

breathing or another activity that decreases your emotional or physical sensations as a result of sharply focusing your attention in a positive way.

- Refocus with Progressive Mindfulness—deliberately encountering a situation that you normally would avoid *and* that is beneficial for you.

- Refocus with Progressive Mindfulness should never be used for dangerous or highly addictive behaviors—use regular Regulate or Regulate & Refocus instead.
- Gratitude lists are an excellent way to Refocus.
- Use the fifteen-minute rule whenever possible.

After working with the first three steps for a few weeks (though some people may jump right in, which is okay if you have enough insight and awareness from prior training or therapy), you likely will be ready to start tackling specific behaviors that you want to change (with Refocus with Progressive Mindfulness) and begin Step 4, where you start Revaluing your experiences:

Revaluing means clearly seeing the thoughts, urges, impulses, and desires for what they are—simply sensations caused by deceptive brain messages that are not true and that have little to no value.

- Progressive mindfulness is the ability to use your Wise Advocate to gain deeper levels of mindful awareness

through experience.

- As your capacity to use progressive mindfulness improves, you will be able to view the bothersome, yet useless false thoughts, impulses, desires, cravings, urges, fears, worries, and thinking errors as nothing more than deceptive brain messages.

## **MAKING THE BRAIN WORK FOR YOU— KEY CONCEPTS**

- Habits are hard to break because they are so strongly wired into your brain because of Hebb's law and the quantum Zeno effect.
- You can break the cycle of deceptive brain messages with focused attention, veto power, and Self-Directed Neuroplasticity (i.e., the Four Steps).
- The key parts of the brain involved in propagating and maintaining deceptive brain messages include the:
  - Drive Center—involved in hunger, thirst, sex, and other basic bodily drives
  - Reward Center—involved in pleasure and obtaining rewards
  - Uh Oh Center—involved in telling you something is wrong; alarm center
  - Habit Center—involved in automatic responses (thoughts and actions)
  - Self-Referencing Center

—focuses on information related to you; can cause you to take things too personally at times

- The Assessment Center is involved in rational decision-making and voluntary emotion management and supports the Wise Advocate. It is the part of the brain that is enhanced and recruited more often when you use the Four Steps on a continual basis.

## **Developing Your Plan**

To begin changing your brain-based habits in a more deliberate way, you will want to devise a list or game plan. In chapter 2, we asked you to write down what things you want to stop doing and the activities you would prefer to be doing instead. Look at that list now. Is there anything else that you want to add? For example, when you completed that list, you had not learned about thinking errors, the importance of emotional bonds, or social pain. Now that you know all the ways your brain can hijack you, reformulate your list and include actions, both physical and mental, that you would like to change in the table on page 342.

## **WHAT ARE YOU DOING THAT YOU WANT TO STOP?**

(e.g., eating carbs when I am stressed out; using alcohol to calm myself after I get into an argument with someone; calling my ex-boyfriend whenever I feel lonely; never doing things for myself, but putting others first; not saying what I think or need; striving for perfection all the time; trying to get the 5 A's from people rather than providing them for myself)

## **WHAT ARE YOU NOT DOING THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO?**

(e.g., eating more healthily; exercising more often; spending more time with friends; meditating to learn how to notice my thoughts and soothe myself; doing more things for myself each day; telling people what I think or need; noticing when I am catastrophizing, and using the Four Steps to deal with it)

With this list in mind, think about which things will be easier to change and which will be harder. Rank them in order in the table below from 1 (the easiest to change) to 10 (the most difficult to change).

## **THINGS I WANT TO CHANGE WITH THE FOUR STEPS**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Obviously, you could start using the Four Steps on anything you want to change, but beginning with something that is easier (#1 on the list above) is your best bet—even if it is not the most pressing or important. Why? It's essential that you learn how to use the Four Steps and have some early successes with applying the method before you tackle more intense sensations or entrenched habits that are strongly wired into your brain. For instance, if you start with something too difficult or that evokes a lot of distress and unsettling emotional sensations, you may feel overwhelmed and not learn how to use the Four Steps

effectively. Therefore, start with something small that does not require you to use Refocus with Progressive Mindfulness. With time and repeated use of the Four Steps, you will be able to incorporate Refocus with Progressive Mindfulness plans into your life and tackle almost any difficulty you have.

In short, don't do everything at once, and allow yourself to see the progress you're making by journaling your successes and writing out gratitude lists.

