

Overcoming Anxiety, Depression, and Anger

Simple and Practical Tools, Strategies, and Exercises to Help You Manage Stress and Become Resilient

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One Day Mindfulness Millionaire: A light-hearted primer for the uninitiated.

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Book available at store.bookbaby.com

eBook (99 cents) and Paperback (\$10)

10-12-24

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Introduction

For most of us, life has been emotionally difficult for some time due to a variety of factors, especially the rapidly increasing cost of living, medical costs and reduced opportunities for frequent, meaningful, and fun social interactions. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the number and severity of stressors has reached high levels for many of us. Experiencing intense levels of anxiety, depression, and or anger has become a routine part of our daily lives. This booklet provides a collection of simple, do-it-yourself, practical mind-body exercises and coping strategies that can improve your capacity to understand, prevent, abort, learn from, and overcome these challenging negative emotions so that you can return to the most meaningful and fun parts of living.

Some tools and resources may apply better to long-term care population.

1. Overcoming Anxiety

Anxiety -- a feeling of fear and unease -- can be a normal reaction to stress. It can help you cope with a problem, but it might cause you to sweat, feel restless and tense, and have a rapid heartbeat. The following are some tools, strategies, and exercises to elicit the relaxation response and help you overcome anxiety.

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Activating the Magical Powers of the Vagus Nerve

The vagus nerve (the tenth cranial nerve) is an essential part of the heart-brain-gut homeostatic-allostatic system. It is the longest nerve of the autonomic nervous system. It has both sensory (80%) and motor fibers.

The vagus nerve consists of thousands of fibers organized in two tracks (one on either side of the brainstem running down the neck to the body to “everywhere” -- every organ system in the body, hence the name *vagus*, Latin for “wandering”). It brings information from organ systems to the brain and takes instructions from the brain to various organ systems (information superhighway) to control digestion, heart rate, vocal cords, emotions, and immune health.

Stimulating the vagus nerve reduces the levels of stress hormones (epinephrine, norepinephrine, cortisol) and increases GABA (inhibitory neurotransmitter) activity in the brain. Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) reduces the heart rate and blood pressure. It is the “rest and digest” nerve. VNS helps reduce anxiety, depression, and body weight (by promoting satiety). The vagus nerve provides interoceptive feedback, which in turn boosts the drive for rewards.

VNS via Simple Daily Activities

Exposure to cold (adjust the temperature to suit your needs – start with just mildly cold and gradually try to increase to moderately cold):

- Immerse your face in cold water (cold water face immersion [CoWFI, or “coffee”]).
- Use cold to stimulate the lateral neck (wearable device).
- Take a cold-water bath.
- Apply cold compresses to your eyes and/or chest (e.g., by wrapping an ice pack in a cloth, holding an ice cube in your hand, sucking on ice chips). Local pharmacies have cold packs. Cold may also improve pain (e.g., acute ankle sprain, neuropathic pain). Athletes (e.g., NBA players) often sit or lie in a tub filled with ice water to relieve pain and recover).
- In winter, step outside for a few seconds (especially in the morning) several times a day.

Voluntary Breath Modulation

- Hold your breath for 5-60 seconds, alternate nostril breathing, box breathing.
- Take deep, slow belly breaths with long exhalation; 3-3-6 (or similar) breathing

Laryngeal Stimulation

- Humming
- Singing
- Chanting
- Coughing (pretend coughing)
- Gargling (warm- or cold-water gargles)
- Laughing (loud belly laughter)

Massage

Use lavender lotion (chemicals in the lavender plant have antianxiety properties; in Germany, an active ingredient is available as prescription medication) or other fragrances or fragrance-free lotion.

- Hand massage
- Foot massage
- Scalp massage
- Neck and shoulder massage
- Total body massage

Miscellaneous

- Light touch to forehead and lips, eye movements (back and forth, up and down)
- Mind-body exercises (some meditations, yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong)
- Physical exercise (e.g., nature run, neck and shoulder stretching)
- Spending time in nature, with plants (gardening) or pets
- Hugging (includes hugging ourselves)
- Pressure therapy (includes acupuncture, weighted blanket)

Neurophysiology and New Research Findings

It is difficult to measure the activity of the vagus nerve directly, but high heart rate variability – the change in heart rate during breathing (the heart rate increases during inhalation as the sympathetic nervous system is activated and decreases during exhalation as the vagus nerve is activated) – is a marker of good cardiovascular health and, perhaps, a strong vagus nerve. Low heart rate variability is associated with diabetes, heart failure, hypertension, etc.

The sympathetic nervous system is involved in the “fight or flight” or “freeze or collapse” response to threatening situations. The parasympathetic nervous system (the vagus nerve is the main nerve for this) is involved in the “rest, digest, calming down” state and response.

Vagus nerve stimulation reduces the inflammatory response to stress (as shown by a reduction in elevated inflammatory biomarkers of inflammation, such as C-reactive protein).

Implanted vagus nerve stimulation (a complex neurosurgical procedure in which a pulse-generating device is implanted in the body to send electrical signals to the vagus nerve) is approved by the FDA to treat severe chronic treatment-refractory major depression and is also used to treat refractory epilepsy. A similar device has been approved to treat obesity – to help control feelings of hunger and fullness. To treat depression (and probably epilepsy and obesity), it may take up to 12 months to see a significant response.

Preliminary research also indicates that VNS (our own habits as well as neurosurgical stimulation) may help manage bipolar depression, diabetes, PTSD, Crohn disease, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Some symptoms of long COVID may be due to damage to (inflammation of) the vagus nerve.

Breath-Awareness Meditation

Find a quiet spot. Sit on a flat but comfortable surface. Close your eyes and begin to pay attention to your breathing. Inhale through your nose. Slow your breathing as you feel your breath enter and leave your body. Feel your lungs expand with the inhalation, retain the breath for a few seconds, and then exhale gently. As you continue to breathe, try to keep your attention on all three aspects of breathing (inhalation, pause, exhalation). The slower the breathing, the greater the benefits. Whenever possible, exhalation should be longer than inhalation. During exhalation, the heart slows, blood pressure drops, and stress hormone levels drop. Also, try to do abdominal/diaphragmatic breathing. Thus, during inhalation, your tummy should bulge outward, and during exhalation, your tummy should go toward the spine.

Count your breaths. If you notice that you have lost count, gently bring your attention back to breathing and start counting again. Continue this for at least 2 minutes. Try to increase it to 20 minutes twice a day (early morning and before sleep). Alternatively, you can engage in this for 2 minutes several times a day. Find your own rhythm, frequency, modification, and duration. This exercise is best done when you are not tired. When you are doing this for the first time, you may experience dizziness, but usually it is mild and transient and passes quickly. Music may be used to assist in breath-awareness meditation.

Potential benefits of breath-awareness meditation include improved memory (through improved capacity to focus, pay attention, be aware), improved capacity to tolerate negative emotions (anxiety, anger, resentment, guilt, grief, sadness), improved ability to manage stress, and improved ability to solve problems in creative and healthy ways.

Worry Basket Meditation

Worry Basket Meditation is based on a Harvard University handout on managing fears and anxiety around the coronavirus (Covid-19). It is important that we remind ourselves that excessive worrying is normal during a time of crisis. Everybody worries a lot, not just us. Next, let's remind ourselves that persistent worry is not an effective way to respond to stress. We can then step up our coping strategies by engaging in this meditation to more effectively manage worries.

This meditation leads you through a visualization exercise. As you are doing this, your mind is likely to wander. No need to be upset; that is what our minds do. When you become aware that you have lost track, gently bring your awareness back to the visualization exercise.

Get into a comfortable position. Close your eyes. (Keeping eyes open is fine.) Do a quick body scan from top to bottom to see if any muscle group (such as forehead muscles, shoulder muscles, lower back muscles) is tense. Feel free to do a gentle shake to loosen the muscles. Bring your attention to your feet and see if they are firmly planted on the floor or in any other comfortable position. Feel free to open a window and allow fresh air in or sunlight to fall on you. Stand or walk around slowly if that is better for you. Take a few slow, deep breaths. Try to have exhalation longer than inhalation. As you slowly exhale, heart rate and blood pressure come down, stress hormone levels come down, and this makes it easier to experience moments of calm.

Begin the meditation:

Imagine a basket. It could be a medium-sized basket that you can easily lift, but feel free to imagine a smaller or bigger basket. Give it a color, any color you wish. Take a few silent breaths as you do this. You are relaxed, in no rush. If your mind wanders, no problem. When you notice that your mind has wandered, smile and bring your attention back to the meditation. Now, imagine that the basket is covered with a lid. Give the lid a color also, any color you wish. Now imagine that all sides of the basket have the following words written on them: Worry Basket. Excellent. Take a few slow, silent breaths with inhalation longer than exhalation as you observe the lovely basket. Now that you have the Worry Basket in mind, you can start putting your worries inside the basket. Find the thing in your mind that you are worrying about. Take your time, no rush. Feel free to name your worries: Covid worries, financial worries, and so on. Take a few silent breaths as you do this. Now that you have identified your worries, imagine moving these worries from your mind and placing them firmly in the Worry Basket. This basket will hold whatever you place in it. Take your time to do this as you take some silent breaths. Now, close the basket with the lid and firmly move the basket to one side, perhaps placing it on a shelf. Step back and look at it. Take a few slow, silent breaths as you observe your worries held in the basket. You can go back anytime and take a worry out, or you can leave it there, giving you space to focus on other things.

