Praise for *Resilience 101*

Chock full of resources and strategies and evidence-based practice that will offer you your own evidence of what works for you as you plan out your journey of life and how you want to be. This book offers wisdoms, insights, strategies and lessons learned by others on how you choose your navigation of life and school. It maps out the stepping stones to you becoming the optimal person you can be. It comes with a process of trial and error as well as successes and opportunities.

As a mindfulness practitioner, academic teacher and mentor, I also know this book can be your introduction to calming your mind while energizing your life through mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness and some of the other strategies are positive, life-defining decisions.

Michele Chaban, *MSW, RSW, PhD, Founding Director of both the Applied Mindfulness Meditation (AMM-MIND) at the University of Toronto and of Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital's Temmy Latner Centre, Palliative Care Program and Family Counselling*

Even as a graduate student this information is good to have on hand to deal with mental health problems that get thrown your way during school. I wish I had gotten something like it sooner, knowing where to get help when you need it is crucial!

Joanna Klees*, MSc student, UBC*

I think that the content is great! Lot's of amazing resources for people and it is definitely easy to follow and understand.

Rachit Desai*, Masters student, UOIT Faculty of Health Sciences*

I thought it was comprehensive, informative and should be shared in class prior to leaving high school, the type of reading that you can refer back to over the years.
***Stephen Campbell**, Human Resource Manager*

This is a great tool that I think can help our youth work out their own solutions to challenges and triggers while acknowledging that they are not alone with their struggles. It is timely and should be shared widely.
***Diana Potts**, Parent*

University students aren't always aware when they are experiencing issues with mental health. Not only does this book help students identify when they are in need, but it also provides them with various tools for students to help themselves. This is an excellent tool in a time when we normalize the anxieties and difficulties of the transition to university.
***Michael Short**, Masters student, UOIT Faculty of Health Sciences*

This is a very practical and useful resource. Transition into higher education can often be stressful as there are many academic changes along with personal discoveries occurring at the same time. There are many helpful strategies within this book that help the reader to understand the feelings they are experiencing in such a time of transition. This book is a great guide for helping students understand tools to build resilience and guide students to become mindful and aware of their new challenges.
***Lynne Tolland**, M.Sc., Parent*

Resilience 101:

Recover Faster, Feel Better & Push Forward

Harry van Bommel and Brenda Gamble

Resources Supporting Family
and Community Legacies Inc.

Toronto, Ontario 2018

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To all of us who experience anxiety.

May we learn from those
who manage their anxiety well

and

may we teach what we learn
to help and support others.

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Foreword

As Associate Dean in the Faculty of Health Sciences I have seen an increase in the amount of anxiety among our students. Let us change that together. We are trying various strategies to see what might help students, faculty and staff become even more resilient.

I say, 'more resilient' because, of course, we are all resilient already. We have all gone through stressful, even frightening experiences and we are still here together.

So our efforts are to get better at being resilient — being able to go through stressful times and recover more quickly and prepare even better for the next time.

Look at any room of people, those on a bus, subway, train or plane, and you can see that each person has gone through difficult times to get to where they are right now.

Some have done it easier than others because their life experiences have prepared them differently. Others go through a more difficult process by self-medicating with smoking, alcohol, and/or drug abuse, or through excessive exercise, eating disorders, or binge-watching television programs. They need new healthy strategies that will help them

take even more control over their mental and physical health.

There was a television show called Mister Rogers' Neighborhood that started in 1966 when your parents or grandparents were kids and that continued until 2001. It taught many children, for the first time, about racism, sexism, disabilities, and how to talk about their feelings. It was particularly relevant during these rough times of the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-Vietnam War era, and all the way up to the plane crashes into New York skyscrapers call "Nine Eleven."

Throughout these tragic times that scared children and adults of all ages, Fred Rogers reminded his viewers of a lesson his mother taught him — whenever you are going through a difficult or tragic time, always look for the helpers around you.

These helpers are everywhere in the people you know such as your immediate family and closest friends. They can also be found in people new to you — your fellow students, professors, Mental Health Services at the university, support groups, and online resources. Even a stranger on a shared train ride can be a helper by being interested in your story.

The greatest lie we tell ourselves during difficult times is that no one cares; that we are alone. It just isn't true. The road ahead is not typically a smooth one for anyone. We all need the help of others and we can all provide that same kind of help to people when they need it most.

At UOIT, let us do it together.

Brenda Gamble, UOIT, Faculty of Health Sciences, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

Introduction

The book is simply about strategies that have helped your ancestors as well as your immediate family and friends through difficult times.

That's it. Nothing fancy. Just practical strategies that help people recover faster, feel better, and push forward through a difficult or even tragic situation.

Notice I didn't say "avoid" difficult times. Nor did I say feel great or happy all the time.

These practical strategies recognize that we all go through difficult times. Some of us, quite unfairly, have more difficult times than others. But we all have them.

We can't be happy all the time. We can't feel great all the time. But we can recover faster than we used to. We can feel better today than we did yesterday. And we can push forward with our inner strength and the outside support of the 'helpers' that Brenda writes about in her Foreword.

These strategies will also help you thoroughly enjoy yourself during the good times and thrive on the positive challenges that university life has to offer.

Most importantly, building our resilience will help during the events or times that feel overwhelming. Whether it is

Did you know you do not need a high school diploma to go to university or college! For university, you need to take a break from school until you are 21 and then apply as a mature student. For college, the age is 19. You may need a few pre-requisite high school courses, but not the whole diploma.

anxiety about doing well in academia or anxiety that comes from a mental illness, grief, personal experiences of loss, war, or violence. It is all anxiety. There are proven ways to prepare for it, reduce it, and manage it with tried-and-true strategies.

Have you ever felt like your mind is controlling your thoughts when what you really want is to feel in control?

Well, this book looks at that too. Mindfulness, meditation, proper exercise, and diet can help you regain control over how you think.

We all have thoughts that keep coming back to us that make us feel less confident, less worthy, less capable, or less loved. These are thoughts — not facts. This book hopes to help you begin to see that difference and regain control over your thoughts, especially when you are highly anxious.

That's quite a lot to hope from a book! Of course, we will also look at other strategies outside of this book. We are working on a series of graphic novels to look at different aspects of mental health and anxiety. We have workshops for both high schools in our region and at our university to help students put into practice some of the skills and knowledge presented in this book. We hope to offer other ways of support through mentorships, video clips by students, study circles, using the full resources of the university, and the full resources of students helping fellow students.

We will do this together. We will learn as we go. We will get better at managing anxiety. We will have fun doing it!

We will also look at how to be happier more often.

Can you be happy all the time? Do you want to be happy all the time? Do you need long periods of suffering, guilt and unhappiness to benefit fully from being happy? How is happiness different from having fun, or laughing, or feeling peaceful, or feeling contented, or satisfied? What makes you happy? What makes you unhappy? Can anything make

you happy or sad?

Another purpose of this book is very simple: to help all of us choose to be happier more often than we are now. Not happy all the time. Just to be happy more often than we are now. That is it!

Social media platforms often have memes of great thinkers to inspire visitors to their sites.[1] The quotes sound superficial until you experience the results of practicing some of these ideas. Several Facebook posts had the following: *Seven Difficult (but Simple) Buddhist Habits that Will Change Your Life.* Their philosophy centres on the idea of reducing suffering:

1. Simplify (less stuff).
2. When we help others we find a deeper satisfaction.
3. Meditate.
4. Follow the Wise.
5. Accept Mindfulness as a Way of Life (non-judgmental).
6. Embrace Change (including in how we look, age).
7. Live in the Moment.

---

[1] Throughout this book when we site a social media post, Google the quote to find it and see more. Sites change often so giving a url for a quote will often be out of date.

There are literally thousands of such quotes across thousands of websites around the world. They are mostly based on ancient wisdom but also current experiences of students in universities. We can learn from each other.

If this book helps you feel happier and be more resilient, then we hope you will pass on what you learn to others — there is no faster way to learn than to teach others as you go.

Remember what we say is not what is important in this book. There are no unique ideas anymore about happiness and resiliency. But you are unique, so your approach to life will be your own. Find things that are useful to you in this book and share them with others. Remind yourself of what helps your happiness and resiliency now and do more of it.

Harry van Bommel, Author, Educator and Public Speaker, Toronto, Canada

Definitions

Mental Health[2]	**The World Health Organization defines mental health as: "…a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and**
Resiliency	**Dr. Krysle Martin of the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (Côté (2018) defined resiliency as an ability to positively manage, tolerate and cope with stresses and traumas. People's range of resiliency go on a continuum from (a) thriving to (b) resilient recovery to (c) survival with impairment(s).**

[2] O'Reilly and Parker (2014).

How to Use This Book

Audience

This book is primarily written for students transitioning to university from high school or the community.

However, the book is equally applicable to current students, alumni, faculty, staff, and the general community. Resiliency and choosing to be happier more often are skills one can enhance at every age and stage of life.

Uses

There are several ways you can use this book:

First, we suggest you go through the "First Things First" sections, especially Sections 1-4. From there you will have a better idea of the type of information you need.

Next, you can go through whichever strategies you like in whatever order you like. Use the Table of Contents to get a quick look at what the options are. You know best what you need so go directly to those strategies that will be most helpful.

For general learning may you want to use the calendar on the following pages to go through a strategy each day for a month. Keeping track of your learning will give you a quick idea of each strategy and whether you find it helpful or not.

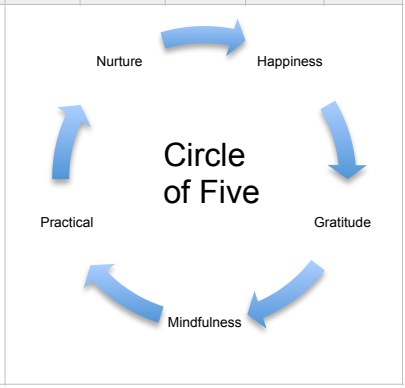
Then practice the strategies — without practice, the strategies are just words. You can only learn how to play guitar by playing the guitar. You will need to practice some or all of the strategies to deal with your anxieties, worries and challenges. This will help to enhance your resiliency and happiness skills.

Lastly, consider how you can adapt the strategies to help some of your friends and fellow students deal more effectively with what they are going through. The fastest way to learn a skill is to help someone else learn it too.

First Things First — Begin with the 6 basic concerns:

1. How do You Know You Need Help? — Look for the Helpers
2. Panic Attacks
3. Depression
4. Suicide Prevention
5. Scheduling
6. Resiliency 101

Then go to any of the strategies that appeal to you first or use the calendar on the next page to review a strategy a day for a month. The **Circle of Five** is a reminder of the connection between strategies.

Sunday Nurture	Monday Happi-ness	Tuesday Grati-tude	Wed Mind-fulness	Thurs Practical	Friday Practical	Saturday Healthy Skepti-cism
1 Relation-ships	2 Habits	3 Habits	4 Mastering Fear	5 Cook — Yes You Can	6 Sleep, Eat Move	7 "Easier Said than Done"
8 Random Acts of Kind-ness	9 Decide to Be Happier More Often	10 Your Place in History	11 The Basics	12 Clean— Your Room Matters	13 Memo-rize	14 Easier to be Unhap-py
15 Time with Older & Younger People	16 Ancient Wisdom	17 Music, Art, Dance	18 Silence	19 Learn How to Learn	20 See Local and Regional Places	21 School of Hard Knocks
22 Grief, Trauma, Difficult Times	23 Ther-apies	24 Book, Film, & Social Media Therapy	25 Practice, Practice, Practice	26 Financial Literacy	27 Succes Looks Like This	28 What Next? REPEAT!
29 Bonus: Math & Other Mental Disci-plines	30 Bonus: Explore Further Resource					

First Things First
1. How do You Know You Need Help?

There are lots of different answers about how to know when you need help. Here are just a few:

1. When you think you need help, you do! If you are feeling anxious, uncomfortable, overwhelmed or afraid, then look for the helpers around you. There are suggestions of how to look in the Practice section at the end of this section.
2. If you want something more detailed to help, here are 8 Warning Signs. If you are experiencing any of these, then you may be mentally and/or emotional exhausted:
    - You lack motivation to get out of bed or go to class
    - You are easily irritated
    - You can't sleep
    - You are not hungry or are over-eating
    - You are having anxiety attacks
    - You tear up easily
    - You feel dizzy and nauseous or have diarrhea often

- You feel detached
- You feel despondent.

3. You can even put a scale to these feelings to get a sense of whether what you are experiencing is typical of most students starting university.

Scale	Description
0-1	No anxiety.
2	Low anxiety, but sometimes frustrated waiting at a red light, or anxious over a math problem, or forgetting a definition of an important term.
3-4	Noticeable episodic anxiety (e.g., before a test, meeting a deadline). This rating is pretty typical for many students. Help from fellow students, friends and family is usually enough to get through the episode.

Scale	Description
5-6	Feeling anxious most of the time yet still able to function (i.e., able to do everything you need to but anxious most of the time). The anxiety is real and exhausting and frightening but you can still function. Starting at this level students need to reach out for help from family, friends, other students, and professionals.
7	Physical symptoms begin to show (e.g., stomach problems, can't sleep). You may begin to self medicate with prescription or recreational drugs, alcohol, excessive exercise, or binge eating.
8	Missing classes, not doing homework, irritable, little motivation, tearful, cutting/ hurting oneself, risky behaviours ("*Who's going to care anyway?*"), perhaps thinking dying is easier than living but not thinking of suicide.

Scale	Description
9	Hiding in your room with little or no personal contact, perhaps having suicidal thoughts, more self harm.
10	Completely overwhelmed, immobile, perhaps suicidal.

You need to find helpers at almost every level because that is what we have learned from generations of people — we are social beings — we need social contacts and mutual supports. When we feel well we can help others. When we feel less well we need the help of others.

What are some of the typical causes of anxiety when starting university:

- home sickness
- difficult relationship(s)
- being bullied
- financial insecurity
- food insecurity (not having enough)
- your parents may be anxious (genetic and environment factors)
- your family may have high expectations you do not think you can meet
- you may have high expectations you do not think you can meet

- cultural issues that affect your anxiety levels
- past or current traumas, grief, experiences of violence
- language issues
- being the first member of your family to go to university
- pressures to marry rather than go to school
- gender issues
- LGBTQ+ issues - having to come out again/for the first time to new people. Worrying about teachers having the wrong name/pronouns on their class lists.

Others can also help identify when a friend or fellow student is having trouble. Turell and Hui[3] came up with this list of ways to help identify someone who might need help:

- they start missing classes regularly
- they miss handing in assignments
- they are sleeping during classes
- they no longer get any exercise or movement
- they are not eating much or not eating well
- they can't catch up on their studies

[3] Turrell (Feb 26, 2018) and Hui (Dec 6, 2017).

- too much time distracting themselves (e.g., binge watching TV, gaming, alcohol or drug abuse)
- they are harming themselves (e.g., cutting their arms or stomach)
- isolating themselves from family and friends.

The first step to help someone is to let them know you care about them. Go to them rather than just text or call. Personal contact is essential. The second is to help them determine if they need additional help and where to get it.

Strategy & Practice

Strategies throughout this book are ways to push forward in your life. Most of our strategies are intuitive – we just do stuff and when it works, we do it again and when it doesn't work, we sometimes still do it again!

Thoughtful, mindful strategies are built upon your own successes but also the wisdom of other people's experiences. Why re-invent the wheel when it's already been invented? Why study by trial and error when others have already figured out how to study well? Why write papers based on how you have always written

rather than learn from professional and academic writers who have so much more experience?

The following strategies have been proven successful by thousands (millions actually) of people. They won't all work for you because we have different learning and working styles. However, many of them will work for you.

Go back to the calendar. Start either on Day 1 or with any of the strategies that appeal to you. There is no right way to do this. Do what works for you.

It is helpful to write down when you read and practiced the strategy to see for yourself how much you are learning in a relatively short time!

Ok. What to do first?

1. Talk with your family and closest friends. They know you. They know how you think (sometimes even better than you know yourself). Don't worry about worrying them. Family and good friends are used to helping each other.
2. If you see a student, faculty member or staff with a Campus Connected logo on their computer, clothing, or office sign, you can talk to them about any of these issues and they

can give you some initial ideas of what to do or whom to see. They are committed to helping anyone who asks.

3. There are a lot of campus resources. Make a point of visiting the Student Life portable and chat with a receptionist to see what services might be helpful.

If you have any doubts, start with #1 above and work your way down. If you are at a 7-10 on pages 23-24, contact the healthcare clinic or the mental health department immediately.

People will often tell you that university and college are the best years

of your lives. Well if you are going through difficult times it will not seem like the best years of your life. You may even feel that your future looks pretty grim.

The good news is that people do care and your future is more in your control than you may think.

Your job is to find the helpers who care and who can help you best.

Call Student LifeLine: 905.721.3392
(8:30 – 16:30) or email
studentlifeline@uoit.ca

Visit our 4 websites:
www.uoit.ca/mentalhealth,
www.uoit.ca/campusconnected,
www.uoit.ca/mentalhealthblog,
www.facebook.com/uoitmentalhealth.

Externally there is 24/7 Telephone Support:

Good2Talk 1.866.925.5454

Ontario Shores 1.800.263.2679

Connex Ontario Mental Health Helpline
1.866.531.2600

Drug and Alcohol Helpline
1.800.565.8603

Gambling Helpline 1.888.230.3505

There are many different services at UOIT including:

ACADEMIC SUCCESS
- Academic workshops
- Career development
- Co-op and internships
- First year transition programming
- Job search services
- Math study hall
- Peer tutoring and Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)
- Study abroad
- Writing room

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT
- Athletics and varsity sports
- Clubs and societies
- Equity and inclusivity programming
- Fan engagement
- Intramural sports
- Mentoring and leadership
- Recreation and fitness facilities

STUDENT SUPPORT
- Alternative testing
- Career counselling
- Indigenous programming and cultural advising

- International student advising
- Mental health support groups
- Services for students with disabilities
- Short-term mental health counselling and community referrals
- Volunteer note-taking program

Mental Health Services recommends that UOIT faculty and staff use the acronym REACH to help students: Recognize warning signs, Engage with them, Assess and Connect them to the Help they need. Knowing that UOIT faculty and staff are trained to help students may help you appreciate how many people there really are who want to help.

Recognize warning signs such as:

- Missing classes, assignments and exams
- Showing significant decline in quality of academic performance or class participation
- Expressing thoughts of despair or harm to self or others (e.g., submitted work or email)
- Displaying extreme disorganization or inappropriate content in written assignments

Visual signs that the student demonstrates:

- Risky behaviour
- Panic or anxious behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Tearfulness or difficulties making eye contact
- A change in appearance or personal hygiene
- Burn marks, cuts or scars

Verbal signs that the student discloses:

- Thoughts of suicide or harm to others
- Worries about coping with life stressors
- Feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or helplessness
- Traumatic experiences (e.g., sexual assault or bullying)

Emotional signs the faculty and staff member:

- Has an instinct that something is wrong
- Senses isolation or withdrawal

First Things First
2. Panic Attacks

> *Anxiety happens when you think you have to figure out everything all at once. Breathe. You're strong. You got this. Take it day by day.*
> Karen Salmansohn[4]

It is very unlikely that someone going through a panic attack can read anything like this chapter. They will rely on others who have done the reading and who can walk them through the exercise below.

Once the person has gone through a panic attack, however, this chapter and book can help minimize the chances of getting another one and dealing better with any that do happen.

There are different types of panic:

1. The full blown panic attack can feel like a heart attack (although, thankfully, most of us have never had a heart attack to compare it to). If you suspect a real heart attack, call 911 immediately.
   Your heart beat will be racing, your

[4] https://www.positivelypositive.com/author/karensalmansohn/ accessed July 31, 2018

breathing shallow and rapid, you may be completely drenched in sweat. You may feel faint, have a stomachache, dizzy, nauseous, tingly, cold, weak, breathless, tearful, or have ongoing headaches.

> ***"Fear does not equal danger."***
>
> Hélène Le Scelleur, a former captain in the Canadian Armed Forces (Treleaven, 2017). Her quote says that many things we fear never happen. Fear is often not about reality but the panic attack is certainly real! It is often a reaction to unknown or presumed danger that may or may not happen.

2. A sudden, milder panic attack can feel like you are frozen in place like a deer in the headlights of a car about to hit it. We might experience this just before speaking in public.
3. The slow-burning panic attack that comes when you are aware that you are not ready for some important task – whether it is handing a paper in on time, being lost in a forest or in an unknown city, or asking someone for help on a project.

First let's deal with the full blown panic attack. It is important to bring yourself back from the brink of a racing heart, panicked breathing, and a mind that feels out of control. Ideally, there is someone nearby who can remind you to:

- Breathe deeply in through your nose and out through your mouth. Concentrate on the breathing and slow down the breaths over a couple of minutes. Once your breathing is under control, your heart rate will slow down as well. Once those two are under better control, your perspiring will diminish.
- Now to calm your mind -- slowly look around you and find…
    - 5 things you can see
    - 4 things you can touch
    - 3 things you can hear
    - 2 things you can smell (or 2 smells you like)
    - 1 emotion you can feel.

By forcing your mind and senses to focus on this search, you regain control over your mind that moments before seemed to take over your body. This focusing slows down your thoughts and gives you a chance to make new

decisions about what kind of help you might need.

Once the person is through a panic attack they need help breaking down any tasks into small steps. They need very small steps to move forward.

First step might be to sit up. Next step, go to washroom to wash their face. Then change their clothes because they are likely moist with perspiration. Then sit down again for a while. Listen to some music perhaps. Then think about what they want to do for lunch/supper. Help getting to cafeteria. Sitting with others they know and who are supportive….

They keep taking small steps until small steps feel limiting. Then they take slightly larger steps. Going to class in the morning with a fellow student who can help take notes. Making a lunch date with another student they know.

And over a day or two or three, their normal routine can continue. But they need to identify what triggered their panic attack and use some of the strategies in this book to deal with them.

