MYT Participant Workbook

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We help people leverage their strengths, overcome their limitations, and create richer relationships at work and at home.

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Your Intention for Today

Awareness-Intention-Action Sequence

The model we use for positive change in MYT can be summed-up in three words: awareness, intention, and action. In short, a lot of stress management and emotional/social competence building is due to awareness. How aware are we aware of our own states of mind? How aware are we of others and of the world around us? Awareness is a skill that can be deepened and broadened. In the MYT process, we cultivate and practice it through a myriad of ways, among them cognitive, reflective, and affective.

Once awareness is established, intention that flows from this state of mind is particularly potent. When we come from an aware and balanced place, we can set our intention wisely. Goals that flow from this state of mind are accurate. Call to mind the difference between consistency and accuracy. We can consistently shoot an arrow in the same place over and over (consistency), but are we hitting the target we want to hit (accuracy)?

Awareness that drives us to build thoughtful intention spurs us into effective action. Rather than inefficient or, worse, destructive action, when we act from a place of aware, clear-minded intention, we are more productive and effective; our actions affect others, our organizations, and us positively.

To put it directly, see the A-I-A Sequence this way:

**Awareness**

Cultivate awareness on the cognitive, affective, and reflective levels. Cultivate awareness within yourself, with others, and in the world.

**Intention**

Formulate a clear and positive intention from a space of awareness.

**Action**

Act in a productive and effective manner congruent with your intention.

What Are Emotions?

Emotions are comprised of three dynamically interacting components: cognitions, behaviors, and physiological processes. In order to effectively work with our emotional experiences we need to engage all three areas.

Connecting with the previous section, Emotional Social Intelligence (ESI) is, in large part, driven by awareness building around these three components: awareness of what we’re thinking, awareness of how we’re behaving, and awareness of our body sensations and physiological processes. The application of skills allowing us to intelligently change the frequency, intensity, duration, and nature of experiences arising from interaction of these areas is emotional and social competence.

**Cognitions**

The thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and worldview we use to interpret events. EI looks like awareness of how we interpret events and skills in changing maladaptive thoughts.

**Behaviors**

What we actually say and do. EI looks like awareness and more control of whether we talk, withdraw, yell, throw, hug, or smile. This includes developing skills in changing behaviors that support optimal functioning, for example, changing yelling (anger) to talking (assertiveness)

**Physiology**

Body activation/sympathetic nervous system response versus the calming parasympathetic nervous system response. Emotional Intelligence manifests as awareness of our heart rate, blood pressure, and other body indicators of stress and developing relaxation skills that allow us to put our physiology in a healthier state.

What is Stress?

**Stress** is the amount of energy you need to adjust to the internal and external demands of your life in a given amount of time. Stress is the balance between what you have to do and the resources you have to do it with.

*Remember this simple equation:*

**Stress = Perceived Demands**

**Perceived Resources**

Stress is the natural way we gear up to meet life’s demands. It’s the way we react to all the challenges of our day-to-day existence –mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It can be useful or harmful depending on its intensity, duration, and our ability to manage it.

Research has concluded that the events people experience as either uncontrollable or unpredictable are the most stress-inducing. In fact, some people define stress as feeling that things are out of control or that they can no longer cope with or manage what is happening in their lives.

**Stress Response (Fight or Flight Response):** the set of physical responses to stress that prepare us to fight an enemy or to run away to safety.

Markers of the stress response:

* Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing rate to prepare you for action. Arteries around you heart develop increased inflammation and tension.
* Blood flow to the prefrontal cortex (or higher reason center) of the brain diminishes as more blood flows to the limbic (or more primitive) part of the brain.
* Muscles tense up to get ready for action. Can result in muscle pain and stiffness.
* We fixate on the perceived threat and go into cognitive tunnel vision. Because of this, we lose our ability to flexibly adapt because our primary concern is survival.

Difficult Interpersonal Situation

Please describe an interpersonal situation in your life where you experienced relationship difficulty. For example, if you argued with a coworker or fought with your significant other, these would be good examples. Include as much detail as possible, direct quotations and paraphrasing are helpful. Also, write down any thoughts and feelings you remember experiencing at the time.

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Positive Emotional Refocusing Technique (PERT)

When you are feeling the effects in your mind and/or your body of an unresolved grievance or ongoing relationship stress then:

1. Bring your attention to your stomach as you slowly draw in a few slow, deep breaths with ease into your belly. Let each successive breath be deeper and slower than the previous.
2. Then bring to your mind’s eye an image of an experience with another person when you experienced love or a picture of a scene in nature that fills you with awe and wonder.
3. Hold the positive or loving feelings that emerge in the area around your heart.

1. Ask this positive emotion voice of yours if it can suggest to you a way to remain peaceful when you think about this hurt or stress.

PERT Practice

Stressful Situation

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Emotionally Competent Response \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Below is a poem that tells the story that most of us can relate to all too well, presenting a lesson for us to pause when we interpret an event or someone’s behavior in a particular way. The poem is titled *The Cookie Thief*.

“The Cookie Thief” by Valerie Cox

A woman was waiting at an airport one night

With several long hours before her flight

She hunted for a book in the airport shop

Bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop

She was engrossed in her book but happened to see

That the man beside her as bold as could be

Grabbed a cookie or two from the bag between

Which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene

She munched cookies and watched the clock

As this gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock

She was getting more irritated and the minutes ticked by

Thinking, “If I wasn’t nice I’d blacken his eye”

With each cookie she took he took one too

And when only one was left she wondered what he would do

With a smile on his face and a nervous laugh

He took the last cookie and broke it in half

He offered her half as he ate the other

She snatched it from him, and thought oh brother

This guy has some nerve and he’s also rude

Why he didn’t even show any gratitude

She had never known when she was so galled

And sighed with relief when her flight was called

She gathered her belongings and headed for the gate

Refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate

She boarded the plane and sank in her seat

Then sought her book which was almost complete

As she reached in her baggage she gasped with surprise

There was her bag of cookies in front of her eyes

“If mine are here,” she moaned with despair

“Then the others were his and he tried to share”

“Too late to apologize she realized with grief”

That she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

Cognitive Distortions

Here are some ways we think and interpret events that tend to lead to anger, anxiety, depression and conflicts in relationships. These are the main *cognitive distortions* articulated and refined by cognitive psychologists over the last five decades.