## **Pay Attention to Your True Self**

Along with using the Four Steps to increase your awareness and insight of what is happening in your brain and body, you need to develop and enhance your sense of self with your Wise Advocate and the 5 A's. Doing so will help counteract your brain's natural tendency to ignore, minimize, or neglect your true self or use thinking errors to keep you stuck and unable to stand up for yourself. It will also help you see yourself the way your Wise Advocate does: a good person worthy of living a fulfilling and rewarding life.

To improve your ability to see yourself from the perspective of your true self, try to *incorporate* and *believe* your Wise Advocate's view of you. For example, whenever a thinking error or negative thought about you arises, imagine how your Wise Advocate would respond and try to really take in that message. Allow yourself to consider the possibility that you genuinely are trying your best and are making progress. Remind yourself that it's natural and healthy for you to allow your true emotions to break through that wall of deceptive brain messages that likely has been dominating your life. Acknowledge that the Wise Advocate, that healthy side of you that is strongly aligned with your true self, would advocate for you to allow all of your true feelings, including grief, mobilizing forms of anger, and healthy stress or anxiety, to emerge. Similarly, remember that it is natural and normal to seek out the 5 A's from important people in your life—it's part of what fulfills you and brings meaning to your life. Simultaneously, acknowledge that in most cases you should provide yourself with Attention, Acceptance, Affection, Appreciation, and Allowing so that you remain independent and relate to people in healthy ways.

The definition of respecting your true self and using the Four Steps to its fullest extent is to achieve the following:

- Constructively deal with your true emotions in a way that allows your true self to be honored and represented
- Skillfully deal with deceptive brain messages by allowing the false thoughts, urges, impulses, desires, and sensations to be present, without focusing attention on or overidentifying with them<sup>32</sup>

When you are able to achieve these goals while incorporating and internalizing the view of a loving, caring being who knows how you think and feel but who acts in your best interest into your sense of self, you will be firmly on your way to acting in healthy, wholesome ways that result in lasting changes to your brain and your life.

Best wishes on your journey and in your life. May you be well.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First and foremost, we want to thank all the people who allowed their stories to be used in this book. Your willingness to share your life and perspective in such a generous way will help many more than you could ever know. We also thank our tireless research assistant and colleague, Poorang Aurasteh, for completing most of the case interviews in this book and enthusiastically helping us with our UCLA Four Step education group.

As with most endeavors, this book is the result of many talented people working together. We begin by thanking two extraordinary people who had the vision and ability to get the project started and see it through to completion. Susan Rabiner, our agent, and Rachel Holtzman, our editor at Avery, were driving forces behind this book. We cannot thank you enough for believing in our ideas and being passionate advocates of our work. We also thank Travers Johnson, assistant editor; Megan Newman, vice president and editorial director of Avery; and William Shinker, president and publisher of Gotham Books/Avery.

In terms of content, we thank Henry P. Stapp, Ph.D., David D. Burns, M.D., Peter G. Levine, and Donald D. Price, Ph.D., for offering their time, knowledge, and pioneering ideas. We also thank the researchers and authors we mention in the book for their groundbreaking work. Finally, we are appreciative of the support from our colleagues at UCLA, including Peter Whybrow, M.D., and everyone at the Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC): Diana Winston, Marvin Belzer, Ph.D., Daniel Siegel, M.D., and Susan Smalley, Ph.D.

## **REBECCA GLADDING**

I greatly appreciate my family and friends for their unending support during the writing process and in life in general. Thanks to Darlene Ricker, one of the most amazing writing coaches around. Among her many talents, she had an uncanny ability to help me consistently erase my writer's block and keep me moving forward even when I had no idea where I was headed. I am also indebted to Karin de Weille for helping me find my creative/ narrative voice and for

assisting in revising chapter 1. To Jennifer Draper, M.D., Keith White, Dana Levy, M.D., Wendy Simon, M.D., Kristen Heiden, Kerry Regan, Donald, Connie, and Curtis Gladding, Melinda Merker, Halary Patch, RN, Iljie Fitzgerald, M.D., Michael Takamura, M.D., Alvin Chan, Shani Delaney, M.D., Jonathan Volk, M.D., Bryan and Vanessa Turner, Luata Bray, LMPc, Stacy Duhon, Alice Rudnick, M.D., and Karen Stone: I couldn't have done this without all of you. Similarly, thanks to my amazing colleagues at UCLA, including the exceptionally talented and hardworking psychiatry residents and everyone in the Adult Eating Disorders Program, particularly Michael Strober, Ph.D., Cynthia Pikus, Ph.D., Maureen Lynch, RN, MSN, and the entire nursing and therapeutic staff, and to the most supportive colleagues imaginable at the University of Washington.