Dealing with Ongoing Worries

Dawn Huebner,[5] PhD wrote a book for children overcoming anxieties. The strategies she suggests will work for anyone of any age:

1. Use logic against worries. Put your worries into words. Identify what is really true and what you're afraid might happen. Really bad things do not happen very often but if something bad happens, you will get through it. You can make a plan to help feel calmer and less worried.
2. Lock worries up in a strong box in your mind. This is a visualization of an actual box in which to put worries until worry time.
3. Make worries wait for Worry Time: a 15-minute period per day when you talk with parents/friends/counsellor. This is hard at first as the worry keeps coming back. By making the worry wait, however, some will disappear completely, lessen in importance, or need to be discussed with parents/friends/counsellor later on.

[5] Huebner (2006).

4. Tell worries to GET LOST! This one is a visual-auditory technique that children can use very effectively. It may feel odd to do so as an adult so you may do it mentally rather than out loud. If mentally doesn't work, however, try talking back out loud! Talking back to worries like one does to siblings or bullies. Physically flick it off your shoulder each time is pops up. Talk back to show you disbelieve the worry, are angry that it is bothering you.
5. Move your body to re-set your system. Physical activity is the fastest way to distract from a worry.
6. Relax with a favourite memory, especially when you can't be active (e.g., in bed, in classroom, in car). Tighten all muscles for 5 seconds and then release (squeeze fist, stiffen legs, scrunch your face). Then deep breathe five times: in through your nose and out through your mouth. Change the image in your head (like changing channels on TV) to an even more pleasant memory/ scene. Imagine the sights, sounds, touch, taste and smells that make you smile.

7. Stay strong in your body and your mind. Go back in your mind to when you felt strong. Exercise your body more than you are doing now because a strong body makes you more confident.

Below is another list that you might find helpful. This one is found on Facebook[6]. NOTE: These lists really seem superficial when you first read them. They are just words. It is only after going through some difficult times and trying different strategies that these lists make sense. They are so common because they form part of the 'common sense' everyone talks about.

Some thoughts to remember when you feel lost:

1. Always remember that your present situation is not your final destination. Every difficult period is followed by other experiences. The break-up of a relationship will, inevitably, be followed by people you know nurturing their relationship with you, and new relationships yet to happen. This always happens — 100 % of the time.
2. Sometimes the bad things that happen in our lives put us directly on the path to the best things that will ever happen to us.

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6 Facebook URLs of specific posts often change. Typing the first line or two into Facebook will find the most current post.

3. If you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree.
4. You can't start the next chapter if you keep rereading the last.
5. If it doesn't open, it's not your door.
6. Sometimes you need to step outside, get some air, and remind yourself of who you are and where you want to be.
7. Sometimes you need to talk to a three-year-old just so you can understand life again.
8. Listen and silent are spelled with the same letters. Think about it.
9. Sometimes you have to stop thinking so much and just go where your heart takes you.
10. You don't have to have it all figured out to move forward.

The milder forms of panic like those before an exam or asking someone for help on a project can best be handled by breaking up larger tasks into smaller ones. Rather than study for a final exam, study for part of it and then treat yourself to a walk on campus or a chat with a friend. Build several study sessions into your schedule. This will reduce the task load and the panic. Each section you study will increase your confidence that you'll do well on the exam.

Rather than visualize all the possible answers that someone might give you when you ask them for help on a project, concentrate on what you need and create a list of several people who might help. If one says no, you have a back-up. Your success at university is not based on whether a specific person can help you with a specific project during your first year. Put the panicky thoughts into perspective.

Sharratt (2017) summarizes advice from Jennifer Hamilton, executive director of the Canadian Association of College and University Services on what students and parents should do the summer before university starts or even while they are still in Grades 11 or 12. If you are already at the university, still do this task:

1. First-year students can make a list of things they're worried about, whether it's managing money, a fear they won't meet friends, or a concern about getting good marks.
2. Parents can have an open conversation addressing these concerns. They can tackle each potential issue with comments such as, "How do you feel we should act if that happens?"

3. Parents and students can make themselves familiar with support services on campus, such as student services, financial aid services, peer support groups, and mental health experts. Then if the need arises, the student knows where to go for help.
4. Students and their parents can have an open dialogue about challenges they're facing as they come up. Parents can work questions about mental health concerns into a conversation with their children, rather than waiting for them to mention any issues. Ask questions such as: "Are you feeling upset about missing your friends?"
5. Students can break their campus down into smaller chunks to feel less lost in the crowd, joining smaller colleges at a large university, or social groups such as sports groups or clubs.
6. Students can engage in the academic community. Even if students live off campus, joining various groups and attending activities on campus can help them feel connected.

Strategy and Practice

Go through the Facebook list (pages 40-41) and add a personal experience to show how it relates to you. We've put some students' experiences as an example:

1. Always remember that your present situation is not your final destination. When I was in Grade 9, my brother died in a car accident. I didn't think I'd ever be able to get through that but now I'm at university. My grief isn't over but it didn't stop me from moving forward in life.
2. Sometimes the bad things that happen in our lives put us directly on the path to the best things that will ever happen to us. When I was forced to take gym class (which I was so bad at the teacher told me to wash his golf balls rather than participate in a run) I never expected this would be where I would meet my best friend.
3. If you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree. I really didn't know what I was doing at university so I took a break between second and third year, worked for a while, volunteered in another

country, and figured out what I really wanted to study.

4. You can't start the next chapter if you keep rereading the last. I was stuck with problems I had at home and school. I couldn't imagine starting university. Then a teacher told me this about 'the next chapter,' and that I was the author of my own life. Didn't believe it at first, of course. But it's true.
5. If it doesn't open, it's not your door. I wanted to be a pilot so badly. Then I took some lessons and even got my licence but decided it wasn't the job for me. So I changed what I was studying. I made the right choice.
6. Sometimes you need to step outside, get some air, and remind yourself of who you are and where you want to be. I tend to hide out in my room, work on my studies, or get caught up with social media. It takes some good friends to drag me away and remind me of the things I used to enjoy: going to the beach, riding my bike, doing 'homework' in a coffee shop with friends, and going dancing.
7. Sometimes you need to talk to a three-year-old just so you can understand life again. I talked with

my little niece once. She knew I missed my mom. So she gave me her toy phone, dialled heaven for me, and told me my mom was on the line. It was the first time I 'talked' with my mom in a long time. It felt good even though I felt stupid doing it. She understood I needed to talk with Mom.

8. Listen and silent are spelled with the same letters. Think about it. I had to do some interviews with older folks for a project. I asked an open question: "What do you remember about your childhood" and people told me stuff that was funny, that was sad, that was insightful, and that changed my life. I had to be quiet though, and listen to both their answers and watch their body language, so they would trust me enough to tell me things they might not have told anyone else, ever.
9. Sometimes you have to stop thinking so much and just go where your heart takes you. I'm very anxious about meeting strangers, especially someone I might like from a distance but who doesn't know I exist. One time, I just ignored the anxieties (okay I had to go to the bathroom a few times first) and introduced

myself. We didn't get married or anything but we are still friends.

10. You don't have to have it all figured out to move forward. No one has it all figured out. A life only makes sense when you look back on it 50 years later. Your family, your career, your hobbies might all make sense in 50 years but now it is just empty space ahead of you that you have to fill up with decisions of what to do and what not to do. You can't possibly know in advance what the right choices are but I did learn how to weigh the pros and cons of decisions better as I got older and more experienced.

First Things First
3. Depression

Kevin Breel of Victoria, BC wrote to fellow young adults with depression in his book (2015). He told his readers that using the 4 words: *"I suffer from depression"* allows him to understand what it is he is experiencing which leads to specific strategies to help him through an episode.

The 4 words also help his family, friends, teachers, and strangers understand him better. He describes depression not as an emotion which can change quickly but as a lens through which one sees life in negative ways; overpowering ways. [129-130]

> *I hope this story makes you feel something that maybe you haven't felt for a while. And if you happen to be a kid like me, growing up in a misery that seems like it will never end: I understand you. I get it. And it's all going to be okay. Trust me. I used to be the kid who thought his life was never going to be good or mean anything. Every day I felt like I had my face pressed against the glass of perfection, watching everybody in the*

> *world live a life that was poetic and pure while I drowned in my problems. And I hated it. I used to think that my life, the one I desperately wanted, not the one I had, was never going to show up; that it would always escape me and I would spend my entire existence searching for something that would go unfound. I used to think that maybe life wasn't really worth much.* [xi]

He is now a writer and stand up comic. Check him out on YouTube.

Johann Grolle and Samiha Shafy (2012, August 2) interviewed Harvard psychologist Jerome Kagan, considered one of the leading experts in child development in the world. He said:

> *We could get philosophical and ask ourselves: "What does mental illness mean?" If you do interviews with children and adolescents aged 12 to 19, then 40 percent can be categorized as anxious or depressed. But if you take a closer look and ask how many of them are seriously impaired by this, the number shrinks to 8 percent. Describing every child who is depressed or anxious as being*

> *mentally ill is ridiculous. Adolescents are anxious, that's normal. They don't know what college to go to. Their boyfriend or girlfriend just stood them up. Being sad or anxious is just as much a part of life as anger or sexual frustration.*

He asks us to look at depression as two things: one that lasts for a time (e.g., grief, losing a job) compared to chronic depression. We label too many students with chronic depression when what they are really facing is difficult, even painful depression that will go away. He believes that mental illness is diagnosed by symptoms when it really should be diagnosed by cause (like every other type of illness). The cause of depression will determine what needs to be done.

How do we understand what chronic depression might feel like? J.K. Rowling used her own experience with depression to create one of the most feared enemies in her Harry Potter books – the Dementors – because "they drain peace, hope and happiness out of the air around them….You'll be left with nothing but the worst experience of your life."[7]

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[7] Francis Mark Mondimore (MD) and Patrick Kelly. (2015), p 10.

Historically, the study of child psychiatry is relatively young. Mondimore and Kelly note the pioneer work of Adolf Meyer's at American John Hopkins Hospital in the 1930s. So we are a long way away from understanding either the adult or the child brain and all the inter-connections that lead to mental health and mental illness.

They also make the distinction between the symptom of depression (low mood) versus the syndrome of depression, what Kagan above called chronic depression. You might expect someone who has failed a course, lost their job, had a vacation cancelled, or experienced the death of a loved one to have the symptom of depression for a time – even a long time. However, when that depression or low mood is coupled with other symptoms, they can be defined as a syndrome of depression requiring treatment. They list the symptoms of depression[8]:

Mood Symptoms

- Depressed mood
- Long-term, constricting quality of mood
- Irritability
- Loss of ability to experience pleasure

[8] ibid, 13.

(anhedonia)
- Guilty feelings
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Social withdrawal
- Suicidal thoughts

Cognitive (Thinking) Symptoms
- Poor concentration
- Poor memory
- Indecision
- Slowed thinking
- Loss of motivation

Bodily Symptoms
- Sleep disturbance
- Insomnia
- Hypersomnia
- Appetite disturbance
- Weight loss
- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Constipation
- Worsening of painful conditions.

When depression is combined with one or more of these symptoms, the problems magnify and the solutions require more thoughtful attention and, perhaps, professional treatment.

Some of the websites cited in this book provide tools to help people identify how severe their depression may be. Like all Internet tools, you must be careful in

how you interpret the results and check out several sources to make sure you are

> Facebook post: Depression, anxiety and panic attacks are NOT a sign of weakness. They are signs of having tried to remain strong for too long. Did you know that 1 in 3 of us go through this at some point in our lives?

getting useful information.

One such tool, The Beck Depression Inventory, is often used by professionals in their therapeutic sessions (Beck, 2018). Having such professional tools easily accessible on the Internet begs the question whether untrained users are able to self-diagnose using such a tool. The tool is simple and asks simple questions, so the 'score' at the end may well provide users with enough information to know whether they should seek professional help or not.

If there is any doubt, you should check with a professional (Perotto & Sutton, January 17, 2018).

A teenager who has changed dramatically from the happy-go-lucky, curious, loving child into an angry, lonely,

child wrote to his parents (and posted on Facebook):

> *I'm going to tell you something now that's hard to say. Please listen, because I really mean it: Don't give up on me. Don't hate me back. I need you to be stronger than me. I need you to be my parent, even though I say I don't want one. I need you to be more patient than I can be, more understanding, more accepting. Even when I am yelling at you, even when I tell you that I hate you, I still need you to love me. If I could tell you how to help me, this is what I would say:*
>
> 1. *Give me space.*
> 2. *Don't yell at me. The noise in my head is so loud I can barely hear my own thoughts. I can't stand it.*
> 3. *Take my electronics away. I need you to set limits on technology.*
> 4. *Bring me somewhere quiet. Somewhere to feel the sun, listen to the wind in the trees. Even if we don't speak, I will feel comforted.*
> 5. *Stop spoiling me. I want to earn things.*
> 6. *Find me someone to talk to – a mentor, a counsellor, a therapist… anyone who can give me hope when I have too little myself.*

7. *Tell me that you love me. I pretend not to care. But I really need to hear you say the words because right now, I don't love me.*

A mother posted a different list of how she helped their child — *10 Things that helped Mom* when her son said he was depressed:

1. Therapy for the whole family
2. Meds – trial and error under professional direction
3. Talking
4. Share memes on depression to start discussion, evaluate progress
5. Finding shared inspiration like Canadian spoken word artist: Shane Koyczan's "Instructions for a Bad Day[9]"
6. Listening to his music
7. Meditation – mindfulness
8. Websites and online communities like **www.themighty.com** and **www.lovewhatmatters.com**
9. Forgive yourself as parents
10. Become okay living with the unknown.

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[9] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lACwPFqxmzY with lyrics or at https://www.shanekoyczan.com

Strategies and Practice

A book can help you look at what is happening in your life and what you would like to change.

If your depression is likely chronic and won't go away by itself, then check out the mental illness resources in the Student Life portable on campus.

If you think your feelings of depression are not chronic but still painful, then use either of the two lists above as an example and write your own list.

What is it you need? Who can help you with that? What are your first small steps to help you get what you need in the way of supports?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

First Things First
4. Suicide Prevention

If you are having suicidal thoughts, seek professional help immediately. You can start by talking with family and close friends, but you also need to talk with a mental illness professional. Use one of the following health lines to get started:

Call Student LifeLine: 905.721.3392 (8:30 – 16:30) or email studentlifeline@uoit.ca

Externally there is 24/7 Telephone Support:

Good2Talk 1.866.925.5454

Connex Ontario Mental Health Helpline 1.866.531.2600

Drug and Alcohol Helpline 1.800.565.8603

Gambling Helpline 1.888.230.3505

In 2012, nearly 4,000 people died by suicide in Canada. We need to help lower that number.

However, that does mean that 99.99% of Canadians chose not to die by suicide

that year. We offer this statistic not to diminish the horror of suicides on the person and their loved ones. We offer the statistic to say that for 99.99%, many of whom are going through very traumatic, difficult times, still choose to live — many by asking for help. That's an encouraging statistic and we hope it encourages anyone who is suicidal to get the help they need and deserve.[10]

A quick side note: For those who have experienced the death of a loved one by suicide, we often blame ourselves or certainly question what we could have done differently. We usually do not blame the person's parents, the siblings, the teachers, or their friends?

We think we are responsible in some way but don't put that same pressure on others. No one deserves that pressure. Mental illness that leads to suicide is not a single event process. It is an illness and sometimes ends in death. Intellectually that makes sense. Emotionally it's not a good enough answer.

There must be something someone (me) should have done. Often, no, there isn't.

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[10] https://suicideprevention.ca/understanding/suicide-in-canada/, accessed Aug 2, 2018

That said, if we get to people sooner, before they have consistent suicidal thoughts — when they are just beginning to feel different, depressed, and isolated, then there are things we can do and must do.

Dr. Marshall Korenblum (CBC News, October 7, 2014) is the chief psychiatrist at the Hincks-Dellcreset Centre in Toronto and says: "We know that 70 per cent of mental illness can be identified before the age of 18 or 19. So if we did a better job of recognizing these problems earlier, they'd be easier to treat and the impact on academic success, social adjustment, and of course mental health would be huge."

The National College Health Assessment (October 14, 2016) supports Korenblum's contention that we need to recognize mental health problems sooner. The survey found[11] (October 14, 2016):

1. 46% were categorized as having positive mental health
2. Over 13% reported seriously considering suicide within the past 12 months

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[11] Malcolm Derikx reported on survey by the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS) with 43,000 students from 41 post-secondary institutions across Canada.

3. 14% said they had a diagnosis or treatment for anxiety within last 12 months.
4. There was no clear divide between academic and personal stress for students
5. 20.8% admitted depression affected their academics.
6. 44.4% students have had at least one depressive episode that prevented them from functioning.

These findings were a 'significant jump' in data compared to their 2013 study.

Some of these depressions are episodic and no less painful. Someone going through grief, for example, may be told it can take a year or two to 'get through it,' which is small comfort.

One in five students experience the death of a loved one by age 18. By age 16, 1 in 20 will have already experienced the death of one or both parents — that's 1 in 20 students in a class. (Children's Grief Awareness Day, March 19, 2018).

If per capita statistics are similar in Canada, that would mean of the approximately 10,000 students at UOIT, at least 500 will have gone through the death of a parent and 2,000 of a close loved one. Depending when those deaths

occurred, many students are dealing with grief along with the general anxiety of transitioning to university.

A physician who had over 200 patients with ALS (Lou Gerhig's Disease) said that most of them were suicidal at some point. He said that some were when they first came to him. They wanted a sense of control over their lives that an acceptance of suicide gave them. If they always had an 'out' they could tolerate so much more.

Some of the patients said that they wanted to live until they needed to go onto a respirator. They didn't want to live with one of those. Until, that is, it came time to decide whether they would go on a respirator or not. Almost all of them chose the respirator because they had a child's wedding to attend, a granddaughter's gymnastic tournament to witness, a bit more tidying up of their affairs to do. Each of his patients, however, never feared that talking about suicidal thoughts would cause the doctor to turn away or diagnose them as 'depressed' and force medication on them.

Strategy & Practice

What to do if you think you have chronic depression?

> Get help now. From family and close friends. From university services. From outside services. Don't wait. Today.

What to do if you think you have episodic depression?

> Start with family and close friends and still check out the university services.
>
> You do not have to go through this alone — in fact, it is the worst thing you can do.

First Things First
5. Schedule

The single greatest skill that successful people share is an ability to schedule their time according to their priorities.

For some those priorities are studying. For others it may be work, sports, raising a family, and being with friends.

If you have multiple priorities, any or all of the tasks can be overwhelming. So you need to know how to schedule your time and be flexible enough to change your schedule as needed.

You need to know how to ask for and accept help. Very few people succeed at university without the help of others. One person may type faster than another and will help a fellow classmate type up a paper. In exchange, that student may be particularly good at scheduling study sessions for the final exams. Study groups are not for weak students but for everyone who wants to succeed.

Having peer support during your studies is good for your academics but also for your heart — and you'll laugh more.

Very few successful parents can raise their children without help. The same premise here — ask for and accept help

so you can juggle all of your commitments to family, studies, work and fun.

To get help with scheduling, check out the Student Life department on campus for a peer tutor who can help. You can also ask fellow students who look particularly organized or call up a friend from high school who was really good at this.

Here are some very practical tips on how to do just that:[12]

1. 90% of all things can be done immediately! Really. Check it out for yourself.
2. Procrastination is often our way of avoiding evaluation of our work by ourselves or others. By procrastinating we have an excuse for not giving our best effort to learn because 'we were late.'
3. The fear of evaluation and our own self-doubts and negative thoughts are of our own making. Try mindfulness to help you get rid of some of those negative thoughts.
4. Design your schedule to break tasks into manageable units.
5. Organizing your work involves consistent planning and evaluating

[12] Harry van Bommel et al, 2007

your success. There is no magic formulae; just practical tips to help you do what you have been doing for years, just better.

6. You have the power to control your time and your abilities. Take that control and enjoy yourself. When you just don't have enough time, bring in help. You can create a team of family, friends, and fellow students to help break up some of the studying, caring for children or aging parents/grandparents, and work. The team can help schedule so you know you don't have to do everything yourself. There will be glitches but there will also be help.
7. Schedule difficult tasks when you have the most energy or in the morning to get it out of the way.
8. Schedule blocks of time for sports, grocery shopping, visiting friends, and doing 'nothing.' If you don't schedule it, you won't do it. It also gives you some leeway if you need to find an extra hour to finish a paper or do some readings.
9. Keep a daily "to do" list (on your phone, computer, piece of paper, cue card, in your calendar) and check off everything you do. It feels good.

10. Decide which 20% of your tasks will produce 80% of the day's results and do those first. So often we spend 80% of our time on tasks that only produce 20% of the results we need. For example, deciding to sort all of your music into new play lists instead of picking 3 to include in the presentation you are working on.

An author of a book on procrastination wrote about how difficult it was to sit down and start writing the book, ironically. He was anxious and he realized that his "obsession with being perfect and on the final result of a published book was causing my anxiety and procrastination."

So he asked himself one day after months of procrastination, "What can I do right now?" That led him to write a sentence, and then another, and on it went. This was based on David Allen's book Getting Things Done which suggested that if a task takes less then 2 minutes, do it now!

A last example – imagine having to write a 15-page paper. It seems overwhelming. The longest paper you've ever written was 8-pages and that was hard enough.

How do professional writers write 15 pages, or 150 pages or even 500 pages?

They all start with an outline breaking down the project into small, manageable pieces. Every writing project has a beginning, middle and an end. The longer pieces have longer middles. Instead of 2 or 3 main points, they may have 10-12 chapters. Each chapter may be about 10 pages and each of those chapters has a beginning, middle and an end.

It is the same with writing a paper. Draft an outline, schedule when you are going to write which parts of the paper rather than just write “Due by Oct 10th” in your calendar. Any large task can be, and must be, broken down into little pieces. The total time to draft an outline and schedule the work is less than 10 minutes.