**All or Nothing Thinking:** Thinking of things in absolute terms, like "always", "every" or "never". Few aspects of human behavior are so absolute. We often see things in black and white categories. If our performance falls short of perfect, we see ourselves as a total failure, if expectations are met, total success. Everything in life is in between… oops, did I say everything?!

**Overgeneralization:** Taking one or a few cases and using them to make wide generalizations. For example, “I didn’t get that account – I’m not good at this job”

**Negative Mental Filter:** Focusing exclusively negative or upsetting aspects of something while ignoring the rest. Examples: focusing on a tiny imperfection in a piece of beautiful clothing; much of a project is working well, but we dwell on what’s not working well and that becomes the entire experience. What we focus on is a choice.

**Disqualifying the Positive:** Continually "shooting down" positive experiences for arbitrary, ad hoc reasons. We reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. We maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by our everyday experiences. “I did well on that account, but that one was easy.” “Joe and Sue are nice but they have to be at work.”

**Mind Reading:** Assuming we know what someone else is thinking or feeling without any having actually checked it out. For example, during a boardroom presentation, “Mary just looked down, she must be bored.”

**Fortune telling:** Predicting how things will unfold before they happen. We cannot even predict the weather a week from now, much less predict our career, family, or even what we will want a month, year or decade from now. “If this doesn’t go well I’ll lose my job”, or “will be miserable.”

**Catastraphizing:** Focusing on the worst possible outcome, however unlikely, or thinking that a situation is unbearable, impossible, or horrible when it is really just uncomfortable.

**Emotional reasoning:** Making decisions and arguments based on how we *feel* rather than objective reality or mistaking emotional intensity as valid reasoning.

**Shoulds & Musts:** Assuming we know what we or others “must” or “must not” do or what the world “should” be like rather than the situation with which we are actually faced. It also looks like having rigid rules that we think should always apply no matter the circumstances. “This MUST happen or \_\_\_\_”. When we apply “should” to ourselves, we often feel guilty, when we apply it to others we often feel frustration, anger, resentment.

**Labeling:** Explaining behaviors or events, merely by naming them. It’s related to overgeneralization. Rather than describing the specific behavior, we assign a label to someone or ourselves that puts the person or experience in absolute and unalterable terms. Instead of describing our error, we attach a negative label to ourselves: "I'm a loser." When someone else's behavior rubs us the wrong way, we attach a negative label to him, "He's a damn louse." Mislabeling involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

**Personalization:** Taking things personally and assuming you are the cause of something when that may not be the case. Often there are multiple causes but we seem to feel better if we can find something specific to blame as a scapegoat.

Automatic Thoughts and Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive distortions are embedded within our everyday thinking. Chances are, if you feel emotionally charged or activated, cognitive distortions are very nearby. We identify a special category of thoughts called “automatic thoughts” in order to tease-out our hidden cognitive distortions. Automatic thoughts come in the form of snap judgments about ourselves, others, and/or the world around us. They’re the type of thoughts that are present before we know it. They pop into our minds and we act, or react, with them as our guides.

Examples of common types of automatic thoughts:

“He never understands me, I shouldn’t even try to talk with him.”

“She’s really angry at me, I can just tell by the way she’s standing.”

“I’m a failure.”

“I’ll never be able to do this correctly.”

“If I mess-up this presentation, I’ll not going to get a promotion. I’ll probably lose my job. Then I won’t be able to pay my mortgage and I’ll lose my house, too.”

Gratitude Practice

*“There are worse things than getting a wrong number call at 4am; it could be the right number.”*

*“Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have we will not be happy- because we will always want to have something else or something more.” – David Steindl-Rast*

Make a list of the things in your life for which you are grateful:

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    11. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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    15. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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Were you able to identify 20 items or more? Did you find it difficult to identify that many? We have a tendency to habituate and get used to the things we have. This can lead us to take them for granted, ignore them, have a sense of entitlement when we have them, or be very surprised when we lose them. Gratitude practice reminds us on a regular basis that everything we have is a gift, that even the most basic things are transient.

We commonly take for granted or underappreciate certain essential aspects of life.

**Being alive**

There’s a reason funeral homes and cemeteries rarely go out of business. The reality: tomorrow is promised to no one. Let’s savor the profundity of life. Our mere existence is an incredibly special experience.

**Health**

When we grapple with illness or pain, great gratitude for health often arises. At some point, we will experience mild or serious illness – and challenges will arise. Why not practice appreciation when healthy?

**Loved Ones**

We’re used to having our family, friends, and colleagues around. We often aren’t consciously aware that loss will happen at some point. Thousands of people today lost loved ones to accidents, illness, or dissolution of relationships. Let’s actively appreciate our loving relationships.

**Senses and Abilities**

Being able to see, hear, speak, walk, or move our hands are facts we often take for granted. To reactivate and practice appreciation and gratitude for these senses, try walking slowly in a room with your eyes closed for 10 seconds, or not speaking for a full day, or putting on headphones so you can’t hear anything for a few hours, or writing and doing daily tasks with your non-dominant hand for a full day. Today, thousands of people lost these abilities due to accidents.

**Plentiful Era**

We in this era, especially in the United States, are the most fortunate animals in the two billion year history of evolution. We don’t worry about predators eating us, we have dramatic control of our physical environment such as heat and shelter (the very sad plight of the several million that are homeless notwithstanding), and we have more food than we know what to do with. For the first time in evolutionary history, the main problem of hundreds of millions of us is eating too much, rather than scarcity. Think about what life would be like if you couldn’t walk into a supermarket for food because they didn’t exist, or there was no ‘turning on the tap’ for water. Over a billion people in the world live under those and much worse conditions.

**Career, Job, Finances**

The science of happiness and wellbeing has dramatic evidence that after making enough money to be above the poverty range ($15,000 - $30,000/year depending on geography), the correlation between happiness and finances is not just low, but is zero. That means that despite our assumptions of needing money, having 30 thousand vs. 30 million dollars is irrelevant to our happiness, which means other things account for it. The issues covered in this workbook are among the key dimensions. This also means that no one job or one aspect of one job is the end-all

“Otherwise” by Jane Kenyon

I got out of bed on two strong legs.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
I ate cereal, sweet milk, and ripe, flawless peach.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
I took the dog uphill to the birch wood.  
  