To all of my patients over the years, your willingness to share your life history and emotions taught me more than any textbook ever could. Thank you for allowing me to know you.

Thanks to Jeffrey Schwartz, M.D., for the unsurpassed education you have given me—I have learned so much from you. Thanks also to all of my teachers and mentors over the years, including Phillip Cogen, M.D., Michael Gitlin, M.D., Thomas Strouse, M.D., and John S. Luo, M.D., at UCLA, Lowell Tong, M.D., at UCSF, Karina Uldall, M.D., and Paul Ciechanowski, M.D., at the University of Washington, T. Glen Lawson at Bates College, and Trudy Goodman of InsightLA. You have helped me become the person, clinician, and ardent educator I am today. Finally, thanks to Peet's Coffee in Brentwood, which provided me with a wonderfully relaxing place to write the majority of this book, and especially Warren, who always greeted me with a smile and a perfectly made Americano.

## **JEFFREY SCHWARTZ**

I would like to thank El Shaddai—the Source of it All, Billy Abraham for telling me about the Jesus Prayer, and the Paraclete for being helper, comforter, advocate, counselor, encourager, strengthener, friend. I would also like to thank my parents for their decades of hard labor—the unpayable debt that made it all possible, and Gary, for being an inspiration. Thanks to Mr. Jeffrey Stern for years of dedicated support. And thanks to Becky Gladding, without whom this book would not exist, and those who have provided support through twenty-five



years at UCLA.

We are eternally grateful and indebted to everyone who has helped us along the way, including anyone we did not specifically mention. Thank you all for your help, expertise, and support.

## RECOMMENDED READING

If you want to learn more about what you read in *You Are Not Your Brain*, you might find these books, most of which we specifically cited and used in the text, interesting and helpful.

*The Brain That Changes Itself* by Norman Doidge, M.D.

*Feeling Good* by David D. Burns, M.D.

*Fully Present* by Susan L. Smalley, Ph.D., and Diana Winston

*How to Be an Adult in Relationships* by David Richo, Ph.D.

*Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor E. Frankl, M.D., Ph.D.

*A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook* by Bob Stahl, Ph.D., and Elisha Goldstein, Ph.D.

*Mindfulness in Plain English* by Bhante Henepola Gunaratana

*The Relaxation Response* by Herbert Benson, M.D., with Miriam Z. Klipper

## INDEX

Acceptance: of false messages; in healthy emotional connections; true vs. false; of uncontrollable circumstances

Accomplishments: acknowledgment of, in refocusing; and goal-setting; and motivation

Accumbens. *See also* Reward Center

Actions, short-term, vs. long-term goals

Activities, as objects of mindfulness. *See also* Healthy behavior/activities

Addiction, treatment of. *See also* Craving(s)

Affection, in healthy emotional connections

Ainsworth, Mary

Alcohol: cravings for; excessive consumption of (*see* Drinking); moderation with

Alcoholics Anonymous

All-or-nothing (black-or-white) thinking

Allowing, in healthy emotional connections

Amygdala. *See also* Uh Oh Center

Anger: acknowledgment of, as true emotion  
; constructive use of; as dysfunctional emotional response; refocusing from; reframing of; thinking errors in

Anterior cingulate. *See also* Uh Oh Center

Anxiety: confrontation of, with refocusing techniques; as consequence of emotional neglect; constructive use of; deceptive brain messages as source of; “part of me” mode in; rating of, for refocusing; refocusing techniques with; reframing of false messages from; repetitive thinking in; symptoms of; thinking errors in; working around vs. stopping. *See also* Self-doubt; Stress

Appreciation, in healthy emotional connections

Assessment Center: activation in refocusing; activation in relabeling; activation in revaluing; engagement of, in reframing; inducement of healthy behavior by; modulation of messages regarding self by; obstacles to evaluative function of; in voluntary action

Attention: focusing of (*see* Focusing of attention; Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus); in healthy emotional connections

Attention density

Autonomic nervous system

Avoidance: assessment of, for refocusing; awareness of; confrontation vs., in refocusing; cost of; substituting action for; thinking errors in