Also, the university has fellow students in the Student Life building there to help with your writing projects. See them in your first term to avoid panic both now and in future years. When you learn a new writing skill, it stays with you forever.

Strategy and Practice

Look at your agenda/calendar and start blocking off times for classes, for studying, for fun stuff, for practical stuff (groceries, working on this book), and some ‘free’

blocks that will fill up once you get a better handle on your study needs.

Block off time to sleep. Students typically don't sleep enough. 5-6 hours is not enough. It hurts your memory, your ability to be analytical, and affects your diet and exercise.

When you change your schedule for an unexpected concert, or time with friends, or helping a fellow student, then incorporate that into your schedule by taking the time from somewhere else rather than just throwing the schedule out or staying up much later to catch up. Scheduling isn't about adding stress — it's about distributing your stress so it does not become overwhelming.

Begin a daily to do list. Once you get good at this, you'll put the important stuff (the 80% you really need done) first.

Always schedule time for fun, for rest, for mindfulness meditation, or just for "you" time.

First Things First
6. Resiliency 101

The number 101 is often used to indicate an introductory course at university that presents the basics of any field. That is what this chapter is about. The basics of being resilient.

We begin with the obvious. You are already resilient. It is the same as taking a communication course. You already communicate every day. A communication course just helps you communicate better. The same with a chapter on resiliency — how to do it better.

Dr. Krysle Martin of the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (Côté (2018) defined resiliency as an ability to positively manage, tolerate and cope with stresses and traumas. Responses go on a continuum from thriving to resilient recovery to survival with impairment(s) and succumbing (not coping).

Young people have resiliency and people who want to support them are there to help them keep it, expand it or get back to what they know works for them.

The characteristics of resiliency include:

- Being active everyday
- Time management
- Eating healthy
- Sleeping enough
- Being compassionate to oneself — physically and behaviourally through self talk and in social groups
- Therapies as needed
- Delegating to avoid being overwhelmed
- Asking for, and accepting help
- Creating opportunities to learn to challenge oneself (including the challenges of anxiety)
- Mental illnesses won't be prevented by doing all or some of these things, however resiliency can help mitigate elements of mental illness.

Components of resiliency include:

- Connectedness — nurturing relationships
- Ability to problem solve
- Optimism
- Agency, confidence, and sense of control
- Distress tolerance
- Self-regulation
- Flexibility

- Self-care (physical health)
- Perspective taking
- Knowing when/how to access support
- Competencies of knowledge and skills (e.g., study skills, time management, stress management).

Dr. Alana Holt of the University of Saskatchewan (Hobsbawn-Smith, 2017) adds another factor:

> *There is a biological piece to why [mental illness] shows up at that age….The brain does not complete development until the early 20s. The brain's frontal lobe is the home of insight, self-awareness, inhibitions, healthy judgment, planning, abstraction and impulse control—which is the last to develop, as any parent of risk-prone teenagers can attest. Youth must deal with the significant stresses that accompany that age—when all the big choices in life are made, solidifying identity, choosing career and partner, and growing a social network.* [27]

Worries can be real or they can be about unlikely events or distressing thoughts. Worry about a test versus worry

about a new babysitter versus worry about hurricanes. They can come from the imagination (fuelled by TV shows, books, and conversations overheard) or from previous experiences (a dog bite years ago leads to continual fear of all dogs to this day).

Worries can manifest into physical feelings: headache, tearful, breathless, sweaty, stomachache, faint, dizzy, nauseous, racing heart, tingly, cold, and feeling weak. So it's not "all in your head."

How to beat worries?[13] Remember our list from the section on Panic Attacks (pages 37-39):

1. Use logic against worries. Put your worries into words. Identify what is really true and what you're afraid might happen. Really bad things do not happen very often but if something bad happens, you will get through it. You can make a plan to help feel calmer and less worried.
2. Lock worries up in a strong box in your mind. This is a visualization of an actual box in which to put worries until worry time.
3. Make worries wait for Worry Time: a 15-minute per day period when you

[13] Huebner (2006) p 34.

talk with parents, friends, or a counsellor. This is hard at first as the worry keeps coming back. By making it wait, some will disappear on their own, and others can be discussed with parents/counsellor.

4. Tell worries to GET LOST! Talk back to worries like one does to siblings, parents or bullies. Physically flick it off your shoulder each time is pops up. Talk back to show you disbelieve the worry, are angry at it for bothering you.
5. Move your body to re-set your system. Physical activity is the fastest way to distract from a worry.
6. Relax with a favourite memory, especially when you can't be active (in bed, in classroom, in car). Tighten all muscles for 5 seconds and then release (squeeze fist, stiffen legs, scrunch your face). Then deep breathe five times: in…and out through your nose and out through your mouth. Then change the image in your head (like changing channels on TV) to an even more pleasant memory/scene and imagine sights, sounds, smells, touch, and what you smell that makes you smile.
7. Stay strong in your body and your mind.

But why are the top 25% of high school students who go to university anxious about their success? They have already proven themselves.

Well some have been told that universities are much harder than high school and that their overall marks will plummet by at least 20%. That's statistically impossible, of course. Many students do very well at university and often do better than in high school in their 3rd and 4th years because they are studying something that really interest them.

Many students are also told that professors don't care about them — about their academic career or their personal problems with anxiety, depression, and maybe mental illnesses. That is just not true! The majority of professors want their students to succeed. Their students' success is part of their legacy as professors.

Some of students' worries come from themselves — their own self-doubts. Some come from the high expectations of their parents, extended families and friends especially if they are the first to go to university.

The principal of an Islamic school in Pakistan sent this letter to parents before exam time to put these expectations into perspective.

> *Dear Parents, The exams of your children are to start soon. I know you are all really anxious for your child to do well. But please do remember, amongst the students who will be sitting for the exams there is an artist, who doesn't need to understand Math. There is an entrepreneur who doesn't care about History or English literature. There is a musician whose Chemistry marks won't matter. There's an athlete, whose physical fitness is more important than Physics. If your child does get top marks, that's great! But if he or she doesn't, please don't take away their self-confidence and dignity from them. Tell them it's OK. It's just an exam! They are cut out for much bigger things in life. Tell them, no matter what they score—you love them and will not judge them. Please do this, and when you do…watch your children conquer the world. One exam or a low mark won't take away their dreams and talent. And please, do not think that doctors and engineers are the only happy people in the world.* [Bulman, October 4, 2016]

Montminy (2016) an American psychologist and health and wellness expert quotes another principal on which his students would mostly likely succeed. It wasn't going to be the ones with the top grades or who were happiest, nor those with the strongest social skills or the highest points on intelligence tests.

He said, "*the ones who were able to recover from a bad grade and resolve to do better next time; to bounce back from a fight with their parents and work through it better next time; to resist the urge to go out to the movies and stay home and study instead; to persuade professors to give them extra help after classes.*" [p 2]

One of the most remarkable studies

on resilience was published in 2003 [Journal of Personality and Social Psychology]. In late August 2001, researchers recruited college students for a study measuring resilience and other psychological traits….[9/11 happened and students were interviewed again.]

Participants who had scored high on resilience prior to the attacks reported greater positive emotions such as gratitude, interest, and love, even while simultaneously feeling negative emotions such as fear, anger, and sadness.

Researchers found that these highly resilient people actually increased their levels of optimism, well-being, and feelings of tranquility and peace after 9/11.

This study illustrates how highly resilient people seem to not only bounce back from hard times, but also grow and become stronger as a result of their trauma. They found a way for their struggle to redefine their life and fill it with new meaning. This type of growth is the cornerstone of resilience. [5-6] This type of growth is possible for everyone who becomes more resilient.

Montminy examines resiliency from various standpoints. One is to look at emotional intelligence as a guide. “Emotional intelligence (EI) is a critical skill of resilient people. It involves a

multilevel process—the ability to be able to monitor the feelings of yourself and others, to discriminate among them, and to use that information when you act." [154]

The statements below highlight aspects of emotional intelligence. Few people answer yes to all these questions—it's the reason we need to learn to improve our EI. After each question answer yes or no. Each no answer is an opportunity to enhance your skills in that area.

- You are curious about people.
- You know how to differentiate between thoughts and feelings.
- You're not afraid of negative emotions or feelings.
- You have empathy.
- You can tell easily when loved ones are upset.
- You don't react immediately to situations.
- You're a good leader.
- You know your weaknesses.
- You are not easily distracted.
- When you get mad or upset, you know what caused it.
- You know your values and you are a moral person.
- You handle conflict well.

- You are good at reading facial expressions.
- You don't let your negative feelings take over your entire mind-set.
- You trust your gut—and others do too. [156-157]

One of the things that she and other authors use are quotes from well-known people – those popular today and those from thousands of years ago. In Montmimy's case, she begins each of her daily tasks with a quote. Here are a few that have provided 'wisdom' to readers over the centuries:

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. *Aristotle [15]*

Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today. *Thich Nhat Hanh (Buddhist monk) [27]*

My life didn't please me, so I created my life. *Coco Chanel (fashion designer and entrepreneur) [47]*

To truly laugh you must be able to take your pain and play with it. *Charlie Chaplin*

[55]

We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual people on a human journey. *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin [107]*

It's not the strongest of the species that survive, not the most intelligent but the one most responsive to change. *Charles Darwin [115]*

It's not that I'm smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer. *Albert Einstein [121]*

[For example, it is often said of Chinese students that they are genetically smarter at Math. In fact, they are not inherently more intelligent but rather they have a cultural practice to be persistent until they find what they know is the right math answer while other students just give up.]

Getting over a painful experience is much like crossing monkey bars. You have to let go at some point in order to move forward. *C.S. Lewis [135]*

Some men look at things the way they are and ask why. I dream of things that are not and ask why not. *Robert F. Kennedy [145]*

The problem is not that there are problems. The problem is expecting otherwise and thinking that having problems is a problem. *Theodore Rubin [169]*

I want to be around people that do things. I don't want to be around people anymore that judge or talk about what people do. I want to be around people that dream and support and do things. *Amy Poehler [177]*

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. *Mahatma Gandhi [185]*

Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for. *Epicurus [193]*

Linda Goldman (2006) wrote *Raising Our Children to be Resilient: A Guide to Helping Children Cope with Trauma in Today's World*. Her book should be mandatory reading as she suggests a practical approach to identifying and helping children and adolescents through various grief, violence, bullying, trauma, and frightening events with activities for parents, educators, mental health

professionals and other caring adults with extensive recommended reading lists, websites and organizations.

Resilience is "often referred to as the resources one uses to cope with difficult times and the ability to bounce back from these hard situations. Triumphing over pain, overcoming challenges, accomplishing through adversity, and developing strength through suffering are familiar descriptions. The American Heritage Dictionary defines resilience as 'the ability to recover quickly from illness, change or misfortune; buoyancy.'" [241]

Goldman suggests a mixture of some of the following to build resilience in children and adolescents:

- Adults acting as role models, teaching coping skills, stress management, decision making, and communication skills so children can better express their feelings, worries.
- Show children they are not alone in a confusing world – that *"somehow, somewhere, I'm part of something bigger than me"* whether that be through a spiritual, religious, social, community, or family lens. [243]
- Resilient children *"act even when they are afraid or unhappy. They often overcome their fears to work for a*

helpful cause." [245] For example, the students in a high school after a mass shooting who speak up in public, even though they are terrified of public speaking, because they want to see an end to the violence.

Strategy and Practice

We can learn most from the people in our lives that have gone through difficult times. Ask some of those people how they did it. What strategies worked? What strategies didn't? What they would recommend for you? What they suggest you avoid trying?

Then create your own list of your resiliency resources — what works for you? What doesn't? Who can you rely on for support? What would you like to learn to do even better? What scares you? What strategies might help overcome those fears? You'll come back to your own list later. For now keep it on a separate sheet of paper hanging by your desk to remind yourself how far you've already come!

Strategy 1
Nurture — Relationships

Dr. Gabor Maté (1999) wrote that while medications sometimes have a role in the treatment of anxieties, depression and improving mental health it “is the ability to have and nurture relationships and to learn to love oneself” that are the keys to success.

So what type of relationships do we need to nurture?

We begin by nurturing ourselves, of course. We need to take care of ourselves; nurture our physical and mental health. Typically many of us are the source of much of our own anxiety.

Why?

Did you know that of all the conversations we have in our lives, we talk to ourselves the most? What is it you are telling yourself? How often is it something positive versus something negative or even harmful?

We need to be kinder to ourselves in how we talk to ourselves. We need to identify when we are telling ourselves things that are not true or not likely to be true. Many of our worries will never happen. Many we won't remember or consider important a few months or even a year from now. Mindfulness, described later in this book, will help you distinguish what are real and what are unlikely worries.

The next relationships are with the people we love most. So often we take our immediate family and friends for granted. We sometimes treat strangers better than those we love most. Look at how you spend your time with people — what percentage is spent with people who really matter to you? What percentage is spent with people you know but are not that important to you? How do you increase the time spent with those that matter most?

Nurturing families also means asking them to be nurturing in ways that are most

supportive to you. Dr. Stan Kutcher of Dalhousie University (Sharrat, 2017) reminds us that many parents expect things to go badly for their children at university. They sometimes project their own concerns, their own experiences onto their children. Yet for most students, university will be a positive, exciting experience. Stress helps us learn new things and parents can help by being supportive in ways you describe to them.

The majority of students will have a good first year, according to Kutcher. Many will still experience some home sickness, a sense of isolation, uncertainly about their studies and/or finances and the stresses of socializing, studying and having to work. Their fears and anxiety are all typical for most first year students and young adults going through a major transition from home life and high school to something new and different.

The third group of relationships we can nurture are those we made before university in our day-to-day lives. These include friends at school, colleagues at work, and folks in the community, in our regular stores, the bus driver on our typical route, or folks who go to the same sporting events.

By the time we come to university, our circle of relationships is already large.

Even when we are far away from home, those relationships still exist and need nurturing. You won't have as much time as before but that doesn't mean you have no time at all.

At university, your relationships will expand to include fellow students, faculty, and staff. For some it may be through sports and for others through studies. You may become friendly with a new bus driver or staff at the local convenience store or grocer. You may go to a spiritual centre regularly and meet new people there.

People always surround you. Most will remain strangers but they too can benefit from a smile or a "good morning." Others will become friends during your time at the university and you'll likely lose touch with most of them — but not all of them. Each relationship deserves to be nurtured as much as you can for your own benefit as well as theirs.

One way to nurture any relationship is to look at how we speak to people. Perhaps you like to make people laugh. Perhaps you are the quiet observer. Perhaps you only participate in conversations when it deals with something you are passionate about like politics, climate change, or the score of the latest favourite team you follow.

One form of nurturing communication is based on a simple Buddhist tenet — before you speak, let your words pass through three gates:

"Is it true?"
"Is it necessary?"
"Is it kind?"

If more people thought of these three gates before they spoke, we would have just as much fun but less stress in many of our conversations.

Finding Ways to Help/Serve

One of the most powerful ways to heal and to nurture relationships is to find ways to help others or serve a greater cause.

Volunteering in a formal way is one strategy — working with an animal shelter, in a healthcare facility, or joining a sports association to be a coach or administrator are all ways to volunteer.

At university, there are also ways to volunteer as a peer tutor, university ambassador, or by creating a study circle for students who might be a bit isolated. There are many clubs, societies, and teams that all need volunteers.

Informally, however, is where everyone has an opportunity to make a

difference in someone's life — a dramatic, fundamental difference. Befriending someone who is somewhat isolated is a wonderful gift to both of you. Helping them succeed is one way that helps you to succeed as well. It's a mutual relationship where each brings something to the other that is helpful.

Imagine a student who is particularly good at expanding their circle of friendship by inviting others to join in for a specific event or activity. Whomever they invite may be a genius at figuring out ways to memorize an overwhelming mass of information (like anatomy, or engineering formulas, or statistics). Everyone benefits from an expanded network of friends.

Whatever you choose, by reaching out to others, you have more of a reason to get up in the morning. Perhaps you are not always motivated to attend your first class at 9:00 a.m. on Mondays. But the person you have connected with expects you there and needs you to be there because of their anxiety about this class. You will show up to be helpful and encouraging. You both benefit because now you are at class to learn the material, and you are supporting your friend, all because you didn't sleep in.

Strategy & Practice

Whether you are still in high school or already in first year at university, go through this list.

1. Make a list of what worries you:

_____

_____

_____

2. Talk about useful strategies you already use successfully. Add others as you go through this book:

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3. Get support – check out what services are available at the university. Check out #1 First Things First — How do You Know You Need Help? for specific information and

Strategy #30 for further ideas.

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4. Think small – what 3 university buildings do you need to know first? https://uoit.ca/maps/

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Add extra buildings (e.g., such as sports facilities, spiritual centre/reflection room, favourite meeting place).

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5. Join in – look at the university website, visit booths during Orientation, and check with other students about what you might like to join: (e.g., clubs, sports, theatre, LGBTQ community, cultural groups). Visit them and attend a few meetings to decide if they are right for you. SCHEDULE time in your calendar to do this.

Strategy 2
Happiness — Day-to-Day

Each day is a new opportunity to find ways to become happier more often and share that happiness with others.

Does that sound corny or what! Yet, how often do you remember someone holding a door for you, sharing a bright Good morning! or offering to let you move ahead of them in the grocery line since you have so few things to buy? How often has someone offered you one of their candies or sent you a funny email to brighten your day? How often do people just smile when they see you coming? Whether you get these things a lot or not, the point is you can increase any of these things by being happier, more often. Happiness breeds happiness just as a room full of complaining, whining people tends to breed more of the same. You can be the catalyst that changes peoples' lives for that moment. You can!

By remembering some of the wonderful things that happened to you can encourage you to do some of these things for others.

Gary T. Reker is a retired life-span developmental psychologist and

Professor Emeritus at Trent University. He wrote in the "Happiness: 14 Habits of Contentment[14]" that "True happiness is a by-product of finding meaning and purpose in your life.[15]"

Another quote from him: "You can always take the Me out off Meaning, but you'll never take the Meaning out of Me."

He concluded that finding purpose leads to happiness not the other way around. His conclusions were supported by the work of professors Michael Fordyce from Florida and Jonathan Freedman of Canada who studied the characteristics of happy people. Reker's research finds many similar characteristics in people who have found purpose and meaning in their lives.

Reker, Fordyce and Freedman share the observations that happy people the world over and those who have found purpose and meaning in their lives have similar character traits — the working theory being that the more you are like happy, purposeful people the happier you'll be.

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[14] Leo Borman, (Ed.). (2011). *The World Book of Happiness.*

[15] Similar in approach to Viktor Frankl's *Man Search for Meaning*. Further information in the next section of this chapter.

1. Be more active and keep busy.
2. Spend more time socializing.
3. Be productive at meaningful work.
4. Get better organized.
5. Stop worrying. (they recognize that 90% of worries never come true).
6. Lower your expectations and aspirations.
7. Develop positive, optimistic thinking.
8. Get present-oriented
9. Work on a healthy personality.
10. Develop an outgoing social personality.
11. Be yourself.
12. Eliminate the negative.
13. Close relationships are No 1.
14. Value happiness.

Pick any one or two of these characteristics to develop. Start with the ones you do naturally and just do them more often.

When Happiness Does Not Work

We have said from the beginning that we cannot be happy all the time. We may be trying to be happier more often than not, but we are enough of a realist to know that it is not always possible for different

reasons. Some of us are inherently moody while others cheerful. Both can be happier more often.

However, it may seem hard to be happy if you have not had enough sleep, have not been eating well, or in extreme circumstances, have no place to live. People would not expect you to be happy in these situations, yet some people are happy in similar circumstances for some of the time.

When we look at people who have survived extreme cases of torture, degradation, or isolation we find that many of them still write or talk about being happy. They have faced the worst possible conditions and are still able to talk about being happy. Dr. Martina Scholtens (2017) writes: "Over 80% of refugees exposed to trauma recover spontaneously upon reaching safety. Research shows that patients' mental health benefits from attention to basic needs, such as shelter, language acquisition, and the ability to work or attend school."[16]

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[16] [53] [Study: Kevin Pottie, Christina Greenaway, John Feightner et al, "Evidence based Clinical Guidelines for Immigrants and Refugees," CMAJ (June, 2010): E1-E102, doi.1503/cmaj.090313.

When we look at people who have grown up in poor areas of world, who have suffered humiliation, lack of education, or proper nutrition we still find that they talk about happiness.

They talk about the love of their family, the encouragement of their friends, the guidance of their teachers, and their faith in something beyond their control. They talk about moments of genuine happiness in situations where we cannot imagine ourselves finding any happiness.

Perhaps one of the best-known survivors of the concentration camps in World War II was Viktor E. Frankl. Dr. Frankl was a famous psychiatrist who lived through the horrors of several death camps. In his book, Man's Search for Meaning (1984), Dr. Frankl gives some wonderful examples of how he suffered the loss of all of his family, including watching his wife be taken away to her death.

In his practice he sometimes asks his patients who suffer from all sorts of problems, large and small, "*Why do you not commit suicide?"* In asking people this ultimate question he learns that people want to live for many reasons. Through his question they find out what they are living for and perhaps how they can live

more fully.

Dr. Frankl's most profound, personal conclusion was that: *We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing:* ***the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way*** [emphasis added].

He goes on to talk about the daily choices one has, in any situation. We have the choice to reach out to help someone else or to ask for help. We have the opportunity to recognize the humanity in someone regardless of the circumstances. The ability to remember the people we love and who love us, give us a reason to fight to live another day. The ability to foresee a future where one's dreams can still be partially fulfilled.

One of Dr. Frankl's images of himself was in the future teaching at the university where he had been a professor and talking to his students about how to survive a holocaust. He imagined the hell he was experiencing as a lesson for his students — it gave him a purpose, a

meaning.

We can learn from people who have suffered situations about which we only have nightmares. They still talk about being happy. They all seem to be telling us that happiness is not something you feel once everything else is okay in your life.