All morning I did the work I love.  
  
At noon I lay down with my mate.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
We ate dinner together at a table with silver candlesticks.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
I slept in a bed in a room with paintings on the walls,  
  
And planned another day just like this day.  
  
But one day, I know, it will be otherwise.

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Awareness-Intention-Action Sequence

The model we use for positive change in MYT can be summed-up in three words: awareness, intention, and action. In short, a lot of stress management and emotional/social competence building is due to awareness. How aware are we aware of our own states of mind? How aware are we of others and of the world around us? Awareness is a skill that can be deepened and broadened. In the MYT process, we cultivate and practice it through a myriad of ways, among them cognitive, reflective, and affective.

Once awareness is established, intention that flows from this state of mind is particularly potent. When we come from an aware and balanced place, we can set our intention wisely. Goals that flow from this state of mind are accurate. Call to mind the difference between consistency and accuracy. We can consistently shoot an arrow in the same place over and over (consistency), but are we hitting the target we want to hit (accuracy)?

Awareness that drives us to build thoughtful intention spurs us into effective action. Rather than inefficient or, worse, destructive action, when we act from a place of aware, clear-minded intention, we are more productive and effective; our actions affect others, our organizations, and us positively.

To put it directly, see the A-I-A Sequence this way:

**Awareness**

Cultivate awareness on the cognitive, affective, and reflective levels. Cultivate awareness within yourself, with others, and in the world.

**Intention**

Formulate a clear and positive intention from a space of awareness.

**Action**

Act in a productive and effective manner congruent with your intention.

What Are Emotions?

Emotions are comprised of three dynamically interacting components: cognitions, behaviors, and physiological processes. In order to effectively work with our emotional experiences we need to engage all three areas.

Connecting with the previous section, Emotional Social Intelligence (ESI) is, in large part, driven by awareness building around these three components: awareness of what we’re thinking, awareness of how we’re behaving, and awareness of our body sensations and physiological processes. The application of skills allowing us to intelligently change the frequency, intensity, duration, and nature of experiences arising from interaction of these areas is emotional and social competence.

**Cognitions**

The thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and worldview we use to interpret events. EI looks like awareness of how we interpret events and skills in changing maladaptive thoughts.

**Behaviors**

What we actually say and do. EI looks like awareness and more control of whether we talk, withdraw, yell, throw, hug, or smile. This includes developing skills in changing behaviors that support optimal functioning, for example, changing yelling (anger) to talking (assertiveness)

**Physiology**

Body activation/sympathetic nervous system response versus the calming parasympathetic nervous system response. Emotional Intelligence manifests as awareness of our heart rate, blood pressure, and other body indicators of stress and developing relaxation skills that allow us to put our physiology in a healthier state.

What is Stress?

**Stress** is the amount of energy you need to adjust to the internal and external demands of your life in a given amount of time. Stress is the balance between what you have to do and the resources you have to do it with.

*Remember this simple equation:*

**Stress = Perceived Demands**

**Perceived Resources**

Stress is the natural way we gear up to meet life’s demands. It’s the way we react to all the challenges of our day-to-day existence –mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It can be useful or harmful depending on its intensity, duration, and our ability to manage it.

Research has concluded that the events people experience as either uncontrollable or unpredictable are the most stress-inducing. In fact, some people define stress as feeling that things are out of control or that they can no longer cope with or manage what is happening in their lives.

**Stress Response (Fight or Flight Response):** the set of physical responses to stress that prepare us to fight an enemy or to run away to safety.

Markers of the stress response:

* Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing rate to prepare you for action. Arteries around you heart develop increased inflammation and tension.
* Blood flow to the prefrontal cortex (or higher reason center) of the brain diminishes as more blood flows to the limbic (or more primitive) part of the brain.
* Muscles tense up to get ready for action. Can result in muscle pain and stiffness.
* We fixate on the perceived threat and go into cognitive tunnel vision. Because of this, we lose our ability to flexibly adapt because our primary concern is survival.

Benefits of Emotional Intelligence

**Job success:** Over 60% of success in business is estimated to come from Emotional Social Intelligence (ESI)

**Increased efficiency and work productivity**: Losses of over $10 billion per year nation-wide are estimated as a result of a lack of ESI. Over $1 billion a year is spent nationwide on E.I. training.

**Improved mental health:** Increases in wellbeing, relationship success, life satisfaction, personal productivity. Decreases in stress, anger, anxiety, and depression.

**Increased physical health:** Strong correlations between anger/stress and hypertension and cardiovascular disease.

Research from:

*Handbook of Emotional Intelligence* by Bar-On and Parker

“A Consultant’s Guide to Understanding and Promoting Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace” by S. Robins (in Handbook *of Organizational Consulting Psychology*)



Emotional Social Intelligence

**Definition:** Emotional-social intelligence is a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands.

**Assessing Emotional-Social Intelligence: The EQ-i Scales and Subscales**

**Intrapersonal**

Self-awareness and self-expression:

* *Self-Regard*: To accurately perceive, understand and accept oneself.
* *Emotional Self-Awareness*: To be aware of and understand one’s emotions.
* *Assertiveness*: To effectively and constructively express one’s emotions and oneself.
* *Independence*: To be self-reliant and free of emotional dependency on others.
* *Self-Actualization*: To strive to achieve personal goals and actualize one’s potential.

**Interpersonal**

Social awareness and interpersonal relationship:

* *Empathy* - To be aware of and understand how others feel.
* *Social Responsibility*: To identify with one’s social group and cooperate with others.
* *Interpersonal Relationship* To establish mutually satisfying relationships and relate well with others.

**Stress Management**

Emotional management and regulation**:**

* *Stress Tolerance* To effectively and constructively manage emotions.
* *Impulse Control* To effectively and constructively control emotions.

**Adaptability**

Change management:

* *Reality-Testing* To objectively validate one’s feelings and thinking with external reality.
* *Flexibility* To adapt and adjust one’s feelings and thinking to new situations.
* *Problem-Solving* To effectively solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature.

**General Mood**

Self-motivation**:**

* *Optimism* To be positive and look at the brighter side of life.
* *Happiness* To feel content with oneself, others and life in general.

## Additional Assessments Used by MYT

**Quality of Life**

This is a measure of an individual's overall functioning, including their social and occupational functioning, mood, anxiety, optimism, and progress. It’s a quick check of life’s general state of affairs.

