

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

MASTER YOUR EMOTION

2 BOOKS IN 1

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN

ANGER MANAGEMENT

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR EMOTION



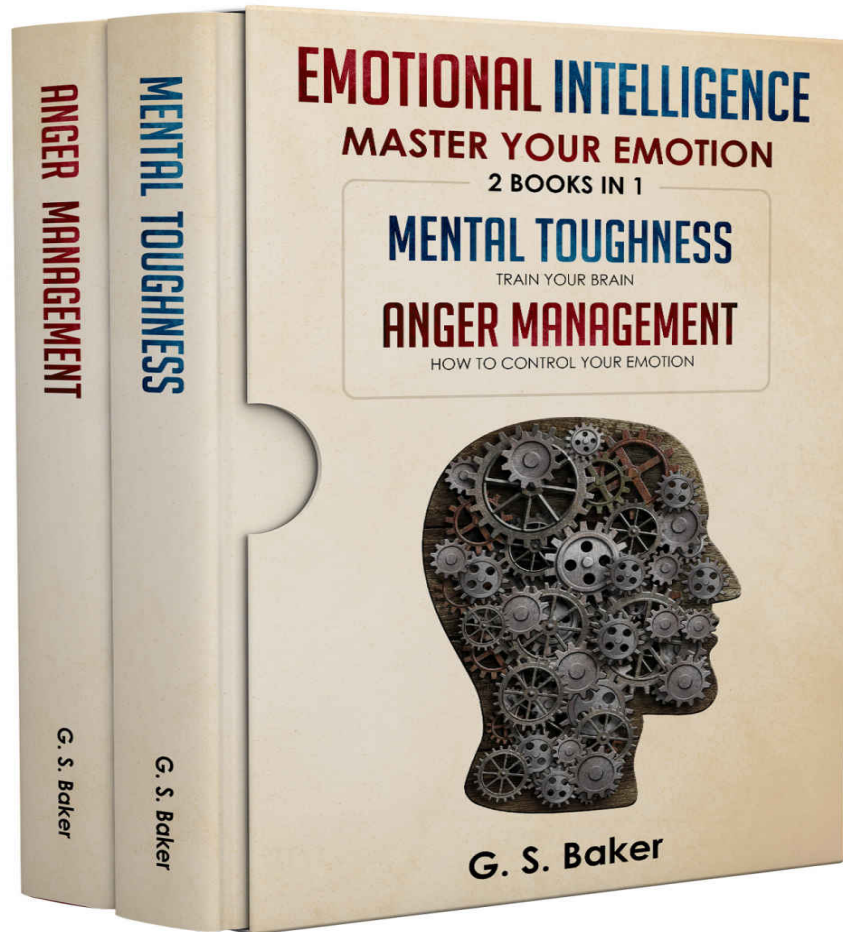
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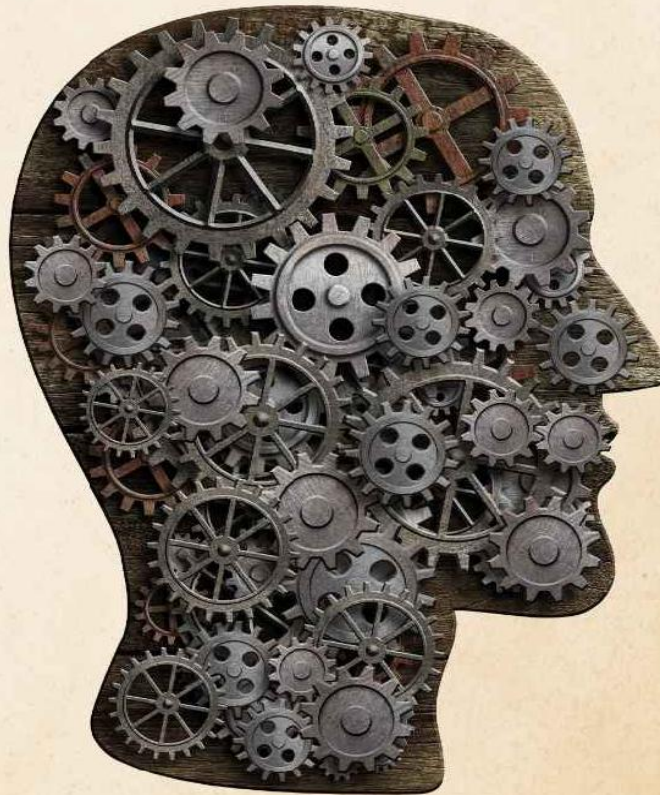
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ANGER MANAGEMENT – HOW TO CONTROL YOUR EMOTION-

BY G.S. Baker

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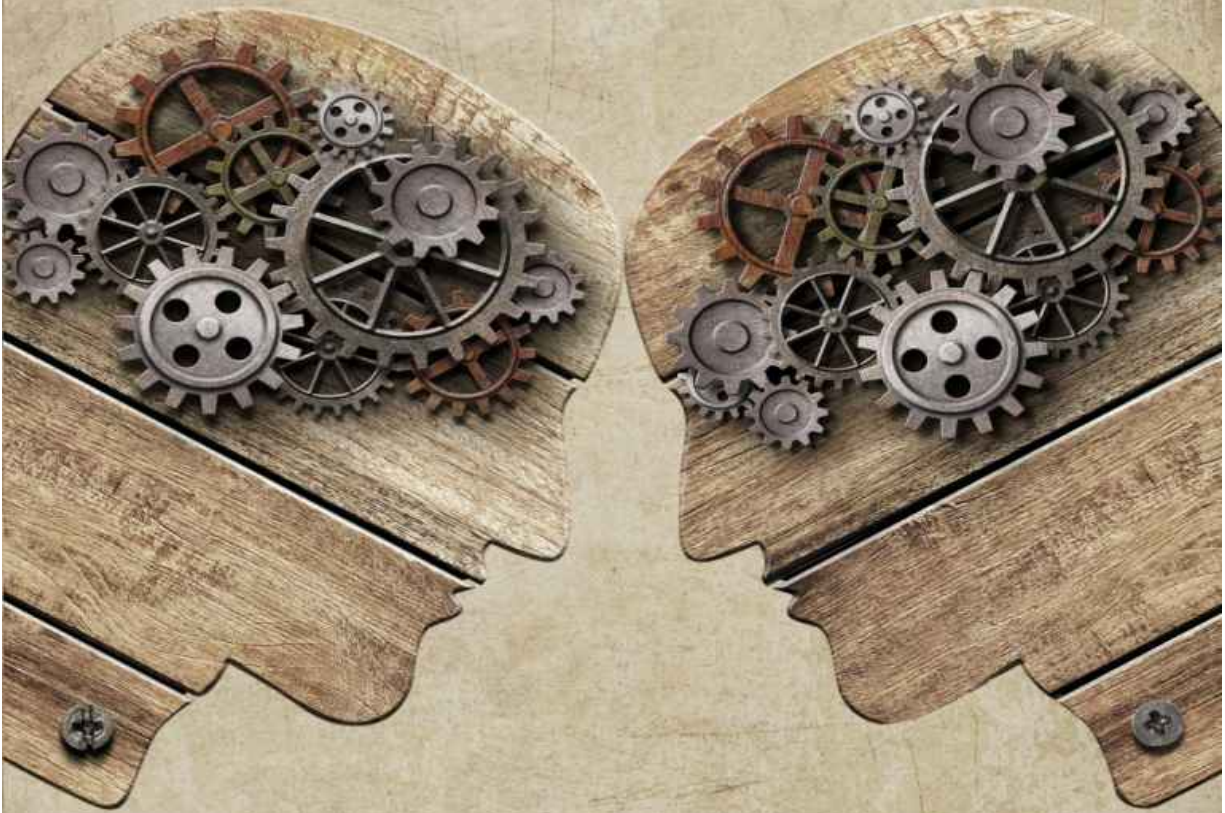
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ANGER MANAGEMENT

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS



21 Daily Steps to Take Self-Control In Every Situation,
Get Freedom From Stress And Anxiety, Increase Your
Emotional Intelligence, Self-Discipline, Awareness

G. S. Baker

ANGER MANAGEMENT

How to control your emotions

**21 Daily Steps to Take Self-Control in Every Situation, Get Freedom From Stress And Anxiety,
Increase Your Emotional Intelligence, Self-Discipline, Awareness**

Author: G. S. Baker

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INTRODUCTION

Anger is a fundamental emotion that everyone experiences from time to time. From a very early age, people learn to express anger by copying the angry behavior they see modeled around them, and by expressing angry behavior and seeing what they can get away with. As many cultures have an uneasy relationship with anger expression, many people are brought up to think that it is inappropriate to express anger directly; that it must not be tolerated; that it is always dangerous. Such people learn to distrust anger, to bottle it up and ignore it, to express it only in indirect ways or to use it as a weapon.

The idea that anger is dangerous is not without merit. Angry people are capable of great violence. However, while anger can certainly be abused, it is more than a simple destructive force. Anger is also a critically important part of what might be called the self-preservation and self-defense instincts. People who are incapable of getting angry are also incapable of standing up for themselves. It is important then that people learn how to express anger appropriately. People need to learn healthy and socially respectful ways to express angry feelings and to not let anger get out of control to the point where it negatively affects relationships, employability, and health.

If you are reading this document, there is a good chance that you (or someone you care about) have an anger problem. An anger problem exists when people become dependent on anger as a primary means of expressing themselves; when they inappropriately use anger or the threat of violence as a weapon to get their way. Inappropriate and uncontrolled anger is harmful for both targets of anger and the angry person as well. Inappropriate anger

destroys relationships, makes it difficult to hold down a job, and takes a heavy toll on angry people's physical and emotional health.

Help for anger problems exists in the form of anger management programs which are designed to help angry people learn and practice methods of bringing their anger under control.

This document reviews what is known about anger and anger management. It starts with a discussion of the nature of anger and anger's effects on people's social, emotional and physical welfare. Reasons and motivations for pursuing anger management are discussed, and then specific techniques used in anger management courses are described. The document concludes by describing ways motivated people can use anger management techniques to learn to control their anger so as to protect their health, promote the quality of their relationships and become more socially effective.

CHAPTER 1: UNDERSTAND YOUR ANGER AND MENTAL HEALTH

Anger is a basic human emotion that is experienced by all people. Typically triggered by an emotional hurt, anger is usually experienced as an unpleasant feeling that occurs when we think we have been injured, mistreated, opposed in our long-held views, or when we are faced with obstacles that keep us from reaching personal goals.

The experience of anger varies widely; how often anger occurs, how intensely it is felt, and how long it lasts are different for each person. People also vary in how easily they get angry (known as their anger threshold), as well as how comfortable they are with feeling angry. Some people are always getting angry while others seldom feel angry. Some people are very aware of their anger, while others fail to recognize anger when it occurs. Some experts suggest that the average adult gets angry about once a day and annoyed or peeved about three times a day. Other anger management experts suggest that getting angry fifteen times a day is more likely a realistic average. Regardless of how often we actually experience anger, it is a common and unavoidable emotion.

Anger can be constructive or destructive. When well-managed, anger or annoyance has very few hurtful health or relationship consequences. At its roots, anger is a signal to you that something in your environment isn't right. It captures your attention and motivates you to take action to correct that wrong thing. How you end up handling the anger signal has very important consequences for your overall health and welfare, however. When you express anger, your actions trigger others to become defensive and angry too. Blood pressures raises and stress hormones flow. Violence

can then follow. You may develop a reputation as a dangerous 'loose cannon' whom no one wants to be around.

Out of control anger alienates friends, co-workers and family members. It also has a clear relationship with health problems and early death. Hostile, aggressive anger not only increases your risk for an early death but also your risk for social isolation, which itself is a major risk factor for serious illness and death. These are but two of many reasons why learning to properly manage anger is a good idea.

Psychology of Anger

Anger is a natural and mostly automatic response to pain of one form or another (physical or emotional). Anger can occur when people don't feel well, feel rejected, feel threatened, or experience some loss. The type of pain does not matter; the important thing is that the pain experienced is unpleasant. Because anger never occurs in isolation but rather occurs after pain feelings, it is often characterized as a 'secondhand' emotion.

Pain alone is not enough to cause anger. Anger occurs when pain is combined with some anger-triggering thought. Thoughts that can trigger anger include personal assessments, assumptions, evaluations, or interpretations of situations that makes people think that someone else is attempting (consciously or not) to hurt them. In this sense, anger is a social emotion; You always have a target that your anger is directed against (even if that target is yourself). Feelings of pain, combined with anger-triggering thoughts, motivate you to take action, face threats and defend yourself by striking out against the target you think is causing you pain.

Anger can also be a substitute emotion. By this, we mean that sometimes people make themselves angry so that they don't have to feel pain. People change their feelings of pain into anger because it feels better to be angry than it does to be in pain. This changing of pain into anger may be done consciously or unconsciously.

Being angry rather than simply in pain has a number of advantages, primarily among them distraction. People in pain generally think about their pain. However, angry people think about harming those who have caused pain. Part of the changing of pain into anger involves an attention shift – from self-focus to other-focus. Anger thus temporarily protects people from having to recognize and deal with their painful real feelings; you get to

worry about getting back at the people you're angry with instead. Making yourself angry can help you to hide the reality that you find a situation frightening or that you feel vulnerable.

Becoming angry also creates a feeling of righteousness, power and being better than others that is not present when someone is merely in pain. When you are angry, you are angry with cause. "The people who have hurt me are wrong – they should be punished" is the common refrain. It is very rare that someone will get angry with someone they do not think has harmed them in some significant fashion.

The definition of whether someone's anger is a problem often turns on whether or not other people agree with them that their anger, and the actions they take in the name of their anger, is justified. Angry people most always feel that their anger is justified. However, other people don't always agree. The social judgment of anger creates real consequences for the angry person. An angry person may feel justified in committing an angry, aggressive action, but if a judge or jury of peers do not see it that way, that angry person may still go to jail. If a boss doesn't agree that anger expressed towards a customer is justified, a job may still be lost. If a spouse doesn't agree that anger was justified, a marriage may have problems.

Whether justified or unjustified, the seductive feeling of righteousness associated with anger offers a powerful temporary boost to self-esteem. It is more satisfying to feel angry than to acknowledge the painful feelings associated with vulnerability. You can use anger to convert feelings of vulnerability and helplessness into feelings of control and power. Some people develop an unconscious habit of transforming almost all of their vulnerable feelings into anger so they can avoid having to deal with them. The problem becomes that even when anger distracts you from the fact that

you feel vulnerable, you still at some level feel vulnerable. Anger cannot make pain disappear – it only distracts you from it. Anger generally does not resolve or address the problems that made you feel fearful or vulnerable in the first place, and it can create new problems, including social and health issues.

What Causes Anger Problems?

Feelings of anger arise due to how we interpret and react to certain situations. Everyone has their own triggers for what makes them angry, but some common ones include situations in which we feel:

- Threatened or attacked
- Frustrated or powerless
- Like we're being treated unfairly.

People can interpret situations differently, so a situation that makes you feel very angry may not make someone else feel angry at all (for example, other reactions could include annoyance, hurt or amusement). But just because we can interpret things differently, it doesn't mean that you're interpreting things 'wrong' if you get angry. How you interpret and react to a situation can depend on lots of factors in your life, including:

- Your childhood and upbringing
- Past experiences
- Current circumstances
- Life Events
- Thinking Styles
- Behavioral Explanations
- Evolutionary Reasons
- Biological Reasons

Whether your anger is about something that happened in the past or something that's going on right now, thinking about how and why we interpret and react to situations can help us learn how to cope with our emotions better. It can also help us find productive strategies to handle our anger.

Your Childhood and Upbringing: How we learn to cope with angry feelings is often influenced by our upbringing. Many people are given messages about anger as children that may make it harder to manage it as an adult. For example:

- You may have grown up thinking that it's always okay to act out your anger aggressively or violently, and so you didn't learn how to understand and manage your angry feelings. This could mean you have angry outbursts whenever you don't like the way someone is behaving, or whenever you are in a situation you don't like.
- You may have been brought up to believe that you shouldn't complain, and may have been punished for expressing anger as a child. This could mean that you tend to suppress your anger and it becomes a long-term problem, where you react inappropriately to new situations you're not comfortable with.
- You may have witnessed your parents' or other adults' anger when it was out of control, and learned to think of anger as something that is destructive and terrifying. This could mean that you now feel afraid of your own anger and don't feel safe expressing your feelings when something makes you angry. Those feelings might then surface at another unconnected time, which may feel hard to explain.

Past Experiences: If you've experienced particular situations in the past that made you feel angry (either as a child or more recently as an adult) but you weren't able to safely express your anger at the time, you might still be coping with those angry feelings now. This might also mean that you now find certain situations particularly challenging, and more likely to make you angry.

Current Circumstances: If you're dealing with a lot of other problems in your life right now, you might find yourself feeling angry more easily than usual, or getting angry at unrelated things. If there's a particular situation that's making you feel angry, but you don't feel able to express your anger directly or resolve it, then you might find you express that anger at other times. Anger can also be a part of grief. If you've lost someone important to you, it can be hugely difficult to cope with all the conflicting things you might be feeling.

Life Events: There may be certain situations which are more likely to trigger an angry reaction from you. Being exposed to a particular scenario or environment might put you on high alert. For example, some people find that they are much more likely to become angry whilst driving.

Thinking Styles: Our interpretation and thoughts about a situation can result in an angry outburst. Especially how we perceive the intentions of other people and the potential consequences to ourselves. Situations in which we feel wronged in some way can be particularly difficult. Also where an injustice has been done that we feel is unacceptable. Our understanding of anger may also influence our reaction. Our beliefs about anger can change the way that we express or control our anger. For example, if we consider that anger must be expressed and not 'bottled up'. We may not have considered making attempts to manage emotions in a more appropriate and sensitive way.

Behavioral Explanations: You might find it difficult to sit with and tolerate frustration. This may be due to your social experiences. Also, what you have come to consider as being normal and acceptable behavior. You may not have had opportunities to learn effective ways of managing and expressing emotions. A pattern of angry behavior can build up. This can

become more and more difficult to overcome. In reality, it is likely that a combination of all these factors influence someone's anger. However, in some ways it is less important to know what causes anger, and more important to know what stops us moving past it.

Evolutionary Reasons: It is also possible that people develop anger issues because of evolutionary factors. To understand this, it is worth considering that humans are generally a sociable species who tend to thrive in the company of others. Because of this, it makes sense that people prefer to avoid upsetting others and ultimately being rejected. It, therefore, seems plausible that socially anxious people are simply slightly oversensitive to being negatively evaluated due to the disadvantages this brings. This could explain why socially anxious people go out of their way not to offend others.

Biological Reasons: It has also been suggested that anger has familial ties. In other words, if someone in your immediate family has anger issues, there is a higher chance that you will have similar personality traits. It is therefore thought that our genetic make-up plays a role in the levels of anger we experience.

What Keeps An Anger Problem Going?

There may be a noticeable pattern to what happens before and after an angry episode. For example, whilst driving, looking after the children or whenever you're talking about money. It might be that we are getting into the habit of getting angry in such contexts. This might be difficult to break.

There may be consequences to angry behavior; both costs and benefits. Many people recognize that angry behavior can achieve short-term gain. For example, getting your own way, or having others respect your status. It can also be associated with significant long-term costs, such as damaged relationships. Considering these for yourself might encourage a change or convince you that you need to take action.

When looking more closely at what prevents us from overcoming anger problems, it becomes clear that our behavior, thoughts, feelings and physical sensations all interact and combine to keep our problems with anger going.

Anger can be an incredibly destructive emotion. It is an emotion that is important for us to understand.

Reasons For Understanding Anger

Anger is a Fact of Life: One of the most fundamental aspects of being a person is that we were created in God's image. Part of what it means to be made in God's image is that we, like God, have a variety of emotions and are able to experience the emotions of others. One of these emotions is anger. What exactly is anger? Anger is a strong feeling of irritation or displeasure. When we experience anger, our mind and our body prepares us to act. Anger involves physical and emotional energy. It is up to us whether we use that energy in constructive ways or to abuse ourselves and/or those that we love. It is up to us whether we use that energy in constructive ways or to abuse us and/or those that we love.

Anger is a Frequently Experienced Emotion: The emotion of anger is experienced much more frequently than most people would like to admit. When we begrudge or disdain others, or when we are annoyed, repulsed, irritated, frustrated, offended or cross, we are probably experiencing some form of anger. The results of research, as well as our own experience, suggest that most couples experience the emotion of anger a minimum of 8-10 times a day... and that's before they have kids.

Anger is One of the Most Powerful Emotions: The emotion of anger can provide tremendous energy to right wrongs and change things for the good. But when we allow it to control us, it can lead to negative destructive actions such as emotional, verbal or even physical abuse and violence. In any intimate relationship, there will be times when you will be hurt or wronged. When that happens, anger can easily distort our perspective, block our ability to love, and thus limit our ability to see things clearly.

Anger is a Secondary Emotion: Anger is a secondary emotion that is usually experienced in response to a primary emotion such as hurt,

frustration, and fear. Anger can be an almost automatic response to any kind of pain. It is the emotion most of us feel shortly after we have been hurt. When your spouse corrects or talks down to you in public, it hurts, and you may respond to them in anger. At the moment it may be the only emotion that we are aware of, yet it is rarely the only one we have experienced. Below the surface, there are almost always other, deeper emotions that need to be identified and acknowledged.

Unhealthy Anger has Tremendous Potential for Harm: Most of us have, at one time or another, been pushed so hard and become so angry that we could have, or indeed have, become violent. I recently came across some sobering statistics that clearly demonstrate the potential harm of anger out of control:

- 10 million children were beaten by angry parents, two-thirds were under the age of 3
- 60% of all homicides were committed by people who knew the victim
- 27% of all policemen killed are killed breaking up domestic arguments
- More than 70% of all murderers don't have a criminal record

One psychiatrist interviewed more than 100 inmates convicted of murder and concluded that most were not angry people. In most cases, they had stuffed their emotions and allowed their anger to build and build, and in these cases, they were finally expressed in an out-of-control and violent way.

Healthy Anger has Tremendous Potential for Good: For most people, the emotion of anger is considered negative, a problem, something to be eliminated or solved. What we so often fail to see is that every problem is

really an opportunity in disguise... an opportunity to learn, to grow, to mature, to be used of God to make significant changes for the good.

Anger is a Signal: Anger is an emotion that God can use to get our attention and make us more aware of opportunities to learn, to grow, to deepen, to mature, and to make significant changes for the good. Anger, like love, is an emotion that has tremendous potential for both good and evil. That's why it is so important for us to understand it.

CHAPTER 2: THE ROOTS OF THE ALL PROBLEMS, MENTAL DISORDER

If you look down the symptom list of various mental illnesses, you'll see "anger" there. Anger is connected with depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, ADHD, personality disorders and others. Why is anger a symptom of mental illness? For the most part, people without mental health problems aren't carrying a lot of anger inside over a prolonged period of time. They also have the capacity to control their anger. For those with a mental health condition, anger can be simmering below the surface ready to bubble up at a moment's notice.

There's also the issue of depression and impulsivity. When a person is depressed, many times they don't care how they come across. And with impulsivity, a lack of control, a person may just blurt out their feelings and not think about the ramifications.

It might be different to how the people around them think and act, but for the person with the mental health problem, these feelings are real. Just like physical illness, mental health problems can happen to anyone and people can recover from and manage. Mental health problems are common and anyone can experience one. Some are more severe than others, and some will have more noticeable symptoms. In most cases, they are manageable and people are able to live happy and successful lives.

What Causes Mental Disorder Problems?

Mental health problems may affect a person from any religion, culture, economic background or nationality. There are a number of factors that are associated with mental health problems.

Some of these factors may include:

Family History - If a family member has a mental health difficulty, others may be at higher risk.

Chemical Balance - An imbalance of chemicals (called neurotransmitters) in the brain can cause symptoms of a mental illness to emerge. Most drugs used to manage mental health difficulties try to correct this balance. There is also research that suggests the behavior itself can cause the chemical change in the brain (as opposed to the chemical imbalance simply always being there).

Stressful Life Events - Things in life that cause stress, or an experience such as grief or loss, experiencing violence or a traumatic accident may trigger mental health problems.

Drugs - Research has shown that using drugs may lead to mental health problems. For example, there has been a link between psychosis and the heavy use of marijuana and amphetamines.

Different Types Of Mental Disorder Problems

There are many terms used to describe mental health problems. This is an explanation of some of the common terms used.

Depression - When someone feels sad and down for a period of time that is longer than a couple of weeks they may be depressed. People experiencing depression may experience some or all of:

- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Loss of interest in what they usually enjoy
- A lack of energy
- Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- Crying a lot for no reason
- Feeling anxious.

If someone is experiencing one or a number of these things, seeking help is important. Your GP is a good first step and they may refer you to a psychiatrist or help you themselves. A psychologist is also a specialist who can help you work through depression.

Psychosis - If someone becomes very confused and appears out of touch with everyone else's perception of the world, they may be experiencing a psychotic episode. When someone is experiencing a psychosis they may:

- Have hallucinations
- Hear voices that may not be heard by anyone else
- Have false beliefs known as delusions
- Experience paranoia
- Have strange and disorganized thinking
- Have strange and disorganized behavior
- Have difficulty speaking coherently
- May appear quite flat.

Some drugs such as hallucinogens, marijuana, and amphetamines may trigger a psychotic episode. Treatment of psychosis usually involves medication, and if someone is experiencing a psychotic episode, it is important they seek help from a doctor, psychiatrist or a clinical psychologist. Friends and family can also provide support. Achieving stability after a psychotic episode may take some time.

Schizophrenia - Schizophrenia is a serious mental illness characterized by disturbances in a person's thoughts, perceptions, emotions, and behavior. It affects approximately one in every hundred people worldwide and first onset commonly occurs in adolescence or early adulthood, although it can also occur later in life.

There are a number of signs and symptoms that are characteristic of schizophrenia. However, the expression of these symptoms varies greatly from one individual to another. No one symptom is common to all people and not everyone who displays these symptoms has schizophrenia (as some physical conditions can mimic schizophrenia). Generally speaking, symptoms are divided into two groups, 'active' symptoms (also referred to as 'positive' or psychotic symptoms) that reflect new or unusual forms of thought and behavior, such as delusions or hallucinations. 'Passive' symptoms (also referred to as 'negative' symptoms) reflect a loss of previous feelings and abilities.

Schizophrenia does not mean someone has more than one personality or 'split personalities'. With medication and support, schizophrenia can be managed. Having the support of family and friends may also be very helpful. The earlier people receive help for schizophrenia, the greater the chance of a better outcome.

Anxiety - There are many forms of anxiety disorders that can stop people from doing what they want to do. Some people have sudden unexplained panic attacks that can seem out of their control. Some people experience phobias like agoraphobia (fear of being in an open space).

Other people become anxious about something in particular. This can lead to obsessive behavior causing them to check and recheck things, for example: having to go home to check that they turned off the cooker. People who experience high levels of anxiety can learn to manage and reduce their anxiety levels. A form of therapy called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has been shown to be really effective in managing anxiety. Look at anxiety for more information.

Attention Deficit Disorder - When someone has problems concentrating and staying focused on tasks, they may have an attention deficit disorder. The condition may have started in early childhood. They may be easily distracted, excessively active, or have a tendency to go off into daydreams more than others.

People with attention deficit disorders find situations like paying attention in class particularly difficult, and this can lead to conflict with teachers or other authority figures. They may feel like the world is against them because of the conflicts that arise due to their inability to concentrate.

People with attention deficit disorders may have a lot of energy and become involved in many activities that can be positive. Young people experiencing attention deficit disorder may need to be helped by their family and school, as well as receiving good medical support. After proper medical assessment, medication may be helpful in managing symptoms.

Eating Disorders - Eating disorder is the term used to describe a group of illnesses where someone has a distorted view of body image with a

preoccupation around eating, food and weight. There are a number of different eating disorders including Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, and Binge eating disorder.

If someone has an eating disorder, it is a good idea for them to get help as soon as possible. This help may come from their local doctor who may then refer them to a psychiatrist or other mental health professional.

If you or someone you know is having a tough time with your mental health, check out face-to-face help for information on who to talk to and how to get support. There's also loads of support available online or over the phone.

CHAPTER 3: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONTROL

Do you have a short fuse or find yourself getting into frequent arguments and fights? Anger is a normal, healthy emotion, but when chronic, explosive anger spirals out of control, it can have serious consequences for your relationships, your health, and your state of mind.

With insight about the real reasons for your anger and these anger management tools, you can learn to keep your temper from hijacking your life.

You might think that venting your anger is healthy, that the people around you are too sensitive, that your anger is justified, or that you need to show your fury to get respect. But the truth is that anger is much more likely to damage your relationships, impair your judgment, get in the way of success, and have a negative impact on the way people see you.

You Do/Say Things You End Up Regretting

I have a confession. I don't know how to express my anger "normally". I usually keep quiet and after a long time – months, years even – the smallest thing can set me off; and then the anger comes out like a raging storm. Then I end up saying hurtful things that have been on my mind for so long but have not said out loud because I knew they would cut deep and not help resolve the issue. I even end up saying things I don't really mean – just because I cannot control my anger at that point. The result? An even bigger problem where the issue/s between the parties involved escalate.

Here's another (hypothetical) scenario: an individual who gets angry easily and finds himself in the same position I just described. The difference is that this person is caught in the vicious cycle of getting angry and behaving in an inappropriate manner: being verbally rude perhaps, throwing things

around maybe, and the likes. At the end of the day, however, the person regrets his behavior, whether or not he admits it to others. Two different people, two different ways of handling anger. Same result: hurting those around them and themselves as well.

You Suffer Physically And Mentally

Being always angry may work for Dr. Bruce Banner, but in real life, that strategy might very well be the death of you – literally. Whether you hold it in till you explode, or you explode all the time, your body is under a lot of stress – and we know what extreme and/or constant stress can do to your health.

High blood pressure, hyperacidity and headaches. These are only some of the things that you can physically suffer from if you don't control your anger.

Then there is the mental/emotional aspect. Being unable to control your anger can lead to guilt, among many other things. In turn, that can again translate to physical issues like lack of sleep, fatigue, and other illnesses. These two main reasons alone should be enough to convince you that you need to find a way (or ways) to control your anger unless you want to suffer the consequences all your life and live an unhappy existence.

Anger Is Contagious

Imagine a husband who comes home from work, angry and shouts at his wife. The wife gets upset because she doesn't understand her husband's reaction, and yells at her kid. Out of frustration, the child kicks the dog which then runs outside and bites the mailman. As you can see, anger can sometimes be extremely contagious. If one of these people had been able to

stop and consider his/her actions, the chain of reaction could have been prevented.

Becoming More Empathetic

Anger Management helps you develop empathy for others, which in turn helps you to better understand the other party. Many times, anger builds up because the parties involved do not care to see the situation from the other person's point of view. When you start developing empathy for the other person and try to see life from their perspective, you will find there is no room for conflict.

Building Better Relationships

Many individuals, who have serious anger issues, begin to avoid those they love most when they realize they are hurting them with their anger. Since those we love most are closest to us, they are often the first victims of our out of control anger.

Gaining New Insight

Anger Management affords you an opportunity to learn more about your anger, its root cause, and triggers. The way you feel and express yourself in your day to day life can most often be connected to feelings and emotions that you have experienced in your past. When this connection is explored during therapy, you will begin to gain new insight which will help you be more aware of your feelings and learn to better understand the nature of your anger and its origin.