You do not need to wait to have financial security. You do not have to wait until you have found the perfect mate. You do not have to wait until you graduate. Happiness, or at the very least, a bit of happiness is inside of you whenever you want it.

One of the reasons we stop ourselves from being happy may surprise you.

Some of us are afraid to be happy. Some of us think we need to be sad, afraid, guilty, or to suffer to motivate ourselves to action (e.g., angry to fight an injustice). We may have these feelings because that is what we think 'normal' people feel in similar situations.

We may feel that these feelings will bring our family and friends closer to us. We may feel that we do not deserve to be happy because we think happy people have earned their happiness. Or we may think the reverse–that happy people are not 'realists' and that their happiness is only an illusion.

The question to ask for those of us who believe that unhappiness is necessary in order to accomplish things (e.g., being unhappy about how we look will force us to lose weight?) is *"Can we could accomplish those same things and be happy at the same time?"* Of course we can.

For example, can we call someone we have not talked to for a long time without having to feel guilty first? Can we help people who have suffered a hurricane, a flood, or a major fire without feeling we have to? Can we miss someone who died years ago without feeling sad that they are no longer with us?

Can we be happy when we are around someone we dislike or do we need to acknowledge our dislike for the person by being unhappy? Can we be happy while awaiting surgery or must we overwhelm ourselves with worry to prove to ourselves that it is serious? Must we dislike the student we are working on a project with to try and figure out a way to work better together?

What does being sad do for us? What does angry do for us? What does hatred do for us? What would happen if we were not sad, angry or hateful? Could we still achieve what we want? Of course we could.

Here are some other reasons people choose to be unhappy more often than they choose to be happy. Do any of these ideas ring any bells for you?

It's not fair that people cheat, steal, hurt others, etc. and get away with it.

Question: Does one need to be angry or unhappy about that unfairness to make it different?

I'm not satisfied yet. There is so much left for me to do and accomplish.

Questions: What is your definition of satisfaction? Can you ever reach satisfaction based on your definition? Is satisfaction based on getting what you want or working toward getting things so that the journey never ends?

Happiness is not something that overcomes all emotions or solves all problems. There will be situations when you will continue to choose to feel the comfort of sadness, anger, and fear.

In our lifetimes we have found comfort in having a good cry, being afraid of failure, being sad when we say good-bye to someone at the airport, or getting angry at an injustice. The only difference now is

that you may begin to see them as choices you make. You can change those choices if you want to.

Although we have control over how we react to things it will not always feel like it is working in both your mind and heart. With practice and success you may choose to be happier more often than you are right now.

Strategy and Practice

Write out the top three things that are making you unhappy right now?

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_____

Write out the top three things that make you unhappy most days?

_____

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Write out the top 10 things that 'make' you happy?

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Write out 3 things you will do today to be happier more often.

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Strategy 3
Gratitude — Habits

Everyday write, pray, meditate or say the things for which you are grateful. Keep the gratitude specific to that day. If you need extra things to be grateful for, add in the family members you love, your close friends, the roof over your head, the food you eat, the ability to study and go to school.

Concentrate on the possible in positive ways. Concentrate on those things over which you have control. You control whom you love, how often you laugh, how you nurture relationships, and for what you are grateful. You can ignore

or minimize the importance of things you cannot control such as fame, fortune, and acquiring even more 'stuff.'

Gratitude for the people you love is very powerful. Even when the people are not physically nearby because they live far away or because they have died (like a favourite grandparent), their presence can be very comforting.

Use your love of them, your gratitude for them and imagine the times you shared. You can also imagine future times together like an upcoming weekend home, a family holiday, or the next video-call you have together.

People can get through almost any current situation if they can visualize a future event that is happy and filled with love. This hope for the future helps give perspective to this temporary situation you are facing now.

Gratitude helps provide that perspective. Even before a big exam or a doctor's appointment or going out on a first date, you are surrounded by people and memories that you are grateful for and which can provide you a modicum of comfort and peace — if you choose to remember to be grateful.

We will look at gratitude more throughout the book. For now, it is enough to know the power that gratitude has in

changing your perspective for the better, in helping you concentrate on what is good in your life. Perspective and the good in your life can provide you with comfort and strength to recover faster, feel better and push forward.

Strategy and Practice

Write out the top three things (people, memories, experiences) for which you are most grateful all the time.

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Write out the top three things (people, memories, experiences) that happened today for which you are grateful.

_____

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Repeat everyday!

Strategy 4 Mindfulness and Mastering Fear

We've all heard that most of our fears never happen. We may fear a car accident on each drive we take but know that the odds are very low that it will happen. We may fear doing poorly on a test only to be 'surprised' that we did better than we thought. We may fear writing a paper thinking we won't do well only to receive a mark at least as high as we hoped for.

Fear is not always logical. It makes sense to fear a lion standing on the hiking trail you are on but really, how often are you likely to be walking somewhere where lions roam free?

Some fears do make sense. A fear of alcohol poisoning if you binge drink is a logical fear. Fear of falling if you are doing some dare-devil stunt you are not good at is a logical fear. Not sleeping for 24 hours regularly is something to be fearful of because it will hurt you.

Many authors have written that the opposite of love is not hate but fear. People do the worst things imaginable out of fear. Some of these fears include a fear of: poverty, rejection, dying, loosing loved

ones, God, power and authority, and the fear of not being valued.

Rose Levit, in her book about her daughter, *Ellen: A Short Life Long Remembered* quotes from a letter Ellen wrote to a friend:

> *When there is fear, there is no love. Along with fear comes distrust, suspicion, hate. With the absence of fear you have freedom–-love. What is life—it is such a complex thing and yet at the same time so simple–-it's silly to pin a definition on it. If you can understand all these complex things–-fear, freedom, love—and still at the same time keep your mind simple–-and love the beauty of a sunny day, just because it is a sunny day—then you can truly be free.*

Fears are the greatest block to being happy. Overcoming fears requires courage and persistence. It requires a belief system that understands the power we give our own fears. It requires time, perspective, and a strong philosophy to fight when we are weakest. It helps to spend some of our time when we are strongest to understand why we need the fear. When we find out why we need fear we may be able to replace it with an

equally powerful feeling of self-love and happiness.

One student had a tremendous fear of hospitals and sickness. They had seen perhaps too much of both to believe that they would have control over their health and happiness while they were sick. It is a fear they overcame with time, effort, perspective, and support just as they got over their almost crippling fear that their parents would die young. Sadly, their parents did die young but they continue to thrive through the memory of their love and support and the love of their friends and siblings.

How did they do that? Keep reading.

Falling in love, getting married, raising children, accomplishing professional challenges, remaining devoted to our beliefs, giving of ourselves in civic and charitable work all may involve some suffering. Children get sick, our friends are not always perfect (neither are we!), our studies do not always go well, and so on.

Would we give up some of that suffering if we knew we would never fall in love, if we would never see the trust and love in a child's eye, if we would never see the love shared during a time of grief?

Happiness does not exclude other feelings. Happiness can give some sense of perspective and help us use all of our emotions to their full benefit. Fear prevents any of our emotions from helping others or ourselves. We have all overcome certain fears. We can overcome others.

Visualization to Reduce Fear

There is a visualization that helps many people overcome certain fears. Let us use public speaking as an example. Most people fear public speaking more than anything. On lists about what people fear most, public speaking is often first while dying is fifth!

Visualization is a 'film' you run in your head, often with your eyes closed. In this one, you will be in four separate places.

1. Imagine yourself being video recorded giving a speech you really are afraid of giving — not to mention you are being filmed too, which can be quite frightening. You will likely feel some butterflies in your stomach just visualizing yourself giving this speech.

Start to breathe a bit slower and deeper into your lungs. A slower breath slows down your heart rate which reduces your perspiration.

2. Now, move away from being in the film giving a speech and imagine sitting in the front row of a movie theatre watching yourself on the screen giving a speech. It's you on the screen but you are no longer in the film. You are now watching yourself on the screen. It's a different sensation. Your fear may still be there, but it's once removed from actually giving the speech and being filmed.

Breathe even slower and deeper into your lungs.

3. Now imagine yourself sitting in the middle row of the theatre. This may seem odd but try anyways. Imagine yourself watching yourself sitting in the front row watching yourself on the screen. So you are twice removed from the actual experience of being filmed. Watch your reactions. Notice that you can see yourself watching from the front row. The sensations of fear are different because you are no longer in the situation — you are watching yourself look up at the screen.

Breathe even slower and deeper into your lungs.

4. Lastly, imagine yourself in the projection booth of the movie theatre. You busy yourself with getting the film ready, making sure the sound is just right, that the house lights are off, and that you are

comfortable because you are stuck in the booth until the film is over — (at least in old movie theatres). You look through the small window in the wall that looks into the theatre to see that everyone is okay there.

You see yourself in the middle row of the theatre and you notice that you are watching yourself in the front row. This front row "you" is looking at you on the screen being afraid of giving a speech and being filmed. But the 'you' in the projection booth is actually a bit bored. It's just another scene in another movie with people telling a story that will be over soon.

This visualization allows you to go as deep as you want into your feelings of fear — when you are in the film and watching from the front row. But as you pull back to the middle of the theatre and then the projection booth, your sensations will diminish. You tell yourself this. You've been to enough high drama and emotional films, that you know that the front seat is a very different experience from the middle row or even the back row. Allow yourself to understand this perspective for yourself.

The Difference between Mindfulness and Meditation

There are many definitions for both meditation and mindfulness. Let's start with meditation. Meditation is broken down into various forms. For some, praying is meditation. For others, listening to soothing music to relax is meditation. For some walking and concentrating on each foot step is meditation. For some mentally repeating a word (mantra) over and over again is a form of meditation to focus your mind on a single word or thought.

All of these methods are to help you become, as Dr. Michele Chaban describes it, aware of whether you are experiencing a body sensation (hunger), a behaviour (argumentative), an emotion (love) or a thought ("the exam will be hard/easy"). She shortens this to BBET[17]. The goal is not to control one's mind but to be aware of and then tame what is driving us to mental and physical discomfort.

Mindfulness is a form of meditation. It is something we can do and be 24/7 — to be fully present in every moment. When

[17] In personal correspondence, Jan 6, 2019

you notice you are not present in the moment and return to being aware of your body sensations, behaviours, emotions and thoughts (BBET), you return to a place of more confidence and comfort.

This takes practice naturally before it becomes a habit. The key is to to avoid the negative feelings from your past and avoid the fears of the future by living in the present. The present moment is all you can affect.

In the present you can focus your attention on what you are doing — to be mindful of cutting and eating your food, to be mindful of each breathe you take, to be mindful of a child's beating heart against your skin.

You can also be mindful of your thoughts. In this case you are focusing on your thoughts without giving them an emotional response. You just recognize that you are imagining a picture/photo of something or someone and/or you are talking to yourself.[18] The only thing you do is tell yourself that you are looking at an image in your head or talking to yourself. You don't concentrate on either. You just recognize you are doing it. You don't focus on the image or the self-talk. You just wait for the next image or thought to

[18] Peter Marks, p 21

appear and identify that one as an image or self-talk.

What this latter practice does is take the emotion out of your thoughts and stops you from continuing the conversation with yourself. We often get stuck in a loop of negative self-talk or going over our schedules in our minds, or worrying about the "to do" list that didn't get done.

When you are mindful, you recognize when you start doing this — seeing an image and/or talking to yourself and then stopping yourself from continuing. Then the next image or self talk begins. But over time, you will find that your mind will slow down. Once an image or self-talk is identified it moves away. It may be replaced by others but slowly you'll find periods of no images and self-talk. It might only be a second or two. With practice it increases.

Mindfulness is particularly helpful in slowing down our thoughts to the point where you don't feel that your mind is taking over our ability to think. So many of us get stuck in self-talk. By practicing mindfulness, we get unstuck and regain control over our own thoughts and, therefore, our actions.

Strategy and Practice

Try to use the visualization of being filmed doing something that makes you anxious. Then visualize yourself up on the screen, then watching from the front row, then the middle row, and finally from the projection booth. Identify your feelings, your self-talk, and your breathing. Slow down your breath during each portion of the visualization. How did you feel at the different vantage points?

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In later strategies we will go more deeply into how mindfulness works. For now, take a few minutes at a time, close your eyes, breathe deeply as you did in the visualization, and just pay attention to the images and self-talk in your mind. Identifying what it is and then return to noticing your breath.

The image or self-talk will change, notice it and identify it, and return to focusing on your breath. That's all. Just

continue to do that. You'll even 'hear' yourself say *"This is stupid, why bother?"* Just notice doing that, identify it as self-talk, and return to focusing on your breath.

If you do this for a few minutes at a time for a few days, you will notice that the power of your self-talk is diminished and you have more control over your own thoughts. Write out some examples of when this has been helpful.

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Strategy 5
Cook? — Of Course You Can

Isn't it interesting that students who were in the top of their classes in high school, high achievers in many areas of their lives, still get away with thinking that they can't cook. What nonsense.

Like any skill, you start with some basics and you go from there. You used to need cookbooks (even special ones just for students!) but now you have YouTube videos to teach you almost anything you want to know.

You start with some basic recipes and only a few kitchen tools. First, a large pot for boiling water (good for pastas, sauces and soups). Next a frying pan for eggs including omelettes with lots of cheese and veggies, and grilled cheese sandwiches. Then you will need some spoons for stirring, a spatula for the eggs, and some cutlery to eat your meal.

Of course, you can also have recipes that do not involve cooking at all: veggies and dip, fruits cut up, taco chips and salsa, and more.

This really isn't rocket science. So if you are nursing student, an engineer, an English major or specializing in sports —

you have absolutely no excuse — you are more than competent to cook!

Now, go online and find something you want to cook by yourself (although it can be more fun in a small group where everyone does some of the work). If you don't have the ingredients, make a list and shop the next time you are close to a store.

Strategy and Practice

Pick one recipe every two weeks — that's not expecting too much. Go to Youtube or a cooking website for students and start with those that include a video. They will show you things you might not consider doing just reading a recipe. For example, do you know what slice, dice, and mince mean? Many recipes have these words. Better to watch someone do it first in a video.

Within your first year, you will have a dozen or more excellent recipes that you can add to in second, third and fourth year. By graduation you can have a party for family and friends and cook up a storm.

But first you start with a singe recipe — pick something simple that you already enjoy eating whether it is bacon and eggs, or macaroni and cheese, or popcorn for a

movie — they are all recipes worth knowing.

Of course, also learn from others: your parents can show you a favourite recipe. Your friends back home or in residence can show you their favourites. You can even exchange a cooking night where people take turns teaching others their favourites.

BONUS: Here is a favourite dessert recipe that only requires a bowl and spoon (spatula is better but a spoon will do). Buy: (1) a container of fresh or frozen fruit (either a single fruit like strawberries or blackberries) or mixed fruit, (2) a container of oil-based whipped cream (like Cool Whip or Dream Whip), and (3) a container of plain yogurt. Mix fruit and yogurt first. Then gently add in the whipped cream. Some people add the whole container and others like the dessert less sweat so only add 1/2 or 3/4. That's it. Your first new recipe at university! And a pot-luck favourite dessert for the rest of your life.

Strategy 6
Sleep, Eat, and Move

It is only logical that how much you sleep, what you eat, and how much you move affects your physical and mental health. Let's look at each separately.

Sleep

There is almost a competition between students to see who can get by on the least amount of sleep, thereby giving them more time to study, or party, or binge watch movies or TV shows. It's an unhelpful competition because everyone loses.

We need at least 7 hours and for many at least 8-9 hours sleep per night. Our brains need the time to work through the day's learning and events which improves our memory. The cerebral fluids cleanse our brains during sleep and too little sleep disrupts this natural process.

Keep electronics away from your bedside. When the screen lights up with a message, it affects your sleep rhythm. Better to use a separate alarm clock (not digital or with a light) or have your smart phone across the room away from the bed so you have to get up to turn the alarm off.

Eat

Eating healthy is easier said than done at school. It is easier to buy something quickly and often cheaply than to eat healthy. Choosing the quick and cheap meal comes with too high of a price for your mental and physical health.

This doesn't mean you can't have pizza or fries sometimes. It does mean you can't have them every day and expect to do well in your studies. Many adults look back fondly on their days of eating badly in university with some pride. Who can argue that cold pizza for breakfast is not good for you!

However, current research is showing that those 'good old days' may well have affected their studies along with their short and long-term health.

Joan Rothchild Hardin (July 18, 2017) believes the connection between the effects of good nutrition on mental illnesses is just becoming better understood. She looks at various aspects of the brain-body connection including a description of how the gut influences some mental illnesses and anxiety through various bacteria.

In another article (January 9, 2017) she looks at the guts relationship to anxiety, depression, and autoimmune

diseases. When the body's intestinal lining is chronically inflamed it eventually leads to a series of autoimmune diseases – and apparently mood disorders too.

So what to do?

Start by improving your diet day by day. When you have a day of less healthy eating, follow it with a day of healthier eating. That's it.

If you are experiencing stomach and intestine problems, you need to think more carefully about what you eat, how you prepare your foods, how long you leave them in the fridge, and what are the ingredients in prepared foods that may be harmful. Check with the health clinic to see if a nutritionist or nurse can help you review your diet and suggest some changes.

NOTE: Almost all of us self-medicate with comfort foods, alcohol and drugs — each has risks associated with them including how they affect your stomach and intestines. Know what they are and decide accordingly what you should or should not consume.

Move

Walk, swim, gym workouts, weight training, jogs, sports (intramural or varsity), or just throwing the frisbee around are all ways to increase your movement. 'Motion is lotion' for your joints and muscles. Whether you do stretches on a yoga mat or walk in the park, anything you do to increase how often you move, will improve your studying.

For many, walking while memorizing statistics, or definitions, or other things is very helpful. The movement helps the mind energize to remember better.

There are different types of movement and you need to do all of them:

1. Stretching to reduce injuries to your wrists, neck, lower back, knees and other joints.
2. Aerobic exercise to increase your heart rate and flush your body of toxins.
3. Strength exercise like push-ups and weight training are necessary as your body cells are constantly replenishing themselves and the strength training helps.

Marion Baraitser (2014) is a playwright and short-story author. She is the writer-

in-residence in London, England's Baobab Centre for Young Survivors in Exile. The centre is partly based on the belief that dance, art, working outdoors in nature (gardening and farming) all combine with verbal and non-verbal therapies to help young traumatized children, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Logically, if a combination of dance, art, and working outdoors help people going through extreme situations, then they can also help university students, faculty, and staff.

Another form of movement is a game called Kipling created by Eli Bay. The Globe and Mail[19] called Eli Bay Canada's Stress Guru. His exercises — meditation and mindfulness as well as physical exercises — have helped thousands of students over more than 30 years. He invented Kipling (named after the writer) as a fun exercise you can do in small spaces.

You need only a styrofoam cup. You can do this by yourself or in a group of 2-6 people. The game is to keep the cup in the air for as long as you can using any of your body parts to hit it into the air. If you play with others, you try to pass the cup to them, again using any body part. Because

[19] https://www.elibay.com/about accessed Aug 10, 2018.

the cup is not heavy or symmetrical, when you hit it with your hand, foot, shoulder, head, elbow or whatever it will not travel in a straight line. So you may aim to pass it to a person opposite you but the cup goes to the person beside you instead. It is very simple but quite aerobic! You can play it in a class room, hallway, dorm room or outside. Be careful of other people not playing the game who are walking by or of valuable objects like computers, lights, or drinks that are easily spilled.

If you play with 2 to 6 people, you will get a great aerobic workout both from the exercise and also from laughing so much.

Who wins? Everyone wins by keeping the cup in the air for as long as possible. You try to beat your time as a group while at the same time not caring if you do. It's about doing something fun and aerobic.

Strategy and Practice

Write out one food item you will eat more of this week and one food item you will eat less of this week.

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Write out how much you typically sleep per night and how much you will increase (or decrease if you sleep too much) to get a better average night's sleep. Try to go to bed and wake up at about the same time every day if you can. This routine helps to encourage deeper sleep, which is what helps rejuvenate you.

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Write out one physical activity you will increase this week so that you average at least 30 minutes of movement per day (e.g., walking, gym workout, Kipling, sports, swimming, biking, exploring a neighbourhood, parking farthest from your first class and walking). You can't expect to graduate university by only studying 30 minutes a day outside of class so you really must expect to increase your physical activity beyond your typical movement to improve your overall mental and physical health.

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Strategy 7
"Easier Said than Done"

A student remarked that all of this resilience, mindfulness, nurturing relationships, and gratefulness is all well and good but for many students it is "easier said than done." He is referring more to those students like him who have mental illnesses beyond episodic anxiety and depression.

Even for students who are anxious some of the time, some of these strategies expect more mental and physical energy than they may have. So what to do?

> Facebook post: {Daring greatly} means the courage to be vulnerable. It means to show up and be seen. To ask for what you need. To talk about how you're feeling. To have the hard conversations.
>
> Brené Brown, PhD, LMSW

You start with one strategy that makes the most sense for you today. Then you

pick another one tomorrow or the next day or the next week.

There is not a right and wrong way to do this — only a personal way.

For those with longer-term mental illnesses, you begin with your family and close friends to see what might help immediately. If your condition continues, then you decide if you will accept further help by widening your circle. Then you look at professional help at the university and within the community.

It is easier said than done. Even when you are going through a particular difficult time with a mental illness, there may be moments (even just short ones) where you can practice one of the strategies in this book. Not to overcome your mental illness but to act in a positive way in spite of your mental illness — to hug a family member, to hold someone's hand when walking, to eat a morsel of food that someone prepared even if you are not hungry.

Almost every adult you speak with (and more and more younger children too) goes through episodic anxiety and depression — this does not diminish the real pain and suffering they have experienced — some for many weeks or months. Knowing you are not unique because you suffer doesn't diminish your

suffering — it gives your suffering perspective and some hope that you too will push forward to a better time.

Some people make their conditions worse by self-medicating which may lead to a spiral that ends with longer-term problems. Some people do not. Learn from those that do not.