Now, if you are ready, open your eyes and smile. Cheers. You just completed a Worry Basket Meditation. Take some slow, deep breaths, pat yourself on the back, and say, “Good job.” That’s an excellent and effective way to manage worries.

Please do this meditation at least once a day. On a particularly difficult day, do it every few hours. Do it with your family, friends, pets, colleagues, and support team. Do it while sitting next to a calming lake, or sitting in the wilderness, or observing the sky from a bench in a park. Feel free to have calming music in the background. Feel free to record your own voice and listen to it. Feel free to have a soothing voice of a friend or family record this and listen to their voice. Feel free to do this in a group setting with family, friends, or work colleagues, and then share your experiences at the end and support each other in the effort. Please do this with children and adolescents struggling with anxiety and fear. Feel free to do it by creating a physical Worry Basket and writing down your worries and then putting them firmly in the basket and covering the basket with a lid. You can go back anytime and take a worry out, or you can leave it there, giving yourself time to focus on other things.

Research (Bhasin et al. 2013) has shown that 20 minutes of such mind-body exercises can improve the activity of genes involved in our immune and metabolic health.

Find a Place of Rest in the Middle of Things

Find a Place of Rest in the Middle of Things is the fourth of the five invitations Frank Ostaseski suggests in his book *The Five Invitations: Discovering What Death Can Teach Us About Living Fully*. Most of us have a lot of stress in our lives. Some days are really rough. The Covid-19 pandemic has taken daily stress to a whole new level. We need to develop the skill to find a place of rest in the middle of things – in the middle of the storm, in the middle of the hurricane. This meditation will help you do just that. In this meditation, try to take refuge in your breath, the most constant and reliable friend and companion you will ever have. By doing this meditation during the emotional hurricane you are experiencing, you will bring down your stress hormones dramatically, your immune system will work better, systemic inflammation will go down, and your prefrontal cortex – the part of the brain that is key in regulating emotions -- will become stronger. You will be able to survive the panic and despair and come out emotionally stronger and physically healthier.

Instructions

Make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes. (Keeping eyes open is also fine.)

You will be repeating the phrases, “Hello, breath, my refuge. I come to rest in you.” Try to synchronize the words with your breath. Such synchronization increases the power of the words. For example, breathing in, say, “Hello.” Breathing out, say, “Breath.” And so on.

Begin the Meditation

“Hello, breath, my refuge. I come to rest in you.”

After one minute, if you are ready, gently bring your awareness to your surroundings and smile. Cheers. You just completed a one-minute *Find a Place of Rest in the Middle of Things* Meditation.

Other phrases: “Hello, breath, my new friend. I have come to rest in you again.” “Hello, breath, my old friend. I have come to hang out with you again.” it is totally okay not to synchronize with your breath. Some words and phrases have power of their own.

You are likely to need at least 20 minutes of this meditation to settle down. Keep doing this regularly and you will be equanimity personified.

Feel free to modify or shorten the meditation. Make up your own phrases. Combine it with stretch yoga and/or background soothing instrumental music. You can even do it while walking in the wilderness or washing dishes.

Aborting Anxiety / Panic Attacks

Education

Learn from your health care provider how to differentiate anxiety / panic attack that does not require you to go to the Emergency Department (because going to the ED may cause you more harm than good, as you may receive benzodiazepines, which may not be best for you in the long run) from acute medical issues for which you should go to the ED. Note that chest pain is often a common symptom of anxiety / panic attack.

Nonpharmacological Interventions

Identify a list of nonpharmacological interventions that you can initiate and engage in as vigorously as possible to reduce anxiety.

Examples of nonpharmacological intervention include:

- Calling family or friends who are calm, cool, collected, and patient to help you calm down
- Doing deep slow breathing exercises with exhalation longer than inhalation
- High-quality app-based guided relaxation (Cleveland Clinic Wellness Mindful Moments, UCLA Mindful, Plum Village Zen Meditation)
- Cold water face immersion
- Taking a long relaxing bath with hot and cold water
- Going for a nature walk or nature jog/run
- Repeating a positive affirmation mantra
- Applying lavender lotion to arms, legs, neck, shoulders
- Tracing a labyrinth with your finger
- Listening to soothing music
- Other approaches (create or identify your own unique strategies)

Pharmacological Interventions

Work with your health care provider to have a medication that you can take as needed if all else fails. There are many options, but please avoid benzodiazepines (e.g., lorazepam). Even taking strong medications such as orally dissolvable olanzapine may be safer than a visit to the ED.

Ten Simple Sensory Relaxation Exercises

1. Apply cold compresses to your eyes
2. Suck ice slowly
3. Do slow deep belly breathing with long exhalation
4. Hold your breath for 5-30 seconds
5. Rub lavender lotion on your hands, arms, feet, legs, neck
6. Lightly massage your forehead and lips with your fingers
7. Hug yourself
8. Trace a labyrinth picture with your finger
9. Squeeze a rubber stress-ball
10. Listen to soothing instrumental music

Each of these activities stimulates the vagus nerve (the “rest and digest” nerve), leading to lowering of the heart rate and blood pressure, improved gut microbiome, and activation of genes that promote metabolic and immune health. These activities also strengthen the prefrontal cortex (the seat of emotional balance and resilience) and lower activity in the amygdala (hyperactive amygdala and insula lead to “doom and gloom” catastrophizing reactions, including rage, anger, fear, panic attack, disgust). Chair yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, and many other mind-body exercises also achieve excellent, deep, and sustained relaxation.

Note: Even one minute of relaxation exercise three times a day (morning, afternoon, and night) can make a huge difference.

Please, Save Me

Sometimes a humor-based strategy is just what we need.

Me: It's a minor problem.

My amygdala: It's a major problem, it is a horrendous problem, it is catastrophic.

Me: It is temporary.

My amygdala: What are you talking about? You have no clue. It is *never* going to go away.

Me: We can fix it.

My amygdala: I am sick of your ignorance. *No one* can fix it. We are doomed.

Me: Please, somebody, anybody, save me from my amygdala. Please, I beg of you.

Set Aside Worries

Set aside this worry
For a moment, perhaps a day.
Watch the cumulus clouds
Lazing away.

Set aside that worry
This time for two moments.
Admire the mountains
Still topped with snow.

Set aside all worries.
Join the bald eagle
Riding a current of spring air.

You have to learn
To set aside worries, my friend,
Or they will eat
your present alive.

The extraordinary calm you seek
Is right in front of you.
You can touch it with your eyes.
Set aside, set aside.

Exercise

Moderate-intensity exercise allows you to talk but not sing.

Vigorous-intensity exercise makes it difficult for you to say more than a few words.

It is okay to exercise for 5 minutes 15 times a day (to reach 75 minutes) – it all adds up.

Limit sedentary behavior (e.g., prolonged sitting without moving, prolonged standing without moving much); you can be active from a sitting or standing position.

At least twice a week, do moderate (or more)-intensity strength training – muscle strengthening.

Aim for moderate to vigorous exercise at least 300 minutes a week (75-150 minutes a day).

Bottom line: Aerobic exercise plus strength training plus stretching plus balance training

For Children

At least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day (so 7 hours of physical activity on Saturday won't count).

Please remind yourself that exercise is the magic pill you have been waiting for!

- You will live longer.
- You will be healthier.
- You will have less depression.
- You will have less anxiety.
- You will feel less cranky and mean.
- You will lower your risk of dementia.
- You will lower your risk of cancer.
- You will lower your risk of falls.
- You will lower your risk of heart attack.
- And so on.

Tip: Regular meditation practice will help you identify barriers to not exercising regularly.

“I Can Make Myself” Meditation

This meditation will strengthen your will power and resolve to make your physical and mental health a priority.

Breathing in, say, “I can.”

Breathing out, say, “Make myself.”

Repeat this for at least one minute every morning as soon as you open your eyes. Watch the power of these words and meditation manifest.

Intensive Personalized Anti-anxiety Schedule

Personalize the following template based on your strengths and interests.

8 a.m. – Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

8:30 a.m. – Nourishing, caffeine-free breakfast with food rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory chemicals (may need dietician guidance)

9 a.m. – Light mindful walking (at least 10 minutes)

10 a.m. – Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

11 a.m. – Soothing music or finger labyrinth tracing or guided relaxing meditation using high-quality apps (Healthy Minds Program [best], Cleveland Clinic Wellness Mindful Moments, UCLA Mindful) (at least 5 minutes)

12:30 p.m. – Nourishing, balanced lunch (avoid high-carbohydrate diet)

2 p.m. – Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

3 p.m. – Light mindful walking (at least 10 minutes)

5 p.m. – Light nourishing dinner

6 p.m. – Light mindful walking (at least 10 minutes)

8 p.m. – Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

Avoid news, negative social media, negative family and friends.

Add aromatherapy (e.g., massage with lavender lotion) throughout the day (scheduled and as needed).

Consider scheduling other relaxation exercises (e.g., progressive muscle relaxation, biofeedback, cold water face immersion / cold compresses to eyes, sucking ice slowly).

GRACE Mindfulness Exercise

Mindfulness is living in our senses as opposed to being on autopilot.