Awareness: of avoidance; of body; of breath; increasing of; intersection of focusing with; mindfulness as; moving from “part of me” mode to

Basal ganglia. *See also* Habit Center

Benson, Herbert

Berra, Yogi

Biology: of brain; vs. destiny

Bipolar disorder

Black-or-white (all-or-nothing) thinking

Blind faith

Blind spots

Blood pressure

Body: awareness of; responses of, to emotional sensations(*see also* Physical sensations)

Boredom

Bowlby, John

Brain: acquisition of new functions by;

activity centers of (*see* Assessment Center;

Drive Center; Executive Center; Habit

Center; Reward Center; Self-Referencing

Center; Uh Oh Center); control of life by; damage to, from strokes; deception by (*see* Deceptive brain messages); distinguishing between mind and; formation of circuits in; partnership with mind; passive processing by; response of, to behavior; rewiring of (*see also* Self-Directed Neuroplasticity); wiring of, by responses to childhood emotional needs; wiring of habits into

Breathing: awareness of; regulation of

Burns, David D.

Caregivers: attachment of children to; ignoring of children’s emotional needs by; as providers of emotional safety

Catastrophizing; balanced response to; emotional impairment from; taking

inventory of

Childhood: emotional connections in; emotional neglect in; emotional safety in; and origin of deceptive brain messages

Cognitive-behavioral therapy

Comparisons, faulty

Concentration camps

Craving(s): identification of; increasing awareness of; indiscriminate responses to; intensification of, when starting relabeling; origins of; of pleasure; reframing of false messages from; relationships as satisfaction for; rule of moderation with; selection of refocusing technique for; strengthening of; as symptom of underlying problem; undermining of effort by; withstanding and reducing *See also* Desire

Darwin, Charles

Deceptive brain messages: acceptance of; actions caused by; assessment of damage from; biology underlying; choice and responsibility regarding; confusing intensification of, with relapse; counteracting(*see also* Four Steps; Refocusing; Reframing; Relabeling; Revaluing); counteracting, goal-setting in; counteracting, sustaining efforts in; cycle of; definition of; distinguishing between self and (*see also* False foreign invaders); and emotional neglect; environmental origins of; extent of damage from; fusion of self with (*see also* “Part of me” mode); increasing awareness of; intensification of, when starting relabeling; interference with relationships; medical intervention with; noncognitive awareness of, in revaluing; passive focusing on; persons triggering; physical symptoms from; recognition of (*see also* Mindfulness; Relabeling); recognizing falsity of(*see also* False foreign invaders); refocusing from (*see also* Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus); reframing of; relabeling of; revaluing of; self-treatment of(*see also* Self-Directed Neuroplasticity); situations triggering; as source of anxiety; as source of depression; as source of guilt; as source of perfectionism; as source of self-doubt; as source of stress; veto power over; working around vs. stopping

Depression: as consequence of emotional neglect; deceptive brain messages as source of; “part of me” mode in; patient’s efforts in treatment of; refocusing toward healthy activity in; reframing of false messages from; symptoms of; thinking errors in

Desire: creation of false expectations by; as factor in sustained effort; indiscriminate responses to; origins of; relabeling of; therapy as fulfillment of. *See also* Craving(s)

Dieting

Discounting the positive

Distraction: vs. refocusing; by repetitive thinking

Drake Center (Cincinnati)

Drinking: control of; cost of; and depression; and dysfunctional anger; formation of habit of; “part of me” mode in; reframing of false messages from; as response to stress; selection of refocusing technique for

Drive Center

Eating disorders. *See also* Food

Effort: estimation of, in goal-setting; indispensability of, in successful treatment; in mindfulness; selectivity in

Ego-dystonic perspective. *See* False foreign invaders

Ego-syntonic perspective. *See* “Part of me” mode

Eisenberger, Naomi

Emotional reasoning

Emotional sensations: acceptance of; avoidance of; bodily manifestations of; brain biology underlying,

Emotional sensations (*cont.*); confrontation of, with refocusing techniques; confusing intensification of, with relapse; as consequence of emotional neglect; from deceptive brain messages; difference between emotions and; distortion of self by; examples of; expectations as triggers for; impermanence of; increasing awareness of; intensification of, when starting relabeling; making mental notes about; as objects of mindfulness; rating of, for refocusing; recognition of false thoughts through; refocusing from (*see also* Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus); reframing of(*see also* Reframing); relabeling of (*see also* Relabeling); and relationship anxieties; veto power over; working around vs. stopping