What is encouraging is that 99.99% of Canadians each year decide to live — to try and find solutions to whatever problems they are experiencing. Some are homeless. Some are impoverished, abused, violated, and worse. Yet they choose to live.

What that means for us is that resilience is a skill we can learn as others have learned it and over time we will recover faster, feel better than we do right now, and push forward through the difficult parts because we know we must and because experience has taught us that we know we can. We prefer not to have to be so resilient and wished our lives were easier but no one is spared difficult times.

So, yes, it is easier said than done but "done" it can be. People who went through the Depression (1930s) your grandparents or their parents knew hardship and resiliency and so do you. You have already gotten to this point regardless of how difficult it has been.

Know that it can get easier. Know that it may happen sooner than you think. And know that however long it takes, if you nurture the people who care about you in whatever ways you can, you will never be alone.

In fact, even if you don't nurture people sometimes because you just can't, most of us will still be loved and helped if we look for the helpers and accept their help.

NOTE: Many of the strategies and 'choosing to be happier more often' advice in this book will seem superficial at first reading. Just know that many people have survived and enhanced their resiliency over the years using exactly these strategies. So doubt them — skepticism is healthy —but check out if your doubt is warranted or not.

The first goal is not to avoid all negative experiences — that's not possible. The goal is to get through them quicker and more effectively.

The second goal is to help others going through similar circumstances so they never feel alone.

Strategy and Practice

Write down what makes you skeptical about what you have read and tried so far.

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Write out the top three strategies you will try in hopes that they may help you become even more resilient, happier more often, and perhaps deal with a mental illness in a more helpful way.

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Strategy 8
Nurture — Random Acts of Kindness

The greatest of needs is to be loved, to feel the compassion of others.
The Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, The Dalai Lama, believes that if science disproves a religious belief, then science wins.

He works with leading world scientists on metaphysical issues including love, compassion, mindfulness, prayer, and living a good life. He says in one of the many posts on social media accredited to him:

> *We can reject everything else: religion, ideology, and all received wisdom. But we cannot escape the necessity of love and compassion. This, then, is my true religion, my simple faith. In this sense, there is no need for temple or church, for mosque or synagogue, no need for complicated philosophy, doctrine or dogma. Our own heart, our own mind, is the temple. The doctrine is compassion. Love for others and respect for their rights and dignity, no*

matter who or what they are:
ultimately these are all we need.

> "My religion is very simple.
> My religion is kindness."
> The Dalai Lama

You've heard about this, of course. Everyday, you are supposed to do something kind for someone else without any expectation of the kindness being returned.

Smiling and acknowledging someone who is often ignored is a simple act of kindness. This can be paying for someone's coffee who is standing in line behind you. It can be helping someone move their furniture who doesn't have enough help. It might be offering to babysit a fellow student's child just before an important exam. It might be helping someone carry their groceries up the stairs.

The list is endless. Its only limit is the limit of our imagination.

But why do it?

Maya Angelou was a well known African American poet and teacher. She suggested that we are constantly asking four unconscious questions of our loved

ones and of the broader community in which we live:

1. Do you see me?
2. Do you care that I'm here?
3. Am I enough for you, or do you need me to be better in some way?
4. Can I tell that I'm special to you by the way that you look at me?

The answers to these questions is to be present with the person you are with so you can see them, you will care they are there, that they are enough, and they are special to you. To do that you need to turn off your devices and focus on the person.

Eating a meal when all four people are texting or checking social media answers Angelou's questions with a loud *"No! I do not see you."* It sends the message that right now I care more about who's on social media. You are clearly not enough because social media connects me with people who are more important to me right now than personal contact with you. No you can't see that you are special to me because I'm not looking at you at all.

This is very similar to trying to have a conversation with an older family member or friend who is watching a sporting event or movie on TV. They say they are

listening to you, but really they are focused on something else. It doesn't feel good regardless of what outside interest is distracting someone from seeing you.

How to build resilience—how to bounce 'forward' (rather than back) after difficult events? Serving others is a way to build resilience and bounce forward from traumatic events. It gives meaning to our suffering. For example, doing something good in the name of someone who has died as part of their legacy and yours.

The obvious answer is that it feels good and can change a person's whole day knowing that someone they know or a complete stranger was kind to them. It might encourage them to do the same thing.

But more importantly it gets us to think beyond ourselves. That's the main reason.

We look at Facebook and other social media posts and imagine that other people's lives are so much better than ours. Of course they think the same about us because we put up happy photos and stories too. But in reality, all of us go through the ups and downs of life. By being kind, we remember that our own downs can be the motivation to be kind to someone else.

One student has a strategy that whenever she feels down, she actively searches out someone to praise for something they are doing well or finds someone who looks down to cheer them up. It makes the student feel better and in control over her thoughts and actions. Regardless of what is going wrong in her life, she can choose to make someone else's life better in that moment.

The more we see beyond our own needs and difficulties the more perspective we get about how this time too shall pass.

One student reminds herself to imagine whether her worries will be remembered next year or in five years. If she is unlikely to remember the discomfort in a year, then she tries to diminish the worry and goes out to do a random act of kindness for someone nearby.

Every class has people in it who are less visible to the other students. Do something kind for them. Every bus you enter has people who are less visible than others and you can do something as simple as smile, offer your seat, or give them extra space when standing.

Your world is full of people who are less visible because of who they are, what job they do at the university, and their personality. Some like to be invisible but

most do not. Most of us want someone to notice that we are there. By doing a random act of kindness, others may notice and do the same. It can be contagious. But mostly, it's just the right thing to do for the right reasons, including feeling better ourselves.

Strategy and Practice

Write out three kind things that strangers have done for you in the past that still make you smile.

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Write out the top three things you will do later today or tomorrow to show kindness toward others.

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Strategy 9
Happiness — Decide on Being Happier, More Often

If you spend any time with people nearing the end of their lives, you will notice that what they need most is an acknowledgement that their life mattered — that they matter.

Viktor Frankl, the famed psychiatrist we wrote about earlier called this ‘the search for meaning.' We want to know our life meant something to those we love and to society in general.

You are at the beginning of your studies and the beginning of your professional development. You get to decide how your life matters. You start by nurturing relationships, being grateful for the good things in your life and overcoming the bad things, and you choose to be happier more often.

Not happy all the time.

Just happier more often than you are now.

In choosing to be happier and finding ways to be more happy, you will change your life story. You will change how you matter to others. Happiness doesn’t

preclude difficult times — it just helps you get through them.

Happiness and Self-Image

When you look in the mirror, are you happy with how you look? If you answer 'yes,' you are in the minority. Most people do not like how they look whether they are a New York model, a leading man in movies, or a first-year student.

Why is that? The quick answer is that none of us fit the body ideal that corporations have determined we need to follow–young, too thin, the perfect nose and gleaming white teeth, sexy, wide-eyed, with gorgeous hair and skin.

Why do corporations want us to define beauty this way? Well if our role model of beauty was more of what we actually looked like, where would those companies be that promote beauty products, plastic surgery, weight loss programs, and some fountain of youth alternative health products?

Corporations define an unattainable model of beauty so that we have to spend billions of dollars per year trying to look somewhat closer to that ideal. Globally, we spend about $38 billion on hair care products, $24 billion on skin care, $18 billion on makeup, and $15 billion on

perfumes. That is $95 billion dollars on just products.[20] Add to that courses, weight loss programs, surgery and the like and we spend more on how we look than many countries spend annually on all of their social, health and education programs combined!

It is stupid. We know that it is stupid. We try to teach our children it is stupid. And yet, what they see are adults trying to look younger, act younger, and avoid becoming the wise people in the community.

What else explains the money we waste acquiring clothes, makeup, shoes and stuff to look and feel good? What if women had a few more pounds and curves and loved it? What if men thought that balding was a sign of becoming wiser rather than impotent? What if the size of penises and breasts did not define sexual attractiveness? What if we trusted nature a little more and beauty corporations a little less? What if we spent the money we wasted on beauty products and used it to travel the world (a better use of our economic power) and make a difference in the lives of others (an even better use of our economic power!)

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20 Audrey Brashich. (2006). All Made Up. New York: Walker and Company, page 64.

WHAT IF?

Realistically though, are we likely to go against all the corporate dictates of who is beautiful and who is not? Probably not. We will still try to lose some weight and build muscles. We will still buy clothes we think other people will like us in. But we can also do more.

We can try to become happier more often with how we look, and we can remember more often that some of the most attractive people we know do not fit the modern culture's view of beauty. Why is that? Because personally we define attractiveness differently than the modern culture does. The person we most want to spend time with may or may not be attractive according to societal norms, but who they are and why they are so important to us gives them their personal beauty.

Remember some of the older people in your life when you were younger — the ones you went to for hugs and comfort and advice and stories. They probably didn't fit the societal norm yet their impact on our lives continues to this day.

Why are celebrities in entertainment or politics so attractive to so many people even though most of them don't fit the ideal of a young, athletic, perfect-skin-and-hair kind of person?

It is because, corny as it sounds, we know that someone's personality, their sense of power, their own positive self-image, their humour, knowledge and graces are all attractions to us. If someone sees themselves as attractive more often, more people are attracted to them–regardless of how much they weigh, how tall they are, what age they are, whether they are bald or have cellulite.

Some of the most attractive people we know may be defined as overweight or pear shaped yet how they dress and carry themselves are immensely attractive because they dress, behave and reflect an outer and inner beauty as they define it.

Ultimately, those people who reflect an inner quality of self-acceptance and inner peace radiate a sense of themselves that attracts almost everyone around them. Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama, and other spiritual leaders certainly do not dress or carry themselves as corporate ideal body models, but they do attract people to them.

The reverse is also true that beauty, as defined by corporations, does not lead to more happiness for everyone. There are many biographies written by the beautiful people to show that although they enjoyed some of their celebrity, and

certainly their wealth, they missed out on happy marriages, children who loved them, people who trusted them and whom they could trust. That does not mean that all beautiful people, as defined by our culture, are unhappy. Many find happiness not because of their beauty but in spite of it. They find spouses and friends who see them for who they are rather than what our culture tells them they should be.

So when you look in the mirror, what should you do to feel happier about how you look? Here is a sample 'top ten list':

1. Stop looking in the mirror so often. Who you see is not who other people see anyway — quite literally. You rarely see your profile yet most of the people you meet see a great deal of it. What you see in the mirror is a reflection, therefore, the opposite of what most people see. Check your hair, make sure there are no broccoli florets hanging from your mouth then move on. At most, you need to check yourself in the mirror only a few times a day. Obsess about something more important to your happiness.
2. Accentuate what you find attractive about yourself without

spending a lot of money doing it. One student who knows what clothes help her feel most attractive goes to a used clothing store, picks out a lovely blouse, changes the buttons with some other ones she had at home and now has a beautiful new blouse. Another student feels best in sweat pants and a hoody. They are both wearing what feels right versus what others tell them to wear.

3. Tell the people you love you need some positive reinforcements about how you look. Tell them you need more hugs and compliments (genuine ones–not superficial ones) to show you they think you are attractive. It can be wonderful to see the difference on a friend's face who perceived herself as unattractive when she meets her future husband who thinks she is stunning. We see ourselves often through the eyes of those we love and who love us. Help them see you better and return the favour.
4. Spend time with older people. Not only can you learn from them, they will always see you as younger and fun to be with! They

value your company rather than judge how you look (at least most of them will!)

5. Recognize that signs of aging are not a reflection of who you are. It is a natural process. Find ways to enjoy your body. Stay healthy and become fitter. Recognize each wrinkle as something you have earned through experiences — good and bad. Enjoy your physical sensations–all of them.
6. For students with children, look at your young children and you will see the beauty in them. Recognize that your elders (parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents) see you in the same light. Your young children also see Mom or Dad and not your physical strengths and weaknesses. They don't look at your external or internal beauty alone–they combine them and see the person that is you just as you do with your children. Look at yourself through their eyes.
7. Spend time with a pet–who else sees you in all your glory with unconditional love (as long as you love and feed them!).

8. Make a genuine effort to read less glamour magazines, gossip magazines, and watch less television shows and movies. This is where corporations spend the most money trying to convince you that you need their help to look beautiful. It isn't true! Spend time with real people who have real bodies who enjoy you as you are.
9. Spend more time with people who like themselves rather than with people who are never satisfied with who they are, what they look like, or what they have.
10. Lastly, and most importantly, learn to be happier more often. There are few things as attractive in a person as seeing their happiness and positive self-image. Many reports on what people find attractive in someone else lists a 'good sense of humour' at the top together with being thoughtful and kind. They attract us because we want to be more like them–happy with a positive self-image.

Strategy and Practice

The practice for this strategy is pretty obvious. Start by writing three things on how you are naturally happy. What happens when you are happier?

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Write out the top three things you will do later today or tomorrow to choose to be happier. Perhaps you will spend some time with a friend's pet, go for a walk with another friend to check out the changing autumn colours, or maybe you will sit quietly somewhere and go through your list of why you are grateful today. Perhaps you will look in the mirror only 3 or 4 times tomorrow instead of dozens of times. Being grateful is just one of many ways to choose to be happier.

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Strategy 10
Gratitude — Your Place in History

Some Indigenous peoples who remember their heritage will recite their maternal family tree in acknowledgement of their mothers and grandmothers. They do this while also acknowledging the powerful influence that water has in their lives — in this case the water they lived in while their mother carried them for 9 months. They say, "I am of the water of Jacoba who was of the water of Diana who was of the water of Maria who was of the water of….." as far back as they can go.

Genealogy is usually based on the father's line even though genealogists record as many of the women as they can in a family tree. However, it is the paternal last name in Western culture that is given prominence in genealogy.

The acknowledgement by Indigenous peoples recognizes the place in history of our female ancestors. Obviously we need both to be created but it is the mothers who give us birth and traditionally raise us.

Knowing your family tree and being able to recite back the generations is one way to know that your part of the tree is

not the end but the middle. We are the middle generation of the hundreds of generations before us and the hundreds to follow.

Knowing that means we don't have to be perfect. We don't have to fix every problem we come across. We don't have to find the cure to every disease or the solution to every crisis.

Our goal should be to leave the world a better place because we were here. For students that means, you don't have to be perfect. You don't have to know everything. You are allowed to share the load with the billions of other people of your generation.

You have the luxury, mostly, to follow your interests and dreams. You have a responsibility to improve the world without having to shoulder all its problems.

Your place in history is important — critical in your own family and important to the wider community. Whatever you study and whatever you do for work (paid and volunteer), you have opportunities everyday to make a difference in the lives of others. Every single day! That's your place in history whether it is recorded or not.

Strategy and Practice

Write down the names of all of your grandparents, their children (your parents and their siblings) and your siblings and cousins. That equals the three middle generations of your family tree. The next three generations will depend on everyone in your generation.

Knowing a little bit about the generations of your grandparents, parents and your own gives your life perspective. Each generation goes through a societal 'hell' of some kind. For your grandparents it might have been the effects of WW II.

For your parents' generation in Western society it was the cold war between the Soviet Union and western countries, the fear of nuclear war that would destroy the world, and the ongoing impoverishment of developing countries.

For the youngest generation, they are facing a world order where immigrants are seen as harmful rather than as those who built up 'new countries' like Canada and the USA. They are facing increasing authoritarian regimes where the concepts of equality and equity are no longer as valued as in their parents' generation; where scientific evidence is ignored and global warming is the world's greatest threat. The next three generations will

have their own societal issues just as they will have all the ups and downs of every family's history.

But we start with the names of your own three generations:

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What three things are you proud of in your family history? What did your parents and grandparents do that makes you proud?

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What do you hope to do that will make the next three generations proud of you and your generation?

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Strategy 11
Mindfulness — The Basics

On page 14 we quoted a post from Facebook:

Seven Difficult (but Simple) Buddhist Habits that Will Change Your Life: Their philosophy centres on the idea of reducing suffering:

1. Simplify (less stuff)
2. When we help others we find a deeper satisfaction
3. Meditate
4. Follow the Wise
5. Accept Mindfulness as a Way of Life (non-judgmental)
6. Embrace Change (including in how we look, age)
7. Live in the Moment.

Mindfulness is #5 but each of the others is a form of mindfulness as well. Simplify declutters our lives and allows us to be mindful of what is genuinely important in our lives — relationships above all else.

Helping others distracts us from our own worries and allows us to be mindful of the needs of others. Meditation in all its

forms (including mindfulness) stills or focuses our mind. It encourages us to distinguish our body sensations, behaviours, emotions and thoughts (BBET) to see what drives us. Once we are aware of what drives us, we can decide "Am I going to let the thing that drives me be the primary boss or driver of me, or not?"

Following the Wise — being mindful of what they have to teach, is another form of mindfulness. Dr. Dan Siegel[21], a clinical psychiatrist at the UCLA School of Medicine says that integrating the wisdoms of the the past and present to become the wisdom of the future defines what health (mental and physical) is really all about.

Mindfulness can help us with our fears. As Canadian Armed Forces Captain and PTSD sufferer Hélène Le Scelleur said, "Fear does not equal danger.[22]" In other words, most of our fears are not real. Mindfulness helps us distinguish between what is real and what are images and thoughts that are not real. That

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[21] Dr. Daniel Siegel is also the Executive Director of the Mindsight Institute and international author on mindfulness.

[22] Treleaven, 2017.

distinction gets rid of most of our fears (or at least reduces their power over us) and saves our energy to react to real fears.

Mindfulness, in its simplest form is the focused, non-judgmental attention to right now. How do we translate that into action? We start by being mindful of where we are in space right now. Where are you standing, sitting or lying down? Then you take notice of your breath. Is it shallow or deep, racing or calm? Take a deeper and longer breath and notice what if anything changes when you do that. Then we notice our body — where are the tense muscles, aches and pains that you may have. Where in your body do you feel perfectly good.

Then we identify the images and thoughts in our mind. We tell ourselves that we are looking at whatever image is there and then we let that image go. Or we see the self-talk or thoughts coming from our mind, identify them and let them go. Each time going back to the breath as the focus.

There is nothing wrong with seeing the images or self-talks. This is not an exercise in focusing on your breath. The breath just gives you a focus to return to. Your mind may well flood you with images and self-talk or not. There is no judgement about whether an image or self-talk is

good or bad — it is just an image in your mind and/or a conversation/talk in your mind that has no power of good or evil. It just is and then you return your focus to your breath. The image and self-talk has no power — they just are.

Over time, there will be periods where you see nothing in your mind's eye — no images, no self-talk. Just quiet. You are not even focusing on your breath. You are just perfectly still. It feels wonderful.

There are many forms of mindfulness. This is just a simple, yet powerful example. It is powerful because we sometimes think we do not control our thoughts and that our mind is no longer our own. It is. We do have the power to control our thoughts once we recognize that our thoughts are neither good nor bad — they just are. What we do with them is up to us.

Let's look at a specific example — of you being quite anxious or fearful about something. How you self-talk will either help you or harm you. The harm usually comes from a self-talk loop that you have been saying in your mind for years that usually leads to you feeling bad or out of control.

Write out a specific example and how you typically deal with self-talk.

Treleaven (2017) advises three ways to overcome and/or manage your fears and anxiety:

1. Get to know it — be mindful of it: fear can be useful when it tells you to get out of the way of moving car

but unhealthy when it affects your sleep, appetite or your ability to work or study. When anxiety or depression affect daily living over weeks or months, identifying it, understanding the causes, and looking to others to see how they dealt with similar situations is help. Write out the causes — writing is a mindful, physical experience of an emotional or mental state and gives you back control over how you are thinking about this situation.

2. Confront and observe: mindfulness, cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) or similar strategies can help people understand that just because they are afraid of something does not mean they are in imminent danger. Being afraid of an exam is not the same thing as being being afraid to walk in a dangerous part of town.

Anxiety before exams can be greatly reduced when students are given better study habits and begin to have greater success in writing exams. The greater comfort with studying, and the greater success with exams, the less anxiety that is disabling. Students may still feel anxious before an exam which is very typical, but they will be able to

sit an exam rather than isolate themselves in their room to avoid the exam.

3. Turn your fear into a purpose: quoting a cancer patient, "*Fear is often simply the anticipation of an unknown event that rarely comes to be."* But when a fear is real, like getting a cancer diagnosis, a person can use their experience to mindfully help others going through a similar experience. So often, people who have experienced extreme trauma or daily anxiety find ways to help others as a means to cope with their own anxiety. Over time, their anxiety decreases because they are helping others. Confidence comes from repeated experiences that one overcomes.

We constantly sabotage our lives, our work, our relationships, and our self-image by what we say to ourselves. Whether we do it quietly in our minds or out loud in anger, it has the same effect. For example, how many times have you said to yourself: You dummy. How could you be so stupid! This could be after forgetting your house keys or misplacing your wallet or forgetting an important birthday or anniversary?

Some of our self-talk is more harmful. A teacher told a high school student that: *"You are just not smart enough for university dear. Better go to college and pick something easy like working with children. You'd be good at that."*

The student listened rather than rebelled. Her own self-talk had already told her that she was not very smart even though she was a leader at school and in her volunteer work. This teacher reinforced the student's self-talk. She did go to college and found out she liked learning more than she thought. She was also good at it. She worked in early childhood education for a few years but decided she wanted to learn more. So she went to university and much to her surprise got her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. Not satisfied yet, she went on to her Masters and finally her Ph.D. She is now an internationally known speaker and adolescent therapist.

You can bet that her self-talk did not improve overnight. It took years of effort to overcome negativity but she did it. She was happy for much of it as she followed her dream, overcame difficulties in several areas, and became able to help many young people deal with their grief. She laughed often, comforted more often and shared her experiences and learning with

colleagues from around the world.

So what do you say to yourself? What doubts or negative judgements prevent you from being happy more often?

This is where mindfulness can be extraordinarily helpful. You need to catch yourself using self-talk that is healthy and encouraging or defeatist and harmful. Many of us have consistently done more of the negative. Our self-talk can come from many sources. You may have been brought up with family members telling you "not to brag about yourself." Public media and advertising are constantly telling us "you're not good enough" just so they can sell their product. It can be hard to feel good about yourself or say good things to yourself.