G: Gather your attention and place it in a sensory activity (e.g., sensation of breathing – chest and belly going up and down, sound of your breathing, air going in and out, temperature of the air coming in versus going out).

R: Relax into this activity (e.g., by relaxing your muscles [forehead, jaw, shoulder, limbs, back]), exhaling longer than inhalation (when you inhale, sympathetic activity goes up; when you exhale, parasympathetic activity – vagus nerve activity goes up and heart rate and blood pressure and stress hormones come down), smile (fake smile is okay).

A: Adjust your posture so that you are alert (e.g., straightening the spine) and comfortable (in sitting or standing position – feel free to wiggle and adjust).

C: Count your breaths (counting can help you anchor your attention so that it wanders away less) – e.g., breathing in, say in your mind, “One,” breathing out, “Two,” and so on till you reach “Ten,” then begin again from “One.” If you lose count, don’t be upset. That is what our minds do. When you realize that you have lost count or have gone beyond “Ten,” gently begin again from “One.” Do this exercise for at least one minute (or three rounds of 10) several times a day. On difficult days, do it for 5 minutes several times a day or even longer.

E: Enjoy being in your senses (and taking a break from your mind’s TNT [Thinking ‘N Thinking] channel, the inner chatter, the inner critic)!

Modifications

- Do it with other sensory activities (e.g., watching your child play, while eating, bathing, washing dishes, brushing your teeth, going for a run, or just about any sensory activity).
- Modify how you count to suit your needs. Count with your fingers to make it more physical. Modify C to mean Continue keeping your attention in the sensory activity. No need to count. Each time your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the sensory activity.

Mindful Reflection

Do it before engaging in reflection (develop a regular reflection practice – reflect on what surprised or shocked you [it may help you identify unrealistic expectations], reflect on your failures [it will help you improve as long as you do it self-compassionately] and successes, reflect on your frustrations [it may help you become more patient]). The E of GRACE here stands for Ego-Unburdening reflection and Ego-Bruising reflection. Reflect on the poem Why are you looking for me elsewhere?

Energy In, Worries Out Workout

Breathing in, say (or visualize), “Energy in” (EI).
Breathing out, say (or visualize), “Worries out” (WO).

This is easy peasy
EIWO workout.

When stressed out,
Do EIWO workout.

Just one minute
Will do the trick.

We need lots of energy
To stay positive, strong, and silly.

Courtesy of pandemic stress,
Mind produces worries in excess.
Body to the rescue.
Tag worries to CO₂.

Replace the habit of worrying
With EIWOing.

For more energy, inhale longer, as inhalation stimulates the sympathetic nervous system besides taking in oxygen.

For more relaxation, exhale longer, as exhalation stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system and vagal nerve.

I EIWO while doing yoga stretches in the morning and when I am waiting for something (e.g., my coffee warming up in microwave, the computer to connect).

Supplements, Herbal Remedies, Topicals, and Cannabidiol to Manage Anxiety

Chamomile

Chamomile extract has been studied for the management of Generalized Anxiety Disorder. The quality of research is poor. It is available on the internet. The maximum dose is 1,500 mg per day, best taken in three divided doses. Start with the lowest dose and, if there are no adverse effects or allergic reaction, increase every 2-3 days to a therapeutic dose or maximum daily dose.

Chamomile tea as needed.

Lavender

Lavender capsules 80 mg (Silexan) has also been studied for the management of anxiety symptoms and is available on the internet. The quality of research is poor. The exact dose is unclear (perhaps 80-160 mg per day). In Germany, the active ingredient in Lavender plant is used as a prescription medication for anxiety management. We suggest taking it once a day and, if there are no adverse effects or allergic reaction and inadequate relief of anxiety, increase it to twice a day.

Lavender lotion three times daily or more often. You may use another aroma if you prefer.

Cannabidiol

Cannabidiol (CBD) is the most abundant nonpsychoactive component of cannabis (as opposed to THC [tetrahydrocannabinol]). THC can trigger anxiety and panic attack.

CBD activates the endocannabinoid system. Low-quality research studies have found it to be effective for reducing anxiety in people who have generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety, panic disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Low-quality studies have also found CBD to be effective in reducing chronic pain and headaches (including migraine headaches).

Many of my patients have found CBD to be effective. Besides the cost concerns, I have not seen them develop any negative effects. My patients get the CBD in the form of gummies and liquid preparations from Oregon and California.

Research has not yet clarified the exact effective dose.

2. Overcoming Depression

Depression is a common and serious condition that negatively affects how we feel, think, and act. It can cause feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities we once enjoyed. It can lead to emotional and physical problems and can decrease the ability to function at work and at home. Fortunately, depression is treatable. The following are some tools, strategies, and exercises to help you manage depression effectively.

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Becoming Kinder

Being unkind to ourselves reflects a weak self-compassion mindset, and weak self-compassion mindset (aka self-compassion deficit disorder) often causes depression. Being unkind to others also causes us to feel regret, and we often mismanage regret, leading to depression.

Being kind is a skill, and you can develop it (become kinder). Being unkind manifests in myriad ways, such as being judgmental, being hard on ourselves and/or others, not giving ourselves or others a break, acting in a self-defeating manner, and being insensitive or even emotionally abusive (in subtle ways that we don't see as abusive). Our unkind behaviors emotionally drain us and may prevent us from tackling the next crisis effectively. Here are three practical strategies.

Becoming Kinder Meditation

Make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes. (Keeping eyes open is also fine.) You will be repeating the phrases "Kindness in, judgments out." Try to synchronize the words with your breath. Such synchronization increases the power of the words. For example, breathing in, say, "Kindness in." Breathing out, say, "Judgments out." Try to hold the exhalation longer than the inhalation. Try to do belly breathing – the belly comes out when you breathe in and goes in when you breathe out.

Begin the meditation:

Kindness in,
Judgments out.
Kindness in,
Judgments out.

After one minute, if you are ready, gently bring your awareness to your surroundings and smile. You just completed a one-minute Becoming Kinder Meditation.

It is okay not to synchronize with your breath. Some words and phrases have power of their own.

If you are going through a lot of stress, you are likely to need at least 20 minutes of this meditation to settle down. Keep doing this regularly and you will be kindness personified.

Feel free to modify or shorten the meditation. Make up your own phrases. Combine it with stretch yoga and/or background soothing instrumental music. You can even do it while walking in the wilderness or washing dishes.

Simple Quote Reflection Meditation Exercise

Take time to read this quote, reread it, and reflect on it.

“The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been kindness, beauty and truth.”

- Albert Einstein

Kindness Circle

Create a small group of individuals (your own little *Sangha* [*spiritual community*]) who routinely meet and reflect on the importance of kindness and help each other overcome barriers to becoming kinder.

Benefits will occur on their own if we engage in such meditations and discussions conscientiously and persist in this journey.

Weak Self-Compassion Mindset

Many of us experience depression on and off. One of the common reasons why individuals experience depression is a weak self-compassion mindset. A weak self-compassion mindset leads them either to become defensive when they make errors (or fail in their effort to cope with life) and or to become overly self-critical. Defensiveness prevents them from acknowledging and learning from their mistakes/failures (and becoming complacent), and self-flagellation prevents them from recognizing the tremendous resources within themselves (innate knowledge and wisdom). Strengthening self-compassion mindset through self-compassion mindset interventions may be more effective than traditional approaches such as antidepressants or cognitive behavioral therapy to overcome depression.

Self-Compassion Mindset Interventions may improve depression in several ways:

- Minimizing negative thoughts and self-doubts (minimizing defensiveness and self-flagellation)
- Revving up a desire to be better (growth mindset)
- Increasing authenticity (living in accord with one's true nature)
 - o Stronger relationships with increased authenticity
- Helping gravitate to roles (in work and interpersonal life) that are better suited to one's values, strengths, personality, and goals
- Alleviating fear about social disapproval
 - o More likely to reveal true self (increases authenticity)
- Promoting optimism
- Spreading a strong self-compassion mindset to others to become more self-compassionate and authentic
- Promoting compassion toward others
- Promoting understanding that failures are a natural byproduct of experimentation and innovation (during living and working)

Examples of Self-Compassion Mindset Intervention

- Imagine you are talking to yourself about a problem/weakness/mistake in a compassionate and understanding manner. What would you say? (You can share or write the answer in a journal.) If you cannot think of anything, try one of the following statements: "It's okay. I am not the first one to make this mistake. This problem that I have is common and is experienced by many other individuals. Let me not be too hard on myself."
- Write yourself a letter in the third person as if you were a friend or a loved one.
- Self-compassion Mantra meditation: Intentionally slowing the thoughts and repeating out loud or in one's mind statements that reflect self-compassion. For example: "Today I will show caring, understanding, and kindness to myself. I will be less judgmental of myself. I will encourage myself often. I will not be afraid to acknowledge my mistakes and weaknesses. I will accept them without being hard on myself."

- Wallowing in self-pity (aka Pity Party) is a normal and healthy expression of our emotional reaction to the unfairness of life. The key is to use a timer so that the amount of wallowing matches the context and we do not spend too much time wallowing.

Tracking Self-Compassion

- Rate the levels of self-compassion once a day (or more times) in a diary.