Developing Better Judgment

Left uncontrolled, anger leads to poor decision making. In therapy, you will learn to skills to help you to better manage your anger, which will allow you to use better judgment and have more control over your impulses.

Experiencing Less Stress

The ability to better manage stress will be an immediate benefit of anger management. Experiencing less stress, you will discover that it becomes more easy to avoid situations that otherwise would become stressful.

Replacing Aggressive Communication With Assertive

Most times anger and angry situations may have been avoided if the parties involved knew how to communicate better. Most problems can be solved when those involved know how to properly communicate assertively. If you do not know how to properly assert yourself, angry behavior is often used in its place.

Knowing Your Responsibility

In anger management, you will to develop an ability to recognize what you are responsible for in how you think of anger, such as when you are the cause of a problem and when you are innocent. When you recognize you are not at fault, you know how to keep a situation calm, yet assign blame to where it rightly should be.

CHAPTER 4: **SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER**

Social anxiety disorder, also known as social phobia, is a mental illness. It belongs to a group of mental illnesses called anxiety disorders. People with social anxiety disorder feel very nervous and uncomfortable in social situations like meeting new people. Or they might feel very anxious when they have to do something in front of other people, like talking in a meeting. Some people feel very anxious in both situations.

People with social anxiety disorder often feel like they will say or do the wrong thing. Or they might think that other people will look down on them and think poorly of them because they're "strange" or "stupid." It's important to know that adults with social anxiety disorder recognize that they feel too anxious, but they may not be able to control it.

Some people may have a panic attack or feel some physical signs of anxiety when they're facing a social situation. Common physical signs of anxiety include stomach aches, shallow breathing, sweating or feeling hot flashes, feeling like your heart is racing, feeling tightness in your chest, feeling tense and feeling shaky.

Social anxiety disorder can have a very negative effect on your well-being and quality of life. The illness can cause a lot of problems in your relationships with partners, family, and friends. It can also seriously affect your school or work life. You may avoid certain careers or fields of study, avoid contributing your ideas, turn down promotions, drop out of school or take many days off because you feel so anxious. Some people with social anxiety disorder fear one or just a few specific social situations. Others fear a wide range of social situations.

Common social anxiety triggers include:

- Meeting new people
- Making small talk
- Public speaking
- Performing on stage
- Being the center of attention
- Being watched while doing something
- Being teased or criticized
- Talking with “important” people or authority figures
- Being called on in class
- Going on a date
- Speaking up in a meeting
- Using public restrooms
- Taking exams
- Eating or drinking in public
- Making phone calls
- Attending parties or other social gatherings

Signs And Symptoms Of Social Anxiety Disorder

Just because you occasionally get nervous in social situations doesn't mean you have social anxiety disorder or social phobia. Many people feel shy or self-conscious on occasion, yet it doesn't get in the way of their everyday functioning. Social anxiety disorder, on the other hand, does interfere with your normal routine and causes tremendous distress.

For example, it's perfectly normal to get the jitters before giving a speech. But if you have social anxiety, you might worry for weeks ahead of time, call in sick to get out of it or start shaking so bad during the speech that you can hardly speak.

Emotional signs and symptoms of social anxiety disorder:

- Excessive self-consciousness and anxiety in everyday social situations
- Intense worry for days, weeks, or even months before an upcoming social situation
- Extreme fear of being watched or judged by others, especially people you don't know
- Fear that you'll act in ways that will embarrass or humiliate yourself
- Fear that others will notice that you're nervous

Physical signs and symptoms:

- Red face, or blushing
- Shortness of breath
- Upset stomach, nausea (i.e. butterflies)
- Trembling or shaking (including shaky voice)
- Racing heart or tightness in chest
- Sweating or hot flashes

- Feeling dizzy or faint

Behavioral signs and symptoms:

- Avoiding social situations to a degree that limits your activities or disrupts your life
- Staying quiet or hiding in the background in order to escape notice and embarrassment
- A need to always bring a buddy along with you wherever you go
- Drinking before social situations in order to soothe your nerves

Who Does It Affect?

Social anxiety disorder is one of the most common types of anxiety disorders, and one of the most common mental illnesses. About 8% of people will experience symptoms of social anxiety disorder at some point in their life. Without treatment, social anxiety disorder can last for a long time. Unfortunately, many people never seek help for social anxiety disorder. There are some groups of people at higher risk of experiencing social anxiety disorder:

- Age - Social phobia usually starts during the child or teen years, usually at about age 13. A doctor can tell that a person has social phobia if the person has had symptoms for at least six months. Without treatment, social phobia can last for many years or a lifetime. The majority of people with social anxiety disorder say that their symptoms started before they were 18
- Women - Women are more likely to experience social anxiety disorder than men
- Other mental illnesses or substance use disorder - Many people with social anxiety disorder have other mental illness like depression, panic disorder, bulimia nervosa (an eating disorder) and substance use disorders. However, social anxiety seems to appear before other mental illnesses.

What Prevents You Overcoming Social Anxiety?

Unhelpful Thoughts: People's unhelpful thoughts and predictions make it more difficult for them to overcome their social anxiety. Socially anxious people often hold unhelpful thoughts about themselves and their ability in social situations (e.g. I'm dull; I'm weird). This, of course, lowers their confidence and makes it harder to become involved in social situations. This, in turn, means they rarely get the chance to test out their social skills and prove they can interact well.

Unhelpful thoughts also typically play a damaging role just prior to people entering social environments as they predict they will perform poorly (e.g. I'll have nothing to say). Similarly, unhelpful thoughts influence people during social situations (e.g. I'm making a fool of myself), as they assume they are not coming across well. To make matters worse, after social situations, people often analyze their performance and assume they have performed poorly. When considering these factors, it is easy to see how unhelpful thoughts stop people overcoming their social anxiety.

Avoidance: As mentioned earlier, socially anxious people tend to avoid social contact whenever possible. If they cannot avoid it, they tend to try and escape it as quickly as possible. Although this is a very understandable way of coping with social anxiety, it is actually one of the main reasons that people find it hard to overcome. This is because by avoiding social situations, people stop themselves having positive experiences that could disprove some of their unhelpful thoughts. Furthermore, the longer someone avoids a social situation, the more daunting it becomes and it is increasingly difficult to face.

Using 'Safety Behaviors': Often, the only time that socially anxious people feel comfortable in social settings, is when they use what is known as

'safety behavior'. Examples of 'safety behaviors' include: trying to stay in the background on social occasions; remaining quiet during group conversations; sticking closely besides those they know well; avoiding eye contact or drinking alcohol for extra courage. Basically, a 'safety behavior' is anything people do to try and make it easier to cope in social situations.

Although such safety behaviors help people feel slightly better at the time, they are actually unhelpful strategies in the longer term. This is because, like avoidance, 'safety behaviors' stop people from having the opportunity to prove that they can cope well, without putting such precautions into place. Instead 'safety behaviors' allow people to put their successes down to other factors (e.g. I only achieved that because my friend was with me). Similarly, by remaining quiet during conversations, they never have the opportunity to show that they would have coped well had they become more involved. As a result, people's confidence remains low and their social anxiety remains. A final point worth noting is that 'safety behaviors' can result in what is known as self-fulfilling prophecies. For example, by staying quiet in social situations, people may come across as 'distant' and others may respond by making less of an effort. As a result, their beliefs that they can't mix well remain in place.

Increased Self Focus: People who are socially anxious often spend a lot of time concentrating on their own bodily sensations during social interactions. Unfortunately, this too plays a part in keeping social anxiety going. For example, people often spend time trying to judge whether they are sweating, stammering, shaking or blushing during social situations. Although they do so in the hope of being reassured that they are not noticeably anxious, this strategy actually just makes things much worse. This is because people tend to overestimate how visible their anxiety is and this, of course, makes them feel even more self-conscious. Also, by

focusing on themselves, it means that they are not fully focusing on the conversations going on around them. This makes it more difficult to join in properly and strengthens their beliefs that they are no good in such situations. It is likely that a combination of these factors play a role in ensuring people's social anxiety continues.

CHAPTER 5: THE 21 DAILY STRATEGIES

Although we think we are driven to anger by external factors, the emotion itself is really a function of our own interpretation of an event or situation. For example, a bad driver who cuts you off in busy traffic isn't the cause of your anger; how you choose to react to the driver is what determines whether you get angry or not. For this reason, researchers argue that angry feelings occur due to angry thoughts. It is therefore up to you to choose how you process external stimuli that can trigger angry thoughts which lead to angry feelings.

This is where anger management techniques can help. Using specific strategies, you can better predict and understand your own anger. So let's take a look at 21 proven strategies that can help you manage your anger in a positive manner.

Identify What Triggers Your Anger

If you've gotten into the habit of losing your temper, it can be helpful to take stock of the things that trigger your anger. Long lines, traffic jams, snarky comments from a friend, or being overtired are just a few things that might shorten your fuse. That's not to say you should blame people or external circumstances for your inability to keep your cool. But, understanding the things that trigger your anger can help you plan accordingly.

You might decide to structure your day differently to help you manage your stress better. Or, you might practice some anger management techniques before you encounter circumstances that you usually find distressing so you can lengthen your fuse - meaning that a single frustrating episode won't set you off.

Determine if Your Anger Is a Friend or Enemy

Before you spring into action calming yourself down, ask yourself if your anger is a friend or an enemy. If you're witnessing someone's rights being violated or your anger is signaling to you that the circumstances you're in aren't healthy, your anger might be helpful. Then, you might proceed by changing the situation - rather than changing your emotional state. Your anger might give you the courage you need to take a stand or make a change. If, however, your anger is causing distress or it's threatening to cause you to lash out, your anger may be an enemy. In that case, it makes sense to work on changing your emotions by calming yourself down.

Recognize Your Warning Signs

It may feel like your anger hits you in an instant. But, there are warning signs when your anger is on the rise. Recognizing those warning signs can help you take action so you can calm yourself down and prevent your anger from getting to a boiling point.

Think about the physical warning signs of anger. Perhaps your heart beats fast or your face feels hot. Or, maybe you begin to clench your fists. You also might notice some cognitive changes. Perhaps your mind races or you begin "seeing red."

When you recognize your warning signs, you have the opportunity to take immediate action so you can prevent yourself from doing or saying things that create even bigger problems in your life.

Step Away From the Situation

Trying to win an argument or sticking it out in an unhealthy situation will fuel your anger. One of the best things you can do when your anger is on the rise is to take a break. Take a break when a conversation gets heated. Leave

a meeting if you think you're going to explode. A time out can be key to helping you calm your brain and your body down.

If there's someone that you routinely get into heated disputes with, like a friend or family member, talk about taking a time-out and resume when you're both feeling calm. Explain that you aren't trying to dodge difficult subjects, but you're working on managing your anger better. And you won't be able to have a productive conversation when you're feeling really upset. You can rejoin the discussion or address the issue again when you're feeling calmer.

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is important for getting your anger under control. However, taking deep breaths alone is often not enough. Trying to clear your mind and breathe deeply may seem like such a challenge that it only makes your anger and frustration worse.

One of the things that you can do to combat this is to do a little imagining with your deep breathing. Instead of breathing deeply to try to force away your anger, breathe into your anger. Imagine that your anger is this driving energy, and as you breathe deeply it gets bigger and bigger. The energy continues to expand until it is far outside of you, and then it can melt away. This might make you feel angrier at first, but it may work to dispel your anger within a few minutes. Count from 1 to 10 and the urge to yell your lungs out will be gone. You will be able to state your point better.

Change the Way You Think

Angry thoughts add fuel to your anger. Thinking things like, “I can’t stand it. This traffic jam is going to ruin everything,” will increase your frustration. When you find yourself thinking about things that fuel your anger, reframe your thoughts. Remind yourself of the facts by saying something like, “There are millions of cars on the road every day. Sometimes, there will be traffic jams.”

Focusing on the facts - without adding in catastrophic predictions or distorted exaggerations—can help you stay calmer. You also might develop a mantra that you can repeat to drown out the thoughts that fuel your anger. Saying, "I'm OK. Stay calm," or "Not helpful," over and over again can help you keep the thoughts that fuel your anger at bay.

Change the Channel

Ruminating about an upsetting situation fuels angry feelings. If, for example, you’ve had a bad day at work, rehashing everything that went wrong all evening will keep you stuck in a state of frustration. The best way to calm down might be to change the channel in your brain and focus on something else altogether.

But, you’re likely to find that telling yourself “Don’t think about that,” isn’t a good way to get your mind off something. The best way to mentally shift gears is to distract yourself with an activity.

Clean the kitchen, weed the garden, pay some bills, or play with the kids. Find something to do that will keep your mind occupied enough that you won’t ruminate on the things upsetting you. Then, your body and your brain can calm down.

Engage in a Relaxation Exercise

There are many different relaxation exercises and it's important to find the one that works best for you. Breathing exercises and progressive muscle relaxation are two common strategies for reducing tension. The best part is, both exercises can be performed quickly and discreetly. So whether you're frustrated at work or you're angry at a dinner engagement, you can let go of stress quickly.

It's important to note, however, that relaxation exercises take practice. At first, you might not feel as though they're effective or you might question whether they're going to work for you. But with practice, they can become your go-to strategies for anger management.

Of course, it is not always possible to exercise when you get angry. However, if you have anger building throughout the day, you can hit the gym after work and get rid of that energy. Taking a walk or going for a run is another form of exercise that you can do to release angry energy. Sometimes if you are in a situation that is making you angry, you can leave that situation and just go for a walk around the block. Exercising helps your body release the 'feel good' hormone. It will also reduce your stress level, which can be a big reason for being irritable and having anger outburst.

Visualization

If you can separate yourself from the source of your anger for a few minutes, visualization can be helpful in calming yourself and releasing your anger. It is important that you do not visualize harming anyone in this process. Instead, visualize other representations of your anger.

For example, you could visualize an angry tornado ripping through a field, tearing up trees and stirring up dust. Your anger is the tornado, and visualizing this harmless destruction can help you release that anger. After a

couple of minutes of the visualization, imagine that the tornado dissipates, along with your anger.

Explore the Feelings Beneath Your Anger

Sometimes it helps to take a moment and think about what emotions might be lurking beneath your anger. Anger often serves as a protective mask to help you avoid feeling more painful emotions, like embarrassment, sadness, and disappointment.

When someone gives you feedback that's hard to hear, for example, you might lash out in anger because you're embarrassed. Convincing yourself the other person is bad for criticizing you might make you feel better by keeping your embarrassment at bay. But, acknowledging those underlying emotions and labeling them can help you get to the root of the problem. Then, you can decide to take appropriate action.

Create a Calm Down Kit

If you tend to come home from work stressed out and you take out your anger on your family or you know that workplace meetings cause you a lot of frustration, create a calm down kit that you can use to relax. Think about objects that might help engage your senses. When you can look, hear, see, smell, and touch calming things, you can change your emotional state.

You might fill a shoebox with scented hand lotion, a photo of you on vacation with your family, a picture of a serene landscape, a spiritual passage about staying calm, and a few pieces of your favorite candy. You might also create a sort of virtual calm down kit that you can take everywhere. Calming music and images, guided meditation, or instructions for breathing exercises could be stored in a special folder on your smartphone.

Send Love And Justice

If a specific person makes you angry, try transforming your anger into thoughts of love and justice. Instead of letting your anger get the best of you in bad traffic, send the driver that has made you angry wishes for getting a ticket or having a near-miss accident that sets him on the straight and narrow. Instead of allowing your anger to control you, transform your anger into thoughts that you wish the best for the person so that they don't make others angry in the future.

Journaling

Journaling can be a great way to release anger. As soon as you can after a situation makes you angry, sit down and write out your thoughts and feelings. Some people find it therapeutic to journal with paper and pen so that it forces them to slow down to articulate their thoughts. Other people find it therapeutic to journal on a computer so that they can bang the keys hard as they type.

The key here is to get all of your thoughts and angry energy and emotions out of you in a healthy and nonviolent way. Journaling allows you to give voice to what you are feeling, which is often the best way to allow yourself to calm down and put those feelings behind you.

Problem Solving

Often, you may become angry because you are frustrated over a situation. Most anger is caused by some kind of problem. If you can change your focus away from the anger to problem-solving, you can diffuse your anger and come up with positive solutions. This is another form of cognitive restructuring. You have to consciously be aware of your thoughts and

feelings and stop them in their tracks and change focus to one of solving the problem at hand.

Being angry is never the solution to a problem and can never fix anything. It is important to know what makes you angry and finding ways to alter the situation so that the reason for being angry is gone.

Take A Time Out

Time outs aren't just for children. When you feel yourself getting angry or irritated and you are worried that you may easily become angry, take a time out. Go to the bathroom and close the door, or go to your car and sit for a few minutes. Even during a workday, there are usually opportunities to take a time out.

When you are in the time out, just focus on your breathing and calming your thoughts. You can use visualization techniques to imagine yourself in a soothing place like a clearing in the woods or your favorite place to go camping. Visualize yourself in nature or some other favorite place. Try to find things in your visualization that engage the senses.

Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring is another form of anger management technique that can take some practice but will ultimately serve you well. Cognitive restructuring is all about changing the way you think. It requires you to be mindful of your thoughts and replace angry or uncontrolled thoughts with more positive thoughts.

How you talk to yourself is every bit as important as how you talk to others, perhaps more so. When you tell yourself negative things like "everything is ruined" you are perpetuating a negative emotion. When you change your thinking to tell yourself "this is upsetting and it's understandable to be angry but now it's time to find solutions" you turn that negative energy into something positive.

Cognitive restructuring is not always possible on your own. You may need to get help with this important tool. Studies have shown that cognitive

behavioral techniques such as these are among the most effective of anger management techniques. The easiest way to learn these techniques is to go through cognitive behavioral therapy with a therapist.

Using Humor

Humor is a great way to diffuse anger. When you can find the humor in a situation and laugh about it, you will find that your anger is instantly released. It is important that you do not make a situation worse by laughing at someone out of hand. You should also avoid sarcasm, as this can perpetuate an argument and hurt the feelings of others. However, if you can think of something funny about the situation and give voice to it in a positive way you may be able to diffuse not only your own anger but the anger of the person you are arguing with.

Changing Your Environment

One of the things you can immediately do when you are feeling yourself getting angry or frustrated is change your environment. Sometimes escaping the situation is the best thing that you can do. This may require you to leave the room or office for a short period of time. Think of this as kind of a timeout, but for a longer period of time.

You can also change your environment in a lasting way that will help you manage your anger. For example, if you are frequently losing your temper because your child does not clean their room, make sure that the door stays shut so that you don't have to look at it. Since seeing it makes you angry, this small change in your environment can help you prevent that anger.

Talk to a Trusted Friend

If there's someone who has a calming effect on you, talking through an issue or expressing your feelings to that person may be helpful. It's important to note, however, that venting can backfire. Complaining about your boss, describing all the reasons you don't like someone or grumbling about all of your perceived injustices may add fuel to the fire.

A common misconception is that you have to vent your anger to feel better. But, studies show you don't need to "get your anger out." Smashing things when you're upset, for example, may actually make you angrier. So it's important to use this coping skill with caution. If you're going to talk to a friend, make sure you're working on developing a solution or reducing your anger, not just venting. You might find that the best way to use this strategy is to talk about something other than the situation causing you to feel angry.

Try Ayurvedic Remedies

According to the ancient Indian medicine of Ayurveda, an excess of pitta (a type of energy) in the body causes anger (krodha) and anxiety. A variety of cooling herbs such as ashwagandha, brahmi, and basil (tulsi) can balance the pitta energy and calm the nervous system, thereby aiding you in managing your anger and stress more effectively.

Consuming ashwagandha root extract has been scientifically proven to reduce anxiety, stress and lower cortisol levels. Ashwagandha extract is readily available in the form of both herbal tea and dietary supplement capsules. Do remember to consult an experienced Ayurvedic practitioner so you get the dosage right. Basil (tulsi) is also an effective adaptogenic and antidepressant herb that can address psychological stress. Tulsi tea is a great herbal tea to sip once or twice a day. Incorporate into your daily routine and give your immunity a boost as well.

Another effective herbal remedy to lower stress and anxiety (and thereby anger) is brahmi oil. Brahmi oil has been traditionally used to calm the nervous system, lower anxiety, and treat insomnia. A gentle scalp massage using brahmi oil mixed with a little coconut oil can help relax you and lower your stress levels.

Seek Professional Help

Consider anger management counseling if you see that your anger is getting out of control and ruining your relationships. A qualified therapist will be able to help you pinpoint the causes of your anger, understand how to manage it, and channel it in positive ways.

It goes without saying that not all of these techniques are going to work for everyone. Each person is different, with different triggers for their anger, so some of these strategies might be more effective than others. Remember that the point is never to eliminate anger, but to manage it in a manner that minimizes your frustration and unhappiness.

CHAPTER 6: AWARENESS

Self-awareness involves monitoring our inner worlds, thoughts, emotions, and beliefs. It is important because it's a major mechanism influencing personal development. After spending time researching and writing this book, I've learned that our lives can get out-of-control pretty fast if we are unaware of how and under what circumstances our emotional nature is triggered (for example, we might not realize how much social media upset us).

Self-awareness is a vital first step in taking control of your life, creating what you want, and mastering your future. Where you choose to focus your energy, emotions, personality, and reactions determines where you will end up in life. When you are self-aware, you can see where your thoughts and emotions are guiding you. It also allows you to take control of your actions so you can make the necessary changes to get the outcomes you desire.

This can help if:

- You want to know more about yourself
- You want to develop good self-esteem
- You don't understand other people's reactions to stuff that you're doing.

How Do You Increase Self-Awareness?

Self-awareness requires self-examination. Be aware, though, that an honest, non-judgmental self-analysis isn't easy. We tend to berate ourselves for our failings or fantasize about how great we are when neither is actually the case. We all have a unique mix of "good" and "bad" traits, but we are largely unaware of them. In order to self-reflect objectively, we need to quiet our minds and open our hearts, forgiving ourselves for our imperfections and offering ourselves kudos, but only where we deserve them.

Increasing self-awareness of false attitudes or inappropriate behaviors requires peace of mind, time, attention and focus. Knowing ahead of time that we can indeed change in positive ways through deeper self-awareness makes it worth working on those personal qualities we most value. But first, we must look within ourselves through self-examination to see what's there, which is often less obvious than we think.

Why Does Self-Awareness Matter?

High self-awareness is a solid predictor of good success in life, perhaps because a self-aware person knows when an opportunity is a good fit for them and how to make an appropriate enterprise work well. Quite frankly, most of us are running on “autopilot,” hardly aware of why we succeed or fail, or why we behave as we do. Our minds are so busy with daily chatter that we usually only self-reflect when something goes awfully wrong.

Perhaps we stumble through a job interview or academic test we thought we were well prepared for, or we handle something in our lives awkwardly that we assumed we were good at, or perhaps we lose a romantic partner over some misunderstanding where feelings got hurt.

Our response in challenging situations is often to get defensive, make excuses, or blame another person because we don't want to see our own part in the disaster. If we can observe ourselves during such incidents, it will be a good start to self-awareness.

How Do You Build Self-Awareness?

Here are some suggestions to start building self-awareness:

Tune into your feelings - This can be hard if you're not the kind of person who likes to think too deeply about your feelings. Your feelings are spontaneous and emotional responses to the things you experience. Like your senses, they give you good information about what's going on around you, should you choose to tune into them. There are some physical signs that you can look for that might help you to 'read' your feelings. They include:

- A warm feeling in your face might mean you're embarrassed.
- A feeling of 'butterflies' in your tummy can mean you're nervous.
- Clenching your teeth might mean you're angry.

In practice: Be aware of physical signs that might indicate how you're feeling. By engaging with how you're feeling, you can get better insights into what you like, what makes you feel uncomfortable and what makes you angry.

Walking, especially in the quiet of nature, can be useful in building self-awareness - The mind tends to wander along with our feet, so with a little conscious nudging (and walking), we can examine our part in something that is happening in our lives now - at work, in social situations, in our relationships, or within the family.

Practicing mindfulness can increase self-awareness - Mindfulness is similar to self-awareness in that they both relate to consciously directing our thoughts inward in order to become more aware of our inner state of being, to observe our thoughts and beliefs, and to notice what triggers our emotions as they rise and fall. Mindfulness includes focused attention in the

moment to whatever one is doing and involves practices such as meditation or a quieting of the mind.

Becoming a good listener can increase self-awareness - “Getting out of ourselves” by focusing on another person is a good antidote to stop downward spirals of self-destructive thinking. By being open to someone else, we can learn to listen objectively, even lovingly, to what that person wants to or needs to share. This, in turn, helps teach us how to listen to our own inner dialogues and opinions objectively and lovingly as well.

Becoming more self-aware can be quite enlightening - There is so much we don’t know about our inner thoughts and processes that the inward journey at times can be surprising. Sometimes certain phrases come out automatically to reveal attitudes or opinions that we don’t even realize we subscribe to or even know where they came from. Over the years of being submerged in a family, a school, various jobs, and a social milieu, we absorb prevailing ideas from our environment, and some of these get buried in our subconscious, where they often don’t get examined until we inadvertently blurt them out, at times to our own embarrassment. This is one good reason why it behooves us to become more self-aware . . . to learn how to be ourselves, and to feel more confident that the ideas we are expressing are really our own.

Self-awareness can open your mind to new perspectives - We each tend to have different perspectives on a variety of topics, but as we develop these perspectives, we get comfortable with them and have a preference for our own opinions. However, limited perspectives lead to limited thinking, so by being open to the views of others, we can expand our perspectives to be more universally inclusive. New ideas are refreshing and stimulating, opening our thinking in new and possibly promising directions. Open-

mindfulness is definitely a plus in being successful at dealing with life's challenges and diverse situations.

Self-awareness is connected to self-esteem

Very often the opinion we hold of ourselves is based on what others think, or more correctly, on what we think others think about us. If we were criticized often as children, we may develop a case of low self-esteem and sensitivity to rejection as a result. On the other hand, if we were praised as a "prince or princess," we are likely to develop high self-esteem, whether deserved or not. So much of our beliefs are buried in the subconscious, where they can do irreparable harm if not examined and re-calibrated to more correctly reflect who we really are.

We owe it to ourselves to become more self-aware of the thoughts and beliefs within. The subconscious holds these ideas and beliefs to be true, so if not examined, we could become a mere sponge for the societal popular mindset and lose much of our uniqueness. Self-awareness can improve our self-esteem because we will know who we are and what we believe, which empowers us to move forward through life with a strong rudder to guide us along our chosen path.

Self-awareness can help you look at yourself objectively

Humans tend to be critical beings, whether self-critical or hard on others, and sometimes both. By beating ourselves up, we serve no one and harm our well-being. And since no one is perfect, why should we expect ourselves to be? So learn to cut through the hype and become more objective, especially about yourself. Yes, there will always be areas where we can improve, but that won't happen if we refuse to take the extra time to develop self-awareness.

When you are alone with your thoughts, there's no reason to take sides. Simply be willing to evaluate yourself as objectively as possible. Be sure not to gloss over what you'd rather not see, but rather mine the subconscious for its opinions and correct the mindsets that are not compatible with your values. You can do this by being completely honest with yourself, and when you find something that is out-of-sync, examine that position, remove what isn't personally compatible, and insert a better value or phrase to bring the idea in alignment with your core values. Do it like you are a teacher correcting a student - not with disdain, but with understanding and compassion. For an extra boost, turn the rephrased concept into an affirmation, and repeat it to yourself as often as necessary to affect the desired change within.

Journaling is a good way to become more self-aware - By writing your thoughts or stream-of-consciousness ideas, you begin opening up to those vulnerable places within. It is here that the mother lode of self-awareness dwells. Journaling isn't everybody's cup of tea, but if you like to write, try it out.

Writing sometimes reveals what contemplation does not, so this method of self-exploration may assist you in expanding your self-awareness. Telling your story, releasing your woes on paper, dreaming up your fantasy situation - these are ways your subconscious can speak to you, revealing what's really "the matter." Let your mind be free and marvel at what it may reveal about you and some of your buried wounds that are crying out for healing. Work with some of these ideas to explore what's behind them with the intention of knowing yourself more intimately.

Feedback from others can help you be more self-aware

Since we are our own best audience, we may miss something in our self-appraisal. That's where the objectivity of others can be most helpful in self-assessment. If you have the courage, ask a friend or acquaintance their opinion of you, or ask about how you managed some project you worked on together or how you handled yourself in some quirky situation.

Constructive criticism is best, of course, but try to be resilient and willing to hear what they have to say. Communication in relationships is extremely important, but you must be open to listening to each other, even when what is said is said imperfectly or is hard to hear. When some aspect of self is revealed that could use some additional refinement, be willing to look behind the obvious to its underlying secret or wound. When you find something that needs some re-tweaking, make a mental or written note to yourself to look at it later when you have some time alone for your self-care.

If, on further examination, a criticism does not appear to be true, consider if they are projecting onto you what they themselves are "guilty" of or struggle with. Perhaps that person is holding a grudge. If so, practice listening to what they have to say and rather than responding defensively, try to get to the bottom of the issue so you can assure a healthy friendship.

Self-awareness can help you know your strengths and weaknesses

"I'm a good starter, but I have more difficulty finishing a project." "It's easy for me to meet new people, but I have reservations when it comes to commitment." "I'm a great friend, but I'm not so good at saving money." We all have strengths and weaknesses, preferences and aversions, and whatever they are, just be aware of them so you don't put yourself in situations where you are unlikely to succeed. Use your strengths to succeed

in life, and your path will be happier because you will find appreciation and support along the way.

Self-awareness can help you set intentions

If we wander through life without purpose or direction, chances are we will end up nowhere in particular. In order to form an intention, you really need some idea about what is important to you and what you hope to accomplish. It's not necessary to know how you are going to get there, but you must have some idea of your general direction.

Say your intention out loud and proud, remembering that you are speaking to your inner self, your subconscious, perhaps your higher consciousness, or possibly even to some higher power of your choosing to let them, and you know that you are focused on a certain direction or destination. Use these ideas to communicate with your inner self, letting your subconscious know that you want to better understand your inner mind so that you can live a more meaningful and satisfying life.

CHAPTER 7: EMOTIONS! DISCOVER HOW FORGIVE

Who hasn't been hurt by the actions or words of another? Perhaps a parent constantly criticized you growing up, a colleague sabotaged a project or your partner had an affair. Or maybe you've had a traumatic experience, such as being physically or emotionally abused by someone close to you.

These wounds can leave you with lasting feelings of anger and bitterness — even vengeance. But if you don't practice forgiveness, you might be the one who pays most dearly. By embracing forgiveness, you can also embrace peace, hope, gratitude, and joy. Consider how forgiveness can lead you down the path of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Forgiving those who have hurt you isn't always the easiest thing to do. However, when you learn to forgive others, you are releasing yourself from the anger and negativity that binds you to that person. Forgiveness can help you release deep feelings of sadness and resentment. It can also help you move past negative thoughts that often contribute to anxiety and depression. You deserve to be free of the pain caused by someone else. Learn to let go and accept the past as it was and embrace your life as it is today.