**Positive States**

This measures ability to experience positive states such as productive rest, concentrated attention, non-sexual pleasure, and intimacy. Simply put, are you able to experience genuinely positive and good psychological states of being?

**Physical Vitality**

This measure assesses the domains of appetite, energy level, sleep patterns, relaxation, and body stiffness. In short, it asks, do you have the physical vitality necessary to carry-out your intentions and desires? Can be linked to stress levels.

**Anger**

A measure of the frequency and intensity of one’s angry reactions over time to situations one interprets as frustrating or annoying. Specific items also look at interpersonal aspects of anger.

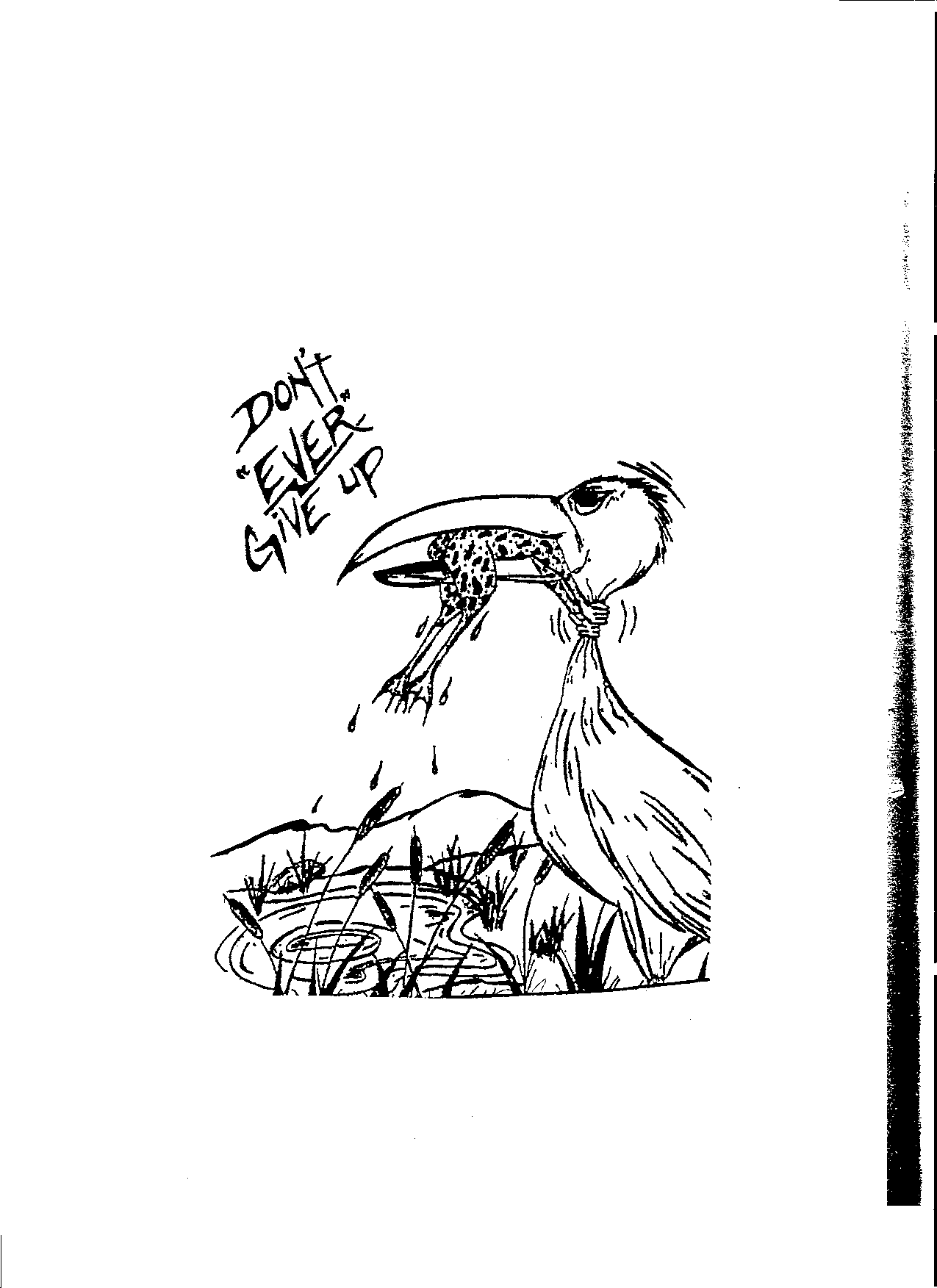
**Perceived Stress**

This measures both perceived amount of stress and stress tolerance. This is a key foundational measure and can be related to a number of other domains, such as anger, physical vitality, positive states, and quality of life.

The Basics of Mental Health

*“There’s no such thing as a problem, only a pause between ideas”*

1. It is not only the situation that makes me suffer emotional distress. I say things to myself that produce both negative and positive emotions. For example, perceiving something as a problem rather than a challenge.
2. Life is unfolding as it is supposed to. To say that things should be other than what they are is to believe in magic and personal omnipotence. Things are as they are because of a long series of events only very few of which have anything to do with you.
3. All humans make mistakes. If you have met someone who has not, please, let the world know. If you don’t allow people to make the mistakes they are going to make anyway then you are guaranteeing problems for yourself.
4. Before blaming someone else for a problem please remember it takes two to create and sustain a dynamic.
5. It is a waste of time to try to discover whose action started a difficult interpersonal situation. The search for the cause is fraught with difficulties caused by lapses in memory, idiosyncratic interpretation of events and usually personal bias. The course of action that makes sense is to resolve the situation as best you are able now.
6. Our feelings are significantly influenced by the way we think. Further, our thinking, especially in emotionally charged situations, is often distorted. In fact, our distortions are often patterned in specific ways unique to each of us. The good news: we can become aware of these distortions and challenge them.



Difficult Interpersonal Situation

Please describe an interpersonal situation in your life where you experienced relationship difficulty. For example, if you argued with a coworker or fought with your significant other, these would be good examples. Include as much detail as possible, direct quotations and paraphrasing are helpful. Also, write down any thoughts and feelings you remember experiencing at the time.