Harnessing the Power of Regret

Regrets are normal, but often are not addressed adaptively. This can lead to excessive suffering (e.g., anxiety, depression, self-hatred, being not easy to live with) and push others away.

Regret should be seen as a messenger, and the message is self-compassion and to learn from our mistakes. Regret is a teacher, and the lesson is self-compassion and to avoid similar mistakes.

So, how do you harness the power of regret? Here is a three-step approach.

Step 1. Attitude

View regret as a bundle of intense energy that needs to be harnessed to improve our lives and our relationships. If not harnessed, the energy will harm our physical and mental health and have a negative effect on our capacity to have healthy attachments.

Step 2. Disclosure

Write down regrets at the pace you can emotionally handle or talk to someone who is supportive and wise.

Step 3. Mindful Self-compassion

Practice mindful self-compassion, because we all make mistakes (including serious mistakes).

Benefits will occur on their own if you follow these three steps and persist in this journey.

Gratitude-Deficit Disorder and Gratitude-Based “Interventions”

Gratitude-deficit disorder often predisposes one to depression, and gratitude-based activities can be an effective antidote to feeling down, despondent, hopeless, helpless, and generally miserable. To be grateful for what we have is not easy, especially if life is full of stress. Certain mindfulness and gratitude practices can easily fix the “deficit” and set us on the path to healing.

These are some of the gratitude practices we have found useful for our mental health. We hope that you may also find them useful.

Gratitude Journal: Once (or several times) a day, write at least one reason for being grateful. It could be as basic as “I am grateful that I am alive,” “I am grateful that I can see,” or “I am grateful that I have a loving wife and son.”

Gratitude Jar: Once (or several times) a day, write at least one reason for being grateful, and put the note in a gratitude jar. This jar can be one’s own or a shared family jar. During difficult times, dip into the jar and read the notes to reconnect with gratitude.

Gratitude Meter: Once a day, ask where one is on the gratitude meter. Is the gratitude gas tank half filled, almost empty, or full? Depending on the answer, tailor the rest of the day toward the required amount of gratitude practices.

Gratitude Meditation: This could involve simple breath-awareness meditation, in which on every in-breath, one states a short gratitude phrase (e.g., “I am grateful for having friends”) and on every out-breath, one states another short gratitude phrase (e.g., “Thank you, God”). You can do this meditation for one minute several times a day and/or for 20-30 minutes once a day.

Gratitude Mindfulness: Try to experience being aware of several daily moments of positive experiences (be mindful of having received the positive experience).

Gratitude Group Discussion: Meet regularly with a group of friends or colleagues to discuss gratitude and share what one is grateful for. Meetings could be as short as 10 minutes, although one hour or more is preferable. Such discussions can be combined with gratitude meditation. These discussions may also include the three “enemies of gratitude” described by Dr. Thomas Gilovich – adaptation, dwelling in the negatives, and skewed perceptions of hardship (that our lives are harder than other people’s lives).

Grief Reflection Meditation

During the Covid-19 pandemic and other global and local tragedies, almost all of us have lost at least one person we love. There is a good chance that life has swept you in its strong current and you have not been able to step outside this turbulent river, sit down on the shore, and cry. This meditation will help you do that. Tears are an expression of love. Let them flow.

In this meditation, you will be mindfully (with your heart) reading a beautiful poem by Rabindranath Tagore. Then you will be reading my reflections about this poem. Then, please sit in silence for two minutes to allow the words and sentiments to settle into your body, your cells, and your spiritual DNA.

Get into a comfortable position. Wiggle your body to shake loose any tight muscle group. Close your eyes. Keeping your eyes open and focused on something is also fine.

Begin the meditation.

Let me not pray to be sheltered from fears

But to be fearless in facing them.

Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain

But for the heart to conquer it.

Let me not look for allies in life's battlefield

But to my own strengths.

Let me not crave in anxious fear to be saved

But hope for the patience to win my freedom.

Grant me that I not be a coward

Feeling your mercy in my success alone

But let me find the grasp of your hand

In my failures.

Reflections:

Let us pray to be fearless in facing our grief.

Let us pray for a strong heart so that we can experience the pain of grief in all its intensity and fury.

Let us have faith in our own strengths.

Let us pray for patience, as the journey through the land of grief is going to be a long one.

Let us find the grasp of God's hand even when we are failing in our efforts to be fearless, strong and patient.

Now, engage in two minutes of slow breathing as you silently reflect on these words and sentiments and allow them to settle in your body. You can also silently read and reread the poem or the reflection during this time in place of silent reflection for 2 minutes with slow breathing.

When you are ready, gently bring your awareness to your surroundings and smile. A sad smile is okay.

It is time to embrace grief, allow it to go through you, and allow yourself to be transformed by it. Grief unexperienced is love unexpressed.

Grief (Simple Quote Reflection Meditation)

In this meditation, you will be reading mindfully – with your heart – a beautiful quote by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. Then take some slow breaths for two minutes to silently reflect and allow the words and sentiments to settle into your body, your cells, and your spiritual DNA.

During the meditation, you may become aware that your mind has wandered. That is expected. No need to get upset. Gently bring your mind and awareness back to the meditation.

Feel free to modify the instructions to suit the needs of your mind and body.

Get into a comfortable position. Wiggle your body to shake loose any tight muscle group. Close your eyes. Keeping your eyes open and focused on something is also fine.

Begin the meditation.

The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not “get over” the loss of a loved one. You will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again, but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to.

Now, reflect in silence on these words and sentiments for two minutes. It is also okay to read the quote again and again during this time.

When you are ready, gently bring your awareness to your surroundings and smile. A sad smile is okay. Cheers. You just completed the Grief Simple Quote Reflection Meditation.

During this difficult time of the Covid-19 pandemic and other collective tragedies, many of us have lost someone we have loved. It is important to revisit – re-sit with -- our grief for them. Grief is an expression of love. Let’s welcome back grief and always keep it in the background of our consciousness.

Staying Positive

Here are seven simple and effective strategies for staying positive.

1. Exercise: releases endorphins and thereby directly elevates mood; improves functioning of the prefrontal cortex, the seat of executive function (necessary for better management of stress and cognitive biases), and hippocampus (improved memory). Stress and cognitive biases feed negativity.
2. Meditate / Live mindfully: improves vagal nerve tone (counteracts overactive sympathetic [fight or flight] nervous system); strengthens Theory of Mind networks and central coherence networks and thereby improves capacity for compassion, understanding different perspectives, and being able to have a 30,000-foot view.
3. Eat a balanced diet (MIND diet [Mediterranean plus DASH diet]): improves mood, anxiety, and sleep by providing necessary vitamins, micronutrients, and antioxidants and reducing inflammation. A lousy diet will make you feel lousy and far from positive.
4. Spend time in Nature: helps healing from grief and trauma (which is now an everyday affair), as we are evolutionarily programmed for this.
5. Step out of your comfort zone: builds resilience (cognitive and emotional flexibility); improves central coherence (the capacity to see the forest and not get lost in the trees).
6. Spend time with positive, kind, calming, and optimistic family and friends: activates mirror neuron networks and thereby improves positivity, kindness, calmness, and optimism.
7. Tell a joke a day: Yes, you read it correctly (credit for this tip goes to my dear friend Anne Basting (www.timeslips.org)). If you can't, learn Improv.

Why try to stay as positive as possible? So that we teach the younger generation what love and resilience manifest during difficult times, and thereby leave a legacy of the defiant power of our all-so-human spirit. The younger generation may have bigger battles to fight than the Covid pandemic (e.g., climate catastrophes), and our staying positive may help them do better than we have.

Activating the Magical Powers of the Vagus Nerve

The vagus nerve (the tenth cranial nerve) is an essential part of the heart-brain-gut homeostatic-allostatic system. It is the longest nerve of the autonomic nervous system. It has both sensory (80%) and motor fibers.

Stimulating the vagus nerve reduces the levels of stress hormones (epinephrine, norepinephrine, cortisol), and elevated stress hormone levels are common in individuals who have depression. Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) reduces the heart rate and blood pressure. It is the “rest and digest” nerve. VNS helps reduce anxiety, depression, and body weight (by promoting satiety). The vagus nerve provides interoceptive feedback, which in turn boosts the drive for rewards.

VNS via Simple Daily Activities

Exposure to cold (adjust the temperature to suit your needs – start with just mildly cold and gradually try to increase to moderately cold):

- Immerse your face in cold water (cold water face immersion [CoWFI, or “coffee”]).
- Use cold to stimulate the lateral neck (wearable device).
- Take a cold-water bath.
- Apply cold compresses to your eyes and/or chest (e.g., by wrapping an ice pack in a cloth, holding an ice cube in your hand, sucking on ice chips). Local pharmacies have cold packs. Cold may also improve pain (e.g., acute ankle sprain, neuropathic pain). Athletes (e.g., NBA players) often sit or lie in a tub filled with ice water to relieve pain and recover).
- In winter, step outside for a few seconds (especially in the morning) several times a day.

Voluntary Breath Modulation

- Hold your breath for 5-60 seconds.
- Take deep, slow belly breaths with long exhalation.