Why You Should Forgive

For many reasons, you may feel that it is too difficult to forgive others who have deeply hurt you. You may feel that the person isn't worthy of your forgiveness. Maybe you fear that forgiving someone will make it appear that you are excusing his or her wrongful actions.

Forgiveness can be especially difficult when you never receive an apology that you rightfully deserve. It is certainly possible that the person who wronged you isn't even sorry for what they did. In other circumstances, the person you need to forgive may have passed away, which can make closure even more difficult.

Considering all of these challenges, you may be asking why should you forgive.

For one thing, forgiveness sets us free. When we hold onto the anger, hurt, and resentment associated with what another person did to us, then we are still allowing them to cause damage in our lives. The person may be long gone from your life, but the anger you feel inside still remains. Years will pass by and you will still be holding onto these negative feelings. Forgiveness can be an empowering way to let go of the pain that the other person caused. It is not about excusing a person for cruel or insensitive behavior. Rather, forgiveness is about striving to live your healthiest life and moving past the upsetting actions of others.

Through forgiveness, you can experience other emotional benefits, including improved relationships with those currently in your life. Consider how your deeply held anger and resentment can be affecting your relationships. You may find that when you forgive others that you are more open to trust, love, and acceptance in your current relationships.

Forgiveness also relieves stress, anger, and resentment - feelings that are known to negatively affect the body and mind. Research has determined that managing stress and anger can aid in sleep, reduce anxiety, and improve overall health and wellbeing. Generally, forgiveness provides an opportunity for great personal growth and opens you up to richer and more fulfilling relationships.

Ways to Practice Forgiveness

If you feel ready to forgive, you may be wondering where to start. It is important to keep in mind that forgiveness is a process that can take time and effort to accomplish. I suggest starting small. For example, try to first start forgiving those that only commit minor offenses, such as someone who cuts you off in traffic. Taking such small steps can begin to open your heart to greater acts of forgiveness.

Listed here are a few ways to get you started towards forgiving others. Try these activities and see if they can help you on your journey towards forgiveness.

Understand forgiveness

Before you attempt to force forgiveness on your most tender hurts, consider what it is you're asking of yourself: Forgiving doesn't mean that you condone what happened or that the perpetrator is blameless. It is making the conscious choice to release yourself from the burden, pain, and stress of holding on to resentment.

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Feel your pain

Hurts can run deep, even if at first glance they don't seem to make a big impact. It's important to give yourself permission to acknowledge and honor the pain that's very real for you. Notice where you feel it in your body and ask yourself, "What do I need right now?" Maybe you need to feel supported, take more time, or do something kind for yourself. Allowing

space for the pain in this way can help you know whether you're ready to release it from your heart and mind.

Name it

Whether you've hurt yourself or have been hurt by another, allow yourself to be honest and simply name the feelings that are there. They might include guilt, grief, shame, sorrow, confusion, or anger. As you consider the act of forgiveness, any of these feelings can arise. A study at UCLA found that when you name your emotional experience it turns the volume down on your amygdala, the emotion center of the brain, and brings resources back to your pre-frontal cortex, the rational part of your brain. So, by naming the feeling you can create space and not get overwhelmed.

Let it out

Keeping hurt feelings bottled up only causes additional stress to your mind and body. Even if the memory is difficult to confront, see if you can share how you're feeling. You can write about it in a journal or talk about it with a friend or a professional counselor. Sharing helps you expand your perspective, and perhaps even see what happened through a different lens.

Flip your focus

If possible, see if you can flip your focus from being the victim to putting yourself in the other person's shoes. For example, consider the life the person lived that led them to this hurtful action. This is difficult to do, but remember, you're not condoning any action. This exercise is just about trying to see that, as humans, we are deeply impacted by our own traumas and life experiences, which greatly inform how we show up and act in the

world. If you are able to do this, compassion naturally tends to flow from this more understanding perspective.

Take action

Whether you are forgiving yourself or another person, taking action can help to facilitate healing and make you feel more empowered. It's best to start with smaller misdeeds to get into practice and feel what's possible. Writing a letter or having an uncomfortable conversation can be difficult and even scary, but often a sense of empowerment emerges from the self-compassionate action of listening to yourself and doing something that supports you.

Remember, you're not the first or last

When you've been hurt, it's common to feel like you're the only one who has ever been wronged in this way. In fact, it's likely that this transgression (or something similar to it) has been made many, maybe even millions of times before throughout human history. Making mistakes is part of our shared human experience. Remembering you are not alone in experiencing this kind of pain can help to loosen your grip on your resentment.

Have patience; forgiveness is a practice

Forgiveness isn't a quick-fix solution. It's a process, so be patient with yourself. With smaller transgressions, forgiveness can happen pretty quickly, but with the larger ones, it can take years. As you begin with the smaller misdeeds and then move onto the harder ones, be kind to yourself, take deep breaths, and continue on.

Stop blaming

We all know it can feel good now and again to complain to a friend - misery loves company, right? Well, not exactly. Blaming is a way to

discharge pain and discomfort. It gives us a false sense of control but inevitably keeps the negativity kicking around in our minds, increasing our stress and eroding our relationships.

Practice more mindfulness

A recent study surveyed 94 adults who had been cheated on by their partners and found a correlation between traits of mindfulness and forgiveness. In other words, it can be said that the more you practice mindfulness, the more you strengthen your capacity for forgiveness.

Find meaning and strength through your pain –

As you practice working with the pain that's there, you grow key strengths of self-compassion, courage, and empathy that inevitably make you stronger in every way. As psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl wrote in *Man's Search for Meaning*, even in the most horrific and painful circumstances, we have the freedom to create meaning in life, which is a powerful healing agent.

You understandably have many feelings of anger toward the person who hurt you. Get these feelings out by writing the person a letter. Let them know in detail all the ways in which they hurt you and how you have felt about it. Get as honest as possible, releasing all of your pent up emotions onto paper. Let the person know that you have decided to forgive them. You can even explain why you are forgiving, such as writing, "I forgive you because I no longer want to hold on to the pain you have caused." Once your letter is complete rip up into shreds. This activity will allow you to release emotions that needed to be expressed and then let them go.

A Mini Forgiveness Practice:

Try this short practice once a day and feel your forgiveness muscles growing. Think of someone who has caused you pain (to start, maybe not the person who has hurt you most) and you're holding a grudge against. Visualize the time you were hurt by this person and feel the pain you still carry. Hold tightly to your unwillingness to forgive. Now, observe what emotion is present. Is it anger, resentment, sadness? Use your body as a barometer and notice physically what you feel. Are you tense anywhere, or do you feel heavy? Next, bring awareness to your thoughts; are they hateful, spiteful, or something else?

Really feel this burden associated with the hurt that lives inside you, and ask yourself: "Who is suffering? Have I carried this burden long enough? Am I willing to forgive?"

If the answer is no, that's OK. Some wounds need more time than others to heal. If you are ready to let it go now, silently repeat: "Breathing in, I acknowledge the pain. Breathing out, I am forgiving and releasing this burden from my heart and mind."

Continue this process for as long as it feels supportive to you.

CHAPTER 8: **GET OUT THE STRESS FROM YOUR LIFE**

It seems like you hear it all the time from nearly everyone you know - “I’m SO stressed out!” Pressures abound in this world today. Those pressures cause stress and anxiety, and often we are ill-equipped to deal with those stressors that trigger anxiety and other feelings that can make us sick. Literally, sick.

The statistics are staggering. One in every eight Americans age 18-54 suffers from an anxiety disorder. This totals over 19 million people! Research conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health has shown that anxiety disorders are the number one mental health problem among American women and are second only to alcohol and drug abuse by men.

Women suffer from anxiety and stress almost twice as much as men. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in America, surpassing even depression in numbers. Anxiety is the most common mental health issue facing adults over 65 years of age. Anxiety disorders cost the U.S. \$46.6 billion annually. Anxiety sufferers see an average of five doctors before being successfully diagnosed. Unfortunately, stress and anxiety go hand in hand. In fact, one of the major symptoms of stress is anxiety. And stress accounts for 80 percent of all illnesses either directly or indirectly.

In fact, stress is more dangerous than we thought. You've probably heard that it can raise your blood pressure, increasing the likelihood of a stroke in the distant future, but recently a health insurance brochure claimed that 90 percent of visits to a primary care physician were stress-related disorders. Health Psychology magazine reports that chronic stress can interfere with the normal function of the body's immune system. And studies have proven that stressed individuals have an increased vulnerability to catching an

illness and are more susceptible to allergic, autoimmune, or cardiovascular diseases.

Doctors agree that during chronic stress, the functions of the body that are nonessential to survival, such as the digestive and immune systems, shut down. This is why people get sick. There are also many occurrences of psychosomatic illness, an illness with an emotional or psychological side to it.

Furthermore, stress often prompts people to respond in unhealthy ways such as smoking, drinking alcohol, eating poorly, or becoming physically inactive. This damages the body in addition to the wear and tear of the stress itself. Stress is a part of daily life. It's how we react to it that makes all the difference in maintaining our health and well-being. Pressures occur throughout life and those pressures cause stress. You need to realize that you will never completely get rid of stress in your life, but you can learn coping techniques to turn that stress into a healthier situation.

Why Are You So Stressed Out?

We're living in very trying and difficult times and things don't seem to be getting any easier. Sometimes life can seem terribly painful and unfair, yet somehow we manage to struggle on, day after day, hoping and praying that things will soon get better. But day by day the world is becoming a crazier and more uncertain place to live in, not to mention stressful. Nothing seems safe anymore. Millions of people are in record levels of debt. Many are losing their jobs, their homes, their health and sometimes even their sanity. Worry, depression, and anxiety seem to have become a way of life for way too many people. We seem to have entered the Age of Anxiety. In fact, in 2012, the cover of Time magazine proclaimed this loud and clear on one of their covers as the featured story in that issue. The constant stress and uncertainties of living in the 21st century have certainly taken their toll, and as a result, many of us seem to live a life of constant fear and worry. When the terrorist attacks happened on September 11, this constant stress and worry seemed to just be magnified. In fact, many people even now four years later report they are still scared that something of that magnitude could happen again – perhaps closer to them. Turn on the news or open up a newspaper and we are bombarded with disturbing images and stories. We begin to wonder if we are safe anywhere. In this, the information age, never before have we had so much access to so much data.

The economy is another stressor. Our country is in debt and so are many Americans. Soaring gas prices, outrageous housing costs, even the cost of food has sent many Americans to work in jobs that are unsatisfying and tedious. They work these jobs because they need a paycheck. Today, it's more important to bring home the bacon rather than work in a dream career. Having more women in the workplace adds to the stress. So many women feel the need to be everything to everyone and that includes a paycheck

earner, housekeeper, mom, wife, daughter, and sibling. The only problem with that is some women just don't make any time for themselves thus contributing to their stress levels being at an all-time high.

Even children can feel the pressure of stress and anxiety. Teenagers who want to go to college find themselves pushing themselves during their studies to try and obtain scholarships so they can attend schools that have ever increasing tuition costs. They find themselves having to hold down part-time jobs on top of all that to earn money for extras that their parents can no longer afford. Add peer pressure into the mix and you have a veritable pressure cooker! Cell phones, internet, palm pilots, blackberries, I-pods – we are always on the go and always reachable. We don't make time to relax and enjoy life anymore. Why not? We certainly should! We feel pressure to do these things because we think we have to, not because we want to. All too often, it's difficult for people to just say "No". Not saying that one little word piles up un-needed expectations and obligations that make us feel anxious.

All of us will experience situations that may cause us to become stressed or feel anxious. The reasons are too many to note but can include, buying a property, having guests stay over, being bullied, exams, looking after children, managing finances, relationship issues, traveling, etc. Stress is a 'normal' function of everyday life. Only when it appears to take over our lives does it then become a problem. Everyone will have different reasons why a situation causes them pressure. As a rule, it's usually when we don't feel in control of a situation, then we feel its grip tightening around us causing us to feel worried or 'stressed'. If stress is caused by us not feeling in control of a situation, the answer is to try and reverse this and regain that control. The good news is: You Can! You have everything inside you that you need to overcome your stress and the accompanying anxiety. The

problem is, often we don't realize that we are in control because we feel so out of control at time. But the tools are there, you just have to use them.

Let's first look at the barriers we put up that are preventing us from becoming healthy and getting rid of our anxiety and stress.

There are three obsessive behaviors that you are likely to be engaging in that impeded your healing process and stop you from enjoying a stress-free life. Recognizing these barriers can be a great first step toward getting rid of the problems that go with being too stressed.

The first is obsessive negativity. When you are obsessively negative, it means that you have a tendency toward being "negative" about people, places, situations, and things in your life.

Perhaps you find yourself saying things like "I can't do this!" or "No one understands!" or "Nothing ever works!", for example. You may be doing this unconsciously, but essentially you have what's known as a "sour grapes" attitude, and it holds you back from knowing what it's like to view life from a positive lens and enjoy the beauty in yourself and people around you! There's a whole world out there for you...with happiness and positive thinking.

Then you have obsessive perfectionism. When you engage in obsessive perfectionism, you are centered on trying to do everything "just so" to the point of driving yourself into an anxious state of being. You may find yourself making statements such as, "I have to do this right, or I'll be a failure!" or "If I am not precise, people will be mad at me!" Again, this behavior may be totally under the threshold of your awareness, but it interferes greatly with your ability to enjoy things without feeling "uptight" and "stressed."

Finally, there is obsessive analysis. When you are obsessed about analyzing things, you find yourself wanting to re-hash a task or an issue over and over again. For instance, you might find yourself making statements such as, "I need to look this over, study it, and know it inside and out...or else I can't relax!" or "If I relax and let things go without looking them over repeatedly, things go wrong!"

While analytical thinking is an excellent trait, if it's done in excess you never get to stop and smell the roses because you're too busy trying to analyze everything and everyone around you. Gaining insight into this type of behavior is one of the most important keys to letting go of stress, and getting complete power over your anxiety. If you find yourself engaging in any of the above "Blocking Behaviors", there are two things you can do to help yourself.

First, ask the people you know, love, and trust, "Am I negative about things?", "Do I complain a lot?", and "Am I difficult to be around?" This may be hard for you to listen to, as the truth sometimes hurts a great deal. But the insight you will get from others' assessment of you is invaluable, and you'll know precisely how others see you. Accept their comments as helpful info, and know that you will gain amazing insights from what you hear.

Second, keep a journal to write down and establish patterns of when you are using "blocking behaviors." Even if you are not thrilled with the idea of writing, you can make little entries into a notebook or journal each day. The great part is that you'll begin to see patterns in your behavior that reveal exactly what you're doing to prevent yourself from curing your anxiety.

Calm Yourself With Visualization

The purpose of visualization is to enable you to quickly clear mental stress, tension, and anxious thinking. The visualization can be used when feeling stressed and is particularly useful when your mind is racing with fearful, anxious thinking.

This visualization process, when practiced frequently, is very effective for eliminating deep-seated mental anxieties or intrusive thoughts. To gain maximum benefit, the exercise must be carried out for longer than 10 minutes at a time, as anything shorter will not bring noticeable results. There is no right or wrong way to carry out the visualization. Be intuitive with it and do not feel you are unable to carry it out if you feel you are not very good at seeing mental imagery. As long as your attention is on the exercise, you will gain benefit. It is best to do this exercise in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed, and then when you are more practiced you will be able to get the same positive results in a busier environment such as the workplace.

You should notice a calming effect on your state of mind along with a sensation of mental release and relaxation. Either sitting or standing, close your eyes and move your attention to your breath. To become aware of your breathing, place one hand on your upper chest and one on your stomach. Take a breath and let your stomach swell forward as you breathe in and fall back gently as you breathe out. Take the same depth of breath each time and try to get a steady rhythm going. Your hand on your chest should have little or no movement. Again, try to take the same depth of breath each time you breathe in. This is called Diaphragmatic Breathing.

When you feel comfortable with this technique, try to slow your breathing rate down by instituting a short pause after you have breathed out and

before you breathe in again. Initially, it may feel as though you are not getting enough air in, but with regular practice, this slower rate will soon start to feel comfortable.

It is often helpful to develop a cycle where you count to three when you breathe in, pause, and then count to three when you breathe out (or 2, or 4 - whatever is comfortable for you). This will also help you focus on your breathing without any other thoughts coming into your mind. If you are aware of other thoughts entering your mind, just let them go and bring your attention back to counting and breathing. Continue doing this for a few minutes. (If you practice this, you will begin to strengthen the Diaphragmatic Muscle, and it will start to work normally - leaving you with a nice relaxed feeling all the time.)

Now move your attention to your feet. Try to really feel your feet. See if you can feel each toe. Picture the base of your feet and visualize roots growing slowly out through your soles and down into the earth. The roots are growing with quickening pace and are reaching deep into the soil of the earth. You are now rooted firmly to the earth and feel stable like a large oak or redwood tree.

Stay with this feeling of grounded safety and security for a few moments. Once you have created a strong feeling or impression of being grounded like a tree, visualize a cloud of bright light forming way above you. A bolt of lightning from the luminous cloud hits the crown of your head, and that ignites a band of bright white light descending slowly from your head all the way down your body, over your legs, and out past your toes. As the band of light passes over you, feel it clearing your mental state. It is illuminating your mind and clearing any disturbing or stressful thoughts that you may have been thinking about. Repeat this image four or five times

until you feel a sense of clearing and release from any anxious thinking. In finishing, see yourself standing under a large, luminescent waterfall. The water is radiant and bubbling with vitality and life. As you stand under the waterfall, you can feel the water run over every inch of your body, soothing you and instilling within you a sense of deep calm.

Try to taste the water. Open your mouth and let it run into your mouth, refreshing you. Hear it as it bounces off the ground around you. The water is life itself and it is washing away stress and worry from your mind and body. After a moment, open your eyes. Try to use all of your senses when carrying out the visualization. To make the pictures in your mind as real as possible, use your senses of touch, taste, and hearing. Feel the water trickle down your body; hear the sound it makes as it splashes over you. The more realistic the imagined scenarios, the more benefit you will gain.

Many people report very beneficial and soothing results from using these simple visualizations frequently. The mind is much like a muscle in that, in order to relax, it needs to regularly release what it is holding onto. You can use any situation or location that will help calm you. We liken this to “finding your happy place”. Maybe you feel relaxed in a swimming pool or on the beach. Imagine yourself there. Just make sure wherever you go in your mind is a place where you can be calm and rested.

By visualizing the different situations, you are allowing your mind to release. It is like sending a message to your brain that when you close your eyes and begin this process it is time for letting go of anything that it has been mentally holding onto, including anxious thinking. In order to train your mind how to let go of the stress, it is important to practice this daily. With practice, you can learn to release all stress within minutes of starting

the exercise. Your daily practice should take place before going to bed, as that will enable you to sleep more soundly.

Many people do not do these visualizations in the bedroom but some other room before going to bed. That way, when they enter the bedroom and close the door, they are leaving the mental stress and anxious thinking behind them. Just be sure you have the opportunity to totally concentrate on your mental images. Visualization as a tool for dealing with mental stress is very effective. If such visualization is carried out properly, you can reach a deep feeling of inner calm. This technique probably will not work in helping to end an anxiety attack, but it can help that attack from beginning. It is a very powerful support tool for ridding yourself of general anxiety sensations.

With practice, you find you go days without having anxious thinking interrupt your life, and importantly, this significantly reduces the level of general anxiety you feel. Visualization is simply a tool you can use to overcome anxious thoughts and feelings. Let's look at various ways that you can combat excessive stress – beginning with music.

Using Music To Beat Stress

Listening to music does wonder to alleviate stress. Everyone has different tastes in music. We should listen to the music that makes us feel comfortable. Sitting down and forcing yourself to listen to relaxation music that you don't like may create stress, not alleviate it.

Music is a significant mood-changer and reliever of stress, working on many levels at once. The entire human energetic system is extremely influenced by sounds, the physical body and chakra centers respond specifically to certain tones and frequencies. Special consideration should be given to the positive effects of one actually playing or creating music themselves. Among the first stress-fighting changes that take place when we hear a tune is an increase in deep breathing. The body's production of serotonin also accelerates.

Playing music in the background while we are working, seemingly unaware of the music itself, has been found to reduce the stress of the workplace. That's why so many retail places play music while you shop – to take your mind off the high prices!

Music was found to reduce heart rates and to promote higher body temperature - an indication of the onset of relaxation. Combining music with relaxation therapy was more effective than doing relaxation therapy alone. Many experts suggest that it is the rhythm of the music or the beat that has the calming effect on us although we may not be very conscious about it. They point out that when we were a baby in our mother's womb, we probably were influenced by the heartbeat of our mother. We respond to the soothing music at later stages in life, perhaps associating it with the safe, relaxing, protective environment provided by our mother. Music can be one of the most soothing or nerve-wracking experiences available.

Choosing what will work for any individual is difficult, most will choose something they 'like' instead of what might be beneficial. In doing extensive research on what any given piece of music produces in the physiological response system many unexpected things were found. Many of the so-called meditation and relaxation recordings actually produced adverse EEG patterns, just as bad as Hard Rock and Heavy Metal.

The surprising thing was many selections of Celtic, Native American, as well as various music containing loud drums or flute, were extremely soothing. The most profound finding was any music performed live and even at moderately loud volumes even if it was somewhat discordant had very a beneficial response.

As we mentioned before, there is not a single music that is good for everyone. People have different tastes. It is important that you like the music being played. I recently picked up a rest and relaxation CD at Wal-Mart that has done wonders for me. It has the sounds of the ocean in the background while beautiful piano music plays. It's very soothing. One note here, it's probably not a good idea to play certain types of ballads or songs that remind you of a sad time in your life when you're trying to de-stress. The reason is obvious. You're trying to relax and wash away the anxious thoughts. The last thing that you need is for a sad song to bring back memories you don't need anyway.

Here are some general guidelines to follow when using music to de-stress.

- To wash away stress, try taking a 20-minute "sound bath." Put some relaxing music on your stereo, and then lie in a comfortable position on a couch or on the floor near the speakers. For a deeper experience, you can wear headphones to focus your attention and to avoid distraction.

- Choose music with a slow rhythm - slower than the natural heartbeat which is about 72 beats per minute. Music that has repeating or cyclical pattern is found to be effective in most people.
- As the music plays, allow it to wash over you, rinsing off the stress from the day. Focus on your breathing, letting it deepen, slow and become regular. Concentrate on the silence between the notes in the music; this keeps you from analyzing the music and makes relaxation more complete.
- If you need stimulation after a day of work, go for a faster music rather than slow calming music. Turn up the volume and DANCE! It doesn't matter if you can actually dance or not. Just move along with the music and do what feels good. You'll be shocked at the release you can feel!
 - When going gets tough, go for a music you are familiar with - such as a childhood favorite or favorite oldies. Familiarity often breeds calmness.
- Take walks with your favorite music playing on the walkman. Inhale and exhale in tune with the music. Let the music takes you. This is a great stress reliever by combining exercise (brisk walk), imagery and music.
- Listening to the sounds of nature, such as ocean waves or the calm of a deep forest, can reduce stress. Try taking a 15- to 20-minute walk if you're near the seashore or a quiet patch of woods. If not, you can buy tapes of these sounds in many music stores. This has been very calming for me - you should try it too.

There's another great relaxation technique that I have found in coping with my own anxiety problems: self-hypnosis.

Self-Hypnosis For Stress

A few weeks ago, I was feeling particularly overwhelmed with stress and anxiety. It seemed like anything that could go wrong, did go wrong. I felt like I was spinning out of control. I happened to be writing a book on yoga and meditation at the time and came across a website that offered a downloadable MP3 hypnotic relaxation session. It cost me about \$20 and it was the best \$20 I have ever spent.

There are plenty of places on the internet where you can get these downloadable sessions for a small fee. However, you can also practice self-hypnosis on your own. You first need to find a quiet place where you can fully relax and listen to your inner voice. You shouldn't try to make something happen. Let your mind listen and relax.

A large part of achieving that hypnotic state is to allow it to happen naturally. Also, don't watch for certain signs or signals that you might be in a hypnotic state. We can guarantee that if you look for these signs, you won't be able to fully relax and gain the benefits of self-hypnosis. There are lots of different ways to experience hypnosis. No two people will have exactly the same experience. In one respect, though, everyone has the same experience: the hypnotic state is always pleasant!

There are no "bad trips" in hypnosis. Keep in mind that self-hypnosis is a skill and that you will continue to get better at it and, as you do, it becomes ever more powerful. It's a good idea to set up a schedule of practice, allowing yourself anywhere between 10 and 30 minutes, depending on how busy you are and how much time you have to spend at it. Practice during the best part of your day if you can and at a time when you are least likely to be disturbed by others. Most people find it best to practice lying down, in a comfortable position, with as few distractions as possible. If you are

bothered by noise while you practice you can try to mask out the noise with some other source of sound.

You can try stereo music in the background, or white noise if you like. If like most people you don't have a white noise generator, try tuning a radio receiver between stations. The static you get when you do that is similar to white noise. However, this takes an older or cheaper FM receiver without a noise suppressor. Sometimes AM tuners can be used for this. This should just be in the background and not too loud to be distracting.

CHAPTER 9: **KEEP CALM AT EVERY PROVOCATIONS**

There's a lot going on in this world. In fact, there's probably a lot going on in your life at the moment. So much to do, so little time, and just too much uncertainty. You probably feel as though you are constantly fighting against the odds while trying to make your way in this world.

As you work through your problems you need to fight through stress, anxiety, fear, anger, frustration, overwhelm and a plethora of other emotions. These emotions leave you in a frantic state, which negatively affects your health and hurts your ability to make good decisions.

The one certainty about life is that it will put you under intense pressure situation. And when emotions get the better of you, you will most likely fail to capitalize on your greatest opportunities moving forward. In fact, your ability to stay calm under provocations could be the difference between the success you desire to create in your life, and complete and utter failure.

Developing the ability to stay calm under provocation situations means that you are less likely to suffer from the effects of stress, anxiety, and worry. Your calm approach will also lead to better health and higher levels of productivity. It will provide you with a sense of control over the events and circumstances of your life, and most certainly a better sense of control over yourself, your thoughts and emotions. On top of this, staying calm under provocations will help improve your ability to focus on the right things, at the right time, and in the right way. It will allow you to better communicate your needs to other people, and help you make more effective, intelligent and emotional-free decisions.

The Qualities of Calmness

In order to reap the rewards that a state of calmness can bring into your life, you will need to become more mindful. Being more mindful means being more centered and focused on the moment. It means letting go of past regrets. It means redirecting your mind away from current stresses, and it also means refocusing yourself away from future worries. It's all about being mindful - being present in the moment - because it's in the moment where you will find the answers you need that will help you solve your life's problems.

A state of calmness also requires patience. Sometimes you need a little patience and time to understand the events and circumstances of your life. Sometimes you need the patience to gain a deeper insight into your predicament. And the only way you will find true and unadulterated patience in a state of calmness.

Likewise, calmness also requires optimism and faith. You need optimism to help you find the motivation you need to journey through the thick dark fog of your provocations. And you need faith to help you find your way when you lose yourself in the turmoil of your emotions. Optimism will help you find the desire you need to move forward, and faith will provide you with the courage you need to persist through the obstacles that stand in your way.

Things to do When Under Provoking Situations

As you go about your day, there will be moments when you will face provoking situations. Something unexpected might happen, your emotions will spin out of control, and it will momentarily seem as though the entire weight of the world has fallen on your shoulders. It's moments like these that a steady hand and calm mind are of utmost importance. In fact, the decision you make at this very moment could either help you improve the situation or might very well make things much worse than they already are.

In order to make the right decision, you will need to stay calm, centered and focused on the right things and in the right way. Here are some suggestions:

Immediately Remove Yourself from the Situation - When under provocation, take time to immediately remove yourself from the situation temporarily. Having removed yourself physically and emotionally from the situation, take time now to clarify why you're feeling pressured. Ask yourself:

- Why am I suddenly feeling provoked?
- What has triggered my feelings?
- What has ruffled my emotions?
- Has something outside of me triggered my emotions?
- Am I seeing things clearly?
- Am I interpreting the situation correctly?
- Is it possible that my perspective of this situation has triggered my emotions?

Sometimes the things that trigger your emotions are phantoms. You're feeling provoked, but the provocation isn't coming from an external force, but rather from within — from inside you. You are in fact creating the emotional provocation within yourself, and this is causing you to feel

provoked externally. This is an illusion. It's a trick your mind is playing on you. It's important you recognize this because changing things might only require a simple shift of perspective on your part.

It's important to gain clarity about what it is you want because unless you are clear about what you want, you will fail to make the right decisions that will help you move through this situation successfully. Moreover, gaining clarity will help you filter out unnecessary and irrelevant factors. It will allow you to re-prioritize the things you need to focus on to help you get through this difficult emotional experience.

Prioritizing things accordingly helps you to focus on the most important and relevant factors that will allow you to move through this situation successfully. In fact, the moment you pinpoint these critical areas is the moment you can begin working your way through this situation in a more intelligent and calming manner. No longer should the circumstances of the situation phase you. Instead, you should now be in full control of your emotional responses, and can now calmly and sensibly work through your problems.

If after going through these sets of questions you are still finding your emotions overwhelming and difficult to deal with, then consider the lighter-side of the situation. Ask yourself:

- What's funny about this?

Hopefully, the answer to this question will help shift your perspective about your circumstances. It might even help you relax and calm yourself down. And that might be all you need to move through this situation successfully.

Always be Attentive

During the provoking situations, it's absolutely paramount that you pay attention to the details. It's in the details that you will find the answers and the opportunities you need to move forward.

When a situation presents itself, it's natural to immediately become overwhelmed by the circumstances. And because you're overwhelmed, you naturally bundle all your concerns and problems into one big messy pile of puzzle pieces in your head. There is no separation between things. Everything becomes one thing, and this is what overwhelms you.

The better way to handle yourself is to pay attention to the details. Be attentive to the little things, to your behavior, to other people's behavior, to the circumstances and all the external things going on around you. The more attentive you are, the more you will pick-up. And as a result you will no longer bundle everything into one big uncontrollable problem, instead, you will see things as individual pieces that are part of the larger puzzle that you now need to figure out how to solve.

Use Empowering Language

The mindset you bring into provocation is absolutely critical. Part of this mindset is the language you use to talk to yourself during these difficult emotional moments. Your language can either help you calm yourself down, or it can lead you down the path of overwhelm and panic. For instance, saying:

- I can handle this...
- I am in control...
- I am calm...
- I am focused...

This type of language will make you feel centered, calm and in control of yourself and your emotions. And because you're in control of your emotional responses, you will now be able to make better decisions moving forward that will help you to work through this pressure situation far more effectively.

Ask Calming Questions

Another aspect of empowering language is the process of asking the right kinds of questions that will help you to stay calm, centered and focused on the right things. For instance, during pressure situations try asking yourself:

- What's good about this?
- What are the benefits of staying calm?
- How will a calm mind help me work through this situation successfully?

These types of questions will help you maintain control of your emotions. They will also help you to redirect your emotions in a more positive and helpful way.

Avoid Unhelpful Thinking Habits

The language you use and the questions you ask yourself translate into the thoughts you indulge in during provocation situations. These thoughts can either be empowering and helpful, or they can be limiting and unhelpful.