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Below is a poem that tells the story that most of us can relate to all too well, presenting a lesson for us to pause when we interpret an event or someone’s behavior in a particular way. The poem is titled *The Cookie Thief*.

“The Cookie Thief” by Valerie Cox

A woman was waiting at an airport one night

With several long hours before her flight

She hunted for a book in the airport shop

Bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop

She was engrossed in her book but happened to see

That the man beside her as bold as could be

Grabbed a cookie or two from the bag between

Which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene

She munched cookies and watched the clock

As this gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock

She was getting more irritated and the minutes ticked by

Thinking, “If I wasn’t nice I’d blacken his eye”

With each cookie she took he took one too

And when only one was left she wondered what he would do

With a smile on his face and a nervous laugh

He took the last cookie and broke it in half

He offered her half as he ate the other

She snatched it from him, and thought oh brother

This guy has some nerve and he’s also rude

Why he didn’t even show any gratitude

She had never known when she was so galled

And sighed with relief when her flight was called

She gathered her belongings and headed for the gate

Refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate

She boarded the plane and sank in her seat

Then sought her book which was almost complete

As she reached in her baggage she gasped with surprise

There was her bag of cookies in front of her eyes

“If mine are here,” she moaned with despair

“Then the others were his and he tried to share”

“Too late to apologize she realized with grief”

That she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

Cognitive Behavioral Psychology

The pioneers in this field were Aaron Beck, Ph.D., (Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy) and Albert Ellis, Ph.D., (Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy) who substantiated the important link between our thinking patterns and our feeling/emotion states.

After thousands of empirical psychological studies over the last 60 years, it is quite clear that how we think about ourselves, others, and the world dramatically influences the emotions we feel.

Example 1:

Thought: “That jerk cut me off on the freeway.”

Emotion: Anger

Example 2:

Thought: “The person in that car may be on the way to the hospital and did not see me.”

Emotion: Empathy, Compassion

**The Key Question**

What kinds of thoughts typically lead to negative mental states (anger, agitation, anxiety, depression) rather than positive ones (happiness, empathy, compassion, gratitude)?

**The Answer**

The so-called “cognitive distortions” tend to push us in the directions of the negative at the expense of the positive.

**The Goal**

To become aware of our habitual cognitive distortions so we can challenge them. Instead of automatically following them or reacting from them, we consciously shift to more adaptive and accurate modes of thinking.

It’s a skill that takes practice. Remember our motto: never give up!

Cognitive Distortions

Here are some ways we think and interpret events that tend to lead to anger, anxiety, depression and conflicts in relationships. These are the main *cognitive distortions* articulated and refined by cognitive psychologists over the last five decades.

**All or Nothing Thinking:** Thinking of things in absolute terms, like "always", "every" or "never". Few aspects of human behavior are so absolute. We often see things in black and white categories. If our performance falls short of perfect, we see ourselves as a total failure, if expectations are met, total success. Everything in life is in between… oops, did I say everything?!

**Overgeneralization:** Taking one or a few cases and using them to make wide generalizations. For example, “I didn’t get that account – I’m not good at this job”

**Negative Mental Filter:** Focusing exclusively negative or upsetting aspects of something while ignoring the rest. Examples: focusing on a tiny imperfection in a piece of beautiful clothing; much of a project is working well, but we dwell on what’s not working well and that becomes the entire experience. What we focus on is a choice.

**Disqualifying the Positive:** Continually "shooting down" positive experiences for arbitrary, ad hoc reasons. We reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. We maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by our everyday experiences. “I did well on that account, but that one was easy.” “Joe and Sue are nice but they have to be at work.”

**Mind Reading:** Assuming we know what someone else is thinking or feeling without any having actually checked it out. For example, during a boardroom presentation, “Mary just looked down, she must be bored.”

**Fortune telling:** Predicting how things will unfold before they happen. We cannot even predict the weather a week from now, much less predict our career, family, or even what we will want a month, year or decade from now. “If this doesn’t go well I’ll lose my job”, or “will be miserable.”

**Catastraphizing:** Focusing on the worst possible outcome, however unlikely, or thinking that a situation is unbearable, impossible, or horrible when it is really just uncomfortable.

**Emotional reasoning:** Making decisions and arguments based on how we *feel* rather than objective reality or mistaking emotional intensity as valid reasoning.

**Shoulds & Musts:** Assuming we know what we or others “must” or “must not” do or what the world “should” be like rather than the situation with which we are actually faced. It also looks like having rigid rules that we think should always apply no matter the circumstances. “This MUST happen or \_\_\_\_”. When we apply “should” to ourselves, we often feel guilty, when we apply it to others we often feel frustration, anger, resentment.

**Labeling:** Explaining behaviors or events, merely by naming them. It’s related to overgeneralization. Rather than describing the specific behavior, we assign a label to someone or ourselves that puts the person or experience in absolute and unalterable terms. Instead of describing our error, we attach a negative label to ourselves: "I'm a loser." When someone else's behavior rubs us the wrong way, we attach a negative label to him, "He's a damn louse." Mislabeling involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

**Personalization:** Taking things personally and assuming you are the cause of something when that may not be the case. Often there are multiple causes but we seem to feel better if we can find something specific to blame as a scapegoat.

Automatic Thoughts and Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive distortions are embedded within our everyday thinking. Chances are, if you feel emotionally charged or activated, cognitive distortions are very nearby. We identify a special category of thoughts called “automatic thoughts” in order to tease-out our hidden cognitive distortions. Automatic thoughts come in the form of snap judgments about ourselves, others, and/or the world around us. They’re the type of thoughts that are present before we know it. They pop into our minds and we act, or react, with them as our guides.

Examples of common types of automatic thoughts:

“He never understands me, I shouldn’t even try to talk with him.”

“She’s really angry at me, I can just tell by the way she’s standing.”

“I’m a failure.”

“I’ll never be able to do this correctly.”

“If I mess-up this presentation, I’ll not going to get a promotion. I’ll probably lose my job. Then I won’t be able to pay my mortgage and I’ll lose my house, too.”