The chief financial officer of a large engineering firm was retiring from his large, downtown-Toronto office. He was asked what his greatest fear was during his career and he responded that, "I always worried that someone would find out I did not know as much as they thought I knew." Even in his position after nearly 40 years of experience and with his power and influence and his excellent service to that company, his self-talk had still told him he was never good enough.

We are not unique in these negative beliefs about ourselves. They are almost

universal. Yet the vast majority of people still function day-to-day. How do they do that?

There is a woman known to one of the co-authors of this book who was orphaned at a young age. She was institutionalized in a mental hospital because the system could not find her a home, not because she had a mental illness. She was kept in the institution for longer than normal because she was a good cleaner and it was free labour. She married late in life and had 5 children, one who died very young. Her life had been hard to say the least.

Yet her joys were many and she was always ready to give you a smile and a wonderful bear hug of love. She lit up a room through her enthusiasm for her children and grandchildren. She would not be considered attractive by society's standards but her husband, her children, and extended family loved her. Her many, many friends and neighbours thought she was a gift to all of them.

For her 80th birthday, her children arranged a surprise party that overwhelmed her with joy and happiness. The photos of the day provided her immense happiness even as her own health had become precarious.

She had moments of despair and

unhappiness like the rest of us. Her face showed the hardships of her life and she didn't routinely smile. But she also had a 'lift yourself up by the bootstraps' kind of attitude that would tolerate unhappiness for only so long. Then it was back to figuring out how she could help others.

It is not the events in our lives that determine how we talk to ourselves. It is not the hurts we have felt nor the love that we experienced that determines what we say to ourselves. It is not just an attitude of the glass half full or half empty that makes us talk in a certain way.

We choose what we say to ourselves. We must now choose to listen more carefully to what we say and decide if we want to change our self-talk.

If we choose to be mindful of what we say to ourselves then we can change from harmful self-talk to positive self-talk. We can choose to provide ourselves with genuine moments of happiness, joy, gratitude, peacefulness and love. We choose whether our self-talk leads to moments of loneliness, fear and neglect, or moments of connection, compassion and personal value.

You can also make a concerted effort to be mindful of what you say to others. Does what you say to yourself or others start with Yes but.... when you are thinking

of something or listening to someone's ideas? If you do, then you are likely not thinking about what someone has just said or an idea you have thought of. You are thinking instead of all the reasons that the idea is wrong or ill advised. You discount an opportunity to learn and be open to a different viewpoint. You miss an opportunity to be happier.

Catch yourself saying positive and encouraging self-talk and purposely choose to do it more often. Will you be happier for it? Of course!

Strategy and Practice

Review the mindfulness exercise in this chapter and practice it once a day for a week. Record what self-talk you have most often and whether that self-talk was helpful or harmful. Then let it go. It's just self-talk. You are learning how to change what you tell yourself. First you need to identify it.

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Consider starting a mindfulness and gratitude journal — combine the two in one. Daily, write down what you are grateful for. This is similar to the exercise you may have done in Strategy 3. Also write down something you were mindful of today. It can either be self-talk that was positive or negative. It might be about being mindful how you ate a meal or walked to class. It might be a conversation with someone else when you took the time to truly be in the moment with the person and listen.

By writing down your mindfulness and gratitude learnings each day you begin to be more mindful of what they are. At first you might not have much to write about but just by doing the physical act of writing, you will be more mindful the next day of what you might write in your journal.

Strategy 12
Clean — Your Environment Matters

Many students believe it is a right of passage to have a messy, dirty and disorganized room/home. For some it really feels good to have that control over their environment.

For many, that kind of environment can make you more anxious. Order in your room/home, can help with order in your mind. If you come home after a day of studying and find your bed made up, your dishes put away, your desk relatively in order, then you can feel more in control of your day.

For others, a messy place can be a sign of creativity — still anxiety producing, but freeing in some way.

So this strategy is one you really have to gauge for yourself. Do what feels supportive for you and how you learn and live. Then forget about it.

This strategy is all about what you need to get things done.

There may be limits depending on where you are living. In residence there may be spot checks to ensure you don't have bugs growing in the old pizza box you have under the bed. Your landlord in

a rental unit may do the same thing. But overall, this is the first time your environment is relatively unchecked so what you do with it will be up to you.

As a quick aside, many students who do enjoy a messy room/home often become quite strict about their new home after graduating. There seems to be something in us that once we reach 23-26 years of age, we want a more organized and clean environment.

So, how do you clean? Like cooking (Strategy 5), Youtube and other websites are filled with videos on all forms of cleaning — the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and the other rooms. You can even learn to paint a room, fix a toilet, add a light fixture, or hook up a dish washer.

And like cooking, you start small. There are many videos with low cost cleaners combining baking soda, water, vinegar and dish soup for cleaning the kitchen and bathroom. Or you can just buy some cheap cleaners at a dollar store and dust to your heart's content.

The key is mostly to be tidy from the start, and clean up dust bunnies before they get so big you mistake them for a real bunny. As with many things we prefer not to do, make it fun by having a treat afterwards or inviting your parents over who will be surprised by the cleanliness.

The bathroom is the key — if that is clean, then they presume everything else is clean; even if it is not!

Strategy and Practice

1. Go pick up a bag of garbage around your room/home right now — takes two minutes and it's done.
2. Schedule a quick clean of the bathroom for within 48 hours (in case you have to buy supplies). Once you have the supplies, you can do this once every week or so. Treat yourself by listening to some great music while you do this.

That's it. Do this as often as necessary for you to feel in control over your environment.

Strategy 13
Memorize

Memorization can be another form of mindfulness. Memorizing favourite songs, poems, or sports statistics. You can memorize long speeches to inspire you in your own writing and speaking.

Memorization is becoming a bit of a lost art. People used to memorize a lot more. In some disciplines it is still necessary to memorize like studying anatomy or chemical elements. But many people are using their smart phones or computers to search for information that people used to memorize. Twenty years ago most people memorized the phone numbers of most of their family and friends. It's still a good mental exercise and helps when your contact list on the phone is unavailable.

There is also a calming element to memorization. Prisoners who are going through a rough patch tell us that reciting things they have memorized has helped with their anxiety and fears. They might recite favourite lyrics and poems or recite their family tree as far back as possible.

Health science students might recite parts of the anatomy and which parts are connected to other parts, or memorize the

nervous system or digestive system.

History students may memorize timelines of major world events. Engineers have to memorize formulas and English majors have to memorize parts of sentences from prose to poetry.

Rather than see these as drudgery tasks — see them with the same interest that you used to memorize, without much effort, who scored which goal in the 2017 Stanley Cup final, or which f-stop on a digital camera gives you the best depth of field, or rank your favourite films from 1 to 100.

When you feel particularly anxious or can't fall asleep, you can try mindfulness or you can try reciting in your head a long list of information until you fall asleep. Whatever works for you.

Memorizing Tips

Memory is basically a system of recording, retaining, and retrieving information much like a mental file cabinet.

Whether you are memorizing something for fun, cramming for a test or studying over a long period of time, memory requires active participation. Even boring ideas and facts can be made interesting and therefore memorable.

1. Visualize things, e.g., completing a nursing procedure rather than just studying the procedure on paper.
2. Combine new information with things you already know. The whole body is connected so if you learn the bones first, then you can add the muscles, then the joints that are connected to muscles and then the nerves that control them, and so on. Start with one core group and add information to it.
3. Organized notes (no matter what method you use) make all the difference. Divide them into manageable units.
4. Be physically active. When memorizing information stand up and walk about while reciting information out loud.
5. Test your knowledge again in an active way, e.g., have someone quiz you, recite information, or write summaries of your information.
6. Use cue cards to help you memorize. For example:
    - Learn languages by putting verbs, nouns by subject matter on cards with their translation on the back;
    - Put professional jargon on the front of the card and the definition

on the back
- Put formulae or procedures on cards.

7. Use diagrams, maps, and chronological events to integrate further information.

Let's look at this a bit more. In ancient Hindu times the Brahmans were tasked with memorizing the four Vedas (holy texts). Most ancient religions chose students to memorize their holy text both to ensure the holy text would last forever (before writing was possible) and for self-discipline. These Brahman students had to learn one Veda with 1017 hymns made up of 10,550 verses or a total of 153,826 words.

This book is about 52,000 words to give you a comparison. There is a difference between knowing what's in a book like this, and memorizing it word for word. Remember that was only one of four Vedas. So humans are capable of immense exercises in memorization.

So how do people memorize large amounts of information? There are several techniques. Here is one called the Place System[23] that excellent public speakers often use to avoid reading their

[23] van Bommel (2005).

speeches.

Draw a floor plan of your home. If there is a basement or second storey, just pick the floor plan with the most rooms in it. Once you have your floor plan drawn out, colour each room a different bright colour. For example, the living room a bright red, the kitchen a brilliant water blue, etc. Write in black the number of the room beginning with #1 for the room closest to the front door.

Examine your floor plan, the coloured rooms and their numbers, but this time with your eyes closed and imagining yourself walking through the main door into this floor plan. In your mind, walk through each of the rooms and see the bright colours you have picked for each room, the hallways that connect the rooms, and even the furniture. Now imagine on the wall of each of these rooms the room number in a large black colour. This will help you keep the rooms in the same order whenever you use them again.

Go back and imagine walking through this floor plan several more times always coming in through the same door and walking through the rooms in the same order.

Let us assume you have seven rooms on your floor plan. Try the following ideas

to see if they help you remember information.

1. Write out a list of 7 objects that you need to remember either for a short grocery list, things you need to pack for a trip, books you want to get at the library, or what ever. Now imagine those items in a very large size with one per room in your floor plan. For example you might imagine a huge white chicken in your bright red living room; a loaf of fresh baked bread sitting on top of your toilet in the bathroom, a razor blade doing dishes in the kitchen, etc. The more bizarre the image the more likely you are to remember this. Use lists like this to practice this skill for fun. In real life a quick note on a piece of paper may be enough. This is just for practice.
2. Imagine a paper you have to write or a presentation you have to give or a short "Thank You" you have to present to someone at a meeting you are attending. You have to make anywhere from 2-7 main points. You do not want to use notes so you try to remember the points, in order of importance. Write the main points, one per room, in your floor plan

above. With practice you will not even have to write them out, but for now, physically writing them out will help your memory. Picture yourself walking through your floor plan seeing the main points written in six-foot letters against a wall in each of the coloured rooms. Practice this several times and when it comes time to remembering the points in the right order, you will be able to speak clearly and confidently. Excellent public speakers use this technique all the time and rarely lose their train of thought.

3. Once you have mastered steps one and two, you can add to your floor plan. You can add notes on each wall in each room rather than one thought per room. You can use another floor in your home or use similar floor plans from the homes of your friends with which you are very familiar. In this way you can develop your memory to the point where you can remember dozens of facts or ideas without using paper. You just start at your own home, go through the coloured rooms, walk outside and into a friend's home and go through their coloured rooms and on and on and or until you have

enough. Your friends will never know how helpful they have been.

Now repeat the exercise but use each room to hold part of a presentation to your class. The first room holds up big sheets of paper with the main points of your introduction. The next 4 rooms, the main "middle points" of your presentation, the last room, holds the conclusion. In each room, each wall holds one point. For example, the Introduction in the first room has three main points — one on each wall. If a middle point needs more space, go to the next room since you have 7 in total.

One more example for fun:

1. The following are some basic suggestions for memorizing any text. Remember these suggestions are based on practice, paying attention and looking for the wonder in the words you choose to learn.
2. Read the whole piece out loud once. Repeat any parts you find particularly enjoyable.
   Write out the piece. If it does not have indents or breaks between paragraphs add some to make it visually easier to learn. Use

coloured markers to highlight key parts. For example in the poem below we have used:

CAPITAL LETTERS for important words in a sentence or phrase to help you remember the rest,

BOLD to highlight words that rhyme, <u>underline</u> for words starting with the same letter or sound (alliteration),
[ ] around sections that are repeated (not in this particular poem){ } around words that have the same vowel sounds
You may come up with other words or phrases to highlight for different reasons.

3. Understand the meaning of the words. Look up any words you do not know in the dictionary. Then understand the meaning of parts of the piece and then the whole piece of text together.
4. Read it out loud again. Try to learn the chorus (if any) by heart, having read or written the piece three times now.
5. Find parts of the piece that are the same or are repeated throughout

and learn these by heart. This often means you have learned a good portion of the piece already.

6. Attach the piece to your refrigerator door, bathroom mirror, or in your appointment book. When you pass by it, read the piece to yourself or out loud. Later while waiting at a bus stop, in a line or before going to sleep, recite whatever parts of the piece you can. Do not worry if you cannot get some parts of it. Continue reciting the rest and look up any missed pieces later on.
7. ENJOY. Memorization for memorization's sake is boring and a waste of time. Memorizing things for the exercise, for the wonder of the words, or because you are interested in the piece makes it a gift you give yourself for future use.

The following poem is written by A.P. Herbert (1890-1971) to the woman sitting behind him in a theatre. Many of us have faced this exact situation and have not found diplomatic language to deal with it well. Tell your family you would like to recite a poem to them over dinner. After they have stopped laughing at you, recite the poem and then they will join you in laughter.

"At the Theatre (to the Lady Behind Me)"

Dear MADAM, you have seen this **play**;
I never saw it 'til **today**.
You know the details of the **plot**,
But let me tell you I do **not**.

The AUTHOR {seeks} to {keep} from **me**
The murderer's **identity**.
And you are not a friend of **his**
If you keep shouting who it **is**.

The ACTORS in their funny **way**
Have several funny things to **say**.
But they do not amuse me **more**
If you have said them just **before**.

The MERIT of the DRAMA **lies**
I understand, in some **surprise**.
But the surprise must now be **small**
Since you have just foretold it **all**.

The LADY you have brought with **you**
Is, I infer, a HALF-WIT **too**.
But I can understand the **piece**
Without assistance from your **niece**.

In short, FOUL WOMAN, it would **suit**
Me, just as well if you were **mute**.
In fact to make my {meaning} **plain**
I trust you will not {speak} **again**.

And — may I add one HUMAN **Touch**?
Don't breath upon my NECK so **much**.

If you look at and remember the important words in capital letters you will remember the order of the poem.	Remembering the rhymes may help you remember what comes before them.
1. Madam	**play-today** **plot-not**
2. Author	**me-identity** **his-is**
3. Actors	**way-say** **more-before**
4. Merit, Drama	**lies-surprise** **small-all**
5. Lady, Half-Wit	**you-too** **piece-niece**
6. Foul Woman	**suit-mute** **plain-again**
7. Human, Neck	**touch-much**

Strategy and Practice

Identify three chunks of information you have already memorized whether it's sports data, lyrics, multiplication tables, or the names of the bones in your feet.

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Write one large chunk of information that you want to memorize and get good at it within a week. A simple one, for example, is this tongue twister: A tutor who tooted the flute tried to teach two young tooters to toot. Said the two to the tutor, is it harder to toot or to tutor two tooters to toot?

Strategy 14
Easier to be Unhappy

Why are so many people unhappy so much of the time? Because it is easier and expected!

There are 10 rules we are conditioned to follow in order to succeed. These are unwritten rules because they go against what we learned from our parents and teachers at a young age about the ideals of good living.

The presumption is, that if you follow these 10 rules you will succeed personally, professionally, and financially.

There is a presumption that these things will make you happy and supply an immediate gratification–even if you will likely not be happier in the long run.

Being unhappy is easier. There are thousands of books, videos, podcasts, websites and courses on how to be happy, successful or at peace. Yet many people choose to be unhappy much of the time.

Don't believe it? Walk into a room full of strangers and watch how people strike up a conversation. You will find that most start with a complaint: The weather really sucks today, right? Can you believe those politicians? Who hired that guy to play for

our team anyway? He's not worth the money! If you entered that room all happy and full of energy, most people would be suspicious–some might even think you are on drugs.

So it's easier to follow some of the unofficial rules of success listed below. These are the rules that society teaches us through media, work relationships, and economics are good rules to follow. We learn and practice them consciously or unconsciously to be successful. Living this way is comfortable. Living this way is more predictable and easier. Living this way fits in better with the people around us.

Sadly, in the long run, these rules usually leave us feeling unfulfilled. Then we pick up the next self-help book, Internet video or seminar on how to find happiness again.

Do you practice any of these rules now?

Society's 10 Rules for being Successful (and Unhappy)[24]

1. Lie – it's easier – just don't get caught.
2. Cheat – you'll get ahead faster – but, again, don't get caught.
3. Steal – people expect it anyway – but, you guessed it, don't get caught.
4. Abuse power – what else is it for.
5. Abuse love – you can always get more.
6. Abuse your body with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, food and certainly no exercise – you only live once.
7. Abuse your mind – watch more TV and sports – you can avoid being overwhelmed by real life this way.
8. Abuse your soul – value and trust only yourself.
9. Complain and critique everything – always see the glass as half empty because, damn it, it is.
10. Hoard as much money and things as you can – it's how the world keeps score of who is winning.

Remember; if you have moments of happiness – don't worry – they always go

[24] van Bommel (1990, 2009) 14-21.

away. Life is hard. No one will do you any favours. Get what you can when you can. You only live once.

If you regularly follow any of these rules, you will come to a place in your life when you ask, “Is that all there is?” Some people call it a mid-life crisis.

Others call it a longing for something more. Some call it a spiritual crisis. Still others call it a sense of being lost and alone.

Do you want something better? Are you satisfied with where your life has led you? If you measure how often in a day you are happy, is it enough?

Is where you study a place of enjoyment, productivity, laughter and life-long friendship? Do you want it to be? If you spend 8-10 hours of each day studying, wouldn’t you like to go home more often energized to tell your loved ones about what a great day you had?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, then follow the rules in the next section to be happier more often.

Your 10 Rules for being Happier More Often (and Successful!)

You've read what society teaches us (unofficially of course) about the real life rules of success look like. Here are 10 rules for being happier that a wise soul, an elder, and a young child might give you.

You're going to start from the bottom of the list and move to the #1 rule you can do to be happier more often.

10. **S**mile and laugh more often. A 10-minute belly laugh massages your internal organs better than hours of quiet meditation.
9. **B**reathe slowly and deeply at least 3 times a day for 5-10 minutes. You can do this while you are working at your desk, driving your car, walking your dog, or waiting in a line.
8. **M**usic – listen, sing, write, or dance. Use energizing or relaxing music, depending on what type of happiness you want at that moment.
7. **R**elationships – nurture the ones you have; create new ones with people older and younger. If you study 10-12 hours a day, then make sure to nurture

relationships with those around you. Enjoy their company. Find ways to include your most important people in your day. Life really is too short to waste your time being away from the people you care about the most.

6. **E**motional joy – find out what makes you smile, laugh, and feel peaceful and write down your favourite 10. Then simply do them more often. It could be watching your child sleep, sitting quietly on a park bench, watching a favourite comedy on TV, going for lunch or a walk with a dear friend you rarely see, sharing a family meal together more often, holding hands with someone you love, eating some of Mom's homemade cookies or working with your Dad on a project. Whatever works for you, do it more often. Don't wait.

5. **I**ntellectual interests – knowledge is power and power gives one a sense of confidence and happiness. Find out about what you need to know to live a good life, as you define it. Learn about managing your finances instead of letting money manage you. Find out about what you need to do to stay healthy. Learn these things as you need them and teach others when they need the same knowledge and skills. Always look for the wonder in learning

and teach what you learn to others. Inspire others through your experiences.

4. **P**hysically move around to release natural endorphins that make you feel good. Movement also offers a distraction. Even if you are stuck in one place, find ways to move your body and at your earliest chance, move it to a different place (e.g., home, forest, beach, playground) to benefit from the change of scenery.

3. **P**ractice a life-affirming belief beyond you. Whether through religion, a more general spirituality or a love of nature, go beyond yourself so you have something to hold on to when you need that strength, courage, and persistence. Belief only in yourself or your family and friends may mean you do not have the resources to struggle through really difficult times nor the comfort of feeling part of something bigger and better.

2. **A**pply ancient wisdom – We are not alone. We are not the first people to try and figure out the meaning of life or how to live a good life. Learn what other people have concluded after lifetimes of study and experiences. We have so much more in common with people of different cultures and from

different centuries.
1. **H**appier more often now – Put the other 9 rules to work starting now. Return to them often.

When you reverse the order of the rules above you will get a HAPPIER MBS. This is a tongue-in-cheek way of saying there is so much BS in the world. Find the true gems on how to enjoy your life every day. Find happiness more often than you do now. When you do, you will be happier more often and have earned a Masters in Being Successful (MBS)! Congratulations!

H appier more often
A pply ancient wisdom
P ractice a life-affirming belief
P hysically move
I ntellectual interests
E motional joy
R elationships – nurture and create new ones

M usic
B reathe slowly and deeply
S mile and laugh more often!

Strategy and Practice

What do you do, without really thinking about it, to make yourself unhappy? How can you replace that with something that can make you happier more often?

Unhappy	**Happier More Often**
e.g. often melancholy	help someone to laugh

Strategy 15
Nurture: Time with Older and Younger People

To get out of our head or to slow down the negative self-talk we often have, it is important to be distracted by relationships that matter.

Spending time with much younger and much older people can be that kind of distraction. They will teach you things — often, without knowing that they are teaching you.

One student, for example, picked up his young nephew after Kindergarten. His nephew was talking about the 'black kid' in class. About how much fun he was, how he loved to laugh, and how he was really good at soccer. The student asked him who this black pupil was. His nephew was a bit frustrated because everyone knew who the boy was.

The student didn't see the boy amongst the other kids leaving school. His nephew pointed out a boy and said, "There's the black kid." He was pointing to a fellow pupil with black hair. For the nephew this was a perfect way to describe his classmate. To the student it was a revelation on how we stereotype people — some by skin colour, some by

hair colour, some by who their sibling is ("that's Shriram's sister"), some by height, some by age, and some by culture.