Emotions: anxiety as signal of; attention to thoughts accompanying; caregiver responses to, and shaping of brain; in childhood; consequences of dismissiveness toward; difference between emotional sensations and; effects of suppression of; healthy cultivation of; recognizing neglect of, in bodily symptoms; and respecting true self; safe zones for; self-care for; surfacing of, in reframing

Executive Center. *See also* Assessment Center; Self-Referencing Center

Exercising, regular

Expectations: all-or-nothing; as factor in sustained effort; false (*see* False expectations); taking inventory of

Exposure and response prevention

Faith. *See* Blind faith; Rational faith

False expectations; vs. acceptance; balanced response to; emotional consequences of; taking inventory of; in therapy

False foreign invaders: definition of; recognition of; refocusing from; reframing of; relabeling of; resulting in social pain; stemming from brain biology; *See also* Deceptive brain messages

Fatigue, overcoming

Faulty comparisons

Feeding the monster

Fifteen-minute rule

Fight-or-flight response 5 A's (Attention, Acceptance, Affection, Appreciation, Allowing)

Focusing of attention: in beginning Four Steps; beneficial (*see also* Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus); choice in; intersection of awareness with; and neuroplasticity; passive; in stabilizing brain circuits; toward unhealthy behavior

Food: moderation with; reducing cravings for. *See also* Eating disorders

Fortune-telling. *See* Catastrophizing

Four Steps: counteracting deceptive brain messages with; developing individualized plan; efficacy of; life stories illustrating; medical intervention and; practicing of; research validating; self-treatment with; sequencing of steps in; tips for beginners. *See also* Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Reframing; Regulate & Refocus; Relabeling; Revaluing; Self-Directed Neuroplasticity

Frankl, Viktor E.

Free Won't

Frontal cortex. *See also* Executive Center

Gambling, control of

Genetic predispositions

Goals: definition of, in Self-Directed Neuroplasticity; direction of neuroplasticity by; finding meaning and; long-term, vs. short-term actions; sustaining efforts toward; time management in meeting

"Good enough" caretaking

Gratitude lists

Grief. *See* Sadness

Gross, James

Guilt: and childhood emotional dysfunction; deceptive brain messages as source of; thinking errors in  
Gunaratana, Bhante Henepola

Habit Center; activation by Assessment Center failure; biological override on; blocking of, in reframing; learning of unhealthy behavior by; noncompliance with, in revaluing; in processing of deceptive brain messages; wiring healthy behavior into

Habits: control of life by; developing plan for changing; formation of; refocusing techniques in changing; wiring of, into brain. *See also* Craving(s); Unhealthy behavior

Habitual response(s): brain biology underlying; to deceptive brain messages; definition of; examples of; to false sensations; increasing awareness of; practicing Four Steps as; to relationship anxieties; repetitive thinking as; selectivity in efforts against; weakening of, in reframing

Healthy behavior/activities: directing attention toward ; making lists of; replacement of unhealthy behavior with

Hebb's law

Hyperventilating

Hypothalamus. *See also* Drive Center

“If only” syndrome

Indecision: cost of; thinking errors in

Inner guide. *See* Wise Advocate (inner guide)

Insula. *See also* Uh Oh Center

Journaling

Judgmental attitudes, and mindfulness

Kay, Robin L.



Labije, Josette ten Have-de

Lateral prefrontal cortex. *See also* Assessment Center

Leisure, goal-setting for

Levine, Peter G.

Libet, Benjamin

Lieberman, Matthew

Life: actual vs. imagined; control of brain over; distractions from; finding meaning in; uncontrollable circumstances in

“Loser,” self-identification as

Meaning, finding, in adversity

Medial prefrontal cortex. *See also* Self-Referencing Center

Medication: treatment of OCD with; use with Four Steps

Meditation

Memory

Mental notes, making: in refocusing; in relabeling

Mind: changing brain with; distinguishing between brain and; evaluative function of; focusing attention with(*see also* Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus); inducement of healthy behavior by; partnership with brain

Mind reading

Mindfulness; as activity; as awareness; in changing habits; definition of; engaging unhealthy behavior with; intersection of awareness and focus in; inward direction of; learning of; and making of judgments; objects of; perspective on transience of false sensations; and recognizing falsity of brain messages. *See also* Progressive mindfulness; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness

Moderation, and cravings

Monkey Mind

Motivation: and avoidance; defenses against discouragement; desire as factor in; expectations as factor in; expenditure of effort and; knowledge of brain functions and; meaningfulness of life and; realistic goals and; by “should” statements; use of anger in; use of anxiety in

Movement, bodily, awareness of

Muscle tension, and anxiety

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

Neborsky, Robert

Negative self-talk

Neuroplasticity: and alteration of brain functions; definition of; direction of(*see also* Self-Directed Neuroplasticity); maladaptive

Nietzsche, Friedrich

Nonjudgmental attitudes, and mindfulness

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)

Ochsner, Kevin

Optimal performance

Orbitofrontal cortex. *See also* Self-Referencing Center

Overanalyzing: becoming lost in; as consequence of emotional neglect; cost of; as erroneous; as habitual response; “part of me” mode in; of personal interactions; refocusing techniques with; in therapy. *See also* Repetitive thinking

Overprotectiveness

Pain relief

Panic attacks

“Part of me” mode: definition of; moving toward awareness from; perception through; separation from

Perfectionism: vs. balance; as consequence of emotional neglect; deceptive brain messages as source of; relaxation of, with refocusing techniques; thinking errors in; undermining of effort by

Physical sensations: awareness of; brain biology underlying; as consequence of emotional neglect; from deceptive brain messages; distortion of self by; examples of; expectations as triggers for; impermanence of; increasing awareness of; making mental notes about; as objects of mindfulness; recognition of false thoughts through; refocusing from(*see also* Refocusing; Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus); and relationship anxieties; veto power over; working around vs. stopping

Physical symptoms: from deceptive brain messages; seeking doctor’s help with

Placebo response

Plasticity

Pleasure, biology of

Positive, discounting of

Positive thinking

Price, Donald D.

Priorities, in goal-setting

Procrastination

Progressive mindfulness: definition of; experience as direct object of observation in; purpose of. *See also* Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness

Quantum Zeno effect

Rational faith

Recognize, Dismiss, and Accept

Refocusing: acknowledgment of the positive in; basic techniques of; dealing with repetitive thinking in; from deceptive brain messages; definition of; difficulties with; vs. distraction; and exercising veto power; from false foreign invaders; from false sensations; toward healthy responses; making mental notes in; mindfulness as foundation of; optimizing performance with; practicing of; purpose of; reframing thinking errors and; regular, as precursor to advanced techniques; regular, selection as appropriate technique; in sequence of Four Steps; from therapeutic stress; use with revaluing; variations on(*see also* Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; Regulate & Refocus)

Refocusing with Progressive Mindfulness; assessment of avoidant behavior in; changing habits with confrontation of avoidant behavior with; definition of; emphasis on avoidant behavior; limitations of; overcoming fear of rejection with; purpose of; reducing cravings with; relaxation of perfectionism with; selection as appropriate technique; in sequence of Four Steps; techniques of; using to assert true self in relationships

Reframing: of cravings; of deceptive brain messages; definition of; of emotional sensations; engagement of Wise Advocate in; of false foreign invaders; associating false messages with social pain; attributing false messages to brain biology; mindfulness as foundation of; purpose of; in “reality checks,” 228; in sequence of Four Steps; shifting to revaluing from; suppressing emotions vs.; of therapeutic stress; of thinking errors ; use with refocusing techniques

Regulate & Refocus: breathing techniques in; definition of; emphasis on physical sensations; as precursor to advanced techniques; Relaxation Response

in; selection as appropriate technique; in sequence of Four Steps

Rejection, fear of: cost of; deceptive brain messages as source of; overcoming with refocusing techniques

Relabeling: of avoidance; beginning with false sensations in; brain activity n; breaking from repetitive thinking with; in changing habits; of cravings; of deceptive brain messages; definition of; of desire; of emotional sensations;

Relabeling (*cont.*): of false foreign invaders; intensification of sensations in; making mental notes in; mindfulness as foundation of; purpose of; in “reality checks,” 228; reframing thinking errors and; in sequence of Four Steps; shifting to revaluing from; use with refocusing techniques

Relapse, vs. stress

Relationships: assertion of true self in; biological mechanisms influencing; diminishing influence of deceptive messages in; goal-setting for; healthy cultivation of emotions in; interference of deceptive brain messages with; interference of habitual responses with; as satisfaction for cravings; thinking errors in