Thought Record Instructions

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Emotion/Rating | Automatic Thought | Cognitive Distortion |
| Briefly describe a challenging situation in which you want to improve your performance. | Check in with yourself. What emotions are present as you contemplate this challenging situation?  In parenthesis, rate the intensity of each emotion on a scale of 1 (minimum) to 100 (maximum). | What automatic thoughts are associated with this challenging situation? Identify the most potent one and work with it first. These can often be interconnected, but for the sake of utility, work on them one at a time. | What cognitive distortions are present in this automatic thought? (Refer to the list on the previous pages for assistance.) |
| Evidence For | Evidence Against | Replacement Thought | Emotion/Re-rating |
| What concrete evidence exists supporting this automatic thought? Resist the urge to be abstract. Abstractions can be very biased and hard to dispute. Be as concrete and specific. When possible use specific time frames, numbers of incidences, and so on. In short, try to put these in measurable terms. | What concrete evidence exists contradicting this automatic thought? Again, be specific and concrete (like in the previous section). | Having gone through the process of challenging an automatic thought, what more accurate and adaptive replacement thought could you now use instead? | Keeping this replacement thought in mind, list the emotions present and re-rate their intensities on a scale of 1 to 100.  What shifts occurred? |

Thought Record Practice

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Emotion/Rating | Automatic Thought | Cognitive Distortion |
|  |  |  |  |
| Evidence For | Evidence Against | Replacement Thought | Emotion/Re-rating |
|  |  |  |  |

Mindfulness Practice

*“Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That’s why we call it ‘the present’.”- Eleanor Roosevelt*

Given how uncertain life can be, and our gratitude for what’s here, we acknowledge that the here and now is a gift, which is perhaps, as some noted, why we call it the present. In addition to the emotional disregulation and cognitive distortions, our attention going to the future also contributes dramatically to our anxiety and stress. It turns out that bringing our attention to the present and being more fully in the present, is a trainable skill… But, needs practice.

**Mindfulness Meditation Exercise**

* Focus your eyes on something specific, either with your eyes open and something in front of you, or with your eyes closed and something you’re visualizing.
* Slow down your breathing, taking 3-4 seconds to breathe in and 3-4 seconds to breathe out.
* Lower your breathing to your diaphragm – it’s right below your belly. Place your hand on your belly. Extend your belly, feeling it rise as you breathe in, and contract it, feeling it lower as you exhale out.
* Let thoughts that come to mind pass through – let them come, let them go.
* If a thought keeps recurring, make a note of it, and then again let it go.

The exercise is to notice, observe – the visual we’re focusing on, our breath, any body sensations, any thoughts, and simply let them come and go as we observe them. We observe them, without judgment, simply building the skill of observing what is happening in the present.

For more in-depth practice of this skill, please refer to these books

by Jon Kabat-Zinn:

(1) *Full Catastrophe Living*

(2) *Where Ever You Go There You Are*

Positive Emotional Refocusing Technique (PERT)

When you are feeling the effects in your mind and/or your body of an unresolved grievance or ongoing relationship stress then:

1. Bring your attention to your stomach as you slowly draw in a few slow, deep breaths with ease into your belly. Let each successive breath be deeper and slower than the previous.
2. Then bring to your mind’s eye an image of an experience with another person when you experienced love or a picture of a scene in nature that fills you with awe and wonder.
3. Hold the positive or loving feelings that emerge in the area around your heart.

1. Ask this positive emotion voice of yours if it can suggest to you a way to remain peaceful when you think about this hurt or stress.

PERT Practice

Stressful Situation

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Grievance Response \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Finding Your Positive Intention

*“*[*Leadership is the wise use of power. Power is the capacity to translate* ***intention*** *into reality and sustain it.*](http://thinkexist.com/quotation/leadership_is_the_wise_use_of_power-power_is_the/252313.html)*” – Warren Bennis*

1. Close your eyes and bring your attention to your breath as it enters and leaves your belly
2. Take 2-3 slow and deep breaths
3. Bring your attention to the area around your heart while continuing to breathe into and out of your belly slowly and deeply
4. Reflect upon love or beauty or appreciation and fill your heart with a positive feeling
5. Ask yourself:

What is the strongest positive language I can use to describe my goal for being in this stressful situation in the first place?

OR:

What is the strongest positive language I can use to describe my goal for successfully managing this situation?

THEN:

What concrete thoughts and behaviors support the fulfillment of this goal?

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From *The Far Side* by Gary Larson



Gratitude Practice

*“There are worse things than getting a wrong number call at 4am; it could be the right number.”*

*“Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have we will not be happy- because we will always want to have something else or something more.” – David Steindl-Rast*

Make a list of the things in your life for which you are grateful:

* + 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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    17. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    18. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    19. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    20. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Were you able to identify 20 items or more? Did you find it difficult to identify that many? We have a tendency to habituate and get used to the things we have. This can lead us to take them for granted, ignore them, have a sense of entitlement when we have them, or be very surprised when we lose them. Gratitude practice reminds us on a regular basis that everything we have is a gift, that even the most basic things are transient.

We commonly take for granted or underappreciate certain essential aspects of life.

**Being alive**

There’s a reason funeral homes and cemeteries rarely go out of business. The reality: tomorrow is promised to no one. Let’s savor the profundity of life. Our mere existence is an incredibly special experience.

**Health**

When we grapple with illness or pain, great gratitude for health often arises. At some point, we will experience mild or serious illness – and challenges will arise. Why not practice appreciation when healthy?

**Loved Ones**

We’re used to having our family, friends, and colleagues around. We often aren’t consciously aware that loss will happen at some point. Thousands of people today lost loved ones to accidents, illness, or dissolution of relationships. Let’s actively appreciate our loving relationships.

**Senses and Abilities**

Being able to see, hear, speak, walk, or move our hands are facts we often take for granted. To reactivate and practice appreciation and gratitude for these senses, try walking slowly in a room with your eyes closed for 10 seconds, or not speaking for a full day, or putting on headphones so you can’t hear anything for a few hours, or writing and doing daily tasks with your non-dominant hand for a full day. Today, thousands of people lost these abilities due to accidents.

**Plentiful Era**

We in this era, especially in the United States, are the most fortunate animals in the two billion year history of evolution. We don’t worry about predators eating us, we have dramatic control of our physical environment such as heat and shelter (the very sad plight of the several million that are homeless notwithstanding), and we have more food than we know what to do with. For the first time in evolutionary history, the main problem of hundreds of millions of us is eating too much, rather than scarcity. Think about what life would be like if you couldn’t walk into a supermarket for food because they didn’t exist, or there was no ‘turning on the tap’ for water. Over a billion people in the world live under those and much worse conditions.