That student now looks at social media differently because of the interaction with his nephew. The language and photos/videos we use to describe ourselves in social media can be very different from reality. Many of us are creating the stereotype of a happy, well adjusted, popular person when we, in fact, may be going through rough times at home, at school, or at work. Like his nephew's perception of 'the black kid' in class, we need to look at people's stories, dig deeper so we can learn from others.

Spending time with older generations like our grandparents, or the elderly man who runs the local convenience store, or the elderly woman you see regularly at the bus stop, can teach us things we might not expect. Your grandparents can tell you stories about their early years when they were your age or when your parent (their child) was your age. They can tell you how they overcame difficult times. They can tell you what they did to have fun. They can tell you how they met and fell in love, or how they overcame the death of one of their children. They can tell you how proud they are of you and how much they love you (and feed you

the food you have loved all your life).

The elderly man at the store might tell you about how he immigrated to Canada or how he helped immigrants who moved into the neighbourhood who were having a rough time. He might tell you why he runs a store at his age. He might tell you how tough it has been since his wife died. He might tell you how to get a really good deal on a used fridge for your home or when it is a good time is to buy tickets to fly to Europe (he goes every year).

The elderly woman at the bus stop might not talk to you very often but over time, after an exchange of smiles for a few days, you might start a conversation. Then over the next months as you take the bus to school and she takes the bus to babysit her grandchildren, she will tell you about herself while offering you advice based on her experiences. She might tell you about the 'scoundrel' she dated when she was your age or the time she got caught smoking when she was 14 years old. She might tell you that she is going for treatment for cancer or depression or heart problems.

It is less important what they say or do. It is more important that they share time with you and that you recognize them as worthy to talk with about anything and, sometimes everything.

People of different generations see the world differently. A 6-year old might look at a rusty fence and see the designs in the rust (like many children see the designs in clouds). An 89-year old may introduce you to classical music or a piece of art on a bus stop ad that they know well and you've never really noticed. A child will go from highly excited to crying and back to excited within a few minutes. They are role-modelling mindfulness. They are reminding you that all things pass and you can choose to allow some things to pass faster than you normally would; just as they do.

There's a joke about a group of students talking at a their school's football game. There is also a group of older fans at the same game, in their 60s, watching their grandchildren play. The young ones start teasing the older ones about how little they know about the modern world — about how the students have to help their parents figure out their smart phones, computers and even how to do online banking.

One of the older fans laughs and agrees that he sometimes gets his granddaughter to help him with a Google search. But then he adds, *"but while you are teasing us about how little we know and how much you know, you may not*

remember that it was folks our age — Steve Jobs, Paul Wozaniak (founders of Apple), Bill Gates and Paul Allen (founders of Microsoft) who invented those computers and smart phones. The iPhone was first released in 2006 which is a long time ago for someone your age, but was only a blip in time for us. For you this is a history lesson while for us it is just part of our generation's positive contribution to modern life."

Strategy and Practice

Write down the three most important things you have learned from older and younger people.

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Write down the three most important things you can teach anyone based on your experiences.

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Strategy 16
Happiness and Wisdom

Wise In Our Time

Do you really have to be 60, 70, 80 or 90 years old to learn life lessons that give wisdom to some of our older and younger relatives and acquaintances? Can we not learn the lessons now so we have more time to enjoy them?

Former U.S. President Harry S. Truman said (as have many others) that: "There's nothing new in human nature. The only thing that changes are the names we give things. The only thing new in the world is the history you don't know.[25]"

Wisdom comes from Indigenous stories and beliefs, from Greek and Roman eras, from religious and political philosophies and from daily experiences.

In some cultures people listen to their older relatives and leaders to find out about life and about living that life more fully. You can read their stories in the thousands of books written since people began to write. You can also learn from

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25 Merle (1974) 21.

the older and younger people in your own life. Children and older relatives are not perfect. They can be cranky, rude and insensitive. However, they also live at the two extreme ends of life. They can help us put the middle years into a different perspective. They can learn from us as we can learn from them.

Social media is filled with wisdom. The quotes/posts may sound pretty superficial and otherworldly, but often they make a great deal of sense. Here are some examples:

The 7 Laws of Peaceful Living

1. Make peace with your past so it doesn't spoil your present.
2. What others think of you is none of your business.
3. Time heals almost everything.
4. No one is responsible for your happiness except you.
5. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
6. Stop over thinking. It's okay to not know all the answers.
7. Smile. You don't own all the problems of the world.

Don't wait for things to get easier,

simpler or better. Life will always be complicated. Learn to be happy right now. Otherwise you'll run out of time.

Other ancient wisdoms include teachers such as China's Confucius who lived around 500 BCE. As a philosopher, politician, teacher and editor he wrote (paraphrased here):

1. It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.
2. When anger rises, think of the consequences.
3. When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals but adjust the action steps.
4. If you hate a person, then you are defeated by them.
5. What superior people seek is in them; what the small person seeks is in others.
6. Wherever you go, go with all your heart.
7. Give instructions only to those who seek knowledge after they discovered their ignorance.
8. Looking at small advantages prevents great affairs from being accomplished.
9. If they spit at you behind your back, it means you're ahead of them.

These types of ancient wisdom have a common belief that peace exists in the midst of chaos, trouble or hard realities. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still remain mentally, emotionally, and physically centred.

There is also contemporary wisdom. An example is Ian Campeau, also known as DJ NDN and co-founder of the musical group A Tribe Called Red, who told a 2018 Toronto audience at a Speakers Forum hosted by National Speakers' Bureau how to be an ally to vulnerable people. He used the example of Indigenous peoples in Canada and how others could be supportive of them — their allies:

1. Be quiet when discussions of the pain and suffering of Indigenous people's come up. This is not your story or experience.
2. Listen and learn and encourage men to listen to women, adults to listen to children, aggressors listen to victims. We all need to listen more.
3. Do whatever you are asked to do. If you are attending a meeting and someone asks you to set up the chairs — do that. Don't offer to do something else because you are better at cooking or speaking or welcoming guests. Do as you are

asked. That includes leaving if you are respectfully asked to leave.

In 1986 Robert Fulghum wrote his perspective on wisdom. It has been copied, read, recited, and criticized millions of times. It typically brings a smile to each reader upon their first reading:

Most of what I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned:

Share everything.
Play fair.
Don't hit people.
Put things back where you found them.
Clean up your own mess.
Don't take things that aren't yours.
Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
Wash your hands before your eat.
Flush.
Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
Live a balanced life—learn some and think some and draw and paint and

sing and dance and play and work every day some.
Take a nap every afternoon.
When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
Be aware of wonder.

Strategy and Practice

Google any faith, political or historical tradition and/or ancient philosophies and pick one or two with which you feel instinctively comfortable. Begin to learn from these. Whether it is ancient Greek philosophy, Indigenous wisdom, or more current philosophies of writers such as Maya Angelou, search out something that will inspire you to be better than you are right now.

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Write out the top three wise thoughts you've learned that you want to incorporate into your daily life. For example one student wrote: *The root source of personal happiness is to find the balance between love, gratitude and service.*

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Strategy 17
Gratitude — Music, Art, Dance

In the previous strategy we quoted Robert Fulghum's Live a balanced life—learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

The arts: music, art and dance provide us wonderful opportunities to appreciate the artists and, for some of us, to become an artist. To have these opportunities are reasons for genuine gratitude.

It takes time to enjoy or perform. Many people have so little free time. So if you make the arts a priority, recognize that you are genuinely fortunate. Fortunate to be listening to favourite music, writing a song yourself, or performing in public. Fortunate to be drawing or painting or using digital mediums, or dancing alone in your room or on a dance floor. All of these activities are moments of self-expression and self-reflection. These are moments to be grateful for the luxury of time.

The arts can be enjoyed alone and in the company others. You can be mindful of specific colours and techniques in fine art or the movements of different characters in a play or ballet. You can be

mindful of the performers' faces. You can be grateful that someone has taken the decades of practice to play a piece of music that moves you to tears.

Strategy and Practice

Write out the top three things that you are most grateful for in music, art or dance.

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Is there any form of the arts that you would like to learn? Try something simple as your time is already very full. But find something. Get a book on doodling since you doodle anyway. Or watch a video on how to play spoons so you can jam with other students who play the guitar or piano. If there is a social dance class at the university or regular dances to just attend, then go and thrive on the movement of your body to music. Just pick one thing and go do it.

Strategy 18
Mindfulness — Silence

Silent and listen have the same letters. Silence is the powerful backdrop that allows excellent listening skills — listening to others and also listening to the inherent wisdom within each of us.

There is a popular wave of articles and books encouraging people to turn off their electronic devices so they can be fully present with others during meals, in classrooms, and in talks with friends.[26]

Before we look at silence more closely, we need to look at the use of electronics, how it affects our relationships, and how it prevents us from being genuinely silent.

Dr. Jean M. Twenge (PhD Psychologist)[27] draws a direct link between smart phones and anxiety-depression in *iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy – and completely unprepared for adulthood (and what that means for the rest of us)*.

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[26] For example, Jaron Lanier's *Ten arguments for deleting our social media accounts right now*, Jean Twenge's *iGen*, and Theiventhiran (2016).

[27] Goldman, Nov 23, 2017.

She says that high anxiety and depression used to affect only middle-aged adults.

Then in the 1970s and 80s there was a up-take of anxiety and depression in younger adults. In the last 10-20 years it has reached young children. There has been a 50% increase in the suicide rate for older teens 15-19, for teens 12-14 it has doubled, and among girls it has tripled.

In many surveys conducted around 2011-2012, anxiety symptoms, clinical depression and suicides went up. University students were reporting "overwhelming, crippling anxiety." High schools students were saying they couldn't do anything right and their lives weren't useful.

Dr. Twenge concluded that between 2011-2016, teens were spending much more time online with social media rather than in face-to-face conversations. Yet decades of research shows that being with other people in personal social interaction is good for one's mental health.

She identified 2011-2012 as the time when a majority of people owned a smart phone. She also identified that anxiety peaked in this generation at that same time. That doesn't prove causality but studies are showing that teens who spend

more time on social media and online are also more anxious and depressed.

Some related facts:

1. Those who spend more time on social media and online sleep less. Less sleep is a risk factor for anxiety.
2. Less time with personal interactions and more time online and on social media is another risk factor for anxiety.
3. Texting and social media are not in real time like the give and take of a personal conversation. With texting you have to wait for a response that could take a long time and waiting can create more anxiety.
4. Risks increase if you are online for more than 2 hours per day and many teens are online for at least 6-7 hours per day.

That does not mean get rid of electronic devices. It means using them wisely as tools like many of our other learning tools — more selectively and less often, and not to use them when you are socializing with your friends and family.

That may sound pretty logical. Dalhousie student Delana Theiventhiran (2016) did a poster abstract on the use of smartphones by 125 female and 84 male

undergraduate students. As part of her research she found that 69% of women and 64% of men reported they would give up their best friend rather than lose their smartphone. What is that saying about how these students see themselves in the world and within their circle of friends?

Silence

When was the last time you sat or laid down in complete silence — no electronic devices, no radio, no TV, no one speaking, laughing or singing nearby? Complete silence. Most students have never experienced total silence. The cityscape is always filled with noises. Even in the country, a quiet night is filled with the sounds of crickets, the wind, or dogs barking in the distance.

So complete silence is almost impossible.

But even given that, most of us have never been really silent because we have control over most of the sounds in our life. We prefer to have the radio, the computer, or TV on so we do not feel alone. When we turn them off, we become anxious. We are used to their sounds. We are comforted by them. Sometimes we sleep with the radio on. We feel like we are really not alone when we have these

sounds around us. We are sometimes or often afraid of silence.

So why is silence important?

Because there will be times when, even amidst external sounds, you will feel alone because you are not allowed to use your devices. Like sitting down in a gymnasium or arena to write a final exam. You may be surrounded by sounds yet filled with the silence of your inner anxiety.

Imagine waiting for a medical procedure and you are not allowed to use your devices. Imagine being at someone's home for supper and no one is allowed to use their devices or being in a professor's class who does not allow devices.

There will be times when you can't control the sounds and you won't have your devices to provide a distraction. You need to prepare for that.

How?

You can choose to be silent more often now when you are in control of your devices. By doing mindfulness exercises where you control how long you are silent and by which sounds you allow yourself to be surrounded by. You may do your mindfulness exercises in your bedroom or in another quiet place. Or you may practice surrounded by the noises of a cafeteria or outside in a park filled with nature's sounds. When you control

sounds is the best time to practice silence. This way, when you encounter forced silence it will not create anxiety.

Strategy and Practice

List what sounds are most comforting to you followed by which are most annoying or anxiety producing.

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Write out the top three ways you can increase your comfort with the silence you control and practice that today?

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Strategy 19
Learn How to Learn

To save time and to become more proficient as a learner, there are certain tools of the trade that you can enhance. If you are at university you already know how to study, take notes, research and write papers.

To move to the next level, there are other skills you can learn while constantly improving the skills you already have. For example, learning how to speed read can improve your retention and understanding of complex materials. Text books are designed for speed readers so this is a skill worth acquiring. Most of you read at about 200-400 words per minute. You can easily double or triple that.

You may know how to take notes but you can improve upon their effectiveness for long-term studying needed in university. Notes are not just for passing exams. What you are studying at university may be part of your future profession. In high school you may have learned some human anatomy and memorized them for an exam. However, in a university health sciences program you will need to know these things for your profession so you need to learn and

remember them forever.

Memorization skills are particularly helpful in the maths and sciences. The more comfortable you are with memorization, the easier your studies will be.

Study skills are something you are already good at because you are in university. But there is more to learn. For example, students hear on average about 20% of a lecture and forget most of that content within 24 hours unless they review their notes within 24 hours. Reviewing helps you remember up to 80% of your notes.

If you review your notes every week before class and again that class's notes within 24 hours, you will remember so much more. Studying for a difficult exam might only take a few hours rather than an 'all nighter' if you leave reviewing your notes until the last minute. You are moving your short-term memory into long-term memory by reviewing your notes regularly and saving a lot of study time too.

Researching and writing require specific skills for each academic discipline. The way you research for an English class will be different from a science class. The written style of an English paper is also very different from

the style of a science paper. You need to know the standard research processes and databases and how to use them. You need to know the format of writing up an experiment or a research paper or a discussion paper.

Learning stress and time management techniques (especially scheduling) can save you an enormous amount of anxiety.

You can acquire these skills by luck and trial and error. Or you can check out the peer tutoring services at the Student Life Centre or by joining (or creating) a study group. You don't have to do this all alone. There are people who know the techniques that can make you a better student while saving you time.

For example, they can teach you some speed reading techniques. Doubling or tripling your reading speed is not difficult.

You spend about 50% of our reading time fixating on a word you don't know or going back a few paragraphs to read something you just read. Just by stopping that will double your speed alone.

Strategy and Practice

Write out the order in which you want to increase your knowledge and skills of learning:

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Call today/tomorrow for an appointment with a peer tutor at the Student Life centre to schedule your first appointment to learn the #1 skill you want to improve.

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Strategy 20
Explore — Local and Regionally

This one is really simple. It's an excuse to get off campus and see and do something completely different from your studies. You can't, or shouldn't study all the time. You need to put your studies into a broader context.

So check with people who live around the campus for things you can do for a few hours every few weeks locally or even regionally if you have transportation or can get a drive from someone else or use transit.

For example, if you are new to the Durham Region, find out what there is to explore in Durham whether it is checking out parks, beaches, museums, tree-top adventures, rafting, art galleries, sporting events, movie theatres near by, restaurants, camping, fishing, or the like.

After checking out the local area you can go farther afield in the Greater Toronto Region going north, east and west. The area has unlimited things to do and explore for people with any interest and taste.

Strategy and Practice

Write a list of things you would like to explore in Durham and farther afield.

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Do one of the things on your list within 7 days. You can do it alone or with others. Just do something that goes beyond your studies.

Strategy 21
School of Hard Knocks

Why learn the hard way, if others have already figured some things out that you can avoid? You use *Youtube and other* videos to learn all sorts of things — why not use them to learn study skills.

You can't avoid all the 'hard knocks' but you can reduce some of them that generation after generation seems hell bent on repeating.

Let's go back to one of our greatest fears — public speaking. Like it or not, university studies requires you to speak in public. So let's learn from others who have done it well over the hundreds of years of recorded speeches.

The worst thing to do is to be unprepared and wing it the first few times. Good and even great speakers, do not wing it. They prepare.

Next, assume that butterflies in your stomach before a speech is a good thing. Most good speakers and actors (acting is a form of public speaking) will tell you they still get the butterflies before a performance. Some get physically ill even after decades of getting good at their craft.

But they will also tell you that these butterflies are necessary to keep you on the ball. They'll tell you that working with others who do not get a little bit nervous before speaking in public is worrisome because they will not know their lines, in the case of actors, or not be able to adapt quickly enough if something goes wrong during a speech (e.g., their computer isn't working, the projector bulb blows out, or a distracted or rude audience member is ruining the presentation).

But there are many other things taught in the school of hard knocks. Drinking alcohol at university is pretty common for many students. Alcohol poisoning is not. The first is part of growing up for some students. The second can be deadly.

There are reasonable risks to take while at university and dangerous risks. Never take a risk without being mindful of the probable consequences for you specifically. Never take a risk when your mental abilities are affected. You might do one 'all nighter' when studying or writing a paper to see what it is like, but do not make a habit of it. University can be difficult and stressful so create habits now that will help you throughout your life.

Eating poorly, not getting enough exercise are risks to your health but not in the same vein as taking recreational drugs with unknown side effects for you. How one person reacts to drugs is different from another person. These are risks you don't have to take to succeed in life or to be happy. Get a similar endorphin high by learning how to fly a plane or learn to SCUBA dive. These are risky too, but they are reasonable risks when you learn the proper ways to fly or dive.

Lastly, the most obvious hard knocks that each generation must go through relate to the friendships and intimate relationships that are often part of university life. Almost everyone has had their heart broken at some time. University happens to be one of those times when it is more likely to happen. Knowing that, learning some of the strategies in this

book and practicing mindfulness, are all ways to deal with any heart break should it arrive. It won't prevent heart break, but you can recover faster, feel better and push forward through the experience.

Strategy and Practice

What are three examples of things you have learned in your own school of hard knocks?

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What are examples of things you might expect to happen at university that would qualify as lessons from the school of hard knocks? How can you prepare for them and cope better than if you are taken completely by surprise?

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Strategy 22
Nurturing Yourself during Grief, Trauma and Difficult Times

It is during the most difficult times that we need to nurture relationships the most.

Some startling statistics[28]:

- 1 in 5 children will experience the death of a loved one by age 18 including grandparents, siblings, and close friends. (Kenneth Doka, Editor of OMEGA, Journal of Death and Dying)

- 1 in 20 children younger than 16 years old will suffer the loss of one or both parents. In the USA that means 1,500,000 children live in a single-parent family because the other parent has died. [NB: In a school of 1,000 children that would mean 50 students will be or have gone through the grief of a parent who died.] (Owens, D. "Recognizing the needs of bereaved children in palliative care" Journal of

[28] Children's Grief Awareness Day. Did you know?: Children and grief statistics. Accessed on March 19, 2018: https://www.childrensgriefawarenessday.com/cgad2/pdf/griefstatistics.pdf

Hospice and Palliative Nursing. 2008; 10:1)

- It is estimated that about 73,000 children die each year in USA with 83% of those having a surviving sibling(s). (Torbic, H. "Children and grief: But what about the children?" Home Healthcare Nurse. 2011; 29(2):76-69.

Grief, trauma and difficult times are dealt with differently if you are an extrovert or an introvert. There is a distinction between being alone and being lonesome — a loner will choose being alone, however, they are rarely lonely.

People who like to be alone have these 5 special personality traits:

1. Keep firm boundaries for relationships.
2. Level-headedness: amazingly strong and sober during tough times.
3. Loyal to their small circle of friends.
4. Self-aware and can navigate through periods of depression and learn from these experiences.
5. Value time so they never waste it for themselves or for others (they are always on time).

Can you be happier more often while you are going through grief?

Of course you can. You can always be happier more often. When you are going through intense grief you may still find moments of genuine happiness exchanging stories with a friend about the person who has died, for example.

You may find moments of genuine happiness by helping a younger person cope with their grief and listening to their stories. You may laugh out loud together at a photograph or watching home movies.

That said, anxiety, depression, grief, and trauma are not signs of weakness — they are signs of having tried to remain strong for too long. We all have times when we need to nurture ourselves, to re-energize and return to our daily lives. This is more likely to happen if we continue to find small ways we can nurture others who are also going through similar grief. When someone dies, many people are affected and each has opportunities to nurture the other.

Whether it is grief or trauma or the typical ups and downs of our lives, we tend to naturally isolate ourselves from others. The famous psychiatrist Carl

Jung[29] said that loneliness "does not come from having no people around, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to oneself, or from holding certain views which others find inadmissible." It is through nurturing our relationships (old and new ones alike) that we break through isolation.

> Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn't do.
> Rikki Rogers
> www.themuse.com/members/30324/rikki-rogers

We can learn from other people how they got through difficult times. People near the end of their lives have many lessons about the importance of nurturing relationships. Sometimes the most profound lessons come from children who are dying.

South African paediatrician Dr. Alastair McAlpine[30] asked his palliative care child

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[29] Memories Dreams and Reflections, Page 356.

[30] https://globalnews.ca/news/4020854/what-dying-children-taught-their-doctor-about-living/ accessed Aug 10, 2018

patients what they enjoyed about life and what gave them meaning. NONE said they wished they'd watched more TV. NONE said they should have spent more time on Facebook. NONE said they enjoyed fighting with others. NONE enjoyed hospitals. MANY mentioned their pets, their parents. ALL loved ice cream and books – either reading or being read to. MANY wished they had spent less time worrying about what others thought about them.