Relaxation, healthy

Relaxation Response

Repetitive behavior: as habitual response; identification of; practicing Four Steps as; replacement with healthy behavior; as response to relationship anxieties; weakening of, in reframing

Repetitive thinking: in anxiety; becoming lost in; dealing with, in refocusing; as habitual response; increasing awareness of. *See also* Overanalyzing

Revaluing: of deceptive brain messages; definition of; experience as direct object of observation in; generation of life choices by; identifying true emotions in; mindfulness as foundation of; movement toward true self in; and recognition of thinking errors; retraining the brain with; in sequence of Four Steps

Reward Center: generation of pleasure by; modification of cravings of; origin of craving in; in processing of deceptive brain messages

Richo, David

Roosevelt, Eleanor

Sadness: acknowledgment of, as true emotion; as consequence of emotional neglect; as false sensation; underlying anger

Safe zones, emotional

Schizophrenia

Schwartz, Jeffrey M.

Self: deception of; distinguishing between symptoms and; distortion by false sensations; fusion of, with deceptive brain messages (*see also* “Part of me” mode); linkage of false sensations to; restoration of; true (*see* True self)

Self-care: for emotions; goal-setting for; in relationships

Self-Directed Neuroplasticity; choosing focus of attention in; definition of goals in; meaningfulness of life and; purpose of; sustaining efforts toward goals in; time management in; treatment of stroke with

Self-doubt: cost of; deceptive brain messages as source of; thinking errors in. *See also* Anxiety

Self-hatred

Self-Referencing Center: management of self by; management of social interactions by; modulation of, in reframing; modulation of, in relabeling; modulation of, in revaluing; in “part of me” mode; registering of social pain in; reinforcement by Uh Oh Center; repetitive thinking as process of; suppression of, in refocusing; and thinking errors

Sensations. *See* Emotional sensations; Physical sensations

“Should” statements; balanced response to; emotional consequences of; harm from; intent behind; motivation by; taking inventory of; in therapy

Shutdown, physical, and emotional sensations

Smiley, Connie

Smoking, quitting

Social pain: brain activity in; from false messages; identification of, with self; neurological association of, with physical pain

Stapp, Henry

Stress: cravings as response to; deceptive brain messages as source of; formation of habitual responses to; refocusing techniques with; vs. relapse; suppression of emotions and; vetoing habitual responses to. *See also* Anxiety

Stroke: brain damage from; prognosis for; symptoms of; treatment with Self-Directed Neuroplasticity

Suicidal thoughts

Taper plan

Thinking errors: balanced response to; categories of; definition of; emotional consequences of; recognition of ; taking inventory of

Thinking/thoughts: evaluating truth/falsity of (*see also* False foreign invaders; “Part of me” mode); impairment of, by emotional sensations. *See also* Deceptive brain messages; Overanalyzing; Repetitive thinking

Time management, in meeting goals

Timer, pacing work with

True self: aligning choices with; assertion of, in relationships; vs. biology; committing to; deceptive brain messages as diversion from; definition of; discarding of expectations and; emotional consequences of ignoring; “fresh eyes” of; healthy relaxation and; and intention of “should” statements; mind as path to; motivation and; movement toward, in revaluing; moving from “part of me” mode toward; recognition of true emotions and; recognizing neglect of, in bodily symptoms; separating deceptive brain messages from (*see also* False foreign invaders); strengthening of; surfacing of, in reframing; valuing of; Wise Advocate as ally of

Twelve Steps (of Alcoholics Anonymous)

Uh Oh Center; appeasement of, with unhealthy behavior; biological modulation of; and childhood emotions; and cognitive-behavioral therapy; disarming of, in revaluing; and emotional neglect; evaluating thoughts in response to; modulation of, in reframing; modulation of, in relabeling; overattention to; in processing of deceptive brain messages; registering of social pain in; reinforcement of Self-Referencing Center by; stimulation of, by expectations; suppression of, in refocusing; and thinking errors

Unhealthy behavior: assessment of damage from; brain biology underlying; in cycle of deceptive brain messages;

Unhealthy behavior (*cont.*): evaluating interference from; extent of damage from; focusing of attention toward; mindful engagement in; refocusing from; replacement with healthy behavior; selectivity in efforts against; wiring of, into brain. *See also* Repetitive behavior