Laryngeal Stimulation

- Humming
- Singing
- Chanting
- Coughing (pretend coughing)
- Gargling (warm- or cold-water gargles)
- Laughing (loud belly laughter)

Massage

- Hand massage
- Foot massage
- Scalp massage
- Neck and shoulder massage
- Total body massage

Miscellaneous

- Light touch to forehead and lips
- Mind-body exercises (some meditations, yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong)
- Physical exercise (e.g., nature run)
- Spending time in nature, with plants (gardening) or pets
- Hugging (includes hugging yourself)
- Pressure therapy (includes acupressure, weighted blanket)

Breath-Awareness Meditation

Find a quiet spot. Sit on a flat but comfortable surface. Close your eyes and begin to pay attention to your breathing. Inhale through your nose. Slow your breathing as you feel your breath enter and leave your body. Feel your lungs expand with the inhalation, retain the breath for a few seconds, and then exhale gently. As you continue to breathe, try to keep your attention on all three aspects of breathing (inhalation, pause, exhalation). The slower the breathing, the greater the benefits. Whenever possible, exhalation should be longer than inhalation. During exhalation, the heart rate slows, blood pressure drops, and stress hormone levels drop. Also, try to do abdominal/diaphragmatic breathing. Thus, during inhalation, your tummy should bulge outward, and during exhalation, your tummy should go toward the spine.

Count your breaths. If you notice that you have lost count, gently bring your attention back to breathing and start counting again. Continue this for at least 2 minutes. Try to increase it to 20 minutes twice a day (early morning and before sleep). Alternatively, engage in this for 2 minutes several times a day. Find your own rhythm, frequency, modification, and duration. This exercise is best done when you are not tired. When you are doing this for the first time, you may experience dizziness, but usually it is mild and transient and passes quickly. Music may be used to assist in Breath-Awareness Meditation.

Potential benefits of Breath-Awareness Meditation include improved memory (through improved capacity to focus, pay attention, be aware), because memory impairment is common in individuals who have depression; improved capacity to tolerate negative emotions (anxiety, anger, resentment, guilt, grief, sadness); improved ability to manage stress (stress is a common precipitant for depression, and continued stress sustains depression even if the person is taking an antidepressant); and improved ability to solve problems in creative and healthy ways (depression impairs problem-solving capacity, and problem-solving therapy is proven to be effective in treating depression for individuals who also have executive dysfunction).

Ten Simple Sensory Relaxation Exercises

11. Apply cold compresses to your eyes.
12. Suck ice slowly.
13. Do slow deep belly breathing with long exhalation.
14. Hold your breath for 5-30 seconds.
15. Rub lavender lotion on your hands, arms, feet, legs, neck.
16. Lightly massaging your forehead and lips with your fingers.
17. Hug yourself.
18. Trace a labyrinth picture with your finger.
19. Squeeze a rubber stress-ball.
20. Listen to soothing instrumental music.

Each of these activities stimulates the vagus nerve (the “rest and digest” nerve), leading to lowering of the heart rate and blood pressure, improved gut microbiome, and activation of genes that promote metabolic and immune health. These activities also strengthen the prefrontal cortex (the seat of emotional balance and resilience) and lower activity in the amygdala (hyperactive amygdala and insula lead to “doom and gloom” catastrophizing reactions, including rage, anger, fear, panic attack, disgust). Chair yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, and many other mind-body exercises also achieve excellent, deep, and sustained relaxation.

Note: Even one minute of relaxation exercise three times a day (morning, afternoon, and night) can make a huge difference.

Please, Save Me

Sometimes a humor-based strategy is just what we need.

Me: It's a minor problem.

My amygdala: It's a major problem, it is a horrendous problem, it is catastrophic.

Me: It is temporary.

My amygdala: What are you talking about? You have no clue. It is *never* going to go away.

Me: We can fix it.

My amygdala: I am sick of your ignorance. *No one* can fix it. We are doomed.

Me: Please, somebody, anybody, save me from my amygdala. Please, I beg of you.

Exercise

General

Moderate-intensity exercise allows you to talk but not sing.

Vigorous-intensity exercise makes it difficult for you to say more than a few words.

It is okay to exercise for 5 minutes 15 times a day (to reach 75 minutes) – it all adds up.

Limit sedentary behavior (e.g., prolonged sitting without moving, prolonged standing without moving much); you can be active from a sitting or standing position.

At least twice a week, do moderate (or more)-intensity strength training – muscle strengthening.

Aim for moderate to vigorous exercise at least 300 minutes a week (75-150 minutes a day).

Bottom line: Aerobic exercise plus strength training plus stretching plus balance training

For Children

At least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day (so 7 hours of physical activity on Saturday won't count).

Please remind yourself that exercise is the magic pill you have been waiting for!

- You will live longer.
- You will be healthier.
- You will have less depression.
- You will have less anxiety.
- You will feel less cranky and mean.
- You will lower your risk of dementia.
- You will lower your risk of cancer.
- You will lower your risk of falls.
- You will lower your risk of heart attack.
- And so on.

Tip: Regular meditation practice will help you identify barriers to not exercising regularly.

“I Can Make Myself” Meditation

This meditation will strengthen your will power and resolve to make your physical and mental health a priority.

Breathing in, say, “I can.”

Breathing out, say, “Make myself.”

Repeat this for at least one minute every morning as soon as you open your eyes. Watch the power of these words and meditation manifest.

Individualized Pleasant Activity Schedule

The Individualized Pleasant Activity Schedule works on the concept of behavioral activation, a strategy that is proven to reduce depression.

Personalize the following template based on your strengths and interests.

8 a.m. – Positive affirmations (e.g., May I be positive, May I be optimistic, May I be kind to myself, May I give myself a break) with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes). (Excessive negative thinking and weak self-compassion mindset are common causes of depression, and positive affirmations can reduce negative thinking and improve self-compassion.)

8:30 a.m. – Nourishing, caffeine-free breakfast with food rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory chemicals (may need dietician guidance – Mediterranean diet has been found to reduce and prevent depression)

9 a.m. – Brisk walking (at least 15 minutes two times a day) (Exercise has been found to be as effective for improving mild depression as antidepressants.)

10 a.m. - Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

11 a.m. – Soothing music or finger labyrinth tracing or guided relaxing meditation using high-quality apps (Healthy Minds Program [best], Cleveland Clinic Wellness Mindful Moments, UCLA Mindful) (at least 5 minutes)

12:30 p.m. – Nourishing, balanced lunch (avoid high-carbohydrate diet)

2 p.m. - Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

3 p.m. – Brisk walking (at least 15 minutes)

5 p.m. – Light nourishing dinner

6 p.m. – Light mindful walking (at least 10 minutes)

8 p.m. - Positive affirmations with slow breathing, exhalation longer than inhalation, yoga stretches (at least 5 minutes)

Avoid news, negative social media, negative family and friends.

Add aromatherapy (e.g., massage with lavender lotion) throughout the day (scheduled and as needed).

Consider scheduling other antidepressant interventions (e.g., music therapy, poems, spending time in nature, spending time with positive and supportive friends and family, spending time in sunlight [20 minutes daily], bright light therapy, humor-based interventions, gratitude-based interventions).

Behavioral Activation for Improving Depression Activity Log

Month: _____

Date: _____

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>

Recommended activities:

- Connecting with others who are positive and supportive and fun
- Physical activity (includes exercise, yoga, Tai Chi, walking in nature, gardening)
- Expanding the mind (reflection, puzzles, discussion groups, book club)
- Self-care (relaxation-meditation exercises, long baths, spa, massage, positive affirmations mantra repetition, brain-health nutrition, sleep hygiene, bright light therapy, sunlight therapy, spending time in nature)
- Creative expression (bring out your inner artist – color, paint, music, poems, new recipes)
- Caring for others / altruistic activities (praying for others, listening to someone vent)
- Spiritual activities / rituals (praying, labyrinth tracing, attending church)

In the activity section, write the specific activity (examples):

1. Speak to my family or friend, brisk walk 15 minutes; puzzles, positive affirmations mantra repetition 5 minutes; coloring; praying for others, praying for self / talking to God
2. Speak to staff, yoga, book discussion, long bath, reading poems, visiting a person (virtually or in person) to provide support, Bible group

To enhance the effects, do it with a buddy and/or with a member of a depression support group.

When the Going Gets Tough (Pep Talk to Self)

Just focus on your part.
Do your part.
Be strong, be patient,
Be kind, be optimistic,
Be open minded, be curious.

Take responsibility, own your errors,
Own your part of failure.
Pledge improvements.
Make improved behavior a priority,
Then schedule this priority in your daily life.

Bad times will pass,
Good times will return soon.
Sadness is a teacher, self-compassion is the lesson.
Sooth yourself,
Support yourself,
Be your own best friend.

Anger is a teacher,
Forgiveness is the lesson.
Bless the person that you blame.
Wish that person well.
Feel the pain under the anger.
Let the resentment go.
Release the negative energy.

Obstacles are not permanent;
You will overcome them.
Failure is just feedback of what doesn't work.
Try to see positives in negative.
Let difficulties rouse your spirit;
Don't let them discourage you.
Conflicts will make you stronger.
Doing uncomfortable things will make your life better in the long run.
Adversity is a training ground for future bigger adversities
That are bound to come due to aging and health-related disabilities
And other challenges.

You are much stronger than you think.

You have overcome many adversities.
You've got this.
You can safely rely on your own strengths.

In relationships, be merciful,
Be tender, be generous.
Accept yourself as you are.
Accept others as they are.
No judgments, no controlling,
Just understanding.