Examples of unhelpful thoughts include blaming yourself, blaming other people, or blaming your circumstances. Unhelpful thoughts can also include over-analyzing the situation and getting lost in too many details; magnifying the negatives of the situation; and/or over-dramatizing events and circumstances in unhelpful ways. All of these methods of thinking

about your situation are not helpful. In fact, thinking this way will make you feel absolutely miserable and will prevent you from moving forward in a calm and controlled fashion.

Instead, focus on things you can control. And that control comes from within yourself. You can control the language you use and the questions you ask yourself. Once you have these things under your control, you will likewise gain control over your emotional responses and thoughts. And this will naturally lead to a greater sense of calmness and emotional stability, which is exactly what you need to help you get through this pressure situation successfully.

Guidelines for Finding Ways to Calm Down and Relax

In order to handle provocation situations far more effectively, you will need to become a more relaxed and calm individual. Calmness is, of course, a state-of-mind, however, in order to get to that state-of-mind, you will need to adopt some new habits, behaviors and potentially shake up your routine a little to allow time for more relaxation and periods of self-reflection.

Here are some suggestions to help you find ways to relax and reflect more throughout the day:

Build a Calming Environment

Calmness, of course, begins from within, on a psychological level. However, it's difficult to maintain an inner sense of calmness if your environment is frantic, chaotic and disorganized. As such, it's important to build an environment that will make it easier for you to maintain a calm mental state-of-mind.

Building a relaxing and nurturing working environment depends entirely on what specifically makes you feel comfortable and relaxed. You might like to install some colored lights, play peaceful music, use tranquil nature sounds, stimulate the senses with aromatherapy, or maybe even use a well-placed fountain or some candles to help bring a warm, peaceful and friendly energy into the room. The choice is completely yours to make.

Build a Calming Daily Routine

There may very well be moments of your day that are frantic and hectic. These moments are simply a part of your working life, and it can certainly be difficult to work around them. Don't resist these moments. Let them be. It sometimes might not be possible to change part of your routine or schedule, however, what's important is that you balance your routine and

make time for yourself, for relaxation and for self-reflection. You can do this by taking nature walks in the local park. You can also do this by taking a warm bath at the end of the day, or maybe a massage during the middle of the day can help extinguish stress, anxiety and worry from your body.

Consider also taking time to nourish your spirit throughout the day with prayer, meditation, Yoga, Tai Chi and other practices that will help you keep your emotions calm, relaxed and centered. It doesn't really matter what you do, as long as for short periods of time throughout your day you can find the time to unwind a little to help you gain some perspective about your life and circumstances.

Use the Power of Visualization

Visualization is a fantastic method for grounding yourself during times of intense emotional turmoil and uncertainty.

Find a quiet place without distractions where you can lie down or at the very least sit down comfortably. If that's not possible, then sit where you are or lie down on the floor while listening to tranquil music. Initially, allow your mind to wander and just find its place in the moment. However, after a few minutes take control of the images forming in your imagination and imagine a tranquil place - a sanctuary of sorts that you can escape to. This is a place filled with all the things that make you feel comfortable, at peace and relaxed.

Spend five to ten minutes at a time exploring this place, relaxing within this imaginary world, and allowing all your stresses and worries to melt away. In fact, use the time you have within this sanctuary to think about your life, circumstances, and problems. Just maybe within this place, you will find the necessary perspective and the answers you need to help you get through the pressures of life. Later, whenever you feel stressed or overwhelmed,

take some time to come back to this place to help ground yourself during moments of uncertainty.

Learn About Breath Control

While visualizing and/or meditating, it's important that you breathe correctly in ways that will help you to relax and center yourself emotionally. Deep diaphragmatic breathing is one method used that can help you maintain your composure and relax your body.

Diaphragmatic breathing requires that you breathe in through your diaphragm for four seconds, then hold your breath for another four seconds, and then breathe out for the final four seconds, and then begin again. Doing this for up to five minutes at a time can help you feel more centered and relaxed. With more emotional composure, you will find the strength you need to move through your problems successfully.

Use the Power of Metaphors

Metaphors are absolutely wonderful tools you can use to help gain a proper perspective on the problems and circumstances confronting your reality. Use them to help you see your problems in a different light. Or use them to find more strength and comfort in the moment.

Metaphors will provide you with a different view of yourself and your circumstances. This shift of perspective might be all you need to stay relaxed, calm and composed during pressure situations.

For instance, your natural tendency and instinct might be to panic a little when you're suddenly confronted with an unexpected problem. In such instances, you will most likely blow the problem out of proportion, which will have a tendency to overwhelm your senses, while also causing you emotional distress. Instead of picturing your problem as this gigantic

mountain that you now must climb, imagine it instead as a tiny ant. See it as a tiny little ant walking beneath your feet.

The benefit of looking at your problem in this way is that you are no longer seeing it as this big dragon that you must slay. Instead, you are imagining it as something small - as something you can easily control and influence. This will have a tendency to calm your mind while helping you gain the proper perspective you need to solve this problem.

Another metaphor you could use is to imagine your problem as mouldable clay. Here your problem is no longer this stiff titanium wall that's standing between you and your desired outcome. Instead, it's something you can mold and reshape to your heart's content.

In the previous couple of examples you were using metaphors for your problems, however, imagine you could now also use metaphors. For instance, imagine yourself as water. Or imagine yourself as a soaring bird. Or imagine yourself as gentle clouds rolling across the sky. Ask yourself:

- How would I approach this problem if I was liquid water?
- What new perspectives could I gain if I was a soaring eagle?
- What if I approached this problem from the perspective of a gentle rolling cloud?

These metaphors will certainly not always provide you with instant answers. They do require some thought and contemplation. Answers and new perspectives will come the more life you give to each of the metaphors you use. What's most important is that you use them to help separate yourself from the problem in order to gain some new and unique insights and perspectives that will help you to move forward in a more positive way.

Build Your Emotional Coping Skills

Building your emotional coping skills means you are learning to manage to proactively handle your emotional responses. This often begins with developing a deeper understanding of the meaning of each of your emotions, and of your emotional tendencies.

Succeeding here means that you will no longer be at the mercy of your emotions. You will instead be in control of your emotional destiny. No longer will pressure situations or problems overwhelm you because you have finally become a fully aware and present individual who understands and appreciates the value that every emotion has to offer.

Building your emotional coping skills will, of course, take some time and effort. However, everything worthwhile takes time. It is after all only within each experience that you will find the lessons you need to help build your emotional intelligence.

Long-term Lifestyle Changes to Help You Stay Calm

In order to become a more serene, calm and peaceful person in the long-run, it's important that you make some long-term lifestyle changes that will provide you with the ability to more readily control your emotional responses. However, it's not only about the lifestyle, it's also about the mindset you bring into every moment of your life. In fact, both lifestyle and mindset go hand-in-hand and work together to help you stay calm under pressure.

Here are some suggestions to help you stay calm under pressure for the long-term:

Get Good Quality Sleep and Exercise

Good quality sleep and exercise is absolutely paramount. Getting good quality sleep will help you become much more emotionally resilient. Likewise, regular exercise will provide you with the energy you need to consciously and physically work through difficulties far more effectively.

When you're well rested and when your body is feeling fit, you will naturally have a more calming energy about you. It will be much easier for you to stay relaxed during uncertain times and difficult moments. You will find yourself feeling more centered, focused and in control. This will provide you with the clarity of mind you need to work through emotional issues far more successfully.

Eat a Well Balanced Diet

Moving on from the previous point, it's also very important to eat well. Eating a well balanced and healthy diet, keeping yourself hydrated with water throughout the day, and avoiding the habit of indulging in addictions

will help you to manage your emotions, and your responses to the events and circumstances of your life far more effectively.

In particular avoid drugs, alcohol, sugar and caffeine addictions. These addictions will put you on edge, making it very difficult to stay calm and centered throughout the day.

Spend Time Simplifying Your Life

It's difficult to stay calm and centered when you're living in a complicated mess. When there's too much clutter, when you're constantly trying to find things, when you have too many commitments and responsibilities — far more than you can handle — that is when things become very messy. This is a clear indication that your life is far too complicated. It's very difficult to find calmness from within if you live in a hectic and complex world.

Commit yourself today to the process of simplifying your life and environment. For instance, take time to organize yourself and your things. Make sure to find a place for everything, and put everything in its place. Be sure to de-clutter your environment, to eliminate all non-essential things, or simply pack them away out of sight and out of mind.

It's also important to avoid living a frantic lifestyle. Having too many commitments and responsibilities don't give you enough time for yourself and your own emotional needs. What you need is space, and a clean uncluttered environment to help you unwind, relax, and calm down. This is the sort of environment that will encourage moments of self-reflection that you can use to help improve your decisions moving forward.

Physically Slow Down

Living at a frantic pace can work quite well for some people. In fact, there are people who thrive on urgency, while still maintaining a calm and

centered energy. However, this kind of lifestyle isn't for everyone because it can lead to high levels of stress and anxiety.

If you typically suffer from stress and anxiety throughout your day, then it's a clear indication that you are living too frantically. There's just too much going on in your life, and at the moment you're just unable to handle yourself or your circumstances. In such instances, it's important to begin slowing things down. This, of course, isn't easy. There's just so much to do and so little time. However, what you must do is re-prioritize things in order to help create the space and time you need to slow down.

Slowing down doesn't necessarily mean that you do everything more slowly. It does, however, mean that you do things more consciously. Therefore instead of rushing through a task, think through the task and take a little time to consider how to best work on this task in the most effective and time-efficient way.

Slowing down also means finding time for periods of relaxation. It means taking regular thought-breaks. Thought-breaks are times throughout the day when you take several minutes to separate yourself from your tasks and activities to just sit down and think about your decisions and actions. These moments of self-reflection could very well provide you with some interesting insights that will help you work much more productively moving forward.

Consistently Build Your Support Network

During moments of great emotional upheaval, it's important to have people whom you can talk to and reach out to. These people are part of your support network. They are there to assist you during difficult moments of your life, and you are also there to assist them in their emotional and physical struggles.

Take some time now to consider the kind of people that could add value to your life. Also, consider the people you could readily assist and support. Jot down the names of all these individuals and commit yourself to regularly staying in touch with them. You could even create an emotional Mastermind group. This is where you invite like-minded individuals to a get-together once a week or month where you discuss problems, concerns, and other emotional struggles.

Your support network will provide you with an anchor you can use during difficult emotional moments of your life. They will instill within you the calmness you need when there are emotional storms brewing around you.

Prepare for Difficulties in Advance

One of the best ways to stay calm, focused and centered at all times, is to prepare for seemingly unexpected setbacks, difficulties, and problems in advance. Of course, you might be thinking that if something is unexpected, then there's absolutely no way to prepare for it. Therefore let's look at it another way: Taking time to think about and preparing for possible future scenarios brings them from the realm of the "unknown" into your conscious awareness. Therefore, what was unexpected before, is now something you are ready to tackle in the moment or in the future.

When you have a full and complete awareness of what you are going to do in the next moment when things change, you will naturally be more calm, collected and emotionally centered. It's often those unexpected moments when events and circumstances catch you by surprise that lead to emotional upheaval and overwhelm. However, given the fact that you are now prepared for the possibilities, you will, therefore, be in a much more favorable position to stay calm and collected during these difficult moments of your life.

Think Through Your Decisions in Advance - Moving on from the previous point, it's also important that you reflect upon the consequences of your choices, decisions, and actions in advance. It's very possible that certain decisions can lead you down one path, and other decisions will lead you down a completely different path. Both of these paths have consequences and certain outcomes that you must keep in mind. Some of these outcomes might lead you into an emotional tornado, while other outcomes might be a little more favorable.

Taking into consideration the short and long-term possibilities of your choices and decisions will put you in the driver's seat of your life. Your mind will be prepared and ready to deal with numerous scenarios and situations. And when your mind is prepared, your emotions will be steady and you will respond proactively to the events and circumstances of your life. This will leave you feeling calmer and centered moving forward.

One of the best ways to identify the potential consequences of your choices and decisions is to simply take some time to sit and reflect in a quiet place. Just sit, and visualize "if I make this choice right now, it will most likely result in..." Take time to consider all the possibilities, and then prepare yourself mentally and physically for all the possible outcomes.

CHAPTER 10: **BREATHING THERAPY**

Breathing exercises are an excellent, quick and easy solution for stress and anxiety relief. Proper breathing techniques work on anxiety on a physiological level by automatically slowing your heart rate. The effect on anger is almost instant. Because calm breathing is a physiological strategy, this approach is also virtually universally effective for getting anger relief. It's hard to go wrong with it.

Don't wait until fight-or-flight kicks in before minding the breath. Controlled breathing not only keeps your mind and body functioning at their best, it can also lower blood pressure, promote feelings of calm and relaxation, and help you de-stress. While the effects of breathing therapy on anger haven't been studied at length at least in a controlled clinical setting, many experts encourage using the breath as a means of increasing awareness, mindfulness, or for to find that elusive state of Zen.

There are lots of breathing exercises you can do to help relax. The first exercise below - equal breathing - is simple to learn and easy to do. It's best to start there if you have never done breathing exercises before. The other exercises are more advanced. All of these exercises can help you relax and relieve stress. From the confines of a bed, a desk, or anywhere negativity finds its way, consider these six techniques to help keep calm and carry on.

Equal Breathing

How it's done: Balance can do a body good, beginning with the breath. To start, inhale for a count of four, then exhale for a count of four (all through the nose, which adds a natural resistance to the breath). Got the basic pranayama down? More advanced yogis can aim for six to eight counts per breath with the same goal in mind: Calm the nervous system, increase focus, and reduce stress.

When it works best: Anytime, anyplace - but this is one technique that's especially effective before bed. Similar to counting sheep, if you're having trouble falling asleep, this breath can help take your mind off the racing thoughts, or whatever might be distracting you.

Abdominal Breathing Technique

How it's done: With one hand on the chest and the other on the belly, take a deep breath in through the nose, ensuring the diaphragm (not the chest) inflates with enough air to create a stretch in the lungs. The goal: Six to 10 deep, slow breaths per minute for 10 minutes each day to experience immediate reductions to heart rate and blood pressure. Keep at it for six to eight weeks, and those benefits might stick around even longer.

When it works best: Before an exam or any stressful event. But keep in mind, those who operate in a stressed state all the time might be a little shocked how hard it is to control the breath. To help train the breath, consider biofeedback tools which can help you pace your breathing.

Progressive Relaxation

How it's done: To nix tension from head to toe, close the eyes and focus on tensing and relaxing each muscle group for two to three seconds each. Start with the feet and toes, then move up to the knees, thighs, glutes, chest, arms, hands, neck, jaw, and eyes—all while maintaining deep, slow breaths. Having trouble staying on track? Breathe in through the nose, hold for a count of five while the muscles tense, then breathe out through the mouth on release.

When it works best: At home, at a desk, or even on the road. One word of caution: Dizziness is never the goal. If holding the breath ever feels uncomfortable, tone it down to just a few seconds.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

How it's done: A yogi's best friend, this breath is said to bring calm, balance, and unite the right and left sides of the brain. Starting in a comfortable meditative pose, hold the right thumb over the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril. At the peak of inhalation, close off the left nostril with the ring finger, then exhale through the right nostril. Continue the pattern, inhaling through the right nostril, closing it off with the right thumb, and exhaling through the left nostril.

When it works best: Crunch time, or whenever it's time to focus or energize. Just don't try this one before bed: It "clears the channels" and make people feel more awake. It's almost like a cup of coffee.

Guided Visualization

How it's done: Head straight for your happy place, no questions asked. With a coach, therapist, or helpful recording as your guide, breathe deeply

while focusing on pleasant, positive images to replace any negative thoughts. While it's just one means of achieving mindfulness, guided visualization helps puts you in the place you want to be, rather than letting your mind go to the internal dialogue that is stressful.

When it works best: Pretty much any place you can safely close your eyes and let go.

Skull Shining Breath

How it's done: Ready to brighten up your day from the inside out? This one begins with a long, slow inhale, followed by a quick, powerful exhale generated from the lower belly. Once comfortable with the contraction, up the pace to one inhale-exhale (all through the nose) every one to two seconds, for a total of 10 breaths.

When it works best: When it's time to wake up or start looking on the bright side. It's pretty abdominal-intensive, but it will warm up the body, shake off stale energy, and wake up the brain. If alternate nostril breathing is like coffee, consider this a shot of espresso.

CHAPTER 11: PERSONALITY DISORDER - HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT

The word ‘personality’ refers to the pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behavior that makes each of us the individuals that we are. These affect the way we think, feel and behave towards ourselves and others.

We don't always think, feel and behave in exactly the same way – it depends on the situation we are in, the people with us and many other things. But we mostly tend to behave in fairly predictable ways. Personality disorders are a type of mental health problem where your attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors cause you longstanding problems in your life. Your experience of personality disorder is unique to you. However, you may often experience difficulties in how you think about yourself and others. You may find it difficult to change these unwanted patterns.

What Causes Personality Disorders?

Personality disorders develop in childhood and the thoughts and behaviors become increasingly ingrained in adulthood.

Some personality disorders are more common in men (i.e. antisocial personality disorder) and others are more common in women (i.e. borderline personality disorder).

Many people with a personality disorder do not seek help until after years of distress, if at all. This contributes to our lack of knowledge about their causes and development. Different causes appear to be associated with the different types of personality disorders. However, like most mental illnesses, the causes appear to be a complex combination of genetic factors, biochemical factors, and individual, family, and environmental factors.

What Are The Signs Of A Personality Disorder?

You might be given a diagnosis of personality disorder if all three of these apply:

- The way you think, feel and behave causes you or other significant problems in daily life. For example, you may feel unable to trust others or you may often feel abandoned, causing you or others unhappiness.
- The way you think, feel and behave causes significant problems across different aspects of your life. You may struggle to start or keep friendships, to control your feelings and behavior or get on with people at work, for example.
- These problems continue for a long time. These difficult patterns may have started when you were a child or teenager and can carry on into your life as an adult.

You may welcome your diagnosis, finding it a way to make sense of your experience. Or you may find it more difficult to come to terms with.

The Main Types Of Personality Disorder

There is a wide range of personality disorders. All of them involve a pervasive pattern of behavior, which means that the characteristic behaviors and thoughts are evident in almost all aspects of a person's life. There are three clusters of personality disorders: odd or eccentric disorders; dramatic, emotional or erratic disorders; and anxious or fearful disorders. Specific disorders are as follows:

Paranoid personality disorder is a pervasive distrust and suspiciousness of others, such that their motives are interpreted as malevolent.

Schizoid personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of detachment from social relationships and a restricted range of expression of emotions in interpersonal settings.

Schizotypal personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of social and interpersonal deficits marked by acute discomfort with reduced capacity for close relationships. It is also characterized by distortions of thinking and perception and eccentric behavior.

Antisocial personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others.

Histrionic personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of excessive emotion and attention seeking.

Narcissistic personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or actual behavior), need for admiration, and lack of empathy.

Avoidant personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of social inhibition, feelings of inadequacy, and hypersensitivity to negative evaluation.

Dependent personality disorder is a pervasive and excessive need to be taken care of, which leads to submissive and clinging behavior and fears of

separation.

Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of preoccupation with orderliness, perfectionism, and mental and interpersonal control, at the expense of flexibility, openness, and efficiency.

Borderline personality disorder is a pervasive pattern of instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image, moods, and control over impulses.

Understanding borderline personality disorder is particularly important because it can be misdiagnosed as another mental illness, particularly a mood disorder.

People with borderline personality disorder are likely to have:

- Wide mood swings.
- Inappropriate anger or difficulty controlling anger.
- Chronic feelings of emptiness.
- Recurrent suicidal behavior, gestures or threats, or self-harming behavior.
- Impulsive and self-destructive behavior.
- A pattern of unstable relationships.
- Persistent unstable self-image or sense of self.
- Fear of abandonment.
- Periods of paranoia and loss of contact with reality.

CHAPTER 12: MEDITATIONS TECHNIQUES

The crucial skill of meditation is learning to focus, to be completely centered. As your whole being gets engrossed in meditation, every tension and stress of daily life will fall from your shoulders. In barely a couple of seconds, you will feel rested and refreshed. Your mental attitude will be more constructive and compassionate. Your family and colleagues will immediately see the benefits of your meditation. You'll attain best conclusions, have greater creativity, and become playfully adroit in dealing the challenges of the day. The world is full of exhausted, ill-natured, stressed-out persons trying to be the best, attempting to do the correct thing, trying to equilibrate their career and bring up a healthy family. Meditation helps you make an honest, loving attitude so that you can endure even the hardest or most intense times.

On a regular basis meditating will help you feel positive about your day-to-day life, rejuvenated, and spiritually attuned. Meditation is a great source for preventing feelings of distress and overwhelm, frustrations that often stem from modern-day stresses. We scurry from place to place, troubled by our cellular phone and our pagers, consumed by the demand and convenience of e-mail. We have so much to pay attention to that the priority of our relationship with ourselves, the most significant relationship of all, is badly ignored. The fact that you're curious about meditation Signifies that it's not too late to begin your journey towards a healthier, better lifestyle. You must remember that you're the foundation of all that swirls around you. When you are spiritually Fit, you will be able to serve other people. Have in mind the saying by President Lincoln, "You don't strengthen the weak by weakening the strong." Every building bears a base. The larger the building, the Firmer the base. Once the building is fully built, the foundation is covered. It is buried deep into the earth, even though it holds the entire

construction. Try to look at building your own spiritual strength in this manner. When we forget our roots, our foundation, life is full of stress and fear. Only by diving deep inside can we reconnect with our own roots, our own foundation.

Meditation is a scientific discipline of self-discovery, self-understanding, and self-transformation. By meditation, we recollect who we're and hence, regain our dignity and our love for life. This is among the significant reasons why meditation is a basic, foundational issue for all of us. We have to devote attention.

How to Get Started With Meditation in 5 Easy Steps

Step 1: Prepare Your Space.

First things first: select your spot. Find somewhere quiet and peaceful, where you won't be disturbed during your meditation. This might be your bedroom, home office, or anywhere that you can close the door and find uninterrupted solitude. As you practice meditation, it will become easier to practice anywhere, but as you are first getting started, quiet and solitude are very beneficial. Once you've settled on a location, make sure that your meditation spot is neat and clean. A messy, cluttered space can make it harder to relax and focus. While not required, you might also find it helpful to set the mood by lighting a candle or stick of incense, or playing some soft, ambient music - whatever helps you get "in the zone."

Step 2. Set a Goal.

Starting a meditation practice can be challenging to people, especially in our fast-paced world. I find that it is extremely helpful to decide in advance how long you are going to practice so that you have accountability from the beginning. I recommend 20-40 minutes per session, depending on how

comfortable you are in your practice; adjust as needed. It's important to note that distractions are inevitable, and that is okay. Do what you can to minimize them (turn off your phone, let your roommates/family know what you're up to, etc.). If you are interrupted for whatever reason, just sit back down and finish your session as soon as you can. The biggest hurdle by far, especially in the beginning, is not distractions, but your own mind and restlessness. The ego can't stand sitting quietly, doing nothing, and it will come up with an endless list of things you should or could be doing instead. Don't give in. Set a timer, or a stopwatch, or an alarm on your phone, and don't dismiss your meditation until your settled-upon time has been reached.

Step 3. Get Comfortable.

When I say "get comfortable", I am speaking in the literal sense. Posture is important in meditation, for many reasons. It helps you breathe easier and deeper. It helps the flow and circulation of blood and energy. Perhaps most importantly, sitting properly will help to minimize aches, pains, and discomfort. There is not one correct way to sit; this depends on your body type, bone structure, and constitution. You can sit on the floor, on a cushion or a bench. You can sit in a chair, or even stand up if that's easier. The important thing is not to slouch or lean against anything. You should be relaxed yet poised, loose yet balanced, comfortable but alert. Pay attention to any pain or discomfort in your back or your legs, and make adjustments as necessary. It takes time, but eventually, you will find the "sweet spot," where your spine is erect, but not rigid; straight, but not stiff. The perfect balance of effort and ease.

Step 4. Follow the Breath.

Bring your attention to your breathing. Focus on the sensations: the air flowing in and out of your mouth and nostrils; the rise and fall of your chest, the filling, and emptying of your belly. Don't try to control your breathing. No need to deliberately breathe slow or deep (although this will often happen on its own, as you become aware of your breathing). Just pay attention, and feel the rhythm, the ebb, and flow. There are breathing exercises which we will explore later on, but for now, just observe.

Step 5. Just Relax.

Easier said than done, right? But relaxing is possible, and the first step is awareness. Start by becoming aware of any places in your body where there is tension or discomfort. We have a tendency to store stress in our bodies, particularly in the legs, shoulders, back, neck, and face. Each time you breathe out, imagine that tension flowing out of your body. With every breath, release and relax, until you feel entirely comfortable and at ease. This can take some time, especially as you are first getting started. Generally, the more often you practice, the quicker and easier it will be to let go of stress and sink into a state of peace and relaxation.

Meditation Techniques You Can Use

There are several different meditation techniques that a person can practice. The important thing is to find a meditation technique that you are comfortable with and try to stick with that one. If you tend to bounce around from one meditation technique to the other you will not get the full benefits of meditation. Meditation has many benefits both physically, psychologically and spiritually. Some of these include control anger, lower blood pressure, improved skin tone, happy outlook on life, less stress and just an overall feeling of wellbeing. Today we are just going to give a brief outline of five of the major meditation techniques.

Trataka

The first meditation technique we want to talk about is Trataka Meditation. Trataka in Sanskrit means to look or gaze. When performing Trataka Meditation a person fixes their gaze on an external object. This can be a dot on the wall, candle flame or whatever. Trataka Meditation is an ancient yoga practiced to develop concentration and the Ajna (third eye) chakra. Basically, the person gazes at the object till the eyes begin to water. As they are gazing they let all thoughts flow through their mind and pass away. Once the eyes begin to water the eyes are then closed. When Trataka Meditation is performed with a candle after the eyes begin to water and are closed the person concentrates on the image of the flame. At first, this will be an after image but will fade into seeing the image with the mind's eye. This is a good way to develop the third eye chakra.

Mantra

The next meditation technique is Mantra Meditation. Mantra Meditation is where you say a word such as ohm over and over in your mind. In Mantra Meditation the word acts like a vehicle that takes you to a state of no

thought. When repeating the mantra or word it is very common for the mind to drift off into other thoughts. When this happens the person needs to gently bring their thoughts back to the mantra and start repeating it once again. In Mantra Meditation the word that is repeated is specific for the purpose of transforming the person in a spiritual way. Typically a mantra will be given to a mediator by a guru.

Chakra

The third meditation technique is Chakra Meditation. There are seven major chakras in the human body. When performing Chakra Meditation the person will focus on a specific chakra for the purpose of cleansing or energizing that chakra. Chakra Meditation has the ability to revitalize a person's body through the cleansing, revitalizing process. As the chakras are interrelated it is advised to start with the root chakra and work your way up when performing Chakra Meditation. When doing Chakra Meditation you can also use the aid of crystals to help in the cleansing, revitalization process. Chakra Meditation can be a powerful meditation for healing and the clearing of negative emotions.

Vipassana

The forth meditation technique is Vipassana Meditation. Vipassana Meditation is one of the oldest forms of meditation and is used for the purpose of gaining insight into one's nature and the nature of reality. The goal of Vipassana Meditation is to bring suffering to an end for the individual. This is accomplished by eliminating the three conditions which are impermanence, suffering, and not-self. After practicing Vipassana Meditation for a long period the meditator is supposed to come to a point where they separate these three conditions from themselves and achieving nirvana. It is believed that all physical and psychological conditions are not

part of the true self or the "I" and should be eliminated with the practice of Vipassana Meditation.

Raja

The last meditation technique we will talk about is Raja Meditation. In Raja Meditation the mind is considered king and it is the mind's job to tame the emotions and the body. Raja Meditation attempts to have the mind bring the body and emotions under complete control. Raja Meditation and the associated practices is a very disciplined type of meditation. When a person takes up Raja Meditation they are expected to give up things like anger, sex, alcohol, meat and pay close attention to their actions. The idea in Raja Meditation for giving up these things is it prepares the body and mind for meditation.

I hope you will put your all into those meditations. After all, you deserve peace and happiness. And the meditations above are very beneficial

To get the most out of those meditations, use these tips.

- Understand that anger is a feeling created by yourself. Sure, certain external events can lead us to anger, but the ultimate feeling, anger itself, is created by ourselves. An important part of Buddhist meditation is to recognize that we, ourselves, create our emotions. In fact, the best way to gain control of your feelings and emotions is to understand that you yourself are creating them. Take a look at my guide to controlling your feelings and emotions for more on this.
- Understand that anger is a product of the mind. That's why the only way to stop being angry is to control the mind. And that's really what meditation is, its total self-control. It's self-mastery. Naturally, self-

mastery is not so easy. It's a challenge. Buddha meditated for decades before attaining enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. But we don't need to achieve enlightenment to manage our anger. We just need a bit of control.

- Accept reality as it is. To do this, simply focus your mind 100% on any part of your present environment. For instance, if you're walking home from work and you're angry, just focus your mind 100% on what you're doing: walking. Your anger will chill like cinders on the snow.

CHAPTER 13: LIFE-CHANGE

Why is change important? Well without change there will be no progress, without progress there will be no movement, without movement there will be no growth, without growth there will be no development, without development there will be no events, without event there will be no time, without time there will be no space, without time and space there will no existence. Despite the importance of change we cannot help but resist change. Why is that? Well, we are far removed from our natural purpose in life which includes my reference of the I's of life; to live, to love, and to learn. Rather we live in a materialistic world, in a society where we are defined by career, status, class, sex, race, and age. We spend our lives trying to live up to the standards of society while losing focus on the purpose of life changes in our individual lives.

The direction of change follows an individual's purpose in life. Keep in mind that everyone has bad thoughts whether they are aware or not, but not everyone has good thoughts. Change can push us in the right or a wrong direction depending on our thoughts of purpose in life. I believe living life with a wholesome purpose is the best environment for change. Knowing our purpose in life is essential in understanding and accepting life changes, including steering our life in the right direction through our life choices.

There are a variety of reasons for this not being the case, one being that as we live longer, the changes usually are more impacting to our life and life meaning. The larger changes create a number of smaller losses and ripples in our world and many times we must grieve a cluster of losses all at one time. When life changes occur, such as a change in our roles, physical abilities, career, relationship or financial status, it can leave one feeling

overwhelmed. These types of changes have a deeper meaning and impact on life and identity more than one would imagine.

It is true that the repetitive nature of having to deal with change may build basic resiliency and bring about an awareness of how to cope better, acquiring new emotional tools in our toolbox. For the larger or more significant changes, those skills may cease to work sufficiently. Here are some tips that may help.

- Don't ignore the impact of the change. The sooner we accept the change has occurred and that it is real, the sooner we can begin to manage it.
- If you find yourself uncertain why the impact of the change is affecting you at this level then there is something you have not seen. Is this coming on the back of a number of smaller changes, either associated with this one change or even unrelated? If not then the intensity is likely related to your self-image or the meaning held in maintaining what was.
- Understand where your control lies. We often see the world as permanent and when it changes around us we may feel like any control we once felt has dissolved. We must shift our control from external to internal. You still have control over your thoughts beliefs and feelings. Putting your emphasis on these areas can help one feel more in control and therefore more resilient.
- With all change comes some loss, but often there is also new opportunity. The new opportunity may not be apparent to you now, however, the belief that it is there, yet to be discovered is vitally important.
- Life change is loss and therefore, we feel grief for what was. We must understand that grief takes time to get through; it doesn't happen

overnight. Identity took a process to create so re-forging a broken identity takes a process, which requires time.