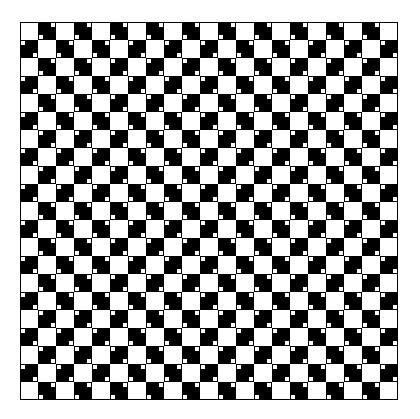
**Career, Job, Finances**

The science of happiness and wellbeing has dramatic evidence that after making enough money to be above the poverty range ($15,000 - $30,000/year depending on geography), the correlation between happiness and finances is not just low, but is zero. That means that despite our assumptions of needing money, having 30 thousand vs. 30 million dollars is irrelevant to our happiness, which means other things account for it. The issues covered in this workbook are among the key dimensions. This also means that no one job or one aspect of one job is the end-all

“Otherwise” by Jane Kenyon

I got out of bed on two strong legs.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
I ate cereal, sweet milk, and ripe, flawless peach.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
I took the dog uphill to the birch wood.  
  
All morning I did the work I love.  
  
At noon I lay down with my mate.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
We ate dinner together at a table with silver candlesticks.  
  
It might have been otherwise.  
  
I slept in a bed in a room with paintings on the walls,  
  
And planned another day just like this day.  
  
But one day, I know, it will be otherwise.

Are the lines curved or parallel?

****

Humility

We often say, “I’ll believe it when I see it.” Even then, can we be so sure? If our perspective is fallible in a task as simple as staring at the picture on the previous page, what fallibility might be present in our perceptions when it comes to the complexities of human relationships and of life? Humility can be extremely useful in helping us get less stuck in our own perspectives and therefore more able to take on a variety of other perspectives and possibilities. This inevitably opens us up to understanding ourselves, others, and life situations with greater richness.

1. **Subjective Perception:** The first step in cultivating humility is recognizing that our perceptions and interpretations of ourselves, others, and events are subjective and tentative.
   1. **Subjective** because others perceive them differently.

Think of an example of you interpreting something one way and someone else interpreting it another way

* 1. **Tentative** because our interpretations and perceptions change over time.

Think of opinions and beliefs you had 10, 15, and 20 years ago. How have they changed over time? How certain can we be of our beliefs right now? Will they also change with time?

1. **Appreciation, Respect, & Awe** for the grand scale of events is a second way to open-up space for humility. Remember, from the workshop, the video “Powers of Ten” and the “Cosmic Calendar” (on the next page). Through a spatial and temporal lens, respectively, they awaken a sense of awe.

**Exercise Combining Cognitive Distortions, Mindfulness, and Humility**

Think of an experience in that last few days or weeks that gave rise to anxiety or anger within you. Was it the event “make you anxious/angry” or did your perception of it contribute? Remember “The Cookie Thief and the visual illusion as you answer these:

What assumptions, cognitive distortions, and hopes/fears were present?

What is one alternative way you could interpret the event right now?

What is one alternative way that you might interpret it 10, 20, or 30 years from now?

What alternative way might someone else could interpret it?

How certain are you about your interpretation? Are willing are you to admit some uncertainty about your interpretations & assumptions?

Where does that life event fit on the Cosmic Calendar (see next page)?

The Cosmic Calendar

Adapted from *Dragons of Eden* by Carl Sagan

If we condense the entire history of the universe into one “cosmic year” where January 1st is the Big Bang and the stroke of midnight one year later is the present, then history would look something like this:

Big Bang Jan 1

Origin of our galaxy May 1

Formation of Earth September 14

Oldest bacteria fossils October 9

Invention of sex November 1

First cells November 15

First worms December 16

First insects December 21

First mammals December 26

Jurassic period, first birds December 27

First flowers, dinosaurs extinct December 28

First primates December 29

Early evolution of frontal lobes December 30

December 31

First humans 10:30 p.m.

First tools 11:00 p.m.

Cave paintings 11:59 p.m.

Invention of the alphabet 11:59:51 p.m.

Bronze age, Trojan war 11:59:53 p.m.

Birth of Buddha 11:59:55 p.m.

Birth Christ, Euclidean geometry, Roman empire 11:59:56 p.m.

Crusades 11:59:58 p.m.

Renaissance, Ming dynasty, Science 11:59:59 p.m.

Quotes for Practice

“Problems are actually challenges that afford us an opportunity to practice.” - MYT

“There’s no such thing as a problem, only a pause between ideas.” - David Morrell (*Brotherhood of the Rose*)

“The walls are not there to stop us. The walls are there to only let in those who really want it” - Randy Pausch (*The Last Lecture*)

“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.” – Jon Kabat Zinn

“If I am not for me, than who is for me? If I am only for myself, than who am I? If not now, when?” - Rabbi Hillel

“That too shall pass.” – King Solomon

“In the final analysis, let us remember that we all inhabit this same world, we all care for our families, and we are all mortal.” - John F. Kennedy

“Looking for happiness is like searching for the glasses sitting on your nose.”

“Life is uncertain. It’s easy to remember, LIFE has an ‘IF’ in the middle of it.”

“Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift, that’s why we call it the present.”

“There are worse things than being woken up from getting a call for a wrong number at 4:00 a.m., it could have been the right number.”

“Be careful of climbing the ladder, it might be against the wrong wall.”

- Jack Kornfield

“If you think you’re enlightened, try spending a weekend with your in-laws.” - Jack Kornfield

Book Recommendations

Fred Luskin

*Forgive for Good*

*Stress Free for Good*

*Forgive for Love*

Jon Kabat-Zinn

*Where Ever You Go, There You Are*

*Full Catastrophe Living*

David Burns

*Feeling Good*

Richard Carlson

*Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff, and It’s All Small Stuff*

Additional Practice Worksheets

The worksheets in the section are meant for your use. You’re encouraged to make photocopies in order to practice the skills outlined.