Give yourself a break.
Give others a break.
Trust the good in you.
Trust the good in others.

Protect yourself from others' negativity.
Spare others your negativity.
Don't underestimate the capacity of your ego to harm yourself.
Don't underestimate the capacity of your ego to harm others.

Pray not to be sheltered from fears
But to become fearless in facing them.
Pray not for your pain to go away
But for your heart to get stronger so that you can conquer your pain.

Breathe in, breathe out.
Positivity in, negativity out.
Gratitude in, resentment out.
Confidence in, doubts out.
Energy in, worries out.
Large heartedness in, pettiness out.
Amazement in, self-pity out.

Just do your part.
Be strong, be patient.
Be kind, be optimistic.
Good times will return soon.
Good times will return soon.

Inspired by poems of Rabindranath Tagore, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, Mary Oliver, and Jiddu Krishnamurti, by neuroscience, and by many other sources of wisdom and love

Getting Younger

The secret to getting younger:

Friendship

Optimism

Kindness

Bother friends more,

Breathing in, say, "Optimism in."

Breathing out, say, "Pessimism out."

Sprinkle kindness any chance you get.

I am just a messenger. Message sent by Marta Zaraska's book *Growing Young: How Friendship, Optimism and Kindness Can Help You Live to 100*. Please read the book. Friendship, optimism, and kindness will also help overcome depression.

Please do the breathing exercise mentioned here to nurture optimism.

One Positive Thought

Thich Nhat Hanh has said
Just one positive thought
In the morning can
Change the whole day.

I am picking two:
May I laugh at my follies today.
May I witness one small miracle today.

Dear friend
Eager to know your positive thoughts
Please share at least one.

Please write one positive thought in your journal every morning. Breathe it in. Visit it periodically throughout the day. See your depression melt away.

Surviving Thriving

I am sitting in a coffee shop.
My attention is grabbed
By the news on my phone.
My experience is doom and gloom.

I put my phone away
And bring my attention to
A mother trying to make
Her baby giggle.
My experience is joy.

My attention goes to people
Wearing and not wearing masks.
My experience is frustration.

I bring my attention to my cup of coffee:
Its aroma, the taste.
My experience is of pleasure.

To move from surviving
To thriving,
I will learn to play
With my child called Attention.

Inspired by the quote by William James: "My experience is what I agree to attend to."

Monitor what you are paying attention to. Switch from paying attention to events that trigger negative thoughts and emotions to paying attention to positive or neutral events.

Symhedonia Practice

Symhedonia = sympathetic joy, vicarious joy, secondary joy

Symhedonia = Your heart glows with joy every time it witnesses another's happiness.

When you hear your child laughing, pause what you are doing, smile, savor it, and watch your heart glow.

Do the same when your partner is enjoying something, when your friend shares her or his accomplishments, when you witness your pet, colleagues, neighbors, or even strangers experiencing joy.

With this mindful symhedonia practice, your heart will glow almost continuously.

Notice Pause Smile Savor other's happiness

Inspired by positive psychology research

Another symhedonia practice: Mantra repetition and coordinating words with your breath.

You are happy, I am happy.

I am happy because you are happy.

I don't need any other reason to be happy.

Bright Light Therapy

Bright light therapy is a good, nonpharmacological intervention that may help some individuals overcome depression. It should usually be used along with other nonpharmacological interventions (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy, behavioral activation, individualized pleasant activity schedule, exercise, music, gratitude-based interventions, dignity therapy) and/or pharmacological interventions.

Individuals who have seasonal affective disorder (especially winter depression) should consider bright light therapy. It may also help individuals who have nonseasonal Major depression. Recent research has also found it useful as an adjunct to pharmacological interventions for Bipolar depression (Sit et al. Adjunctive bright light therapy for bipolar depression: A randomized double-blind placebo-controlled trial. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 2017; October 3rd).

Bright light therapy with sleep hygiene may improve sleep.

Exposure to sunlight is always better than a bright light therapy lamp.

I recommend a bright light therapy lamp available from the Center for Environmental Therapeutics (<https://cet.org/product/light-therapy-lamp>). It costs about \$180 (includes shipping). I have no financial relationship with the makers of this lamp.

You can begin exposure to bright light for 15 minutes and slowly increase (15 minutes per week) as tolerated to 60 minutes per day. The box should be above your head at a 45-degree angle. One can start with exposure in the morning (6-9 a.m.), but some individuals may respond to exposure in the afternoon (noon-3 p.m.). You should be about a foot away from the screen, not looking at the screen but engaged in another activity (e.g., reading, watching TV). Adverse effects are minor and include eye strain and headache.

Omega-3 Supplement

Psychiatric disorders for which omega-3 supplement has the most research support include Major Depression and Bipolar Depression. Individuals who struggle with obesity and/or chronic inflammation (e.g., elevated inflammatory biomarkers – CRP) may especially benefit, as omega-3 has some anti-inflammatory effects.

Some research indicates potential benefits in the following disorders, but more research is needed:

- Neurocognitive function and aging well
- ADHD
- Autism
- PTSD
- Chronic / persistent aggression

Other potential benefits:

- Lower risk of cardiovascular disease

Food rich in omega-3 is always better than a pill.

Dosage:

1 gram once or twice daily (each gram has both EPA and DHA, EPA ideally 60% or more)

Adverse effects: Gastrointestinal (tummy pain, nausea); slight increased risk of bleeding (hence stop a couple of weeks before surgery); rare risk of switching from depression to hypomania / mania

3. Overcoming Anger

We all become angry from time to time. How our anger affects us and how we express it are important components of our well-being. Fortunately, we can learn how to recognize, cope with, and express anger in healthy and productive ways. The following are some tools, strategies, and exercises to help you understand and manage anger.

37. ABCD of Anger Management (Page 51)
38. Anger Self-Management (Page 52)
39. Anger – Collaborative De-escalation (what family and professional caregivers can do to help) (Page 53)
40. Unexploded Time Bomb (Page 55)
41. Mindful Way through Anger (Page 57)
42. Breathe, Reflect, and Respond (Page 58)
43. Anger-Reduction Meditation Exercise (Page 59)
44. Simple Quotes Reflection Meditation Exercise (Page 60)
45. Four Types of Anger (Page 61)

ABCD of Anger Management

A = Acknowledge.

Recognize that you are angry and have destructive impulses to hurt the other. (You may do so in art.)

B = Breathe slowly.

Slow your breathing while experiencing anger so that you can tolerate it for longer periods.

C = Catch the insight the energy of anger brings.

This may take time, effort to reflect, and help from friends, mentors, and/or therapists.

D = Don't act out destructive impulses.

Do forgive yourself if you do act out. Don't suppress angry thoughts and feelings. Don't try to avoid / eliminate / get rid of anger.

"Our willingness to recognize and tolerate anger is intimately related to our ability to love." --
Donald Winnicott

Anger Self-Management

Notice build up early

Walk away, take time-out

Count to 10 slowly

Breathing/Relaxation/Meditation exercises (includes cold therapies)

Light to moderate exercise, go for a run, push-ups, sit ups

Written, pre-planned coping statements in their own words they can keep with them, rehearsal

Access comforting people, music, objects, places



Anger - Collaborative De-escalation

What family and professional caregivers need to do to help

Self- check

Eye level

Soft voice

Slow speech

Simply language

Open stance

Space - two arms-length or more if they need it

One person speaks

Active listening - what is going on right now?, reflect (you feel criticized, ignored, talked down, invalidated, unfairly treated), affirm (I appreciate you sharing how you feel)

Request time out before problem solving or explaining

Distraction - let's go for a walk

Address their concern soon enough



As needed meds

Use LEAPS acronym

Listen

Empathize

Ask

Paraphrase

Summarize



Apply Miller's law

To understand what another person is saying, you must assume that it is true (assume that the person is truthful) and try to imagine what it could be true of.

Suspend judgment about what they are saying to first understand them without imbuing their message with personal interpretations.

Use Miller's law to understand someone's agitation and anger.

Dr. George Armitage Miller (1920-2012), professor of psychology, Princeton University. His field of expertise was Theory of Communication.

Unexploded Time Bomb

It is okay if we have an angry outburst now and then. It often allows us to express something important that has been suppressed. It can even be effective if it is brief, expressed at the right moment, and aimed at the correct target.

The simple reason to take anger seriously is that it may be the only signal that we are being injured or will soon be injured. It can help us preserve our mind and body -- our "self." It can help us safeguard self-respect. In this sense, anger, like sadness, joy, disgust, and fear, is a messenger. With mindfulness and meditation, we can observe our mind and body during the state of anger, develop some distance, and thereby have better success in understanding its message – the message being to take steps to protect ourselves from injury. The problem is that the anger messenger comes in a storm and, if we don't let the storm pass, it has the destructive potential to leave relationships in ruins by causing us to say things that we would not say in a calmer state. Its redemptive quality is not easy to harness, but with effort and diligence, with regular meditation practice, it can be harnessed.