- Shift your focus to what hasn't changed; what aspects of your life and identity have remained intact. What beliefs have not been shaken by recent events? Go beyond making a mental record; actually write the beliefs down. The action of writing things down, make them more tangible and therefore more concrete and emotionally accessible to us.
- For the big losses, we may even need to rediscover who we are again. The example of spousal separation comes to mind when they have been a couple since young adulthood. In these cases, it can be helpful to go back to your essential self, the person you were prior to the relationship. What did you enjoy doing, who were your friends and why? What did you dream of doing back then that you never got to do? These are the types of questions we can begin to use to discover that essential self: the self we were becoming before our trajectory was changed by the other person's essential self.
- Surround yourself with people who are supportive and not negative minded. We have all kinds of relationships in our lives and not all are healthy or productive to be around when going through tough periods in our life. Surround yourself from negative and fearful people.
- Monitor what type of television, radio programs, and even music you listen too. These things can bring added stress, anxiety and depressed feelings you don't need.

Some life changing events may require some additional assistance to get through. No matter how resilient we have been, there can be a change, or changes, that are just so shattering to our sense of safety in the world we need professional direction. If you are going through this type of life change, you likely do not need to work with someone weekly. Even 1-2

sessions per month can provide great benefit and make the difference in surviving or thriving through difficult life change.

The purpose of life changes is evident in our very existence, without change we would not exist. We experience life changes throughout our existence or lifetime and how these changes impact our lives depends on our individual purpose. When we live life with a wholesome purpose it is easier to accept change because we can understand the benefits of change. We may not like or understand the difficult twist and turns of change, however, knowing with a positive perspective that change is a part of life perhaps the purpose of life changes would outweigh the our resistance to change.

CONCLUSION

It should now be clear that anger can be expressed in many forms. It can be spoken in angry or sarcastic words. Nagging or quarreling are especially divisive forms of anger. It can be expressed in a mood like irritability or in the silence of pouting. It can also be physically demonstrated through violent actions. Revenge and hatred are often the most extreme forms of anger.

To allow oneself to exhibit any of these forms of anger is bad. It is a sign of a flaw in one's character and personality. More devastating than the effects on the person himself are the evil effects that anger can have on other people. Anger destroys harmony in the home. It can endanger peace in a neighborhood, a city, country, or even in the world. Angry people cause problems wherever they go – on the job, in a meeting, or at a party.

Anger is also a stumbling block on the road to perfection. For some people, it is just a small obstacle. For others, it is a major stumbling block. Either way, a person must work diligently each day and in every human situation to remedy this great problem of anger. With hard work and the ever-present assistance of friends, family and health professional, this problem can be remedied. Unnecessary and unreasonable anger can be stopped.

I hope that you found some of the ideas in this booklet useful. You can continue to use the techniques you found helpful long into the future and they should continue to benefit you. If some of the ideas are not particularly helpful at first, it is perhaps worth sticking with them for a few weeks to give them a chance to work. If however, you feel your situation remains largely unchanged or if you did not find this booklet useful, you should speak to a professional who can tell you about the other options available which you could find helpful.

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

-TRAIN YOUR BRAIN-



*Improve Focus, Brain Secrets, Peak Performance,
How Champions Think, Critical Thinking,
Self-Confidence, Powerful Habits, Mental
Resilience Like A Spartan And SEAL*

G. S. Baker

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

-TRAIN YOUR BRAIN-

Improve Focus, Brain Secrets, Peak Performance, How Champions Think, Critical Thinking, Self-Confidence, Powerful Habits, Mental Resilience Like A Spartan And SEAL

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This book will introduce to you some of the methods used to develop mental toughness and self-confidence. These techniques also apply to anyone who is interested in becoming more mentally tough, and who is willing to work toward achieving their specific personal and professional goals.

This mental toughness book is the most important ingredient that is very much necessary for achieving goals in life because during the course of your journey towards your life's goals, chances of you facing bumps are very high. Not only that, this book will help you acquire resilience, determination and willpower so you can persist till you reach your goals.

This Mental toughness book gives you the ability and strength to push despite opposition and hurdles. So, it is imperative that you must try cultivating the trait..

This Mental toughness book will allow you to handle the difficulties you may face in your life. A few experts firmly restrict this attribute to the sports field. But a number of other experts believe that this attribute pervades every area of our life. Researchers who authored the book "Mental Toughness," says that this attribute is "the quality which determines in large part how people deal effectively with challenge, stressors, and pressure... irrespective of prevailing circumstances."

According to these researchers, this trait consists of a few critical components and they are challenge, control, commitment and confidence. As far as "challenge," the first component, is concerned, you must view challenges, not as obstacles, but as opportunities. The crux of "control," the second component, is to believe that you have complete control over your destiny and life.

Researches prove that the attribute has a genetic link. At the same time, experts suggest that people can learn and strengthen their mental toughness as well. But how can you cultivate this trait?

1. Believe that you have the ability for achieving your goals

A study conducted revealed that top performers and especially, elite athletes always possessed extreme self-belief. This means that they firmly believe that they can succeed. In other words, if you believe in yourself and keep encouraging yourself positively, you can achieve your goal regardless of what it is.

2. Prefer intrinsic motivations to external rewards

External rewards like popularity, money, etc. are certainly nice but intrinsic motivations are better because they come from the "within." This means you will love doing things just for doing them. When you love doing things, you will push harder and try to perform better. In fact, mentally tough people love doing things in which they are interested and their success in their tasks come from intrinsic motivations and not because of external rewards. This means that they love the challenges they may face while doing things and overcoming those challenges is the real reward for them.

3. Mentally tough people do not get upset when they encounter setbacks

Mentally tough people rebound even when they encounter setbacks and while doing so, they move ahead with stronger determination and resolve. They innovate to find out new ways for overcoming such phases.

4. They are self-directed

This means that they do not let things happen. Instead, they focus on creating the life they like to lead. They set goals and take appropriate action

for going behind their goals and achieving them. In other words, they learn the process of setting goals and pursue the goals relentlessly.

5. They keep their focus even if there are distractions

Distractions are bound to be there in everyone's life but mentally tough people do not allow them to play spoil-sport to their focus. Remember that it is impossible to always have everything right. Even if other things need your attention, you must focus only on your goals and work towards achieving them.

INTRODUCTION

Because human beings are sensitive, there are several ways we can bring on depression and stress. Unfortunately, a lot of reproach still surrounds the effects of mental health. If we become sick with a physical ailment, we are more than willing to divulge this information to others. However, being unhappy is often seen by the individual as a sign of personal deficiency. If the latter describes you, please do not take these emotions lightly.

Do not feel dis-heartened if you feel that you find it difficult to cope with the way the world is. You are not alone, many others have the same problem. What you need to do is develop your mental toughness. Depending on how mentally equipped you are to deal with disappointments, will ultimately determine your general psychological state. Even the most seasoned people have, at some stage in life, suffered from a mental collapse.

We need to ask ourselves, From where do we attain our strength of mind or mental toughness? Some of it apparently seems to come from our genes. Evidence shows that mental health has been partly accredited to hereditary factors. It is a proven fact that if we are happy with our present way of life, we have more confidence in ourselves. Identifying that you require to build up your mental toughness will lead to a number of possible things you can do.

Firstly, a reality check is required every so often if things become too much to bear. Ask yourself whether you are over burdening yourself. You must try to focus on your priorities. People resort to a self defeating strategy by overloading themselves with things to do to stop them from thinking about feeling down. Think wisely when you select additional activities you want

to partake in; for example, contemplate a hobby or sport that has a positive effect on your emotional strength.

Secondly, think about speaking to people who can assist you when problems arise. Over and over again, individuals hide their feelings from others. Try not to do this! Sometimes what we need is someone who is prepared to listen. Low self esteem and depression that overcomes you needs to be faced head on by talking to a doctor or other qualified personnel.

Balance is understood as a sense that all the important aspects of life are working together in total harmony. Do not forget that balance is a very important word when it comes to mental toughness. The concept of balance differs between every person, due to the fact we all have our own lifestyles with differing requirements. Peoples perception of balance could potentially alter at different stages in their life. They may wish to work beyond their allotted hours at work, but as a consequence, the financial freedom they desire could reap the rewards of a life that has both balance and stability. However, off balance can occur when we are knocked back in life. Off balance could result in us getting confused and weighed down and hinder us in our decision making. Believing in yourself and your life goals and continuing to move forwards is the secret to balance.

People discover that there is a shift in their sense of balance and consequently their prerogatives in life. In your late teens, your social life may provide you with balance. Once you reach the middle of your life, you may have become financially secure and want to rediscover yourself again. Later on in life, holding down a job could possibly have more importance. People need to take stock of their lives and regularly need to consider where they are now and from where it is they have come. This is very

important. Take your time about thinking where your priorities lie in terms of stability and balance.

What we 'need' to be content in life is what people speculate about. Social pressures such as family, friends and mass media brings this about. Truthfully though, what is best for you is only known by oneself. Have unwavering confidence in your own instincts more and listen to your inner voice. Seriously question whether your life is too hectic. Have your loved ones and your family priorities been pushed back due to overwork? Get together an action plan to try and get as close as possible to what you would be doing in an ideal world!

CHAPTER ONE

Mental Habits And Get Out From The Comfort Zone

Mental Habit

Mental habit can be defined as an acquired, repeated behavior. A pattern of behavior that we repeat without hardly questioning why we think as we think or why we do how we do what we do. If at the end of reading the list of successful mental habits you find that there are some that you do not use, keep in mind that habits can be incorporated. Just as you have incorporated some that may take you away from feeling a successful person, you can also "uninstall" them and change them for the ones you choose to have a successful life.

Mental Habits of Success

The Habit Of Gratitude: Being grateful to you, to others, to life is an excellent habit. Have you ever thought about all the people who participate daily in your life? Do you feel grateful for it? How many people can you thank for the toast that you eat at breakfast? Do you think the farmer who sows the wheat, who harvests it, who converts it into flour, who converts that flour into bread and bakes it while you are still sleeping, who takes it from the bakery shop, to the shop where you buy it, who buys it, when it's not you? With only breakfast we already have a dozen people for whom to feel gratitude. We can live without thinking, or we can live feeling gratitude for every moment of our life. Successful people are people who feel grateful for who they are, for those who have them by their side, for what they have achieved, for the challenges that life has posed for them, for being alive ...

The Habit Of Celebrating: What do you focus on your day to day? In your failures or your successes? Celebrate the daily successes of you and others, celebrate the successes that have led you to where you are today is also a mental habit of healthy. There are people who do not know how to celebrate, feel happy for each of their achievements, instead, they spend their days thinking about everything that has gone wrong. They are people who are not comfortable with their lives, because they always lack something to become happy, because they focus on what they have not achieved, instead of congratulating themselves, feeling proud of their work and effort. You can say, do not speak English, I never finish anything I started. But that's not true. Maybe they have finished a university career or dozens of projects, but instead of recognizing the steps they have taken to get where they are at that moment, they are still thinking about what they have not been able to achieve until now. Successful people instead of

thinking about what they are not, do not have or do not, celebrate what they do, what they are and what they have.

The Habit Of Trusting: Do you distrust others, that someone does something good for you, of the good faith of others, that if you lend something they will return it to you as it was, that if you do a favor, they will not remember it? Do you think others are going to cheat you, cheat you, take advantage of you in some way and try to protect you? When we trust or distrust, others perceive it. Have you noticed that some people act with distrust even if you have not given them reasons to do so? How do you feel if this happens? Trusting is scientifically proven that it helps the other person to trust us too. Successful people expect the best from others, trust in them and give without expecting to receive, although they trust that mutual trust will be more advantageous for both. When we give without the expectation of expecting something in return, generally the other person feels more predisposed to return the favor, although we have not put it as a premise to offer our favor first.

The Habit Of Evaluating Your Life: Are you one of the people who ask themselves if what they are doing brings them closer to their ideal self? Successful people have acquired the mental habit of continually asking themselves if they are taking the steps that lead them to be the person they want to be. They do not position themselves as victims of circumstances, luck or opportunities, but assume the responsibility of making things happen.

The Habit Of Happiness: It may be difficult to accept that happiness is also a mental habit. Being happy sometimes we believe that it is something that escapes our influence, our possibilities of doing something to be happier. What is happiness for you? What makes you happy? If we make

decisions that make us happy, the most normal thing is that we are. On the other hand, when there are people who make decisions they forget to ask themselves if what they are about to do makes them really happy. Working at night not being able to see our children or our partner, working hundreds of kilometers from home and spending little time with the family, choosing a career because we believe it will give us economic security, but without really being something that we are passionate about, all These are decisions that perhaps do not make us happy. Successful people first feel happy in their own skin.

The Habit Of Asking For Help When You Need It: There is a phrase that I heard a while ago and that may seem like a joke and says: The important thing is not to know, but to have the phone of the one who knows. To succeed, it is necessary to assume that if we have to learn to do everything by ourselves, it will take us much longer than if we ask for help in what we are not experts or do not like to do. Asking for help demonstrates our greatness, demonstrates the humility to recognize that other people can help us to solve situations that for us are complex but that for them can be something very simple. Successful people surround themselves with people they can learn from, people who are successful and capable of helping them with their own personal growth.

Remember, mental habits can also be acquired. Nothing changes in our life until we change inside our mind. Gratitude, trust, happiness, valuing ourselves, evaluating our present and knowing how to ask for help are mental habits that, when incorporated, bring us closer to what success is for us.

Mental Habits That Will Help You Get Out Of The Comfort Zone.

Transform Your Negative Thoughts

If you are often offended by criticism in the office, associate those comments with constructive advice from someone who helps you improve. When you feel your initial response to reject or deny criticism, stop to imagine that person is giving you a gift so that you can reach your full potential, is suggested from Forbes .

Find A Good Reason

Leaving the comfort zone can be difficult if there is no compelling reason to do so. Take the time to imagine what it could be like to take that step.

Turn The New Into A Habit

Staying within the scope of the familiar is an attempt to be protected. If you understand that the new is also safe, it will be easier to leave the comfort zone. Start trying new things little by little, once a week. Go to a restaurant that you do not know, invite someone you just met for drink a coffee, attend an event to make work contacts. By turning the new into a routine, it will become less intimidating.

Compare Scenarios

Ask yourself what is the worst and the best that could happen. Both questions will help you face your fears. Then you can focus that energy on exploring something new.

Do Not Rationalize So Much

When we feel scared or uncomfortable when trying something new, it is easy to excuse ourselves saying that we do not have time for that or that we are not interested. Put aside pretexts and start a new adventure!

Act As If You Feel Comfortable

In line with the previous trick, try acting as if you were a person who is not afraid to take a new step. Once you do it, the rest will come naturally.

CHAPTER TWO

Mental Toughness And Emotional Resilience

Would you like to have the ability to deal with the ups and downs of life with strength and grace? Developing mental and emotional strength is not something that can be done overnight. If you can begin to see every surprise that life brings you as an opportunity to strengthen you, you will begin to accumulate the wisdom and clarity that you can put to the test when things become really difficult.

How To Be Strong Mentally And Emotionally

1. Identify Challenges And Set Goals

Understands The Meaning Of Emotional Strength. Developing emotional and mental strength (or endurance) means adapting appropriately to things, such as stress, trauma, adversity or tragedy. Resistance is not something innate, but a process that everyone can learn and that is within ordinary people.

- Having emotional strength does not mean not experiencing pain or suffering, because this strength is usually learned every time someone faces an extremely painful situation. What it really means is that one learns to "recover" from such experiences.
- If you want to develop this resistance, you should focus on perfecting particular skills, for example, making plans and fulfilling them, developing confidence and a positive perspective of the personality, learning to control feelings and strong impulses, as well as improving communication and resolution. of problems in an effective way.

Find Out About Emotional Regulation. Another important part of the process to become an emotionally and mentally stronger person is to learn to control emotions. You may not be able to control everything that happens to you in life, but you do have the ability to choose your way of reacting. We repeat: this is not something innate, and anyone can learn to control their emotions in a productive way.

Identify the specific aspects that you want to change. Before developing a mental and emotional strength, you should keep a record of all your strengths and weaknesses in order to be clear about what you want to

change. Make a list of as many strengths and weaknesses as you can think of. When you finish writing it, determine how to convert each of your weak points into goals that you can reach.

- For example, you may have written on the list of weaknesses that you find it difficult to assert your needs. If you want to solve this problem, you could say that your goal is to be more assertive

Accept Your Strengths: In addition to determining the aspects in which you want to change, you must take the time to honor your strengths. Read the list of your strengths and congratulate yourself for them. By congratulating you from time to time, you can stay focused on your positive qualities and develop mental and emotional strength.

Think about your past experiences. The reason you feel a lack of mental or emotional strength may be related to something that happened in the past . Regardless of whether this fact happened to you a few months ago or in your youth, it can negatively affect your mental and emotional strength. Studies have shown that children who are victims of abuse, neglect or some other danger are more likely to have emotional and mental problems, which can lead them to use drugs or commit suicide.

- Try to determine if the negative experiences of your childhood could affect your mental and emotional states. Think about the way and the reason why these experiences may have affected you the way they did.
- You may need to talk with a therapist about your childhood experiences in order to fully understand them, deal with them, and move on.

Determine If You Have An Addiction That Merits Treatment. An addiction to drugs, alcohol, sex or something else can negatively affect your emotional and mental strength. If you think you have some type of addiction, seek help to eradicate your bad habits . If your condition is serious, you probably need treatment. Talk to a therapist or doctor in case you think you have an addiction that harms your mental and emotional strength.

Write Your Thoughts And Feelings In A Journal. This can help you understand what might have caused these difficulties and it is also an excellent way to relieve stress. To start with this practice, go to a comfortable place and propose to write about 20 minutes a day. You can start by writing your feelings or what you think, or even use an input phrase. Here are some of the input phrases you can use:

- "I feel helpless when ..."
- "My biggest challenge is ..."
- "If I could talk to myself as a child, I would say ..."
- "When I'm depressed, the best thing you could do for me or tell me ..."

Consider Talking To A Therapist. Without help, it is probably difficult to determine the reason why you have difficulties and find out the best way to deal with what you feel. A certified mental health professional can help you understand your feelings and deal with them.

- Keep in mind that feeling a mental and emotional fragility can be part of an underlying mental condition that merits treatment. Consulting with a therapist can help you understand what is happening and decide the best course of action.

2. Maintain Stability

Get Away From The Vices That Disturb Your Peace Of Mind. If you play with your mental health drinking, taking drugs, stealing, lying and doing other things, you will detract from your ability to be emotionally and mentally strong. Begin to discard these vices of your life, or at least limit them so that they do not take control of your behavior and emotions. If you have an addiction, seek help.

Take Care Of Your Body. Exercise, healthy food, rest and relaxation will help you develop and maintain your mental and emotional strength. By taking care of yourself, you will be telling your mind that you deserve to be taken care of. Make sure you spend enough time to satisfy your basic needs concerning exercise, nutrition, sleep and relaxation.

- Exercise regularly. Try to exercise 30 minutes a day.
- Have a balanced diet composed of whole, healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Sleep for 8 hours every night.
- Practice yoga, perform breathing exercises or meditate for at least 15 minutes.
- Drink plenty of water (at least 8 glasses a day or more if you exercise and sweat).

Enrich Your Mind Challenge Yourself To Continue Learning At All Times. In this way, you will become mentally stronger and wiser as you acquire more knowledge. Do not allow yourself to become stuck in a routine, be it mental or physical. Be curious, be aware and learn about the world.

- Read books, watch good movies, attend concerts, go to games, go to a ballet performance and assimilate art in some way.
- Create your own art Write, paint, compose music, create a sculpture, knit or do anything that stimulates your creative side.
- Learn new skills Learn new dishes, do some DIY projects at home, plant a garden, learn to drive a manual car, learn to fish, train to run a marathon of 5 km.
- Talk with people. Have deep conversations that go beyond a simple talk. Find out about the stories of the people and share yours.

Develop your spiritual side . Many people develop strength by paying attention to their spirituality. Establishing a connection with something greater than one (whatever it may be) can infuse the spirit with strength and a sense of purpose. Studies have shown that spirituality and prayer help relieve stress and decrease the period of recovery during illness. [12] Spirituality can take many different forms, and it is important to find one that works well for you. There is no one correct way to be a spiritual person.

- Consider going to a place of prayer to pray in the company of other people.
- Meditate or practice yoga.
- Spend time submerged in nature and admire how beautiful the natural world is.

3. Develop Mental And Emotional Strength

Set reasonable goals and take them out. You can practice the development of your mental strength by setting significant goals and achieving them, step by step. To progress step by step, you need to commit yourself,

overcome boredom or pain and dedicate yourself to reaching your goals. It is not easy to achieve and, the more you practice, the greater capacity you will have to reach your goals.

- If you have big goals that seem unattainable, divide them into smaller feasible steps. For example, if you want to be more assertive, you can set a goal to express what you think 3 times a week. These situations can be something as simple as telling your partner that you want to go to dinner at a specific restaurant instead of letting her make the decision.
- Have a persistent attitude Make the decision that, even if you have a setback, you will keep trying, regardless of whether your goal is to keep a job, finish a project, manage your finances, etc.
- Consider failures as learning opportunities. Failures are only temporary setbacks filled with lessons from which we can learn.

Develop Your Strength Against Negativity. Negativity can occur in different ways, either from within, in the form of negative and harmful thoughts; or from the outside, as negative criticism or abuse by people. While completely eliminating the negativity of life is beyond our control, there are ways to control it.

- Control negative thoughts by learning to identify them and challenge them. You can learn more by reading the article "How to deal with negative thoughts".
- While you can minimize your contact with negative or toxic people (you can even get them out of your life completely), they are sometimes relatives, co-workers or other people with

whom you must interact. Instead of taking your negativity seriously, you can learn not to get involved and set limits with that person. If you want to know how to do it, a fantastic source of information that you can turn to is the article " How to deal with negative people ".

Use Positive Thinking To Develop Your Mental And Emotional Strength. Saying positive affirmations on a daily basis can help you be a strong person both mentally and emotionally. Take a few moments a day to look in the mirror and tell yourself something encouraging. You can say something that you believe or that you would like to believe about you. Here are some examples of positive affirmations:

- "I'm trying to be emotionally strong every day."
- "I'm learning more productive ways to control my stress and be kind to myself."
- "I know that if I move towards my goal step by step and day by day, I will feel emotionally and mentally stronger."

Learn To Stay Calm Under Pressure. If a situation starts to get more intense and you can feel that your emotions are about to explode, calm down. If you hold back a bit instead of acting impulsively, you will have more time to analyze your alternatives and determine the most sensible way to move forward.

- Counting to 10 probably looks like a cliché, but it really works. Before you react emotionally to a situation, pause, breathe deeply and reflect.
- The meditation can help you remain calm, as taught to be more objective about emotions and thoughts. Instead of reacting, you can look at your thoughts and emotions, say "OK, I feel a lot of

frustration at this moment" and then determine the best way to act.

Leave The Details Aside. If you are sensitive to the small annoyances and verbal comments that we all face on a daily basis, you will end up dedicating your time and energy to things that will not be useful in the long run. If you obsess with these details and give them your attention or treat them as a major annoyance, not only will you increase your stress, but you can also increase your risk of mortality. Learning to adapt your attitude in order to take naturally the small stressors that arise daily will help you keep under control the stress hormone (cortisol), thus protecting you from, for example, a lower immune system, higher blood pressure and cholesterol, as well as an increased risk of heart disease.

- Instead of stressing out, create the healthy habit of thinking about what bothers you, reassuring yourself and deciding the healthiest and most productive method of dealing with stress.
- For example, if your spouse always forgets to put a lid on the toothpaste, keep in mind that it may not seem as important to you as it is to you. You can choose the option to deal with that situation (cover the toothpaste and think of other ways to make your partner contribute to the house) or leave a (nice) note on the wall as a kind reminder.
- Avoid perfectionism . Perfectionism can lead you to have extremely high and often unrealistic expectations of yourself and the way your day unfolds, which will generally make you forget to take into account all the things that affect you and that go beyond your control
- Do a visualization exercise to put aside the details that disturb you. Hold a small stone and imagine that it contains what

bothers you. Concentrate on that negative aspect and squeeze the stone with great force. Then, when you're ready, throw it into a pond or field. In doing so, imagine that you also throw away all the negative feelings that you imbued.

Modify Your Perspective. If you tend to be overwhelmed by your own problems, look for ways to change the perspective of your life and all its possibilities. Everyone comes to an impasse from time to time, but those who possess emotional and mental strength have the ability to find a way to achieve their goals. If you have trouble clearing your mind, try the following techniques:

- Read more. Reading the news or a novel will allow you to enter the worlds of others, which will serve as a good reminder that the world is a huge place and that your problems are just a drop in the sea.
- Do a volunteer job. Interact with those who need your help. Some studies have shown that voluntary work has a wide range of benefits for both physical and mental health.
- Listen to a friend Listen to someone who really needs your advice. Put yourself in his place and give him the most authentic advice you can.
- Travels. Leaving your comfort zone can really help you to have a perspective of your situation. Go to a new place, even if it's just a neighboring city.

Develop A Positive Attitude: People who have mental and emotional strength do not usually complain very often. They have as many problems as the others, but they take them naturally and try to see the big picture. Having a positive attitude about the good that happens in your life and the

possibilities that the future holds will give you a greater mental and emotional strength to be able to face the complicated situations. Some studies have even revealed that having a positive attitude can be beneficial for physical health.

- Take the time to be present during the moments of happiness. Try to have fun as much as possible with your family, friends, pets, etc.
- Observe difficult situations with a positive attitude. There is always something to learn.

Be honest with yourself. Having the ability to face reality can be the greatest sign of emotional and mental strength that a person has. If you want to overcome an obstacle, you must have the ability to face it. Lying about what happens will only hurt you in the long run.

- If you have the tendency to flee, like watching too much television in order to avoid problems, recognize your bad habits and try to overcome them.
- Be honest with yourself regarding your difficulties.

4. Dealing With Situations That Arise In Life

Think before acting. When facing a difficult situation, take as much time as possible to reflect before reacting or making a decision. In this way, you will have the opportunity to control your emotions and weigh your alternatives, something mandatory regardless of the situation you face.

- If possible, take the time to evaluate the situation and write down the way you feel. Try to identify at least one positive aspect of the situation, no matter how small. Modifying your way of thinking in a certain way can make a big difference.

- Do not forget to take at least 10 seconds to let things settle down before speaking. Even if your partner just told you that he wants to end the relationship, you can take about 10 seconds to recompose yourself before answering. In the end, you'll be glad you did it this way.

Evaluate all perspectives. When you are calm and before making a decision, think clearly about the situation in question. What happened exactly? What are the possible measures you can take? There is always more than one solution to a problem.

- Let's say a friend asked you to participate in an illegal activity, but you're not sure whether to maintain your loyalty to him or follow the rules of the law. Weigh the pros and cons of both decisions. Is he really your friend if he asks you to violate the law or is it the law that stands in the way of true justice?

Determine The Best Decision And Take It. Use your conscience as a guide. Studies have shown that people who make decisions guided by their instincts tend to feel more satisfied than those who weigh the pros and cons in a meticulous way. Sometimes, the answer will be clear, while in others, it will be incredibly difficult to determine what is right. Do not let the problem get worse and out of control. The best thing is that you make a decision and carry it out.

- Consult with other people you trust. In case of doubt, there is no problem in asking the opinion of others. Just do not let them influence your decision to do the wrong thing.
- Think of what someone you admire would do. Must be someone rational, honest and good-hearted. What would that person do?

- Ultimately, you must take responsibility for your actions. Take the best possible decision and try to make it something you can live with.

Reflect On Your Experiences. After facing a difficult situation, think about what happened, the way you handled it and the result. Are you proud of your behavior? Is there anything you would do differently if you had the chance? Try to learn as much as you can from your experiences. Wisdom is only obtained through this type of practice. Evaluating what happened instead of trying to erase it from your mind will help you know what to do the next time you face a difficult situation.

- If things did not go as planned, do not worry. Remember that things do not always go totally well and that you will not always get what you want. This is true of all people, no matter how fantastic their lives may seem.

CHAPTER THREE

Reinvent Yourself-Winning Your Laziness

Call it laziness, laziness, ineptitude, idleness or whatever you want, but the idea of doing nothing when necessary is generally considered a sign of weakness or laziness. Sometimes laziness occurs when you do not want to face something, like a boring task or a difficult confrontation with someone. Other times, it may be because you feel overwhelmed and think that the work needs a complete team instead of just one person. Also, there are also those moments when you simply do not want to take the trouble to complete a task. In any case, it is not a desirable quality.

How to overcome laziness

1. Clarify Your Mind

Find out the real problem. Every time the monster of laziness threatens to invade your motivation, get away and make a small evaluation of what really happens. Laziness is usually a symptom and not the problem itself. What is the cause of your lack of motivation? Are you tired, overwhelmed, afraid, hurt, or simply lacking in inspiration and blocked? The chances are that the problem is smaller than you think and that you can overcome it more easily than you think.

- Whatever the problem that holds you back, do your best to discover it. In most cases, it will be a specific problem or detail. Finding the cause is the only way you can really address it. Once you do it, you can deal with it effectively.

Concentrate On The Real Problem. Now that you know the cause of your laziness, start focusing on it. The solution may take longer than expected, but it will be permanent. Consider the following points:

- If you are tired, start to dedicate some time to relax. Everyone needs to have a rest. If your schedule does not allow it, maybe you should make some sacrifices. But the final result will be much better.
- If you feel overwhelmed, take a step back. How can you simplify everything you have to do? Can you divide it into sections and make it smaller? Can you make a list of your priorities and take care of them one at a time?
- If you are afraid, what are you afraid of? Obviously this is something that you would like to do. Are you afraid of reaching your full potential? Or of finally achieving your goals

and feeling unhappy? In what way can you understand that your fear is irrational?

- If you are suffering, perhaps the only answer is time. Grief, sadness and all negative emotions will not go away at will. Our wounds need time to heal. Pressing less to stop suffering could be the catalyst to help you find the change you are looking for.
- If you lack inspiration, what can you change in your routine? Can you expose yourself to a different environment or is it a mental demon that you must conquer? How can you improve your daily life? Think according to your senses: music, food, sight, sounds, etc.

Get organized Being surrounded by disorder (even if it is only visual) can greatly affect our motivational abilities. If you can improve your life with a little organization, do it. Whether it's your desk, your car, your whole house or your routine, clean everything.

- In our subconscious many things happen that we do not notice. Whether it is an unpleasant range of colors, an inappropriate amount of light or lack of balance in some way or form, somewhere in our mind we are aware of it. Get rid of that small but dissuasive brake by organizing yourself better.

Watch Your Internal Dialogue. Sometimes, behaviors provoke thoughts and, sometimes, thoughts provoke behavior. Take your precautions and get rid of that negative internal dialogue. Think "God, I'm so lazy. I'm not good for nothing" will not get you anywhere. So stop doing it. Only you are in control of your thoughts.

- Every time you think you're not performing well enough, turn that negative thought around and turn it into a positive one. "It

was a slow morning, but now it's time to recharge. In the afternoon, I'll go to work! " You will be surprised to learn that the explosion of mental positivism could really change your perspective.