University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA): labeling study at; OCD study at; social pain study at

Values: and goal-setting; in guidance of Wise Advocate

Veto power

Winston, Diana

Wise Advocate (inner guide): activation with refocusing techniques; assistance

with “should” statements; attuning to; in balancing of relationships; blocking of, by emotional neglect; defining response of; definition of; distinguishing true emotions with; engagement of, in reframing; “fresh eyes” of; guiding of mind’s evaluations by; incapacity of; inducement of healthy behavior by; invoking perspective of; negation of, by false thoughts; obstacles to evaluative function of; overriding of, by perfectionism; perspective on self of; progressive levels of awareness through; recognition of deceptive brain messages by; shifting perspective toward, in revaluing; strengthening of; support from Assessment Center

Work(place): optimizing performance at; refocusing on; unhealthy situations and relationships at

Worst-case-scenario thinking. *See* Catastrophizing

[1](#)

Jeffrey M. Schwartz, Paula W. Stoessel, Lewis R. Baxter, Jr., Karron M. Martin, and Michael E. Phelps, “Systematic Changes in Cerebral Glucose Metabolic Rate After Successful Behavior Modification Treatment of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder,” *Archives of General Psychiatry* 53, no. 2 (February 1996): 109–13.

[2](#)

Ibid.

[3](#)

Viktor E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, trans. Ilse Lasch (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962/1963), p. 76.

[4](#)

Ibid.

[5](#)

Ibid., p. 66.

[6](#)

This process of desires overshadowing one another leads to what is sometimes called “Monkey Mind” in Buddhism—an inability to stay focused on your goals and instead allowing your attention to wander (or be swayed), like a monkey swinging from tree to tree.

[7](#)

Benjamin Libet, “Do We Have Free Will?” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6, no. 8–9 (1999): 54.

[8](#)

The amygdala’s connection to the autonomic nervous system (responsible for the fight-or-flight response) causes these physical manifestations of anxiety.

[9](#)

The *orbitofrontal cortex* is also very important in estimating risks and rewards. It works alongside and regulates the Uh Oh Center to some extent. We will discuss the orbitofrontal cortex briefly in chapter 5 when we talk about the relationship between the deceptive brain messages and your sense of self.

[10](#)

When we talk about either the Self-Referencing Center or Assessment Center being “active,” we are referring to relative levels of activation as seen in brain imaging scans. In reality, the Self-Referencing and Assessment centers are working all the time. The key distinction is which one is *more* active at one time—this strongly influences which function the brain is performing.

[11](#)

The importance of attachment and the ability to develop close, healthy bonds



with others was first emphasized by John Bowlby, M.D., and later refined by Mary Ainsworth, Ph.D., and many others.

[12](#)

For simplicity, we refer to all the important people in your childhood as *caregivers*, because in some way they represented people who you expected to keep you safe and comforted as a child. We recognize that the important people in your life could have included grandparents, aunts/uncles, siblings, cousins, teachers, coaches, friends, troop masters, and so on.

[13](#)

In this case, we are using Mom as the example, but as we have said previously, the caregiver can be anyone whom the child cares about and wants to seek safety and comfort from.

[14](#)

Learning to overvalue your emotional responses arises from your caregivers repeatedly responding to your genuine emotions in excessive, almost hysterical ways.

[15](#)

Much of the pioneering work in understanding and emphasizing how people ignore, neglect, dismiss, devalue, and minimize their feelings as a result of their early life experiences comes from clinicians focusing on attachment relationships in experiential psychotherapy. Although little has been written on the subject for general audiences, Josette ten Have-de Labije, Psy.D., Robert Neborsky, M.D., and Robin L. Kay, Ph.D., among others, have been teaching and writing about these patterns of behavior for years for professional audiences.

[16](#)

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, *Mindfulness in Plain English* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1992), p. 33.

[17](#)

Or, as Eleanor Roosevelt famously proclaimed, “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”

[18](#)

This is an important clarification: With deceptive brain messages, what you *do* matters far more than the false, inaccurate, and destructive thoughts and feelings created by your brain. Of course, when you are dealing with your true emotions, beliefs, and needs (i.e., based on and reflecting your true self), those thoughts and feelings matter *as much* as your actions and should be appropriately and constructively dealt with and tended to.

[19](#)

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, *Mindfulness in Plain English* (Boston: Wisdom