Thought Record

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Emotion/Rating | Automatic Thought | Cognitive Distortion |
|  |  |  |  |
| Evidence For | Evidence Against | Replacement Thought | Emotion/Re-rating |
|  |  |  |  |

Positive Emotion Refocusing Technique (PERT)

**When you are feeling the effects in your mind and/or your body of an unresolved grievance or ongoing relationship stress then:**

1. Bring your attention fully to your stomach as you slowly draw in and out one or two slow deep breaths. Keep breathing slowly and deeply.
2. Then bring to your mind’s eye an image of an experience with another person when you experienced love or a picture of a scene in nature that fills you with awe and wonder.
3. Hold the positive or loving feelings that emerge in the area around your heart.

1. Ask this positive emotion voice of yours if it can suggest to you a way to remain peaceful when you think about this hurt or stress.

Reflection back on a difficult situation, sketch it out. Outline your grievance response, then practice PERT. Afterwards, outline your emotionally complement response.

Stressful Situation

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Grievance Response \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Emotionally Competent Response** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Finding Positive Intention

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1. Close your eyes and bring your attention to your breath as it enters and leaves your belly
2. Take 2-3 slow and deep breaths
3. Bring your attention to the area around your heart while continuing to breathe into and out of your belly slowly and deeply
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5. Ask yourself:

What is the strongest positive language I can use to describe my goal for being in this stressful situation in the first place?

OR:

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THEN:

What concrete thoughts and behaviors support the fulfillment of this goal?

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Gratitude Practice

*“There are worse things than getting a wrong number call at 4am; it could be the right number.”*

*“Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have we will not be happy- because we will always want to have something else or something more.” – David Steindl-Rast*

Make a list of the things in your life for which you are grateful:

* + 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    9. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    10. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    11. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    12. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    13. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    14. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    15. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    16. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    17. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    18. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    19. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
    20. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As you write these items, breathe deeply and slowly in order to genuinely savor the positive emotions that arise from this gratitude practice.

MYT Biographies

**Frederic Luskin, Ph.D.** is the Director of the Stanford University Forgiveness Projects and a Senior Consultant in Health Promotion at Stanford University. Dr. Luskin’s research demonstrates that learning forgiveness leads to increased physical vitality, hope, greater self–efficacy, enhanced optimism and conflict resolution skills as well as decreased anger, stress and depression. On three occasions he has successfully worked with men and women from both sides of the violence in Northern Ireland who have had family members killed. Dr. Luskin also served as the Co-Chair of the Garden of Forgiveness Project at Ground Zero in Manhattan. Dr. Luskin is the author of the San Francisco Bay Area best sellers *Forgive for Good and Forgive for Love* and *Stress Free for Good*. Dr. Luskin’s work has been featured in Time, O, Ladies Home Journal, U.S. News and World Reports, Parade, Prevention as well as the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, USA Today, and the Wall Street Journal. In addition, The Public Broadcasting System has made a pledge drive video of his teaching called “Forgive for Good.”

**Shani Robins Ph.D.** pioneered the field of Wisdom TherapyTM in 1998, which integrated the best practices of western psychological science and eastern traditions. Shani completed his B.A. in Psychology and Philosophy with honors from UCLA in 1989, his M.A. and Ph.D. in Cognitive Experimental Psychology from U.C. Santa Barbara in 1996, a 2-year National Institute of Mental Health  Postdoctoral Fellowship at U.C. Irvine in 1999, and a second Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in 2002. He is an instructor at Stanford University and U.C. Berkeley, is a licensed Clinical Psychologist (PSY18795), and the founder and director of the Wisdom Therapy Institute ([www.wisdomtherapy.com](http://www.wisdomtherapy.com)). Dr. Robins applies Wisdom Therapy, Emotional Intelligence, Mindfulness Meditation, and the active cultivation of humility to organizational and corporate consulting. He also conducts the outcome research demonstrating that these skills contribute to significant increases in well being, productivity, health, mindfulness, positive relationships, and commitment to one’s company and significant reductions in stress, anxiety, work place conflict, anger, aggression, and attrition. He has published and has given numerous training workshops and scientific talks nationally and internationally in the field of Wisdom and its relationships to emotions, stress, coping, performance, and organizational consulting. Among his publications is a chapter on Emotional Intelligence in the *Handbook of Consulting Psychology*, and a journal article on a systems conceptualization of anger and other emotions. Dr. Robins is an avid racquetball player and also enjoys playing chess and GO. He rollerblades, salsa dances, runs the occasional marathon, and strives to appreciate the simple things.

**Art DeLorenzo**, **CLU, ChFC, CFP, MSFS**. Art has a BS in Education from Castleton State College in Vermont where he had the honor of giving the commencement address in 2005. He also has a MS from Ithaca College in Physical Education. He joined Ameriprise Financial Services when it was known as IDS in 1968 as an advisor, moving to District Manager in 1969, became a FVP in 1984, and a GVP in 1999 where he retired in December of 2004. He has spent decades supporting Ameriprise field personnel as a proponent of emotional competence as the key to achieving unprecedented levels of success. Art's multi level perspective on the financial advisor work has helped him raise the level of effectiveness of successful advisors  
as they balance their work, personal, and spiritual lives. He currently spends his time mentoring field leaders and advisors 4 to 5 days a month, plays all the golf he can, and regularly climbs mountains both here in the US and in the Himalayas.

**Aneel Chima**, **PhDc**, believes deeply in a scholar-practitioner model of engaging clients and seeks to embody this balance in his professional endeavors. Applying methodically researched insights from the academic sphere to day-to-day, practical needs of businesses and non-profit organizations is central to his work as a consultant. He specializes in providing market intelligence, organizational development, and executive training. Additionally, Aneel teaches Emotional Intelligence at Stanford University, is a professor in the Business Psychology Program at Palo Alto University, and a doctoral candidate in clinical psychology at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (ITP). His research focuses on leveraging wisdom and emotional-social intelligence for effective organizational leadership.

Aneel is chair of the board of trustees for the Veterans, Immigrant, and Refugee Trauma Institute of Sacramento (VIRTIS) and serves on the board of directors of the Association of Transpersonal Psychologists. Previously, he served on the ITP Board of Trustees and was an award-winning physics and mathematics educator at Everett Alvarez High School in Salinas, CA where the SUHS District Trustees recognized his teaching excellence.

Aneel can often be found hiking through the Santa Cruz Mountains or playing racquetball and tennis. He also loves enjoying Northern California’s natural bounty of fruits and vegetables by cooking new recipes with friends and family.