Unfortunately, many of us become angry not in reaction to actual danger or even hypothetical danger. Most of the situations making us angry are actually situations that are making us feel insecure or afraid, and we are impatient with such feelings and irritations. Our mind may tell us that we are reacting to disrespect, but on closer look the problem was more about misunderstanding and miscommunication or simply two imperfect humans being emotional and immature. Anger, if not pulled back in such situations, may cause a tear in the fabric of our relationships that will take even more effort to heal. Then, shame will cause us to paradoxically become even more angry so that we can justify our initial over-reaction. Meditation helps us recognize that self-respect stems from ourselves – not another's behavior toward us. If we respect ourselves, if we are strong enough to take responsibility for our own life, then the situations that would cause us to feel disrespected won't matter. Then, you would be right in saying that when the other person "disrespects" you, that behavior reflects more who that person is than you.

When we are angry, if we can be aware that we are angry (meditation helps us become aware), then we can ask ourselves, "What injustice is happening now that is making me angry?" Our rage provides strength to indignation and motivates us to fight injustice. Except in situations of immediate danger, the energy anger generates needs to be channeled into dogged pursuit of justice.

Many people are living with suppressed anger – not just for a few years but for decades or even a lifetime. This is unfortunate, because we have everything within us that is needed to cool the fires of our anger. All we have to do is accept this truth and we are on our way.

Suppressed anger becomes poison, causing depression for some people. Depression may be the lesser of two evils – the other being that rage within will cause them to destroy, even kill

others. Depression often manifests, especially in men, as addiction – to work, sex, food, alcohol, gambling, drugs.

Suppressed rage makes some individuals obnoxious and impossible to live with or even be with. The seeds of rage in such individuals are often sown by trauma (usually in childhood). In a few individuals, anger becomes so strong that its poison makes them outright toxic – cynical, vindictive, hateful, mean, spiteful, resentful, full of grudge and distrust, cruel, sadistic, and callous.

An angry outburst may provide some relief and even clear any misunderstandings between two souls. The trouble comes when a part of us, for reasons that often are not easy to understand, nurses and stokes the flames of anger – through angry thoughts and false beliefs.

Next time when you are angry, ask yourself, “What is really bothering me? Why are my mind and body reacting this strongly? Is it fear? Am I feeling unsafe? Is it lack of control?”

Please, let us not let rage consume us or annihilate hope in us.

Inspired by: Ursula K. Le Guin, in her essay, “About Anger” in her book *No Time to Spare: Thinking about What Matters*.

Mindful Way through Anger

“When we are full of anger, it is because we are suffering deeply. We have to go to a friend who practices mindfulness and ask how to practice in order to transform the anger, the despair in us.”

- Thich Nhat Hanh

Mindfulness Exercises during Experiences of Anger

Phrase/Mantra Repetition

Sit comfortably.

Close your eyes (it is okay to keep your eyes open).

Take a deep breath.

Repeat softly in your mind, “Breathing in, I bring relief to my pain. Breathing out, I release my anger or resentment.”

When your mind gets lost in thought, gently bring it back to the repetition of the phrases.

Do this for at least five minutes.

Open your eyes and smile (a fake smile is okay).

Note: Other phrases (e.g., “I am not a bad person; I am a good person,” “I am not what the other person claims I am,” “Breathing in, I take in God’s love for me. Breathing out, I release my pain and hurt feelings,” “Breathing in, I cool my anger. Breathing out, I send love and forgiveness to the person who has hurt me,” “I am strong, I am fearless, I am patient, I am kind,” “I am slow to anger, quick to forgive,” “Strong minds forgive. I am strong, I forgive”) may also be appropriate. Choose a phrase that you find most useful. Usually, it is the one that counteracts negative schemas* and automatic negative thoughts. Feel free to modify any of the above exercises to fit the needs of your mind and body (e.g., timing the phrase with your breathing, soothing music in the background, applying soothing lavender lotion to yourself while doing these exercises, sipping something soothing while doing these exercises, stretching your muscles or doing yoga while doing these exercises).

*Schemas are strongly held beliefs that we have about ourselves, others, and the world in general. Negative schemas form early in life and remain stable throughout adulthood. They are due to negative or traumatic experiences in childhood. Negative schemas include feeling that one is unlovable, unworthy, unloved, worthless, insignificant, weak, “bad,” a failure; feeling that others are untrustworthy, devious, harsh, selfish, mean, “bad,” unforgiving, narcissistic, abusive, nasty, liars; that life “sucks,” that the whole world is mean, selfish, and cruel; that love doesn’t exist, that you cannot trust anyone, that no one cares, etc. Negative schemas can be weakened with mindfulness exercises and/or psychotherapy.

Breathe, Reflect, and Respond

When you are experiencing strong feelings of anger, say aloud or in your mind, “Breathe, reflect, and respond” (BRR, as in burrrr). It’s a reminder (cue) to breathe, reflect, and respond.

You can also say to yourself, “Just breathe, don’t react. Just breathe, don’t open your mouth.” Focus on breathing. One, breathe in; two, breathe out; three, breathe in; four, breathe out; and so on.

Alternatively, take a deep breath.

Repeat in your mind: Pause, reflect, and then respond.

Don’t react. Pause, reflect, and then respond.

Just breathe. Don’t react.

Pause, reflect, and then respond.

It is important to remind ourselves that almost all reactivity when under the influence of anger is destructive (sometimes in a big way). Relationships are fragile, and doing the repair work after having a tear in a relationship because of an angry reaction is much harder than developing the skill to PRR.

It is also important to remind ourselves that when we are angry, we are deeply suffering. It is important to have compassion for ourselves.

Anger-Reduction Meditation Exercise

A monk decides to meditate alone, away from the monastery. He takes a boat out to the middle of the lake, moors it there, closes his eyes, and begins to meditate.

After a few hours of undisturbed silence, he suddenly feels the bump of another boat colliding with his. With his eyes still closed, he senses his anger rising, and by the time he opens his eyes, he is ready to scream at the boatman who dared disturb his meditation.

But when he opens his eyes, he sees it's an empty boat that probably became untethered and floated to the middle of the lake.

At that moment, the monk achieves self-realization and understands that the anger is within him; it merely needed the bump of an external object to provoke it.

From then on, whenever he comes across someone who irritates him or provokes him to anger, he reminds himself, "The other person is merely an empty boat. The anger is within me."

- Anonymous

Anger-Reduction Meditation Exercise (ARME, as in army)

When you notice that you are angry, close your eyes (keeping eyes open is also okay) and take a deep breath.

Recollect this story of the monk and the empty boat. Say in your mind, "The situation/person is merely an empty boat. The anger is within me. Let me take this opportunity to breathe some of it out."

As you inhale, say in your mind, "I now have less anger within me."

As you breathe out, say, "I am releasing some of my anger."

Do this for a minute or more. Open your eyes and smile.

Source: Abhilash Desai MD and Faith Galliano Desai PhD. *One Day Mindfulness Millionaire: A Light-hearted Primer for the Uninitiated*. <https://store.bookbaby.com/book/one-day-mindfulness-millionaire>

Simple Quotes Reflection Meditation Exercise

Pick one of these quotes, read it mindfully (slowly, with your full attention and your heart), take in the words and the wisdom, and do a simple quotes reflection meditation exercise (SQRME, pronounced “squirmy”).

“Anger is experience of a huge creative urge gone into reverse.”

--Poet May Sarton

“Anger is often an alluring substitute for grieving, granting us an illusion of agency.”

--Philosopher Martha Nussbaum

“Anger is often the deepest form of compassion. The internal living flame of anger always illuminates what we belong to, what we wish to protect and what we are willing to hazard ourselves for.”

--Poet David Whyte

“Under the light of awareness, the energy of irritation can be transformed into an energy which nourishes.”

--Thich Nhat Hanh

Four Types of Anger

The great Zen master Seung Sahn-Soen identified four types of anger:

1. *Attached anger* – We are so attached to or hijacked by anger that we take hours or days to get over it. Even after that, we may spend time justifying it and avoiding any effort to understand the underlying causes.
2. *Reflected anger* – We become angry for a few minutes to an hour, then settle down and acknowledge the underlying pain we are experiencing, and then engage in efforts to understand the underlying causes.
3. *Perceived anger* – We feel angry inside but are able to not show it or show it in a compassionate manner. We are then able to easily engage in efforts to understand the causes underlying our anger.
4. *Loving anger* – We feel anger only on the outside to help other people – “you must do this” – but no anger on the inside. This is true Love-Mind.

Through meditation, we can help ourselves move from attached anger to reflected anger to perceived anger to moments of loving anger. Only a few great souls reach the highest level – loving anger for sustained periods.

Psychiatry Basics

Step one:

Assess and workup for medical causes of psychiatric problems. Example: pain, dehydration, constipation, infection, delirium. Consider CBC, CMP, TSH, B12, D, Mag levels and for chronic insomnia, ferritin levels (iron deficiency can cause RLS and restless sleep).

Step two:

Review medications and look for medication induced psychiatric problems. This includes medication adverse effects, toxic levels (may need blood levels), and medication withdrawal. Consider rational deprescribing of unnecessary medications, medications not in keeping with goals of care, and medications on AGS 2023 Beers list of medications potentially inappropriate in older adults. Consider checking for total anticholinergic burden of medications using the www.acbcalc.com and reduce anticholinergic burden. Consider pharmacy or psychiatry eConsult for review of meds and suggestions for deprescribing.

Step three:

Inquire about social and environmental factors.

Step four:

Consider non-pharmacological interventions.