Put Into Practice The Full Consciousness. Many of us do not take time to stop and smell the roses. We eagerly eat a large meal just to get dessert, wine or bed with a full stomach. We always think about the next big thing we will do instead of living that wonderful moment that is the present. When we begin to live in the moment, we will want to take advantage of it.

- The next time you think about the past or the future, return to the present. Whether it's the environment around you, the food on your fork or the music in your ears, let me show you how great it is to walk on Earth and live. Sometimes stopping or slowing down can give us the energy to take advantage of what we have at our disposal.

Think of the benefits. All right, you're already focused on the present. Now let's focus on a better present. What would happen if you took advantage of this precise moment? What if, instead of wasting the morning lying in your bed, you would get up and do yoga, finish your work or prepare a good breakfast? What would happen if you practically did it every day? during the next six months?

- It would be wonderful indeed. Let those positive ideas control your line of thought and make sure you realize that once you start and develop the habit, everything will be much simpler.

2. Prepare Yourself

Get out of bed Research claims that not getting up just sounds the alarm is bad for us. Maybe you think that staying there and enjoying the warmth of the sheets will allow you to have more energy later, but the opposite happens. You will feel more tired throughout the day. Instead, get out of bed! Your mind will follow the signals that your body gives you. If you get out of bed, you must be ready and eager to start the day.

- Place the alarm clock on the other side of the room, so you'll have to stop to turn it off. This will make you much more difficult to just press the repeat button or go back to sleep.
- Literally, jump into your bed if you have the energy to do it. That allows your blood to circulate. Maybe it's the last thing you want to do, but if you can do it on your own, you'll feel more alive than later.

Set Some Achievable Goals. By establishing some worthy goals and more, achievable, you have something to look forward to. Choose the goals that really inspire you and that encompass most of your talents and abilities. Make a list of large and small tasks, and prioritize each one according to the time required and its importance.

- It may be useful to keep a personal journal for each day you carry out your activities, with an accurate record of what may have helped or hindered you in achieving your goals as part of your practical logistics for your personal development.
- Consider the possibility of creating a mural in which you publish all your goals and dreams. Be creative and use images, magazine articles, etc. You can use this mural to plan all your dreams. Every day, when you wake up, look at it and focus on the point where you want to be. Doing so will give you a start

to the day full of inspiration and will push you to fulfill your dreams.

- Not everyone finds the mural method inspiring, but there are other ways, such as mental maps, journals, creating a vision and telling others, publishing online commitments, etc.

Make A List Of Wishes, Goals And Motivations You Want To Achieve.

Mark them as you meet them. Keeping your goals in mind requires that you really focus on them and a list can keep you energized as you meet them. Place copies everywhere: one in the refrigerator, on the night table, on your computer, in the mirror of your bathroom, even on the door of your bedroom. Simply place them where you can see them more frequently.

- When you begin to accumulate accomplished goals, you will not want to stop. You will literally see what you have been working on and what you are capable of, and that momentum will feel so good that you will have to move on. You would be disappointed and feel worse if you did not.

Reconsiderate Periodically The Importance And Value Of A Problem Or Goal.

Once you have set a goal or faced a problem, you will not miraculously achieve it without putting effort on your part. Also, part of the success behind having a goal or finding a solution to a problem depends on reminding yourself of its importance. If you lose sight of your goal or the solution to the problem, it will be easy to get carried away by the distractions and dead ends that make it seem too difficult to continue, allowing laziness to arise. Regularly reevaluating the importance and value of the problem or objective will help you stay focused and revitalized. Among the things you can ask yourself are:

- Is it something that I can really afford to ignore or leave unresolved for longer?
- Is it something that I can improve with the help or experiences of someone else?
- Am I using the right method to solve this problem or achieve this goal? (Sometimes, it's time to apply a new approach to keep using it).
- Am I too perfectionist with my expectations? Perfectionism can lead to procrastination, which can lead to nothing being done, since nothing is good enough. The final result? Laziness arises because "everything is too difficult". Avoid falling into this vicious circle by always doing your best effort instead of concentrating only on perfection.

Remind yourself that you are capable of doing things. The action modifies everything. In a moment you are standing and frozen; in the next you do not give your arm to twist and you are changing things simply because you proposed it, decided something or took the risk. You do not define yourself because of what happened in the past, you are always prepared to reinvent yourself and encourage change. You just have to think and believe in it.

- If you feel stuck, try to jump, do the homework and tell yourself "Despite that old habit of being petrified, I'm here now and I'm productive!" Speak always in the present tense; No conditional, future or past time should be part of what you say. Similarly, never use the statement if only ; that's only for people who really do not want to get ahead.

Iron Your Clothes Let's say you're sitting on your couch, looking at your computer and all those spreadsheets you'd like to create on their own at that moment. Leave it alone. Instead, do something small, like ironing clothes. You will take out the iron, the ironing board, your shirts and five minutes later you will think "Why am I wasting my time ironing my clothes?" You will leave the iron aside, you will be a little more awake and you will start with what you really want do.

- And the other advantage? You will have a ironed shirt.
- Obviously, it is not necessary to be ironed. It could even be a shower. Sometimes, the simple act of getting up and doing something is the hardest obstacle. When something is small, it paves the way for us, making everything easier.

Exercise. The advantages of the exercises are truly countless, but one of the main ones is to feel more energized all the time. Allow your blood to flow, increase your metabolism and keep your body in an energized state that lasts practically all day. If exercising in the morning is a problem for you, do it for at least 15 minutes. You will feel more animated the rest of the afternoon.

- Did we mention that it also represents a huge part of being healthy? When we are healthy, we feel better in general. If you do not currently exercise (particularly aerobic and anaerobic exercises), make an effort to introduce it into your routine. Your goal should be to exercise around 150 minutes a week, but whatever time you can do, do it.
- Along with the exercise, you should also eat healthy. Junk food does not give your body the nutrients it needs to be active. A body that lacks energy can easily feel listless and apathetic, so

if you are worried about your nutrient intake or your energy levels, it would be a good idea to visit a doctor.

Get Dressed For The Occasion. Sometimes, we lack motivation in life. Only life We usually trust in our work, in our life situation, in our relationships and in a certain way we find ourselves in our own little world, knowing that we must strive to develop. And what is the easiest way to start that change? Dress differently

- Regardless if you are the boy who distributes pizzas wishing to work in the stock market or someone who spends all day lying on his couch wanting to run a marathon, changing your clothes can also change your behavior. If you do not believe it, consider it this way: how would you talk to a boy in a suit? After a while, that boy begins to live in a world that addresses him as he would a boy in a suit. So, put on your pants to run. In the long run, you'll end up wondering why you do not go running.

3. Get In On The Action

Begins. Everything starts somewhere, even if it's about removing the staples from a sheet of paper you have to read or cleaning the windshield of your car in order to drive. Overcoming the initial natural inertia in most human beings who face difficult situations or tasks will immediately relieve the pain of avoiding them. It will also emphasize how to continue to address the problem in greater depth. Solving problems will gradually create momentum and build the confidence to stay motivated and to make things less intimidating.

- Waiting for life to be easy is unrealistic. Generally, life is difficult and, sometimes, it is difficult. However, it is also wonderful, surprising, exciting and full of hope. Being lazy you exclude yourself from the possibilities that life offers you and that is a self-destructive attitude. By improving your own attitude regarding the discomforts of everyday life and by learning to tolerate the things that affect you, your adaptability increases and you will become a more productive person. When something looks gigantic, difficult and undesirable, immediately address that problem. Do not argue for it, do not make excuses or fight, just get involved completely by taking small steps.
- To motivate you, you can use the 5-second rule. When you begin to feel stress or need to postpone things, you must give yourself 5 seconds to start the activity. This will keep you from sitting around making excuses, and it will start you acting.

Take your time. It is important to divide your work in small steps. The smaller they are, the more accessible and feasible they will be. When you actively look for a way to do a task or achieve a goal that involves a sense of control and take a relaxed approach, you will feel capable rather than threatened. Often, laziness consists of feeling overwhelmed by everything and giving up because the mental obstacle in front of you seems too big. The answer is to trust in the power of small things.

- This does not mean that you can not switch between tasks (certainly you can do it), in addition, variety is the ingredient that helps maintain interest. What this means is that each small task must be done separately, with small breaks between each one instead of lazing here and there at the same time. Also,

when going from one task to another, it places reference points, that way it will be easy to resume this task after taking a break.

- Often, it is said that those who complain about not having time waste it in useless ways, such as doing multiple things at once. The human brain works inefficiently when you are continually pressured to do several things in very tight deadlines. In other words, doing several things at once reduces our effectiveness. Free yourself by doing important things in order and without feeling any guilt.

Give yourself words of encouragement. You are your own coach, your own source of inspiration. You can go directly to the action by telling yourself inspiring things and affirming your actions. Say things like "I want to do this; I'm doing it now! "And" I can take a break when I finish and that break will be well deserved for completing this task. " Say things like you out loud if necessary. You will feel motivated to give voice to your actions.

- Periodically reciting a mantra that strengthens you throughout the day can be very helpful as, for example, "I can do this, I know". You can also visualize certain activities as if you had already completed them and anticipate the sense of achievement that you will experience when you finish them.

Ask For Help When Needed. Many people always carry an unjustified fear that tells them it is wrong to ask for help from other people. Whether it has developed as a result of a previous unpleasant encounter, an overwhelming educational experience or a highly competitive workplace, this is an unhealthy attitude to life. We are social beings and part of our existence consists of sharing and helping others. Moving from "me to us"

requires a bit of practice, but it is an important part of growing and stop trying to do everything ourselves.

- Sometimes having another person to hold us accountable is the encouragement we need to act. If you have problems losing weight, get a training partner! That other person puts pressure on us that we ourselves are not able to exercise (in a positive way).
- Make sure you surround yourself with people who support and stimulate you. If all we know are exhausting relationships, it is easy to see why laziness is a problem. Find your own circle of friends that makes you feel good and use them as a guide.

Be Honest With Yourself. Stay away from the couch until you're ready to take a break. Even if you sit down, set a time when you should return to your work or other activities such as reading a textbook, putting a load of laundry in the washing machine, writing to a friend, etc. Self-discipline implies doing what you must do, when you should do it, regardless of whether you feel like it or not. No matter how soon you start with your training, this is still the hardest lesson to learn. Maintain a healthy balance between being tolerant and strict with yourself, and prioritize work over pleasure.

- The rewards are more pleasant when you have to wait for them and when you deserve them. You will only end up being hard on yourself if you start watching television for two hours after 10 minutes of work. Resist, you'll feel better in the long run.

Find yourself at every step you take. Before you immerse yourself in possible arrogance, remember that this is not a festival of vanity. This is about maintaining your motivation. Whenever you finish a step, reach a

small goal or finish a project, find a way to encourage yourself. Completing a task or making an effort will feel remarkably good each time you do it.

- Celebrate your achievement by telling yourself that you have done well. Say something like: "Well done! Everything is on wheels; Keep it up and you'll make it. " Since great successes are made up of many small and successive successes (each small achievement is heroic), recognize your diligence accordingly.

4. Stay Motivated

Learn To Reward Yourself For The Little Things You Complete Or Try.Occasional rewards make tasks more attractive and help keep you on track. If you manage to do something you did not do the day before or what you were very afraid of, you deserve a good reward! When you reward yourself after taking small steps on a path that leads you to a larger goal, you develop an automatic reinforcement that tells you that you are doing the right thing. Make sure that most of the rewards are simple but effective, such as having longer breaks, watching a movie, buying a high-calorie treat (only once in a while!) Or similar things. Reserve the biggest rewards for when you achieve your greatest goal. By using the self-rewards method you will train your mind to actively look for something to do to get it.

- The breaks are rewards and needs. Do not confuse laziness with the need to take short breaks regularly to restore creativity and freshness.
- Obviously, the other side of rewards is punishment. People react better to positive reinforcers and it is better to hold on to rewards. Punishing yourself for not achieving your goals will

simply produce an undesired effect confirming your worst beliefs about being lazy and a good for nothing. It is a useless exercise, if it was ever one.

Write Down Your Goals Weekly. Having a list of weekly goals will help you stay focused and motivated. As you progress, it is inevitable that your goals change. Also, you will indicate the most effective ways to achieve them. As your goals change, so should your list.

- Publish the list everywhere. Try placing your list on your lock screen of your device or cell phone. To do so, simply write it in your notes, take a picture and place it in your wallpaper. Set daily, monthly and even annual goals to continue seeing them all the time in a different way.

Realize That Life Is About Balancing Costs And Benefits. To enjoy some benefit, there is usually a price that must be paid. Generally, the cost is emotional, often physical and sometimes mental. Frequently that pain implies a feeling of exclusion or abandonment while we think that others do not seem to tolerate the same challenges (usually they have their own, even if you do not see them). And that pain can make you want to avoid risks, be distracted and seek safety in your comfort zone. To get out of it, you will need to face the pain before you can reach your goals.

- Evaluate if a potential benefit is worth the price you will pay. If it's worth it (and most times it will be that way), take advantage of your constantly developing maturity to generate the courage, endurance and discipline that gives you the strength to achieve phenomenal results. Nobody gets anything without effort and suffering.

The Work Is Worth It. Most experts, professionals and geniuses will immediately admit that most of their achievements consist of 99% effort and 1% talent. The undisciplined talent does not lead many to success. Academic excellence, financial independence, sports, performing arts and relationships require firm and consistent attention and effort that puts us to the test both emotionally and physically, even to the best of us.

- You will not be a great entrepreneur, a great broker, a great cook or even good at your work overnight. You will fail again and again. It is completely normal and it is good. It means you keep going.

Order Your Schedule. Having too many activities or distractions in your daily life can easily make you avoid the things you need to do. Try to sort your schedule by delegating important tasks and deleting those that are not necessary. Eliminate distractions and focus on your goals.

- For example, if you want to write 1000 words every weekend, but you can not do it because of your extracurricular activities, consider eliminating one of them. By reducing at least one meeting of one hour a week, you will have more time to achieve your goals.

Stay On The Right Track. There will be times when things get difficult and even after the reward you may not feel like going back to the task at hand. In those moments, you will have to resort to your internal reserves to remind you of the goal or the expected solution in order to stay focused. When you are in that state (often called "flow state"), take full advantage of that feeling that tells you everything is on wheels and use it to move to the other task or goal as soon as you finish rewarding yourself.

- The longer you delay the restart of your work after finishing a task or goal, the harder it will be to start over. Remember that feeling of being deeply involved in doing things and how good it feels to achieve your goals. The sooner you reinitiate with your activities, the more confident you will feel and the faster these good feelings will be restored.
- You can ask someone to help you take responsibility. For example, if you have the goal of going to the gym daily, ask a friend to help you meet it. Send him a message every day after going. If you do not go, have me send you a message to remind you of your goal.

Do Not Give Up. It is one thing to find your motivation and another to maintain it when things get difficult, especially in the face of unexpected problems. Keep in mind that interruptions occur, often for no apparent reason and will ruin all your effort. Instead of allowing setbacks to discourage you, watch them for what they are and avoid getting discouraged. You are not alone and staying focused on overcoming your challenges is one of the best ways to deal with your problem and recover.

- Remind yourself how much you want to reach your goal or complete your task, seek help if you need it, evaluate what you have already achieved and avoid giving up. Let's do it.

CHAPTER FOUR

How To Live Under Pressure

In our day to day and quite often, we usually assume that being under pressure is something that we can easily perceive. And they teach us the idea that when we can no longer with certain emotion or action, we will be aware of it, managing to eliminate or retaliate from the effects of that pressure that we are suffering on our body. Despite this, many times we are so absorbed and focused on achieving a certain goal or overcoming the potholes of each day that we do not realize that we are under pressure. Sometimes, ourselves, with the help of our mind, we block warning signs.

Discover The Symptoms That Indicate That You Are Under Pressure

When stress begins to appear, the body will begin to send us signals in the form of symptoms. And, although we may believe that these are not important, it is best to listen to these signals, reflect on their origin, their "why" and how to stop them.

You will agree with me that sleeping little or feeding on junk food every day is not the healthiest way to live and develop as a human being, being clear signs that something is not working in your lifestyle.

1. You Sleep And Rest Little

One of the main points to take care of and keep healthy if we want to enjoy a correct and full emotional well-being . Rest is vital for our physical and inner body. If it is difficult for you to fall asleep or this is shallow, with nightmares and a feeling of little rest when you wake up, you are probably living under significant stress.

2. You Feel Tired During The Day

You need many more hours than you present a normal day so that your mind, heart and spirit can truly rest. If you are not able to enjoy a feeling of total rest, something goes wrong .

3. You Get Sick Frequently

When our body is facing high levels of stress , the immune system is greatly affected and suffers, causing us to contract common diseases more easily and then we feel weak.

4. Suffer Muscle Pain

When subjected to a strong pressure, our body is tense, presenting major muscle contractures in the neck and back. This tension can be relieved by practicing relaxation exercises and soft sports.

5. You Are Worried Throughout The Day

If you can not avoid worries at any time, stop to analyze the reason . If you constantly stop thinking and analyze certain situations in your life that are generating discomfort for you, surely it is not just the latter. You are probably finding yourself under pressure and continued stress.

In that case, you need to disconnect as soon as possible. Consider taking a vacation or rest season when possible.

6. You Have Difficulty Managing Everyday Stress

It is a clear symptom that the pressure is affecting you . Finding yourself in a situation that is taking away a lot of continuous energy can lead you to not controlling yourself in the smallest things.

In these moments, you are at the mercy of your uncontrollable emotions, being able to break to mourn or get angry at any moment. This point is one of the main indicators that your body is subjected to too much pressure and internal wear.

7. Feel The Need To Eat Junk Food

The increase in stress leads us to raise the number of cortisol in our body. This, what it does, is to make us feel the need and desire to consume foods and drinks rich in sugars and saturated fats.

8. You Have Digestive Problems

One of the main destinations of stress in symptomatology is the digestive system . It is true that the stomach pains may be of different origins, but you will surely agree with me that in times of high stress and nerves, stomach aches increase considerably.

How To Act When You Are Under Pressure

The pressure that is experienced for a long time either in the workplace or personal is very hard to cope because the pressure acts as an external weight that weighs heavily on the back. Excessive pressure can cause physical discomfort, for example, headache or discomfort in the stomach.

1. First of all, do not get used to living like this, do not become normal something that is not. There are people who associate work so directly with stress that they do not realize that occupational health is the key to good mental hygiene.
2. Perform relaxation exercises very regularly and breathe deeply. Also look for natural spaces such as gardens full of flowers, the walk along the river, see the sea ... Each city has its charm, therefore, enjoy the beauty of your place of residence as the best elixir of peace.
3. When you have been under pressure for a long time , you have to reflect on what decisions you are putting off. Everything that is not resolved remains a focus of internal conflict.
4. Do a coaching process is very effective to get out of a situation of work or personal stress because through this process of self-discovery, you can analyze the causes of what happens to you.
5. Think that the limits are in the mind and not in reality. Eliminate negative beliefs about yourself and analyze your strengths to face the situation with optimism.
6. To cope better with work pressure , remember that there are medicines as natural as laughter. Therefore, take your life with a sense of humor. Besides that you will get better results you will also enjoy much more.

7. You can write a list of possible solutions to your conflict by analyzing the starting point and the point of arrival of each action plan. In life, the simplest way is usually the most effective.

8. When you are under pressure you have to be very careful not to neglect your diet because, in such a situation, it is possible that the person has less appetite by having a knot in the stomach.

CHAPTER FIVE

How The Strong People Think

The 7 Main Habits Of Mentally Strong People

1. Practice Focused Attention

You know, because you are an assiduous reader of this blog, that multi-maintenance is not possible and that multitasking is not healthy, unless one of the tasks is automated. To train the mind, practice being present at least a while a day. Choose an activity in which you can be totally present, for example, a conscious walk: go for a walk and observe the movement of the body when walking; then focus on the environment: the breeze, the noises, the plants ... A specific task of your work routine or the practice of a sport are also good times to practice presence and focused attention. Choose active listening when you are with friends or with your family. Be aware of what is really said by thinking only what you hear. This way of being present brings patience and empathy.

2. Do Physical Exercise

Does it sound like that of "mens sana in corpore sano" that the Romans already said back in Year II? Nothing more to add. Mind and body usually go together, with exceptions due to physical illness. The relationship I want to highlight has to do with self-care : a careless mind can imply an insufficient or decreasing physical health and vice versa. In fact, more and more physical exercise is advised to people with some mental or emotional problem and meditation is being introduced in the treatment of some diseases. Exercise is recommended because it helps increase the levels of

serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine in the brain and balances the levels of neurotransmitters that make us feel mentally healthy.

But you do not need to have a disease or disorder to recommend exercise. Its benefits are important in totally healthy people because it influences the mood, provides energy, reduces stress, contributes to deeper relaxation, improves mental clarity, contributes to better learning, vision, memory and cognitive functioning , enhances creativity and intuition and, in short, gives us a greater enthusiasm for life. In other words, exercise is fundamental to improve both our health and social relationships, self-esteem and emotional and spiritual connection.

3. They Make Conscious Breaks During The Day

Call it conscious pause or mindfulness. A simple pause to watch TV does not serve as mental training.

This habit can be carried out in many ways. The goal is to be aware of your own body and evaluate in a few seconds how you feel. You can also bring attention to the activity you do at that time, making it more aware.

Pauses can be long and you can do a meditation (10 minutes or more) or small breaks and apply what is called informal mindfulness .

Some examples of mental breaks you can do:

a formal meditation with audio

Sit or lie down with your eyes closed and remain silent letting the mind go to your air, for a short time-3 to 5 minutes. At first your mind may not stop chattering. Little by little you will learn to leave her in silence, letting her thoughts pass

from where you are at this moment, stop and bring your attention to the body and to the breath. Ask yourself: how do I feel?

during routine activities such as showering, washing teeth, stirring a sauce, making coffee ... give full attention to what happens outside and inside you
conscious listening to a piece of music

give you a self-hug

Taste a portion of something you like a lot, like chocolate in my case, with full attention

There are some examples that you can expand with your own experience. With several daily pauses, we reduce cortisol controlled by stress, improve memory and executive functioning, bring serenity and we become less reactive.

4. They Cite Themselves

Take care not only with exercise. One way to take care of the mind besides the body is to dedicate time to a favorite activity. In "The path of the artist", Julia Cameron proposes to spend a little time a week to the appointment with the artist, being the artist yourself. Take an afternoon to do something with what you really enjoy and just for that reason: bring beauty or enjoyment to your being. From going to visit a friend and chat without devices in between, to go to the movies, the theater, an exhibition, a bookstore, the field, your favorite restaurant, to surf, to play chess, to paint. The satisfaction of doing something for pleasure feeds the mind. It is a gesture of love towards yourself.

5. Set Limits

If you want to cover everything and live a film happiness with an ideal work without worries, a dream house, a model family, a sculptural body, etc. You will live in continuous dissatisfaction and end the day dejected and exhausted. Success is not getting to X or what they tell you in the movies where the good always wins. Success is knowing how to live with what is trying to improve what is within your reach. Experiment, try, remove, put, change, leave ... Step by step and being consistent with yourself. The coherence is a fundamental pillar to lead a happy life. Therefore, put limits to external demands and also to your own. Do not do things to please others but for being consistent with yourself and your values. The self-demand is fine as a mechanism of improvement but has a limit from which it is a bondage and can become a mental disorder. Use the demand as an instrument, not as a yoke that prevents you from living. Remember each day what are the values that move you and the motives that direct your life. And act according to those values.

6. They Appreciate And Do Not Complain

Mental strength is also trained by practicing daily gratitude to what each day brings. Normally it is done at night or every time during the day you realize something to be thankful for, as something as simple as being able to shelter you on a cold day. Related to gratitude, strong people mentally practice non-complaint . They are aware of what they have in each moment and prefer to take charge of the difficulties, to overcome them, rather than complain and do nothing. They focus on the solution and not on the problem. This is how they take responsibility for their own happiness without depending on anyone or anything external to themselves.

7. They Relate And ...

... if necessary, ask for help. Talking about what you think and feel with people related to you helps you to have a real vision of your life. Ask for help from your environment or a professional if you are going through a moment of stress, sadness, insecurity, lack of motivation, continuous anger, dissatisfaction, etc. There may be many reasons why a good conversation and external vision is the remedy you need. Maybe it's enough to write. The daily writing relieves a lot of tension, clear ideas and resolve internal conflicts.

Characteristics Of Mentally Strong People

1. They Are Emotionally Intelligent

In the last decade many studies on emotional intelligence have been carried out, and it seems that this type of intelligence is the key to having a strong mentality. The emotional intelligence helps people to better know each other , to interact more efficiently , to stay calm in difficult situations, to be more realistic, more productive, to maintain emotional balance, to be more prepared to change, etc. . Unfortunately, not everyone is emotionally intelligent, which negatively affects their psychological well-being.

2. They Are Compassionate To Themselves And Accept Themselves As They Are

They constantly repeat to us that we have to forgive others , but we tend to be very hard on ourselves. Mentally strong people are compassionate to themselves and want whatever happens . And, of course, being compassionate with oneself also includes self-acceptance. Doing things wrong from time to time is part of life, there is no one who does everything perfectly

3. They Trust Themselves

People with a strong mentality trust themselves, and this allows them to overcome most challenges proposed . People with a high level of confidence may not always achieve their goals, but never give up . This confidence in one 's ability helps them not crumble at the failure and move forward in meeting their own goals and objectives.

4. They See A Failure In Learning

And of course these people fail at times, like everyone else. But mentally strong people are aware that it is possible to fail and think that it is

hopeless: Go ahead! Mentally strong people learn from their failures, which allows them to grow .

5. They Do Not Give Importance To What Others Think Of Them

We all like to like others, but this is not always possible . The psychological strain of constantly thinking about what others think of oneself can be mentally exhausting. Mentally strong people do not waste time with these kinds of thoughts, and follow their path true to their style.

6. They Know How To Fit The Criticisms

We all receive criticism from time to time, some can be constructive and others have no basis. Mentally strong people accept constructive criticism and take advantage of it to learn . Also, do not take other criticisms as something personal, so they do not give importance.

7. They Know Who They Are And Where They Want To Go

Who I am? It is one of those existential questions that, if we do not know how to respond, can become an obstacle when it comes to achieving our goals and being happy . Mentally strong people are not afraid to answer that question and know who they are. They also have a path they want to follow and are in constant movement, which keeps them motivated despite the fact that, from time to time, they have to change course.

8. Happiness Is Inside

Strong people of mind know that happiness is in their interior and not in external things. They enjoy themselves and live in the present moment because they understand that in life what matters is small things, not material things . They have an inner strength that makes them resistant to life.

9. They Are Not Afraid To Leave The Comfort Zone

Mentally weak people are characterized by not wanting to leave their comfort zone , because they are afraid of change. It is easier to stay there even if things do not go well with us, facing our insecurities and knowing something new that can mean a better future. Getting out of the comfort zone is good, even if it is just another experience in life for learning.

10. And Therefore, Do Not Fear Uncertainty

But leaving the comfort zone means facing our fears despite not knowing what awaits us . Mentally strong people do not fear uncertainty, but face it and, as I said before, they know that bad experiences are also learned.

11. They Have A Positive Mindset Despite Adversity

Mentally strong people have a positive mindset no matter what happens . Therefore, whether at the time of leaving the comfort zone, of facing uncertainty, when they fail, etc., they always maintain a positive attitude and mentality. The power is in the mind.

12. They Are Resilient

Mentally strong individuals are resilient, that is, they are people capable of facing the adversities of life and coming out stronger from them . Although it is common to think that being resilient is something innate, it is possible to learn to master this ability with practice and a good attitude.

CHAPTER SIX

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to tap into your emotions and use them to make your life better. Being in touch with your feelings allows you to manage stress levels and communicate effectively with other people, two skills that enhance your life both personally and professionally. Unlike IQ, which remains constant throughout your life, EQ can be developed and honed over time. See Step 1 to learn how to develop your emotional intelligence using techniques you can try right away.

How To Develop Emotional Intelligence

1. Tapping Into Your Emotions

Note Your Emotional Reactions To Events Throughout The Day. It's easy to put your feelings about what you experience throughout the day on the back burner. But taking time to acknowledge how you feel about experiences is essential to improving your EQ. If you ignore your feelings, you're ignoring important information that has a big effect on your mindset and the way you behave. Start paying more attention to your feelings and connecting them to experiences.

- For example, say you're at work and you get cut off during a meeting. What emotions arise when this happens? On the other hand, how do you feel when you get praised for good work? Getting into the practice of naming your emotions as sadness, embarrassment, joy, contentment, or any other number of feelings will start raising your EQ right away.
- Get in the habit of tapping into your emotions at certain times every day. What are your first emotions upon waking? Your last before you fall asleep?

Pay Attention To Your Body. Instead of ignoring the physical manifestations of your emotions, start listening to them. Our minds and bodies are not separate; they affect each other quite deeply. You can raise your EQ by learning how to read physical cues that clue you in to what emotions you're feeling. For example:

- Stress might feel like a knot in your stomach, tight chest, or quick breathing.
- Sadness might feel like waking up with slow, heavy limbs.

- Joy, pleasure or nervousness might feel like butterflies in your stomach, a racing heart or increased energy.

Observe How Your Emotions And Behavior Are Connected. When you feel strong emotions, how do you react? Tune into your gut responses to situations you face every day, instead of just reacting without any reflection. The more you understand what spurs your behavioral impulses, the higher your EQ will be, and you'll be able to use what you know to actually change your behavior in the future. Here are some examples of behaviors and what's behind them:

- Feeling embarrassed or insecure might cause you to withdraw from conversation and disconnect.
- Feeling angry might cause you to raise your voice or angrily stomp away.
- Feeling overwhelmed might cause you to panic and lose track of what you were doing, or cry.

Avoid Judging Your Own Emotions. All the emotions you have are valid, even the negative ones. If you judge your emotions, you'll inhibit your ability to fully feel, making it more difficult to use your emotions in positive ways. Think of it this way: every emotion you have is a new piece of useful information connected to something that's happening in your world. Without this information, you'd be left in the dark about how to adequately react. That's why the ability to feel your emotions is a form of intelligence.

- It's hard at first, but practice letting negative emotions surface and connecting them to what's happening. For example, if you feel bitterly envious, what is that emotion telling you about your situation?

- Fully experience positive emotions, too. Connect your joy or satisfaction to what's happening around you, so you can learn how to feel them more often.

Notice Patterns In Your Emotional History. It's another way to learn as much as you can about your own feelings and how they're connected to your experiences. When you have a strong emotion, ask yourself when you last felt like this. What happened before, during and after?

- When you see patterns, you can exert more control over your behavior. Observe how you handled a certain situation before, and how you'd like to handle it next time.
- Keep a journal of your emotional reactions, or how you feel from day to day, so you can clearly see how you tend to react.

Practice Deciding How To Behave. You can't help what emotions you feel, but you can stay connected to something that's happening in your world. Without this information, you would be left in the dark about how to adequately react. That is why the ability to feel your emotions is a form of intelligence.

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Practice Deciding How To Behave. You can't help what emotions you feel, but you can decide how you want to react to them. If you have an issue with lashing out in anger or shutting down when you're hurt, think about how you'd rather react. Instead of letting your emotions overwhelm you, decide how you're going to behave next time your feelings grow strong.