Anxiety: counseling, relaxation training, lavender lotion several times a day, etc.

Depression: counseling, bright light therapy, gratitude journaling, exercise therapy, behavioral activation therapy, etc.

Insomnia: counseling, bright light therapy, sleep hygiene training, etc.

Step five:

Consider relatively benign medications first psychopharmacological interventions are needed.

Anxiety: chamomile extract 500mg three times daily

Insomnia: melatonin 3mg at bedtime daily, chamomile 500mg-1500mg at bedtime daily

Step six:

Traditional psychiatric medications as necessary.

Namaste

Behavioral / Mental Health Care Plan Template

Patient information:

Patient SNAP (strengths, needs, abilities, preferences):

Date initiated:

Review date:

Goals (SMART – Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-limited):

Target problems	Pharmacological interventions	Non-pharmacological interventions

Signatures of team members:

Patient:

Family member (if patient agrees):

Primary Care Provider:

Mental health professional:

Nurse:

Social worker:

Examples

Case 1. Patient information: Mrs. A is an 80-year-old retired school teacher who is experiencing depressed mood, insomnia and many other symptoms of **Major depression** for the last two months. Her PHQ-9 score was 21 on 3/31/24.

Patient SNAP: Mrs. A is very motivated to take an active role in her recovery as she has experienced depression in the past. Mrs. A has very supportive husband and daughter. Mrs. A has self-identified that she needs lots of encouragement and positive reinforcement. Mrs. A prefers solitary or one-on-one activities rather than group activities.

Date initiated: 4/1/24

Review date: 6/1/24

Goals: Patient will report normal mood at least 5 days a week and report 7 hours of sleep at least five days a week, and his PHQ-9 score will be less than 10 by the review date.

Target problems	Pharmacological interventions	Non-pharmacological interventions
Depressed mood	Sertraline 50mg daily	-Individual therapy weekly -Walking program 10 minutes twice daily
Insomnia	Melatonin 3mg daily at night	-listening to soothing music daily at night

Case 2: Patient information: Mr. B is a 70-year-old retired construction worker who is experiencing **alcohol withdrawal symptoms and has alcohol use disorder.**

Patient SNAP: Mr. B has been in treatment for his AUD in the past and is aware of the potential dangers of untreated alcohol withdrawal. Mr. B has six years of sobriety before this relapse. Mr. B needs to be reminded of the harms his addiction has caused to his health and his relationships to maintain his motivation for recovery. Mr. B prefers medication therapy over counseling.

Date initiated: 4/1/24

Review date: 5/1/24

Goals: Patient will report no alcohol withdrawal target problems, attend at least 70% of alcoholic anonymous virtual groups by the review date and maintain total abstinence throughout the review period.

Target problems	Pharmacological interventions	Non-pharmacological interventions
Tremors	Lorazepam 1mg three times daily for 7 days, then 0.5mg as needed every 8 hours for another two weeks	-Education about alcohol withdrawal and alcohol use disorder -individual therapy weekly
Cravings for alcohol use	Lorazepam used for tremors will help this problem also	-journaling about harms of alcohol and benefits of abstinence
Risk of relapse	Naltrexone 50mg daily	-alcoholic anonymous virtual groups daily for 30 days and then twice a week

Case 3: Patient information: Mrs. C is a 60-year-old retired nurse who is experiencing elated mood, grandiose delusions, paranoia towards family and many other symptoms of **Bipolar mania** for the last two weeks.

Patient SNAP: Mrs. C is creative and uses her talent of art to channel the increased energy during manic episodes. Mrs. C has excellent knowledge of adverse effects of her psychiatric medications. Mrs. C needs family intervention when she feels “great” and doesn’t think she needs to take any medications. Mrs. C prefers her family rather than staff to “get her” to take her medications.

Date initiated: 4/1/24

Review date: 6/1/24

Goals: Patient will report normal mood for six days a week and absence of delusional thinking by the review date.

Target problems	Pharmacological interventions	Non-pharmacological interventions
Elated mood	Depakote ER 1500mg daily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -activities of his interest throughout the day -family education and support
Delusions	Risperidone 3mg daily at night	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -staff and family reassuring him when he is paranoid -staff and family not challenging his grandiose delusions and distracting him with activities of his interest

Resources

1. *Overcoming Anxiety*

Bhasin et al. Relaxation Response Induces Temporal Transcriptome Changes in Energy Metabolism, Insulin Secretion and Inflammatory Pathways. *PLOS One* (May 2013). Available free on the internet (not providing the link intentionally, as the link is several lines long). This is not the link to the study but a summary of the study:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/05/130501193204.htm>

Tracy Dennis-Tiway. *Future Tense: Why anxiety is good for you (even though it feels bad)* (Harper Wave, 2022). And podcast by her with Jonathan Bastian (Life Examined).

Abhilash Desai and Faith Galliano Desai. *Fearless Strong Patient Kind: 73 meditations to help you manage stress better and become super resilient*. eBook. Email me for PDF copy.

Abhilash Desai and Faith Galliano Desai. *Mindfulness and Meditation*. eBook. Email me for PDF copy.

Abhilash Desai and Faith Galliano Desai. *One-Day Mindfulness Millionaire: A Lighthearted Primer for the Uninitiated*. Available as paperback (\$10) and eBook (99 cents) on Amazon and BookBaby.

Free high-quality apps for relaxation exercises / meditation: Healthy Minds Program (best), Cleveland Clinic Wellness Mindful Moments, UCLS Mindful, Plum Village Zen Meditation, CBTi Coach, PTSD coach.

Hoge et al. Mindfulness-based stress reduction as effective as escitalopram for the treatment of adults with anxiety disorder. *JAMA Psychiatry* 80 (2023):13-21.

Palouse Mindfulness offers free online MBSR course / self-paced training.
<https://palousemindfulness.com>.

Saeed and Majarwitz. Generalized anxiety disorder: 8 studies of biological interventions. *Current Psychiatry* 21 (July 2022):22-27.

WHO 2020 Exercise Guidelines:
<https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/bjsports/54/24/1451.full.pdf>

Yap et al. Efficacy and safety of lavender essential oil (Silexan) capsules among patients suffering from anxiety disorder: A network meta-analysis. *Scientific Reports: Nature Research* 9 (2019):18042.

2. *Overcoming Depression*

Serena Chen. Give yourself a break: The power of self-compassion. *Harvard Business Review* (September-October 2018): 116-23.

Abhilash Desai. *Poems to Manage Self*. Please email me for pdf of this collection of more than 50 poems.

Abhilash Desai. *Medical Poems*. Please email me for pdf of this collection of more than 100 poems.

Abhilash Desai and Faith Galliano Desai. *One-Day Mindfulness Millionaire: A Lighthearted Primer for the Uninitiated*. Available as paperback (\$10) and eBook (99 cents) on Amazon and BookBaby.

Mark Epstein. *The Zen of Therapy: Uncovering a Hidden Kindness in Life* (Penguin, 2022).

Free high-quality apps for relaxation exercises / meditation: Healthy Minds Program (best), Cleveland Clinic Wellness CCW Mindful Moments, UCL Mindful, Plum Village Zen Meditation, CBTi Coach, PTSD coach.

John Katsos and Jason Miklian. How to thrive in a changing world. *Harvard Business Review* special issue (Spring 2022). A new crisis playbook for an uncertain world.

Liao Y et al. Translational Psychiatry 2019. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41398-019-0515-5>.

Kristin Neff. *Compassionate Body Scan* (2014). Audio-book.

Kristin Neff. *Self-Compassion Step By Step: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself* (2011). Book and Audio-book.

Palouse Mindfulness offers free online MBSR course / self-paced training.

<https://palousemindfulness.com>

Daniel Pink. *The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward* (Riverhead, 2022).

Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/>

Can Compassion Training Help Physicians Avoid Burnout?

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/can_compassion_training_help_physicians_avoid_burnout

Can Empathy Protect You from Burnout?

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/can_empathy_protect_you_from_burnout

How to Awaken Compassion at Work

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_awaken_compassion_at_work

Measuring Compassion in the Body

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/measuring_compassion_in_the_body

The Compassion Paradox Faced by Healthcare Workers

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/the_compassion_paradox_faced_by_health_care_workers

"A Good Day" with Brother David Steindl Rast <https://binged.it/2rDWjUT>

WHO 2020 Exercise Guidelines:

<https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/bjsports/54/24/1451.full.pdf>

Harvard Publishing. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/omega-3-fatty-acids-for-mood-disorders-2018080314414>

Cardiovascular risk: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/in-major-meta-analysis-of-clinical-trials-omega-3-fish-oil-supplements-linked-with-lower-cardiovascular-disease-risk/>

Why Health Professionals Should Cultivate Gratitude

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_health_professionals_should_cultivate_gratitude

4. *Overcoming Anger*

Abhilash Desai and Faith Galliano Desai. *One-Day Mindfulness Millionaire: Living Mindfully – A Lighthearted Primer for the Uninitiated*. Available as paperback (\$10) and eBook (99 cents) on Amazon and BookBaby.

Thich Nhat Hanh. *Anger: Wisdom for Cooling the Flames* (Riverhead, 2002).
Ursula K. Le Guin. "About Anger," in *No Time to Spare: Thinking about What Matters*
(Harper, 2017).