- When something negative happens in your life, take a moment to feel your emotions. Some people describe it as having a wave of sadness or anger wash over them. Once the initial wave has passed, make a decision about how you want to behave. Decide to communicate your feelings instead of repressing them, or get up and try again instead of throwing in the towel.
- Don't turn to escapist habits. It's not easy to let bad feelings fully rise to the surface, and many people tamp them down by drinking too much, watching a lot of TV, or turning to other habits that numb the pain. Do this often enough, and your EQ will begin to suffer.

2. Connecting With Other People

Be Open-Minded And Agreeable. Openness and being agreeable go hand-in-hand when it comes to emotional intelligence. A narrow mind is generally an indication of a lower EQ. When your mind is open through understanding and internal reflection, it becomes easier to deal with conflicts in a calm and self-assured manner. You will find yourself socially aware and new possibilities will be open to you. To strengthen this element of your EQ, consider:

- Listening to debates on television or the radio. Consider both sides of the argument, and look for the subtleties that require closer inspection.
- When someone does not react emotionally the same way you would, consider why this is, and try to see it from their point of view.

Improve Your Empathy Skills. Empathy means being able to recognize how other people are feeling, and share emotions with them. Being a more active listener and really paying attention to what people are saying can help you get a better sense of how they're feeling. When you can use that information to inform your decisions and improve your relationships, that's a sign of emotional intelligence.

- To improve empathy, put yourself in other people's shoes. Think about how you would feel if you were in their situation. Actively imagine how it must be to go through the experiences they're having and what might alleviate some of their hardship in terms of support and care.
- When you see someone experience a strong emotion, ask yourself, "How would I react in the same situation?"

- Be truly interested in what people are saying, so you can react in a sensitive way. Instead of letting your thoughts drift, ask questions and summarize what they're saying so it's clear you're in the conversation.

Read People's Body Language. Make a point of trying to read between the lines and pick up on people's true feelings by observing their facial expressions and other body language. Often people say one thing when the look on their face reveals that there's a deeper truth. Practice being more observant and picking up on the less obvious ways that people communicate their emotions.

- If you're not sure that you're skilled at interpreting facial expressions, try taking a quiz to tell. A higher tone of voice indicates that someone's stressed.

See The Effect You Have On Others. Understanding other people's emotions is only half the battle when it comes to EQ; you also need to understand the effect you're having on other people. Do you tend to make people feel nervous, cheerful or angry? What happens to conversation when you walk in the room?

- Think about what patterns you might need to change. If you tend to pick fights with your loved ones, your girlfriend cries easily during conversations, or people tend to close up a bit when you come around, you might need to change your attitude so that you have a better emotional effect on people.
- Ask trusted friends or loved ones what they think about your emotionality where you have room for improvement.
- A person's tone of voice can also be of impact. You may have trouble recognizing the effect you have on others, and they can

help.

Practice being emotionally honest. If you say you're "fine" and have a scowl on your face, you're not communicating honestly. Practice being more physically open with your emotions, so people can read you better. Tell people when you're upset, and share happiness and joy as well.

- Being "yourself" helps other people really get to know you, and they'll trust you more if they see where you're coming from.
- However, understand that there's a line: control your emotions so as not to hurt others with them.

3. Putting Eq To Practical Use

See Where You Have Room For Improvement. Being intellectually capable is important in life, but being emotionally intelligent is just as essential. Having high emotional intelligence can lead to better relationships and job opportunities. There are four core elements to emotional intelligence that help you lead a balanced life. Read this over and decide where you might have room for improvement, then take steps to practice your skills in that area:

- Self awareness: The ability to recognize your own emotions for what they are and understand their origins. Self-awareness means knowing your strengths and limitations.
- Self management: The ability to delay gratification, balance your needs with those of others, take initiative and to pull back

on impulsivity. Self-management means being able to cope with change and to stay committed.

- Social awareness: The ability to be attuned to other people's emotions and concerns, as well as being able to notice and adapt to social cues. Being socially aware means being able to see the power dynamics at play within any group or in an organizational context.
- Relationship management: The ability to get along well with others, manage conflict, inspire and influence people and to communicate clearly.

Lower Your Stress Level By Raising Your EQ. Stress is a catchall word for feeling overwhelmed by a variety of different emotions. Life is filled with difficult situations from relationship breakdowns to job loss. In between, there are myriad stress triggers that can make any daily issue seem much more challenging than it probably is. If you're stressed a lot, it's difficult to behave in the way you want to. Having a good plan for relieving stress improves all aspects of your EQ.

- Figure out what triggers your stress, and what helps relieve it. Make a list of effective forms of stress relief, like hanging out with a friend or taking a walk in the woods, and put it to good use.
- Get help if you need it. If your stress feels too overwhelming to deal with alone, seek the help of a therapist or psychologist who can give you tools to cope (and help you raise your EQ in the process).

Be More Light-Hearted At Home And At Work. When you're optimistic, it's easier to see the beauty in life and everyday objects and spread that

feeling to those around you. Optimism results in emotional well being and greater opportunities – people want to be around an optimistic person and this draws them to you, with all the possibilities that more connections bring you.

- Negativity encourages people to focus only on what can go wrong rather than building resilience.
- People with high EQ tend to know how to use fun and humor to make themselves and others feel safer and happier. Use laughter to get through tough times.

Signs That You Lack Emotional Intelligence

1. You Stress Easily

When you eat your feelings, they accumulate to generate sensations such as tension, stress and anxiety. Ignored emotions damage the body and the mind. Emotional intelligence helps you manage stress better by helping you identify situations that overwhelm you and deal with them properly in time. People who do not use their emotional intelligence tend to rely on other methods, less healthy, to manage the pressure. They have twice the chance of experiencing anxiety, depression, substance abuse and even attempting suicide.

2. It's Hard For You To Be Assertive

People with good emotional intelligence have a good balance of good manners, empathy and cordiality, but they are able to set limits. This combination is ideal for managing conflicts. When most people are angry, these people with good EI stay calm and balanced as they move away from mismanaged emotions. This allows them to neutralize difficult or toxic people without generating enemies.

3. You Have A Limited Emotional Vocabulary

All people express emotions, but only a few are able to identify them clearly as they occur. Our research shows that only 36% of people can do this, which is problematic because poorly understood emotions usually cause misunderstandings, irrational choices and counter productive actions. People with good EI dominate their emotions because they know how to identify them and have a great vocabulary to name them. Many people simply define their mood as "bad", the emotionally intelligent know how to say "frustrated", "anxious", "irritable", etc. The more specific the word, the

better knowledge you will have of what you are feeling, what causes the sensation and what to do about it.

4. You Assume Things Quickly And Defend Your Postures With Vehemence

People who lack EI form opinions quickly and succumb to vague information that supports their own positions and ignores anything that might contradict them. Very often, they argue ad nauseam to defend a point. This is especially dangerous for leaders, because their little-analyzed ideas can become the strategy of an entire team. Emotionally intelligent people marinate their thoughts because they know that initial reactions are moved by feelings. They let their thoughts develop and consider possible consequences and counter-arguments. Then they communicate their idea in the most effective way possible, considering the views of the audience.

5. You Hold Grudges

The negative emotions that come with grudges are, in fact, a response to stress. Just thinking about the offense you received makes your body go into "survival mode", a mechanism that causes you to get up and fight or run away before a threat. When danger is imminent, this reaction is essential to survive, but when the danger is over, saving that stress is very damaging to the body and can have devastating consequences over time. In fact, researchers at Emory University found that saving stress contributes to high blood pressure and heart disease. Keeping a grudge means that you are keeping the stress of an anger and emotionally intelligent people know that they should avoid this. Releasing things not only makes you feel better, it can also help your health.

6. Do Not Let Go Of Your Mistakes

Emotionally intelligent people move away from their mistakes, but do not forget them. By keeping them at a safe distance they can remember the teachings they left to achieve future success, but they do not let them stop them. They know how to handle the fine line between remembering and reliving very well. Reliving mistakes too much makes you anxious and afraid to try new things, while forgetting them completely makes you repeat them. The key to balance is in your ability to transform failures into lessons that help you improve.

7. You Feel That People Do Not Understand You

When you lack emotional intelligence it is difficult to understand how others see you. You feel little understood because you can not give your messages the right way. People with high IE know that even with practice there is not always 100% effective communication. They know how to realize when people are not understanding them, adjust their strategy and recommit their idea until they are understood.

8. Do Not Know What Your Triggers Are (Triggers)

We all have triggers, situations or people that pressure us and lead us to act impulsively. Emotionally intelligent people study these triggers and avoid situations or individuals that can make them lose their heads.

9. Do Not Get Angry

It is not that emotionally intelligent people do not get angry, but they manage their discomfort better to obtain the best possible result. Sometimes this is simply showing that you are angry, sad or frustrated. Hiding your emotions constantly with a false positive attitude is not genuine or productive. People with good EI use negative and positive emotions in the right situations.

10. Blame Others For How They Make You Feel

Emotions come from within. It is very tempting to attribute your feelings to the actions of others, but you must take responsibility for them. **NOBODY CAN MAKE YOU FEEL SOMETHING THAT YOU DO NOT WANT TO FEEL** . To think otherwise only slows you down.

11. You Offend Easily

If you know very well who you are, it is difficult for things that others say or do about you to bother you. People with emotional health are safe and open-minded. They can even make fun of themselves because they know very well what is the limit between humor and degradation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

How Analyse The People

You can read a person if you carefully evaluate their body language, what they say, the way they say it, your intuition and your feelings. Obviously, you can never know what a person thinks; however, you can use some essential strategies to get clues related to your thoughts and your personality.

How to read a person

1. Read Body Language

Study Your Position. Through posture, you can get many clues about a person's true thoughts. The way you sit and lean provides clear information. Between 70 and 90% of the communication is done non-verbally.

- If a person is leaning in a direction contrary to yours, this indicates that she is likely to be stressed.
- If you lean back as if you feel relaxed, this may indicate that you feel you have the power and control.
- If the person has poor posture, this may indicate that they do not have self-esteem or that they have negative feelings.

Observe The Presence Of Positive Body Language. Experts point out that body language is divided into categories of positive and negative movements. If you identify the movements of positive body language, you can determine if a person has a positive opinion of you.

- Staying with your arms or legs uncrossed indicates the presence of positive feelings.
- If the person looks away, as if feeling shy, this is a sign of a positive emotion towards your person.
- Leaning in your direction is a movement of positive body language.

Observe The Presence Of Negative Body Language. There are some clues that indicate that the person may have negative feelings towards you or towards herself.

- Crossing the arms or legs is a movement that shows distrust.

- Aiming with the feet to another place or to an exit indicates that the person could have negative feelings.
- Looking to the side or leaning in the opposite direction is a sign of the presence of negative body language.
- If a person touches the nose, eyes or back of the neck, this can be an indicator of negative feelings.

Identify False Smiles. There are signs that allow to determine if a person's smile is false. If it is a true smile, you will notice the presence of wrinkles near the eyes of the person. If it's a fake smile, you will not usually notice wrinkles.

- It requires the use of more facial muscles to show a true smile.
- Lines of expression or wrinkles near the eyes arise due to the orbicular muscle, which is activated by showing true smiles.
- It is less likely that quick smiles are true.
- Sometimes, false smiles are bigger, since the person tries to stretch his face

Read The Eyes Of A Person. The eyes are quite expressive, so you can get a lot of information from a person if you know what you should observe in them.

- Dilated pupils are an indicator of interest.
- The look of power consists in looking only at the triangle formed by your eyes and your forehead, which indicates that the person does not seek intimacy. If the person looks at you from the eyes to the mouth and below, this is an indicator that you are looking for intimacy. The social gaze consists of looking only from the eyes towards the mouth, this shows comfort and friendship.

- Constant eye contact can be an indicator of an attempt at dominance, or it can indicate that the person is telling a lie.
- The visual contact that lasts 2 to 3 seconds before looking away is an indicator of confidence. Eye contact lasting 1 second or less is a sign of evasion or insecurity.
- If the person blinks quickly, this may indicate that they are interested in you.
- People who lie tend to look to the right when they think. Some experts believe that this happens when they are going to create a story.
- If the person closes their eyes for a constant period of time, this indicates that they need time to think.

Read The Hands Of A Person. As well as the eyes, the hands can provide clues to a person's personality or what they think.

- If the person keeps their palms down, this indicates that they feel they have the power. This can also indicate that something is going to be rejected or stopped.
- If the person holds the palms up, this can be an indicator of submission. Also, this indicates that the person wants to offer and offer something.

Read Gestures And Physical Contacts. You can get clues of what a person thinks by observing what he does with his hands. Gestures consist of physical movements that reveal an emotion or opinion.

- If someone touches your hand for a short time, this indicates that you want to establish a connection with you.
- If a person rubs his nose, he is probably lying to you.

- If the person hides his hands, he is probably hiding something from you.
- If you rest your chin on your hand, you will make a decision.
- If you scratch the back of the neck, this indicates that someone's questions have not been answered.
- Identify the imitation gestures. If a person begins to imitate your expressions and gestures, this usually means that he wants to sell you something.
- Moving to a personal space can be an indicator of bullying.
- If a person raises their eyebrows, this indicates that they have a positive opinion of you and want to communicate better with you.

Read The Ears. Many people dismiss the ears, but people who really know how to read faces consider that they can offer clues about personality.

- The small ears are an indicator of attention to detail and determination.
- People with large ears can be objective and spiritual.
- People who have ears that stand out can be adventurous and be willing to try new things.
- If people have ears that are high, this can be an indicator that they are intellectual and very creative.

2. Read the verbal cues

Analyze The Words That The Person Chooses. You can get clues to people's behavior through the words they use. For example, if a person tells you that they have won "another" prize, this is a clue that they feel insecure, since they wanted to make sure you know they have won before.

- This indicates that it would be effective to praise the person's achievements. This identifies an area of vulnerability.
- Analyze if the words chosen by the person coincide with their body language. You could get clues if there is an incongruity.

Identify The Lies. If you focus on what the person says, you could determine if he or she is likely to lie. However, you should place your comments in a context and you should always keep in mind that the reading of verbal cues is not always infallible.

- The person will have more time to create a story if they answer one question with another.
- If the person uses qualifiers as "to my knowledge and understanding," he is likely to lie.
- If he lies, he will sometimes remove any reference related to himself, so he will not use the word "I".
- People who lie sometimes use the present tense to talk about past events.
- Some studies have shown that people who use more formal language may be lying. For example, they may not use colloquial words or use titles to refer to people.
- People who feel guilty about something sometimes use words that make the action less relevant. For example, instead of using the word steal, they might say something like "borrow."

Keep In Mind The Tone And Speed Of The Voice. You can get a lot of information about people's personality through the sounds they make when speaking.

- People who talk too much or too quickly often feel insecure or anxious.

- Sighs are an indicator of sadness and frustration.
- If a person speaks too slowly, they are likely to be depressed or not spontaneous.
- If the tone of a person's voice changes suddenly, it could be telling lies.
- A repetitive tone of voice is an indicator of insincerity.
- If a man feels attracted to a woman, his tone of voice could vary more.

Know The Length Of Sentences. The average sentence has 10 to 15 words. This is known as the "average extension of language in morpheme."

- If the person uses sentences that are longer or shorter than the average sentence, this indicates that they are stressed.
- Some experts consider that if people breach this average extension considerably, this can be an indicator that they are lying. They will select these sentences to analyze them more closely.

3. Read emotional energy

Give him your hand When you shake a person's hand, how do you perceive their energy? Determine carefully what you feel. Do you feel warm or cold?

- Chinese medicine uses the word chi to refer to the energy that a person emits.
- Another word that is used to denominate the emotional energy of a person is the "vibrates".

- If you want to analyze a person's energy, you may have to touch her, either hugging her, holding her hand or just touching her hand.

Use Your Intuition. Do not think too much. Does this person make you feel good or not? Sometimes, you will have a "feeling" which you should take into account.

- The chills can be a physical sign that the body gives you to tell you something is wrong. Also, they could only be a sign of the feeling of "déjà vu".
- Is there someone who makes you feel exhausted or energetic? This will give you clues to your emotional vibes.
- Pay attention to the moments of discernment that cause interruptions in your thinking.
- What do you think about the person's overall energy? Do not focus on one or another gesture or tone, but in the general environment that creates and the feeling that gives you.

Read The Type Of Energy Of A Person. The thinkers of antiquity created 5 elements to make a description of the general energy of a person. They considered that people could be read and even detect diseases if these elements were known.

- People who possess the energy of fire are extravagant, hysterical and exciting.
- The people who possess the energy of the forest are vivacious, fresh and energetic.
- The people who possess the energy of the earth are practical and methodical.

- People who possess the energy of metal are depressed and introverted.
- The energy of water is an indicator of serenity and objectivity.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Mastery Your Thought

Thoughts can be our best friends," says Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard, "and our worst enemies." Everyone has ever had the feeling that the mind has its own mind and thinks independently, but learning to control thoughts can help us be happier, reduce stress and be more prepared to solve problems or achieve goals. . Read this article if you want to learn a few tricks to be the master of your brain.

How To Control Your Thoughts

1. Take Control Of Your Thoughts

Stand Up And Breathe Deeply. Stop a way of thinking out of control thinking literally: "Stop!". Take several deep breaths to recompose yourself before continuing, which will allow you to channel your thoughts clearly and with a balanced head.

- By concentrating only on breathing for a few moments, you will be able to distance yourself a bit from your thoughts and it will be easier for you to control them.
- Some studies show that it takes 90 seconds for the neurochemical triggers to be deactivated in the brain and brain chemistry to return to normal, so try counting to 90 to calm down.

Stay In The Present. Thinking constantly about the past, something that you can not change, or projects of the future, something that you can not predict with certainty, is a sure way to lose control of your thoughts. Concentrate on the here and now, the precise situation you are in and that you can really control, and you will see how your thoughts follow you.

- According to many spiritual practices, it is best to remain in the present to promote inner peace and mental clarity.
- A simple question you can ask yourself is: "What can I do right now to change the way I feel?"

Observe Your Thoughts Without Judging Them. After pausing, go back to your thoughts without criticizing yourself for having them. Think about why you have those thoughts and what makes you feel unable to control

your mind. Observing thoughts objectively will help you to be aware of them without experiencing negative emotions.

- Base only on objective and concrete facts. If you are arguing with someone, try to guess why the other person is angry, or blame them. Think of the events that have led you to that discussion, what you can do to end it and the specific cause of your anger.
- Instead of thinking: "Women are fatal to me and if I do not have a girlfriend it's my fault", she thinks: "I have not yet found love because I have not met anyone who is really compatible with me".
- If you are in trouble, write your thoughts and read them for yourself.

Take Steps To Channel Your Thoughts. Being rambling without doing anything can lead you to an endless cycle of thoughts. Draw a plan to channel your thoughts and dissolve your concerns, since, in many cases, uncertainty is the root of disturbing thoughts. If you can not stop thinking about work, for example, look for a way to separate your work life from your personal life by taking a few days off, working less from home or trying to find a new job that you like.

- Many times, we can not control our thoughts because we are afraid to act to solve the problems that concern us.
- Once you find a plan, you will have to move forward with it.

Find a comfortable and pleasant environment. The outside world deeply affects the inside, so if you find yourself in an environment where you feel uncomfortable or out of control, your thoughts will reflect these negative

emotions. Put some music that relaxes you, light a candle or go to your favorite place.

- It is proven that the aromas of lavender or chamomile and incense are relaxing, so they may help you control your thoughts.

Divert Your Thoughts Temporarily By Doing Some Activity That Distracts You. Go running, put a movie or call a friend to keep your mind away from your disturbing thoughts. Do something that you can do immediately and that does not allow you to keep your arms crossed immersed in your negative thoughts.

- Write down activities that help you relax and incorporate them into your weekly schedule.
- However, do not forget that this solution works only in the short term. You will have to keep looking for ways to contain your thoughts when you can not escape them.

Talk To Someone To Express And Share Your Thoughts. It is possible that having a new perspective of your thoughts will help you sort the ideas in a few minutes, and expressing your feelings will prevent them from repeating themselves in your head over and over again.

- Some people with whom you can share your thoughts quietly are your friends, your parents or a professional therapist.
- If you feel uncomfortable, start by saying "I need to talk to someone to let off steam" or "I've been thinking about something all day, would you mind listening to me, if you have a moment?"

2. Keep Thoughts Under Control

Do Not Try To Choose Your Thoughts, But Control Them As They Come. The human brain is an amazing and complex organ, capable of imagining incredible things, visualizing memories and assimilating information immediately, so that we will never be able to control each and every one of our thoughts. Think about controlling the thoughts as they come instead of trying to suppress those you do not want to have.

- Even if it is paradoxical, concentrating on ignoring something never works. Every time you think about not thinking about something, obviously, you'll be thinking about it.

Make Your Thoughts And Your Mental Health A Priority. Take care of your brain sleeping 7 or 8 hours a day, controlling your level of stress and adopting a positive attitude towards life.

- Eating healthy foods and exercising regularly helps maintain good mental and physical health.

Find Out What Events Trigger Your Conflicting Thoughts. Although you should not avoid all your problems, pay attention to the things that cause you to generate negative thoughts and get ready when you come back to find them. Organize your daily schedule to end the day with a positive motivation, such as doing some creative work, spending time with your family or reading a good book, which will allow you to spend your rest hours thinking about the things you like most.

- Dedicate several moments a day to stop and evaluate your life.
- Be aware of your thoughts in the triggering moments, avoiding, again, any judgment or self-criticism.

Meditate. Throughout history, meditation has been a vital tool to help people relax and control their thoughts. Find some time to meditate daily,

even if it's only between 5 and 10 minutes, especially on days when your thoughts are harder to control.

- It has even been shown that meditation helps to achieve good body and heart health.

Restructure Your Thoughts From A Positive Or Non-Invasive Point Of View. Restructuring thoughts will help you situate them in the context of the world around you, allowing you to understand them better. For example, instead of worrying that your boss has destroyed your presentation because he does not like you, try to assume that he has taken into account the other workers, the company, his superiors and, in short, not only what he feels for you.

- For example, if someone you love takes a while without calling you, it is most likely because you are busy or stressed, not sick or in danger.

Assume That There Are Many Things That You Can Not Control. Instead of obsessing about things you can not control (other people, time, news), concentrate on yourself. When you think about things in the outside world that are beyond your control, remember that the only person you can control is yourself, and work on it. This does not mean you should not try to intervene in the world around you, but you should always keep in mind that what you can best control are your own thoughts.

CHAPTER NINE

Learn How To Be quite And Strong In Every Situation

In general, most people have difficulty maintaining calm in certain situations. This can be seen in many occasions in which we are not able to react in a peaceful way, we get depressed, we lose patience, we explode in an attack of anger ... In this article we want to make a special emphasis on how to manage so that stress and Nerves do not overwhelm us in difficult situations. We live in a stressful society, in which work, training, relationships ... are increasingly more complex, and yet our psychological tools are usually not cultivated and worked to meet these demands. From Nuts and Neurons we want to provide you with some simple strategies that can help you stay calm in difficult situations.

Ways To Stay Calm In Any Situation

We must know that the way we deal with stressful situations has an important impact on our psychological and physical health. Of course it is not at all easy to keep calm when faced with personal conflicts, we feel betrayed, work under pressure etc . The moment we feel that we are upset, we can observe how our body undergoes changes, we notice that the pulse accelerates, the body temperature increases, some muscles begin to tense, our breathing becomes more superficial and accelerated ... When we identify these changes and are aware that we are altering, and this can lead to losing the roles, we must take into account the following recommendations to be able to remain calm:

1. Identify Body Signals

First of all, you have to learn what the bodily signals are that tell you that you are beginning to feel agitated. This is essential, and the sooner we are able to realize that our body is shaking, before we can put in gear regulatory mechanisms, and easier to keep calm. This is something we already talked about when we discussed the topic of amygdala kidnapping . It is essential that we are aware of how our body is, as this can help us a lot to intervene before we are totally blinded by emotions.

The most common bodily signs of stress and nervousness are the following:

- Increase of cardiac frequency
- Surface and accelerated breathing
- Trembles in the extremities
- Clickers
- Dry mouth
- Muscle tension

Once these signals are detected, we must learn to manage our physical and psychological activation. Next we are going to see some forms ...

2. Learn To Breathe

One of the most powerful tools we can use against agitation and nervousness, is diaphragmatic breathing . It is also known as abdominal breathing . When we breathe, several muscle areas always work simultaneously, but in diaphragmatic breathing work or muscle movement is especially important in the lower part of the lungs (in the diaphragmatic area). The diaphragm, when contracting, moves the abdomen, displaces the internal organs down, so the abdomen is swollen, for this reason it is also spoken of abdominal breathing to refer to this type of breathing.

When we breathe in this way, we take a large amount of air to the lower part of the lungs, which is the one with the most volume capacity, thus ensuring greater ventilation, oxygen uptake and cleaning of the lungs with each expiration. When we are breathing so our belly swells and our chest and shoulders remain low and immobile (although if the breathing is deep we can also see movement in the chest and shoulders). Learning to release the tension of the abdomen to maintain a slow and deep diaphragmatic breathing, is an important aspect to learn to stay calm. As soon as we begin to breathe in this way, our physical activation diminishes, and we feel that we relax almost immediately.

3. Learn To Manage Your Non-Verbal Language

We know that our body reflects what we feel, and that our emotions alter our non-verbal language, which helps us communicate our internal states to others. However, there is something that we generally do not have that

clear, and that is that our bodily postures and actions can also modify our psychological states, and can even help us manage our emotions and physiological states.

This is something that we had already talked about in other articles, such as the one on the topic of the facial feedback hypothesis , which states that the facial expression of emotions would not only serve to provide information to other individuals about the underlying emotion , but that the muscular activity in itself would be the initial responsible of the production of the own emotional experience, by means of a sensory muscular feedback. When you want to relax, control your breathing (so that you can gradually change to a diaphragmatic breathing), watch your body, and release muscle tension, relax men, and try to reflect with your body a state of calm. This will help you avoid stress and nerves from taking over.

4. Distract Yourself For A Moment From The Situation

When we are in a situation that generates tension, discomfort or nervousness, and we need to keep calm, it may be a good option to take a few minutes to get away or isolate ourselves from this situation, and reassure us.

Give us a break to drink a glass of water, take a little air during a walk, listen to some music, or perform any other task that clears our mind and allows us to take distance from the stressful situation. This can be a good practice to be able to relax a little and recover serenity.

Since we move away from the situation that disturbs us, our brain takes about 90 seconds to regulate and return to calm. For this reason it is important to know that many times it is not enough to count to 10 ... but you have to take a break and disconnect for at least a couple of minutes.

5. Think Differently, Or Stop Thinking

We know that the thoughts that pass through our mind directly affect how we feel, for this reason, in line with what we have said in the previous point, we must learn to clear our mind of all those thoughts that can increase our discomfort and our nervousness. Learning to manage our internal dialogue is crucial in order to maintain calm under pressure.

When faced with a difficult situation we must be very attentive to everything we say to ourselves, and we must strive to ensure that this internal dialogue is not toxic and counterproductive.

It is important that we are aware of this, and that we also learn to evoke thoughts that help us to relax. In clinical practice, in many cases suggestive procedures (such as hypnosis) are used so that patients learn to remain calm or relax. These procedures are based on the evocation of relaxing images and sounds, which we can use to reduce stress levels .

6. Learn To Be Objective

This may sound very nice, and very easy to say ... "I will be objective", but really if we stop to reflect, although it is sometimes complicated, there are certain ways of thinking that can help us stay calm.

To learn to be objective, you can imagine that the situation in which you are as if you were not inside it, and the protagonist was someone else. Do you think you would see it the same? Would you think the same way? Imagine that the protagonist of that story was a person that you appreciate, and this one asked for your advice ... What would you recommend? How would you console him? By posing the situation in this way, you are likely to be able to be more objective and distance yourself from the emotional implications of the situation, which can help calm you down and act more serenely. You

can also pose the situation to a person you trust with whom you feel affinity, to help you consider the consequences of a particular decision and choose the most appropriate alternative. A person outside the problem will help you stay calm and will tell you your objective point of view from an external position.

8. The Importance Of Physical Exercise

To maintain calm in difficult situations, it can be very useful to do physical exercise . Move, activate your body in any way. Taking a walk or going for a run are good ways to disconnect from problems, release energy and keep your mind clear of negative thoughts and emotions.

No matter what exercise you choose, it is always better to go out for a little walk than to stay locked in your room with the same harmful thoughts hanging around your head. The sport can help us regulate our emotional states, and also because we release endorphins, makes us feel better.

9. Practice Mindfulness

Various investigations have shown that the practice of full consciousness benefits and increases our emotional intelligence through the following aspects:

- It helps us see clearly and accept the reality of our situation.
- It allows us to become aware, in an intelligent way, of our bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings, first step and starting point to decide consciously to act or not on them.
- It allows us, in an intelligent way, to see the speed with which our bodily sensations, our thoughts and feelings change, which facilitates the "relativization" of them.

- It helps us to face, intelligently, the inevitable threats of life, both big and small.
- It helps us to counteract the mental habits that fill us with anxiety and other unpleasant emotions.
- It allows us to deal constructively with negative moods.
- Instead of rejecting, fleeing, avoiding, etc. the thoughts, feelings and sensations that produce pain and suffering help us to become aware, know and accept our mental states (thoughts, emotions and sensations), which prepares us to stop identifying with these contents and let them go, which It allows us to face pain and suffering more effectively.
- It helps us to change, in an intelligent way, the vision we have of ourselves as well as our expectations about life, making them more in line with reality.
- It allows us to verify, in an intelligent way, that it is not always possible to maintain pleasurable states and to drive away unpleasant ones.
- It allows us to accept and respond, intelligently, to both triumph and defeat. More concretely, to the occasions in which we feel that we are a real disaster or that we are great; to the times we win and lose; to the moments when we have descended to the deepest well and to those in which we feel we have reached the moon.

Ultimately Mindfulness will allow us to place ourselves in the right condition to face and respond intelligently to the different in our life contexts. In addition, through this discipline a philosophy is promoted that helps us to understand and accept our emotions and thoughts, diminishing their negative repercussions.

10. Learn To Forgive Yourself And Congratulate Yourself

We already know that staying calm in any circumstance is not an easy task. It requires a lot of patience, a lot of practice and desire, and willpower to not give up when faced with truly complicated situations. Learn to congratulate yourself for trying to behave in the best possible way. The important thing is your intention, and of course it will not always be enough, but we have to learn to forgive our own mistakes, and congratulate ourselves for our successes. Remember that failures help you learn more about yourself and make you know yourself better so that in future situations you do not make the same mistakes.

CHAPTER TEN

Positive Thinking And How To Use It

Positive thinking is the opposite of negative thinking. Positive thinking might take place in your mind, when you feel happy or when you have achieved something you have been wanting to achieve for a while. It's a little voice in your head (the one that's reading these words), that can put us in a more positive frame of mind on a day-to-day basis as we go about our lives. Positive thinking is also one way a person can experience the feelings of positive emotions such as joy, happiness, excitement. It may also put a smile on our faces and a bounce in our step, and make us look forward to things more.

Whether one has positive thoughts or negative thoughts, our minds are occupied with thoughts and depending on some factors, for some, positive thinking occurs more often than for others. But the great thing is that positive thinking is a skill that can be taught, learned, practiced and mastered such as you would be taught sports, practice music, learn a new language or master a subject. Positive thinking can also become a Mind Set which is the next level of just having positive thoughts from time to time. A Positive Mind Set is such that the majority of your thoughts will be positive. And again for some people, the opposite may be true, but through proven steps, tools and practice, anyone can reprogram their mind to counteract negative thoughts and a negative mindset.

Why Positive Thinking?

Positive thinking is valuable to us in many ways. For example, if you're competing in a cross country or marathon event at a sports day, and you're running and running, feeling like your legs are going to collapse under you

and your stitch will kill you,... you feel weak, muscles are melting, your lungs feel like they're going to burst and every step is agony. Like many top sports people do, they will use positive thinking to push through, not just to get over the finishing line, but to win. A positive mindset is also referred to as a "Winner's Mind Set".

Who Wouldn't Want That?

And as we have established, positive thinking is the opposite of negative thinking. Negative thinking is the other voice or even other voices in our heads that might tell us we are stupid when we make mistakes or fail at something. Negative thinking can mentally paralyse some people too and stop us from asking for what we really want in our lives. For others, it might make them worry about things that may or may not happen.

Positive thinking and the development of a positive attitude are two of the most important qualities you must have to achieve your goals and change your life. When you think about what you want, you will also talk about what you will do to achieve it. This will naturally cause you to feel happier and more in control of your life . Why does this happen? because while you think of something that makes you happy, the brain releases endorphins that are responsible for producing a sense of well-being. A positive mind increases the chances of success in all areas of life. So is! Taking a positive attitude towards the world will make you happier. And this is not something that I invented. There is scientific evidence that having a positive mind reduces stress levels and improves health significantly.

How To Think Positively

1. Assessing Your Thinking

Take Responsibility For Your Attitude. You are solely responsible for your thoughts, and your outlook on life is a choice. If you tend to think negatively, you are choosing to think that way. With practice, you can choose to have a more positive outlook

Understand the benefits of being a positive thinker. Choosing to think more positively will not only help you take control of your life and make your everyday experiences more pleasant, but it can also benefit your mental and physical health as well as your ability to deal with change. Being aware of these benefits can help you be even more motivated to think positively on a regular basis.[3]Here are some benefits of positive thinking:

- An increased life span
- Lower rates of depression and distress
- Greater resistance to the common cold
- Better mental and physical well-being
- Better coping skills during times of stress
- A more natural ability to form relationships and cement bonds

Keep A Diary To Reflect Your Thoughts. Recording your thoughts can enable you to step back and evaluate patterns in your thinking. Write down your thoughts and feelings and try to spot any triggers that lead to either positive or negative thoughts. Taking just twenty minutes to follow your pattern of thinking at the end of every day can be a valuable way to identify your negative thoughts and make a plan to change them to positive thoughts.

- Your journal can take on any form that you like. If you don't care to write long-winded reflective paragraphs, you can just

make a list of the five most prevalent negative thoughts and positive thoughts you had that day.

- Be sure to give yourself the time and opportunity to evaluate and reflect on the information in the journal. If you write every day, you may want to reflect at the end of every week.

2. Combating Negative Thoughts

Identify Your Automatic Negative Thoughts. In order to shift away from the negative thinking that is holding you back from having a positive outlook, you'll need to become more aware of your "automatic negative thoughts". When you recognize them, you're in a position to challenge them and give them their marching orders to move right out of your head.

- An example of an automatic negative thought is, upon hearing that you have an upcoming test, you think, "I'll probably fail it." The thought is automatic because it's your initial reaction to hearing about the test.

Challenge Your Negative Thoughts. Even if you have spent most of your life thinking negatively, you don't have to continue being negative. Whenever you have a negative thought, particularly an automatic negative thought, stop and evaluate whether the thought is true or accurate.

- One way to challenge negative thoughts is to be objective. Write down the negative thought and think about how you would respond if someone else said the thought to you. It's likely that you could offer an objective rebuttal to someone else's negativity, even if you find it difficult to do for yourself.
- For example, you may have the negative thought, "I always fail tests." It is unlikely that you would still be in school if you

always fail tests. Go back through your files or grades and find tests that you received a passing grade on; these challenge the negative thought. You may even find that you have tests that you passed with As and Bs, which would further confirm that your negativity is exaggerated

Replace The Negative Thoughts With Positive Thoughts. Once you're feeling confident that you can spot and challenge negative thoughts, you're ready to make active choices about replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. This doesn't mean that everything in your life will always be positive; it's normal to have a variety of emotions. However, you can work to replacing the daily unhelpful thinking patterns with thoughts that help you to flourish.

- For example, if you have the thought, "I will probably fail the test," stop yourself. You've already identified the thought as negative and evaluated its accuracy. Now try replacing it with a positive thought. A positive thought doesn't have to be blindly optimistic, such as "I will definitely get a 100 on the test, even if I don't study." It can be something as simple as, "I am going to take time to study and prepare so I do as well on the test as I can."
- Use the power of questions. When you ask your brain a question, it tends to find the answer for you. If you ask yourself, "Why is life so terrible?" your brain will try to answer your question. The same is true if you ask yourself, "How did I get to be so lucky?". Ask yourself questions which draw your focus onto positive thoughts.

Minimize External Influences That Stimulate Your Negativity. You may find that certain kinds of music or violent video games or movies influence your overall attitude. Try minimizing your exposure to stressful or violent stimuli and spend more time listening to calming music or reading. Music benefits your mind really well and books on positive thinking can provide good tips for being a happier person.

Avoid "Black-And-White Thinking." In this type of thinking, also known as “polarizing,” everything you encounter either is or it isn't; there are no shades of gray. This can lead people to feel as though they have to do something perfectly or not at all.

- To avoid this type of thinking, embrace the shades of gray in life. Instead of thinking in terms of two outcomes (one positive and one negative), make a list of all of the outcomes in between to see that things aren't as dire as they seem.
- For example, if you have a test coming up and don't feel comfortable with the subject matter, you may be tempted to not take the test or to not study for it at all, so if you fail, it's because you didn't even try. However, this is ignoring the fact that you're likely to do better if you spend more time preparing for the test.
- You should also avoid thinking that the only outcomes of your test-taking are an A or an F. There is a lot of “gray area” between the A and the F.

Avoid "Personalizing". Personalizing is making the assumption that you are personally to blame for anything that goes wrong. If you take this type of thinking too far, you can get paranoid and think that no one likes you or

wants to hang out with you, and that every little move you make is going to disappoint someone.

- Someone who is personalizing may think, "Betty didn't smile at me this morning. I must have done something to upset her." However, it's more likely that Betty was just having a bad day, and her mood had nothing to do with you.

Avoid "Filter Thinking." This is when you choose to only hear the negative side of a situation. Most situations have elements that are both good and bad, and it helps to recognize both. If you think this way, then you'll never see the positive in any situation.

- For example, you may take a test and receive a C, along with feedback from your teacher saying that your performance improved greatly from the last test. Filtering can cause you to only think negatively about the C and ignore the fact that you have shown improvement and growth.

Avoid "Catastrophizing." This is when you assume that the worst possible outcome is going to happen. Catastrophizing is usually related to anxiety about performing poorly. You can combat catastrophizing with being realistic about possible outcomes of a situation.

- For example, you might think that you're going to fail an exam you've been studying for. A catastrophizer will then extend that insecurity to assume that you'll then fail the class and have to drop out of college, then end up unemployed and on welfare. If you're realistic about negative outcomes, you'll realize that even if you were to fail a test, it's unlikely that you would necessarily fail the course, and you would not have to drop out of college.

Visit a peaceful place. It can help to have a personal escape when you need to turn your attitude around. Many people find that spending a little time outdoors improves their mood.

- If your workplace has an outdoor area with benches or picnic tables, schedule yourself a little down time to be outside and refresh yourself.
- If you are unable to physically visit an outdoor peaceful place, try meditating and visiting a pleasant outdoor area with perfect weather in your mind.

3. Living An Optimistic Life

Give Yourself Time To Change. Developing a positive outlook is actually the development of a skill. As with any skill, it takes time to master, and it requires dedicated practice and gentle reminders about not falling back into negative thinking.

Be Physically Positive. If you change your physical or bodily habits, your mind will follow suit. In order to feel happier in general, approach your physicality in a positive way. Practice good posture, standing up straight and keeping your shoulders down and back.[15] A slump will make you feel more negative. Smile more often. Not only will others smile back at you, but the act of smiling may convince your body that it is happier.

Practice Mindfulness. Being more aware of your actions and your life will make you feel happier. When you simply go through the motions of your life like a robot, you will likely forget to find the joy in everyday things. By being mindful about your surroundings, your choices, and your daily activities, you can gain greater control of your life and your happiness.

- Consider taking up meditation as a way to center yourself and learn excellent focus. By meditating every day for 10 to 20 minutes at a time that's convenient for you, you can increase your awareness of self and the present, helping you to corral the stinking thinking with greater consciousness.
- Try taking a yoga class. Yoga can also help you become more aware of the world as you get in touch with your breathing.
- Even just stopping to take deep breaths and rest your mind for a few moments can make you feel happier.

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Surround Yourself With Positive People. We are often influenced by the people around us. If you find that people around you tend to be negative, look to surround yourself with more positive people. This will feed your own positivity. If you have a close family member or a significant other

who is constantly negative, encourage her to go on a journey towards positivity with you.

- Avoid people who sap your energy and motivation. If you can't avoid them, or don't want to, learn how not to let them get you down and keep your connection with them brief.
- Avoid dating anyone with a negative outlook. If you're already prone to negative thinking, you'll be falling into a trap. If you do wind up in a relationship with someone who struggles to think positively, though, seeking counseling together might be your best option.

Set Meaningful Goals. Whatever your goal may be, you should keep yourself busy working on it and believe in the cause you've set for yourself. Once you reach the first goal, you will be inspired to continue with the remaining goals, as well as adding new ones to your life. With each goal you achieve, no matter how small, you will gain confidence and your self-esteem will increase, feeding more positivity in your life.

- Working towards achieving your goals—even if you're just taking small steps—can make you feel happier

Don't Forget To Have Fun. People who allow themselves regular fun in their lives tend to be happier and more positive because it isn't all drudgery and never-ending monotony. Fun breaks up the hard work and challenges. Remember that fun does not look the same for everyone, so you may need to spend time finding an activity that is fun for you.

- Always make time for laughter. Hang out with friends who make you laugh, go to a comedy club, or watch a funny movie. It'll be hard to think negatively when your funny bone is being tickled.

Strategies To Have A Positive Mind

1. Always Use Positive Words

How many times do we find ourselves complaining about everything? Many, right? That's why it's important to remember that our words reflect our thoughts and, the more we look for positive things to say, the more we fill our thoughts with a positive attitude. Make an effort to commit to always have a positive mind. I suggest the following exercise: every day when you wake up, have a conversation with yourself and ask yourself: what do I want to achieve? How will I react when I reach my destination? How will I avoid negative thoughts? Commit yourself at that moment to avoid them and replace them with constructive and positive thoughts. The next morning, check how much you managed to expel negative thoughts on your previous day and start over!

2. Focus On The Present Moment

We usually make the problems seem bigger than they really are. This can become a habit. A bad habit! But focusing on the present will make your concerns and fears smaller about what might fail.

3. Accept That Not Everything Is Perfect

I have a news: perfectionism does not bring us closer to happiness, it takes us away from it! Being positive does not mean thinking that everything is perfect. It can be difficult to give up the need for perfection and control, but to accept that things will not always happen as you expect will give you inner peace, tranquility and will positively focus you towards the future. Many situations are beyond our control, and instead of spending energy generating negative emotions for this, better accept that things did not go as you wanted and focus on what you could do better next time.

4. Live With Positive People

Tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are! We look like the people around us: the more time you spend with people who have a positive mind, the more you start to think / act positively.

5. Contribute To Your Community

One of the best ways to be more positive (and actually feel better) is to contribute to your community in some way. It's wonderful to help other people.

6. Be Grateful

Once a week set aside a few minutes of your day to thank for all that you have good in your life. Remember all those reasons why you feel grateful, it helps you to maintain the positive approach to face any situation in your life.

Being grateful will turn anger and frustration into more positive feelings.

7. Meditate!

Meditation helps us generate positive thoughts. I suggest the following meditation exercise:

Close your eyes and take a deep breath

Just relax

Feel your breath

As you exhale, you release all negative thoughts from your body

Take control of what happens in your body and in your mind for the next three minutes

Only you will have within you an immense power and freedom to be and think positively and strengthen you.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Weapon For Social Anxiety and Understanding The Stress

You want to meet people, make friends, and share yourself with the world, but social interactions can be especially intimidating for people who struggle with social anxiety. While many people feel nervous before a presentation or speaking event, social anxiety interferes with your normal routine and causes tremendous distress on a regular basis. You may constantly doubt your social adequacy and worry about what might happen if you receive a negative evaluation. Although therapy can be very useful for people who suffer from social anxiety disorder, there a number of techniques you can try to combat your anxiety without professional intervention.

How to Overcome Social Anxiety

1. Recognizing Social Anxiety

Understand Symptoms Of Social Anxiety. There are some common symptoms or experiences of social anxiety. Common markers of anxiety disorders include:

- Excessive self-consciousness and anxiety in everyday social situations that generally others would not find overly stressful.
- Extreme worry about social situations for days, weeks, or even months beforehand.
- Intense fear of being watched or judged by others, especially people you do not know.
- Avoiding social situations to a degree that limits your activities or disrupts or otherwise negatively impacts your life.
- Fear of humiliation.
- Fear that others will notice that you are nervous and react negatively.

Understand Physical Symptoms. While experiencing anxiety affects the way you feel emotionally, your body creates triggers to clue you in on how you're feeling. People with social anxiety may experience:

- Blushing
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Nausea, or "butterflies"
- Shaky hands or voice
- Racing heartbeat
- Sweating
- Feeling dizzy or faint

Learn to recognize your triggers. Different people with social anxiety have different triggers, although many are pretty common. By knowing what causes you to react with anxiety, you can start to process these experiences in a more positive manner. It may be obvious, or sometimes seemingly random. Sometimes keeping a journal can help pinpoint common experiences. For example:

- Do you feel anxiety when you walk into a classroom? Is it the same for math class as it is for art class?
- Do certain people, like your boss or coworkers, trigger anxiety when you interact with them?
- Do you feel anxiety in social situations? Is it the same for a restaurant as for a concert? Is a group of close friends different than strangers?

Pay Attention To Situations You Tend To Avoid.

- Do you always sit by yourself at lunch, rather than asking to sit with others?
- Do you always turn down invitations to parties?
- Do you avoid family get-togethers?
- Do you avoid using public restrooms?

Some other common triggers include:

- Meeting new people
- Being the center of attention
- Being watched while doing something
- Making small talk
- Being called on in class
- Making phone calls
- Eating or drinking in public

- Speaking up in a meeting
- Attending parties

2. Tackling Fears Using A List Method

Face Your Fears. Many people who suffer from social anxiety tend to avoid their fears rather than facing up to them. Although this can help to alleviate social anxiety in the short-term, it can actually make the anxiety worse in the long-run. Facing your fears is always difficult and requires a lot of bravery and determination, but if you want to cure your anxiety it is something you must do.

Write A List Of Situations That Trigger Social Anxiety. Once you've identified your triggers, write them down. Then, look at your list and arrange the triggers from least threatening to most threatening. At the bottom of the list might be making eye contact while speaking, in the middle may be asking a stranger for directions; the top of the list might be asking someone to a dinner date or singing karaoke.

- If you struggle to rank your fears, try assigning them numbers. Give a 1 to "scary" triggers, a 2 to "quite scary," and a 3 to "terrifying."

Start tackling your list. Make a goal to tackle one list item every week. Start with the items you gave a "1" rating, and work up the list. You want to start with the more manageable items first and build your confidence as you attempt more and more challenging items.

- Remember that you get credit for just trying--you may need more than one attempt to succeed. Every 'failure' is one step closer to succeeding.

- People with anxiety tend to take an "all or nothing" approach--either you summon up the courage to ask to sit next to someone at the coffeeshop, or you fail forever. If you did not do it today, try again tomorrow or next week.
- You may have to break down big goals into little goals. For instance, if you are finding it difficult to ask to sit next to someone at the coffeeshop, you may need to find a smaller, related goal. Maybe smile at a stranger at the coffeeshop? Or sit kind of close to a stranger? For some people, it may be to even go in the cafe at all!
- Start with small, easily reached goals. It may be too daunting to even start at a "1". It is better to gain confidence through baby steps than to try to bite off too much at once.
- Treat the list as cumulative. If you start feeling stressed and anxious, then take a short break before moving on. It's okay to re-evaluate your goals and move at your own pace.

3. Practicing Social Anxiety Skills

Practice relaxation techniques. If you're struggling to feel comfortable in new social situations, learn ways to relax yourself. Meditation and exercises like yoga and tai chi are techniques you can use to calm down and prepare yourself to face your challenges calmly.

- If you carry tension in your muscles, tighten your whole body for three seconds (including your hands, feet, jaw, neck, etc.), then release. Do this two more times and feel the tension leave your body.
- Learn to recognize your body overreacting to feelings of anxiety and immediately practice calming yourself in those

situations.

Use Breathing Techniques. People who suffer from social anxiety often find themselves in situations where their panic gets the better of them and they have difficulty breathing. In this situation, one of the best ways to regain control and calm your mind is just to focus on your breathing.

- Inhale deeply through the nose for six seconds. Feel the breath moving down through your chest, into the pit of your stomach.
- As you breathe focus solely on the movement of air in and out of your body.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth for another six seconds. Repeat this exercise until you begin to feel calm again.

Pick A Mantra Or A "Pump-Up" Song. Recite a comforting prayer, line of poetry, or famous quotation, something that inspires you and that you can return to when feeling anxious. Find a song that inspires confidence you can listen to as you drive to a social gathering or before a big presentation.

- Even something as simple as "I can do this" will help you center yourself and feel confident.

Change Your Diet. Stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine can increase anxiety symptoms. Alcohol can also trigger anxiety attacks, so be careful when drinking. Know the difference between drinking to calm nerves and drinking in excess.

4. Changing Your Mentality

Identify negative thoughts. When you experience social anxiety, chances are your thoughts are to blame in creating negative experiences, so start to observe the thoughts you have, then begin to challenge them. Some common thought patterns include:

- Being a mind reader – You assume you know other people's thoughts, and they are thinking negatively about you.
- Fortune telling – You attempt to predict the future by assuming a bad outcome. You “know” that something bad will happen so you feel anxious even before anything happens.
- Catastrophizing – You assume the worst situation can and will happen to you.
- Making it about you – You assume that others are negatively focusing on you or assume that what other people are doing or saying is about you.

Challenge Your Negative Thoughts. Once you have learned to identify your negative thoughts, you must begin to analyze and challenge them. Ask yourself questions about the thought and test whether or not it's really true. Use logic and evidence to disprove these automatic, negative thoughts.

- For instance, if you are afraid to go to a party because everyone will notice that you're nervous and sweating, try something like, "Wait a minute. I was invited to this party because these people are my friends and they want to see me and spend time with me. There will be tons of people there, do I really think I'm going to be the focus of their attention? Will my friends even care if they notice that I'm nervous?"

Use Positive Affirmations. Instead of engaging in negative thoughts, replace them with positive thoughts. When a negative thought pops up, follow the same protocol of first challenging that thought with evidence to the contrary, then give yourself a positive message to say to yourself.

- For instance, if you think, "No one really wants me to come to the party," you can challenge that with: "They invited me, so

obviously they want me at the party. The hostess even texted me yesterday to say she really hopes I can make it." Then look at yourself in the mirror and say to yourself: "I am funny and fun to be around, and anyone would be lucky to have me as a friend."

- Other positive affirmations for someone dealing with social anxiety might be: "I am working to feel more comfortable with social situations every day. I know with practice and patience I will feel more comfortable in social situations."
- You can also write positive messages on sticky notes and put them around your house or stick them to your mirror.

Decrease Your Self-Focus. To reduce the concentration on yourself, engage with your surroundings. Observe the people around you and your environment. Focus on listening to what is being said, and stay away from engaging negative thoughts.

- When you notice yourself focusing on your thoughts or what people think of you, flip your attention away from yourself.

Assign Less Value To The Responses Of Others. Lots of anxiety comes from feelings of being judged. Other people may not always agree with you or respond to you, but this is not a reflection on you or your abilities. Everyone experiences social interactions where they get along with other people great, and times where they don't hit it off. It's just part of life, and has nothing to do with how likable you are. You're working toward comprehensive confidence, so what matters most is that you're working on your list. You're trying!

5. Using Good Social Skills

Ask questions. One of the easiest ways to get more comfortable in one-on-one conversations or group discussions is to ask questions. You'll put others at ease if you ask sincere and open-ended questions. Start with general questions, such as "What have you been up to today?" or "How did your presentation go?"

- Open-ended questions allow the responder to say whatever she wants to say, without being confined to a simple yes or no. If you ask, "Do you want to see that movie?" it may not elicit as much of a response as "What do you think about that movie?"

Listen Actively And Curiously. This can make all the difference in the world. When you listen, you show that you are engaged in what someone is saying, and that's it's important and interesting to you. Listen to what someone else says and then respond to her comments. Think about what she's saying, and allow her to finish her statements without interrupting.

- Pay attention to your body language. This is a big factor in conversation, even though it is unspoken. Instead of looking over someone's head, try to make eye contact.
- Listening intently also prepares you to ask good follow-up questions.

Communicate Assertively. This style of communication means you are able to express feelings, thoughts, beliefs, needs and opinions while still respecting the rights of others. When you are assertive, you respect yourself and others.

- Learn to be okay with saying "No." It can be very difficult for some people to say no, but saying yes or agreeing to something you can't or don't really want to do can cause stress and

resentment. Take care of yourself and say "No" when you need to.

- Be direct, keep a neutral tone of voice and body language. Make your needs clear, and understand that being assertive doesn't necessarily mean getting exactly what you want.
- If you're within a group at a meeting or at a party, try talking in a moderately louder voice than you usually do. Make eye contact and speak decisively. This projects confidence and will command presence.

6. Putting Yourself Out There

Prepare For Social Situations. Practice relaxation beforehand, and read a paper to have talking points to engage with people at social events. Prepare a comment to make at a meeting, or have a topic from the radio to discuss over lunch. If you have to stand up in front of a large group of people to give a presentation or speech, being prepared will give you extra confidence.

- Try learning your speech by heart. This will help you to avoid forgetting any important points on the day itself.

Ask Your Friends Or Family For Support. Especially as you begin to tackle more and more daunting fears, reach out to your support network to help you.

- If you have to attend a large event, such as a party or conference, bring a close friend or family member along with you for support. Just having a familiar person close can make a huge difference in your confidence levels. If you start to feel

overwhelmed, turn to your friend and try to keep your mind off your nerves.

Expand Your Social Circle. People who suffer from social anxiety can find it very difficult to put themselves out there and meet new people. However, this is an essential part of overcoming anxiety and moving forward with your life.

- Think of an activity that you enjoy, whether it's knitting, horse riding, or running, and find a group of people in your area who share this interest. You will find it much easier to strike up a conversation with people who have similar interests to your own.
- If you get invited to a party or event, make sure you say yes. People with social anxiety tend to shy away from group gatherings, but this can cause you to feel even more isolated and unhappy. Make an effort to go to any social gathering (even if it's only for half an hour). You need to push yourself out of your comfort zone if you want to get better.

Take A Social Skills Or Assertiveness Training Class. Taking a class to gain skills is a great way to learn and practice your social skills and assertiveness. Get to know the people in your class and practice your skills with them.

Make An Appointment With A Therapist. If, after working on confronting your anxiety triggers for a while, you're still having trouble moving down the list and still suffering from severe anxiety, or if your anxiety is debilitating, talk to a professional.

Keys To Understanding Stress

1. Why Do We Respond With Stress?

The axis that causes it is the experience or perception of a threat or a type of risk. The issue is that the threat can be real or imaginary: the organism does not differentiate it, that is, always lives it as real, for that reason it defends itself.

2. How Do We Feel It?

Like fatigue, depression, anxiety, constant irritability, fear, confusion, fluctuations of mood, and so on. Thoughts of fear of failure, excessive self-criticism, forgetfulness, difficulty concentrating and making decisions, repetitive thoughts, are also the result of this factor.

We can also feel it as diarrhea or constipation, poor memory, body aches, headaches, tensions and frequent "aches", lack of energy or concentration, sexual dysfunctions (among them the most important is the lack of desire).

3. Where Does It Come From?

Any living organism defends itself (be it vegetal, animal, human), because it feels (as the etymology of the word says) "tight", urged, stuck, hardened before that threat or risk. The living beings, be they plants, animals and obviously the human being, have two "mechanisms" to survive, one of them is homeostasis (restoring the balance that allows them to live) and another the homeodynamics (generating imbalances that allow them to display their potentials).

4. When Is It That A Simple Environmental Threat Becomes Stress?

As what alerts our defenses (whether imaginary or real) persists and the body does not manage to solve it, it settles and makes symptoms. Our

substantial difference as humans is that we mean the emotions and make them feelings , and it is with the latter that we must deal with them.

5. When Stress Turns Against Us, How Do We Reverse It?

The fact that a person is negatively stressed produces the mentioned disorders and a lot of suffering. But if you consider them as tools to evolve and decide to treat yourself, you need a professional to help you see what to do with the feelings of threat you perceive, and how you can take advantage of them and process them in a different way. You should consider them as a wake-up call, going to the positive to feel better. Making a comparison with anxiety , this may be a feeling that paralyzes us or that moves us towards actions that allow us to solve and improve our lives.

6. Is It Important To Move To A Place In Life That Generates A Sense Of Permanent Threat, Then?

There is an idea of a philosopher named Jean Paul Sartre, which is very valid to paraphrase and which is useful here: "I am not responsible for what they did or do of me, I must be responsible for what I do with what they did or do my". If we have stressed negatively and we are suffering, let's not blame the circumstances (however unfavorable they really are) or our way of being, product of what they did to us, let's not deny either of these issues, but let's reflect on them making us charge of the changes we are able to make.

CHAPTER TWELVE

How To Set Daily Goals And Becoming A Warrior Of The Discipline

Do you feel dissatisfied with the disorganization that you feel in your life? You may have big plans for your life, but you have no idea how to reach them. Although it is important to write down your goals , it is essential that you look for ways to accomplish and achieve those goals (personal development plan). Probably you realize that with personal development and the achievement of your goals you can improve your well-being and your happiness in general. Once you have written your goals, create some measurable points of reference to meet your daily goals.

How to set daily goals

1. Write your goals

Make A List Of All Your Goals. Include all your weekly, monthly, annual or life goals. This will allow you to classify them according to the importance they have for you. Take some time to think about the time it will take you to achieve each goal and see if they are achievable.

- Always try to be as specific as possible by brainstorming your goals. In this way, you can clearly understand the steps you must take to achieve any life plan or short-term goal.

Divide Your Goals In Daily Steps. Once you have discovered your dreams and future ideals, choose a few specific goals to achieve them. If your goal is large or long-term, divide it into smaller goals or steps. Be sure to dedicate enough time to complete large projects or goals; In this way, you can strive every day to achieve them.

- By dividing a goal into daily goals or steps, you can reduce stress and feel happier in the long term.

It Establishes Some Reference Points And Deadlines. Do not concentrate so much on setting daily or smaller goals to the point of forgetting your goal or general plan. Set some deadlines and meet them will give you a sense of achievement, increase your motivation and know what works and what does not.

- Try to use a calendar as a visual indicator to stay committed to your goals and the term you proposed. It is also very satisfying to cross out a completed goal or goal.

Try The SMART Model To Set Goals . Take a look at each of your goals and write down how the goal is: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant

or realistic and of fixed duration with defined deadlines ("SMART" by its initials in English). For example, you can take a vague goal such as: "I want to be a healthier person" and turn it into a more specific goal using the SMART method:

- Specific: "I want to improve my health by lowering a bit of weight."
- Measurable: "I want to improve my health by dropping 9 kilos (20 pounds)."
- Achievable: although you can not lose 45 kilos (100 pounds), 9 kilos (20 pounds) is an achievable goal.
- Relevant or realistic: you can remember that when you lose 9 kilos (20 pounds) you will have more energy and you will feel happier. Remember that you do not do it for anyone else.
- Fixed-term: "I want to improve my health by dropping 9 kilos (20 pounds) next year, which is approximately 1 kilo (2 pounds) per month."

2. Set Achievable Daily Goals

Establish A Realistic Deadline. For short-term goals, analyze how long it will take you to complete the project and establish a deadline. If it is a longer goal, keep in mind how long each step will take you and add the time of each step. It is a good idea to add a little extra time (may be a few days or weeks more), in case something unexpected happens. Regardless of the type of goal, make sure it is achievable.

- For example, if you have a full-time job, volunteer for 10 hours and do 5 hours of exercise, adding 20 hours per week to reach a

goal may not be realistic. This will make it harder to commit and achieve the goal.

Establish A Daily Routine. If your lifestyle and your goals allow it, create a daily routine. Although a routine may sound inflexible or boring, it can reduce stress by keeping you on track. The routines are fundamental to achieve the long-term goals, since they keep you on track correctly towards the goal. They also help you create good habits and provide you with a structure.

- It is not necessary to reserve all the hours of the day; you can simply set the goals for that day. For example, you can plan to work for 3 hours, exercise 1 hour and do housework for the next 2 hours.

Keep Track Of Your Progress Every day, keep in mind where you are as you move toward your goals. If the goal is too far away (perhaps it is a goal of life to become more flexible), it is a good idea to establish reference points. Benchmarks allow you to keep track of your gradual progress, which can motivate you to continue striving to reach the goal. The record of your achievements will also allow you to turn around and see how far you have come and what you have already achieved.

- Dedicate this time to measure your actions and achievements and compare them with your list of goals and the calendar. You may have to readjust the calendar if you realize that you are going faster or slower than you expected.

Take One Step At A Time. You may be very anxious to start a big project or goal. Although this is excellent, keep in mind how much you can actually assume. If you set unrealistic goals or accept too much work, your

motivation and your interest in the project may be affected. Try to take one step at a time and remember that you work to achieve your goal.

- For example, if you are interested in improving your health by changing your diet, exercise routine, bedtime and the time you spend in front of the screen, you may feel overwhelmed. Instead, focus on one aspect at a time or take charge of a few, but set small goals for each. This can make you more productive in the long term.

CONCLUSION

When it comes to certain people some are born mentally tough and others are not. Does this mean that if you are one of the people that aren't born mentally tough that you can never get tough? The answer is no. What people don't realize is that mental toughness can be built, gained or learned. The only advantage you have when you are born tough is that you won't have to work as hard to keep it or build up its level. Getting mentally tougher is like working out your muscles. If you lift weights all the time then you are going to get stronger. The reason that you get strong is because your muscles respond to the lifting of the weights. In much of the same manner that you can work out your mind and make it tougher. That is all well and good, but how does one make it tougher and how long will it take? Unfortunately, it can take some time and it won't be the easiest thing in the world to do but it is completely possible. The best way to make yourself mentally tougher is to step out side of your comfort zone as often as you can, by doing this you are testing the limits of what you think you can and can't do