They loved friends who treated them normally. MANY loved the beach and swimming. Almost all valued kindness above most other virtues. Almost all loved people who made them laugh. They loved their toys and superheroes. ALL valued time with their family. Nothing was more important. McAlpine's conclusion: "Be kind. Read more books. Spend time with your family. Crack jokes. Go to the beach. Hug your dog. Tell that special person you love them."

Parker J. Palmer is an author, educator, and activist who focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality and social change. He is the founder and senior partner of the Center for Courage & Renewal. In a

January 17, 2017 article[31] he writes:

> My misgivings about advice began with my first experience of clinical depression thirty-five years ago. The people who tried to support me had good intentions. But, for the most part, what they did left me feeling more depressed.
>
> Here's the deal. The human soul doesn't want to be advised or fixed or saved. It simply wants to be witnessed — to be seen, heard and companioned exactly as it is. When we make that kind of deep bow to the soul of a suffering person, our respect reinforces the soul's healing resources, the only resources that can help the sufferer make it through.

It is reassuring that the gift of being present, of being witness and attentive to the suffering of others can be helpful regardless of what formal or informal training we may have.

In nurturing relationships, we build a network of people who will pay attention to us; who will listen and when words and hugs and shared tears are not enough,

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[31] http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2188 accessed Aug 10, 2018

they are just present. In creating such a network of people we become the person we want to be one day by being that presence, that witness, that person who pays attention for others. When we need it ourselves, that same network of people will be there for us.

Viktor Frankl is one of those names you have read about in other chapters. He wrote many books and journal articles as a renowned psychiatrist but he is best known by the general public as the author of Man's Search for Meaning.

It bears repeating that this time-honoured book has helped generations of readers cope with the difficulties in their lives. Viktor Frankl's memoir of life in the Nazi concentration camps during World War II highlights his main message: that the last of human freedoms is the freedom to choose how to respond to any circumstances.

Although a famed psychiatrist (a contemporary of Jung and Freud), Frankl's most popular book talks about how he survived the camps and how others survived the worst of human degradation. He lost his parents, brother and his wife to the camps.

His conclusions were that no matter what your life experiences, you could not avoid suffering. He felt his own survival

was based on finding meaning in his suffering. He imagined teaching students in his old classroom at the university in Vienna about how to survive torture, degradation and inhumanity at its worst.

After surviving the holocaust he did return to his university and did teach again. He taught about the incredible humanity of his fellow prisoners — how they pretended their slop of food was really a 4-course meal at a famous Paris restaurant and they laughed together at the absurdity of it. He also taught about those prisoners who gave their last piece of bread to someone who needed it more.

He built his own therapeutic model on these experiences and called it *logotherapy*, (Greek for meaning) which suggests that pleasure is not our main motivator but rather the discovery of what we find meaningful in our lives and using that to push forward through any trauma.

Mark Twain wrote: the two most important days of your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.

http://marktwainstudies.com/the-apocryphal-twain-the-two-most-important-days-

Trauma — Lessons for Helpers

Family doctor Martina Scholtens (2017) wrote a book about her 10 years working with Vancouver's refugee community. Her insights are worth a closer look and the experiences and research statistics are very encouraging. Some of her comments are about the refugees and some about those who care for them. They are all insightful and worthy of our attention.

"Over 80% of refugees exposed to trauma recover spontaneously upon reaching safety. Research shows that patients' mental health benefits from attention to basic needs, such as shelter, language acquisition, and the ability to work or attend school." [53][32]

Scholtens concluded that hearing horrible stories of torture was bearing witness to that suffering. She knew she could not help or cure the suffering of patients who had been tortured, but her attention, her listening, her bearing witness was her most healing power [59].

"No one shared a story of intense suffering and expected to be offered a

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[32] [Study: Kevin Pottie, Christina Greenaway, John Feightner et al, "Evidence based Clinical Guidelines for Immigrants and Refugees," CMAJ (June, 2010): E1-E102, doi.1503/cmaj.090313.]

solution. As difficult as it was to just listen —to accept one's impotence—it was enough. And so I said nothing. When he finished speaking, I said only, 'I'm sorry to hear how much you've suffered. No one deserves to be treated like that.' After disclosing a horrific story, patients always did one of two things: they apologized, or they thanked me" [59].

She read the UK's *Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing: Making the Most of Ourselves in the 21st Century Report*[33]. It included simple daily habits for mental well-being based on evidence-based research:

1. Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours.
2. Be active: go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Garden.
3. Take notice: be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual.
4. Keep learning. Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Take on a different responsibility at work.
5. Give: do something nice for a friend or a stranger. Thank someone.

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33 London: The Government Office for Science,2008– a two-year study involving over 400 international experts.

Volunteer your time [99].

Marissa Moss's husband (2017) had ALS, a neuromuscular condition often referred to a Lou Gerrig's disease. In her Preface she writes:

"So there's heartbreak in these pages, but also universal truth. We all have the capacity to face adversity, to come through it, and to heal."

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is all too prevalent for students. Jane Schwartz reported in April 2018 on a Maclean's magazine survey of 23,000 undergraduates at 81 Canadian universities. 46.7% of LGBTQ+ students, greater than 20% of female students, and 6.9% of male students reported having been sexually assaulted in their lifetimes and about half of those assaults occurred during university.

The university believes it is vitally important to help students who have experienced this form of violent trauma.

The home page of the university website has a Crisis button at the very top

highlighting the importance placed on the consequences of such violence. Click on the link and you will see the “Mental and Sexual Health” section with the red button “Are You Okay?” You answer 4 quick questions and the site will direct you to the services at the university that can be most helpful.

Those are the professional services available at the university. There are others in the community and online and crisis phone lines.

Other website pages: www.uoit.ca/campusconnected,www.uoit.ca/mentalhealthblog, www.facebook.com/uoitmentalhealth

Externally there is 24/7 Telephone Support:

Good2Talk 1.866.925.5454

Ontario Shores 1.800.263.2679

Connex Ontario Mental Health Helpline 1.866.531.2600

But most helpful will be those friends and family who are there to nurture you through this most difficult time. You need to start with those people who will be less

concerned about getting you justice, and more concerned about getting you through this trauma.

Strategy and Practice

How do you nurture yourself now? How do you get nurtured by others? Is it enough? If not, why?

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Write out the top three things that you might do differently or more of to nurture yourself? How quickly can you start?

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Strategy 23
Happiness — Therapies

There are many different types of therapies that can help you discover how to be happier more often. These are not typically cures but ways of seeing and treating your anxiety, depression or mental illnesses over time.

There are no quick cures. Not that we have discovered yet. Sometimes, depending on your mental health, the answers can be quite simple (if not easy). The anxiety that many new students experience at university is managed by improving your studying, reading, note taking, scheduling and writing skills. The more competent you become the less anxiety you feel.

Other feelings, experiences and conditions will take longer. For example, grief can take several years even though most people can continue to study, work and enjoy parts of their lives at the same time. The enormous sadness of the first days and weeks become less intense or last for shorter periods of time in the months that follow.

The Stepped Approach

Dr. Peter Cornish of Memorial University created a Stepped Care model for the counselling centre at Memorial University in Newfoundland "which he hopes will get everyone on campus to be part of the support system for those dealing with mental health issues.[34]"

The Model began in 2014. Rather than always refer to psychologists when someone says they are stressed, anxious or depressed, this model brings in many other 'low intensity' options.

About 70% of mental health professionals like this model while 30% hesitate because this is not the current approach they are comfortable with. Users and university administrators all like the model.

The model allows the student to determine the amount of intensity of support for which they are ready. More intense therapy challenges a student to help them with their issue. Less intense is more informational, online resources and the like where the student is less challenged to deal with their issues (education and mental health literacy).

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[34] Siebarth, (May 16, 2017).

At this lower level of intensity an individual will find resources that help them understand the options available to them. Once they have improved their mental health literacy they can have a follow-up discussion.

For example, UOIT Professor Wendy Stanyon's Mindsight website: ***http://mymindsight.uoit.ca*** gives users complete control over how much information they want, in which formats (video clips, quizzes, standard information) and at what intensity.

The next level of intensity is also educational but with a therapist who presents workshops on particular topics. This level includes peer support programs.

The next level uses therapists to act as coaches with the addition to online content. Groups come together, do pre-work online, and as a group work through issues together or individually with the therapist. Cornish writes: *"This is actually one of the more exciting levels in terms of outcomes, because we are getting good data coming in where patients are spending a quarter of the time a week with counsellors compared to traditional counselling. Because the content and the workbooks are available 24/7, patients are actually spending more time working on*

issues, but do so independently. The outcomes are in most cases, much better, and at minimum they are at least as good as when a counsellor spends an hour per week with them. So you're getting more with less."

The next level is psychiatric/ psychologist/physician care but perhaps 30 minutes versus an hour and other possible approaches over time.

Part of the process is a dashboard so everyone involved, especially the students, can see which level of intensity resources they are using to feel more in control of the process.

Lastly, in dealing with resistance of some faculty and staff Cornish writes: *"we are expanding the model to organize, along a stepped model continuum, health promotion and illness prevention activities aimed at the whole campus population. This will ensure that care and support systems are more fully integrated throughout campus communities with the goals of maximizing efficiencies, collaboration and stakeholder – by this I mean student, staff and faculty – empowerment. All members of the community will be supported through engaging and creative campaigns as well as some training programs to participate in the development of a healthy campus."*

Whatever the process available in different universities, this model highlights the decision-making process that many students go through to determine how much help they may need. If information and some homework can provide relief, then the student can feel almost immediate results while being in total control. If more extensive supports are necessary at first, that does not preclude using some of the lesser levels later on to become even more aware of what is possible.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

CBT is based on the theory that the way you see yourself, the world and other people can affect your thoughts and feelings, and can ultimately lead to mental health problems. This talk therapy helps you to change the way you think so the negative self-talk is reversed and you feel more in control over your own thoughts.

The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) did a series on mental health and described a scenario that explains how CBT can work. You're walking down the road and you see someone you know. They recognize you but they walk on by, without saying anything.

A common response by someone who's depressed might be:

- Thoughts: They ignored me – they don't like me.
- Emotions: Low, sad and rejected.
- Actions: Go home and avoid people.

This can become a vicious circle; the more negative your thoughts, the more depressed you might become, and the more depressed you are, the easier it is to believe quite unrealistic and depressing things.

Someone who isn't depressed might have a more positive view of the situation:

- Thoughts: They look a bit distracted – I wonder if there's something wrong?
- Emotions: Concerned for the other person.
- Actions: Get in touch to make sure they're OK.

Using a simplified process for dealing with the negative reaction called "Catch It, Check It, and Change It" the process breaks the vicious circle of depressing or anxious thoughts, feelings and behaviour. These steps are listed as follows and have some of the same elements that mindfulness practice does:

Step 1: Catch It
Spot when you might be having these kinds of negative thoughts. The best way to do this is to use your emotions as 'cues.' When you feel anxious or depressed, check your thoughts. What are you thinking? Could those thoughts make you depressed or anxious?

Step 2 – Check It
Stop and react on what you're thinking. Is it really true? Do you have evidence to back it up? Would other people interpret

things in the same way? This is perhaps the most difficult part of the exercise as nearly everybody believes their own thoughts are right (i.e., think about arguments with friends about politics or football). It's very difficult to check out your own thoughts objectively. That's why CBT is best done with a therapist, who is much better able to take that 'one step back' perspective.

Step 3 – Change It
At this point you need to try substituting more realistic thoughts. If your automatic thoughts tend to be depressive or anxious, you need to think of different, but realistic ways of thinking positively about the situation. Then, check out these new ways of thinking. Are they more likely to be true than your automatic thoughts? Do they make you feel any different?

Step 4 – Practice Makes Perfect
Psychologists and psychiatrists have found that homework is important here. It's important to practice, so they suggest you try using a simple diary.

Although this is a simplified version of CBT, it highlights the general process. Many people going through anxiety, depression and mental illnesses feel they

have lost control of their minds. This process, along with others such as mindfulness, can help you regain that control.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) & Neuroplasticity

OCD is a brain glitch that 'forces you' to repeat a compulsion over and over again. Whether it is constant hand washing dozens of times a day, or having to arrange all the cutlery at a table in just the right way, or filing all of your books in a very particular way, this compulsion can take over part of your life.

Dr. Schwartz in California[35] uses the concept of neuroplasticity to help patients with obsessive compulsive disorders (OCD). Although its description seems over simplified, it can be very effective. It may take months or even years in some cases and lots of effort, but if it works. It can be a real life-changing process.

He gives the example of someone who compulsively checks to make sure their door is locked. The 3 step process is:

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35 Doidge, (2007). Chapter 6.

1. Lock the door with real intention and tell yourself out loud perhaps, that "There, I have locked the door. That's finished."
2. When the urge to check to ensure the door is locked comes, you must re-label what is happening. You remember locking the door so you know it is locked. You say to yourself: "Yes, I do have a problem right now. But it is not that the door is unlocked. It's my OCD. My brain has got stuck, and can't shift gears. I'm having an OCD attack." Doing this step over time distances you from the feeling that you have to check the door and becomes like watching yourself on TV struggling with your OCD.
3. Re-focus on doing something positive, wholesome, and ideally a pleasurable activity. Whether it is going for a walk, exercising, working on a hobby, taking a shower, reading, talking with someone – whatever it is, it will (again over time) replace your OCD with something pleasurable. It is essential to do something rather than struggle with the attack solely intellectually. The 'hardwiring' your OCD has in your

brain needs to be replaced with new neural pathways that lead to recognizing an OCD attack and replacing your thinking (always going to recheck the lock) to something more pleasurable. You are not trying to make the feeling go away, but you don't want to give into the feeling.

The three-step process is time consuming and frustrating, but over time and with some work it is often successful.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

EMDR was originally designed in the 1980s as a psychotherapy treatment to reduce the distress of traumatic memories. This three part-process looks at traumatic memories in the past, present triggers that bring back that trauma and future responses to master the response. By stimulating eye movements that occur during REM sleep, the mind is able to reprocess the negative responses to trauma in a healthier way.

It is not hypnosis and the patient remains in control at all times. It helps with PTSD, anxiety, phobias, and traumas. Sessions last about 60-90 minutes and

relief can occur after 1-3 sessions. For more complicated conditions, it may take a dozen or more sessions.

It is not a cure all for everyone. It is one of many techniques that can help . Check out online video clips to see if it might work for you and then look for a local practitioner.

Tapping (Emotional Freedom Techniques or EFT)

This therapy, (like EMDR) uses physical movement (tapping) to help deal with mental and emotional states.

It is being taught in some elementary schools and is done by tapping your face, arms or legs to create a physical response to an emotional state. It is used with people suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), with anxious or depressed people, with people who have experienced the death of a child through violence, and with children curious to respond to their feelings in a different way.

Based on ancient Chinese Acupressure and modern psychology the simple tapping technique is about focusing the mind through physical tapping of different parts of the body. By redirecting and being mindful of the process, anxiety is reduced and focus is

enhanced.

To see how this works, Google tapping to see video clips that demonstrate this practice. As with any practice, check out various sources to ensure you are getting accurate and useful information. Do not send money to anyone. Check out the free resources first and check with any professional counsellor you may be visiting to get their recommendation.

These were only a smattering of what is available out there in the way of therapy. Each is designed to give you back control over your life — to be happier more often.

There are many other forms of therapy that have been proven to work. For example, the traditional psychotherapies with a licensed practitioner and medication therapy find the balance that gives the user the best opportunity to gain control over their thinking and their future.

There are therapies such as art therapy to help people express themselves in a different way. There is pet therapy to give people contact with an animal that provides unconditional love and support. There are also physical therapies that can benefit those with mental illnesses such as the Alexander Method, Reiki or therapeutic touch.

How to choose? You start, as always,

with the people you know. What do they do? Who do they get help from? Then you might go to a counsellor who has information and experience with various forms of therapies. You ask them what they recommend for you to try along with whatever you and the counsellor are doing together. You search the net for reliable resources that explain options to look at and try.

The key is to do the minimum so that you can recover faster, feel better and push forward. You don't want to spend your life trying different therapies. You want to spend your life living fully, happier more often and in control as much as possible.

Strategy and Practice

What therapies, if any, have you tried? What were the results?

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What one therapy might be helpful to you right now? Schedule an appointment with the right person who can help you look at this option and take notes throughout the therapy session to help you evaluate the results.

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Strategy 24 Gratitude — Book, Film and Social Media 'Therapy'

Like Strategy 17 where you are grateful for the music, art and dance in your life, you can also be grateful for the books, films, and social media you regularly use. These mediums form a type of informal therapy.

Some people actually refer to using books for therapy as "bibliotherapy." It's really just using books as a way to learn more about yourself, or to distract yourself, or even to 'improve' and heal yourself (self-help books). The same can be done by watching films whether action packed thrillers or documentaries on gratitude or practitioners of gratitude or how-to videos on writing a gratitude journal.

You can learn practical skills like mindfulness exercises through books, films and social media (especially video clips). You can use these mediums to distract yourself (or dare we say, procrastinate?) from intense times in your life.

All of these mediums provide a sub-category of autobiographies of people

who have overcome both major as well as more typical difficulties which provide us with perspective, insights and hope. The lives of others can inform our lives. That they made the effort to share their stories (many without much financial success) is something for which to be grateful.

The autobiography can be about working through a mental illness like severe depression (Breel, 2015; Goldman, November 23, 2017) or overcoming incest (Talbot,1995), or the traumas of war or being a refugee (Scholtens, 2017), or surviving the Holocaust (Frankl, 1963) or life as an emergency physician (Maskalyk, 2017).

They can be larger than life auto-biographies with their life lessons like that by Gandhi (1957) or Eleanor Roosevelt (1960) in which she describes 11 keys for a more fulfilling life:

1. Learn to learn
2. Fear—the great enemy
3. The uses of time
4. The difficult art of maturity
5. Readjustment is endless
6. Learning to be useful
7. The right to be an individual
8. How to get the best out of people
9. Facing responsibility

10. How everyone can take part in politics
11. Learning to be a public servant.

The Dalai Lama provided a process whereby trauma can be forgiven but should never be forgotten. In his advice to Hollywood Emmy-winning, voice-over artist and stand-up comedian, Maurice LaMarche, (December 13, 2016) he describes when the Chinese army took over Tibet.

> *When the Chinese secret police and army officers came into my country they tortured my friends. They killed them. I had been spirited away the night before but I knew they were killing my friends.*
>
> *I was very angry at these army men. And I knew that if I was to be the Dalai Lama I had to be rid of this anger. What did I do? I thought of Chinese army man's life.* [Here the Dalai Lama holds out his arm to use it as a time line.] Stroking his arm, he says: *"Here is the whole life of the Chinese army man. Here he is an infant [*at bicep*]. Here a small*

> *child then teenager going on first date [*moving down the arm toward elbow*]. Here is where he kills [near upper forearm]. But here [*moving down forearm towards his palm and fingers*] chance to be a good person again. All the rest of his life.*
>
> *By forgive I do not mean forget. People get in trouble with this. To forgive is a different thing than to forget. I will never forget what army men did to my friends.*

As well as books, films and social media, there are more specific websites that provide helpful information. With websites, you need to ensure that what you are reading is based on sound scientific thinking and proven success. Whenever you see an idea or therapy that might be helpful, do an Internet search for any "critique of X therapy" to see what those opposed to it are saying and draw your own conclusions.

Strategy and Practice

Name any books, films, or social media posts that have helped you with previous difficult times.

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Look at some of the resources in this book and pick one to look up online. Write down any useful information you get from the resource to help you now or in the future.

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Strategy 25 Mindfulness — Practice, Practice, Practice

You may look at mindfulness and give it a try for a while. Or you might understand it intellectually but decide it's not for you right now. Either decision is obviously okay. Just return to this decision in a month or so to see if it might be something worth trying for a few days.

We could continue to fill you with lots of information on how mindfulness helps Olympic athletes with their sports, helps victims after a crime, helps reduce anxiety in students, or builds a community of practitioners, and so on. But in the end, you have to decide to try and to practice.

Practice, practice, practice is for mindfulness but also for all the other strategies in this book, whether nurturing relationships, choosing to be happier more often, gratitude, and even cooking and cleaning.

This is a simple strategy to read about but not a particularly easy one to apply. So we won't add any more words so you have a few minutes perhaps, to try a mindful exercise from earlier in the book.

Strategy and Practice

Whether it is for mindfulness or one of the other strategies, take a few minutes now to practice, mindfully, one of the strategies.

Strategy 26
Financial Literacy

This is a strategy you typically only need to spend a block of time on once or twice a year — for the rest of your life.

As with everything, you need a Financial Literacy 101 course of self-study or take a workshop in your community. Ask around to see if there are any workshops planned at the university during November (Financial Literacy month in Canada) or in the community.

This webpage has a free book for young people you can download to get a handle on your financial literacy:

http://www.moneyandyouth.cfee.org/en/

The government of Canada has an extensive website that allows you to learn on your own. Take a module at a time to build up your financial understanding of what you need to know now as a student and later on.

https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/financial-literacy-programs.html

This webpage is specific to young people: ***https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/the-city.html***

Start with any of these sites and expand your knowledge as you need it. There are some basics everyone needs, including how to create and stick to a budget, how to save for the next stage of your life, how to pay off loans/debts, and more.

Strategy and Practice

1. Schedule to learn one or two modules/chapters from any of the resources listed above. You just need to get started. That's the hardest part. Once you start, you'll understand you are doing this for yourself. The more you know about finances now, the more money you'll have over the coming years for the things you need.

2. Look over the university website for any scholarships you may qualify for as well as any links to external scholarships. There are scholarships that do not receive any applications because students presume they

wouldn't win. It's worth the time to send in applications. The more applications you complete, the more 'cut and paste' you can do, as many ask for the same type of information. The more scholarship money you get, the less your financial stresses.

Strategy 27
Successful Resiliency Looks Like This

How do you know your efforts at the various strategies are successful? What does success look like?

Most research in the fields of resiliency, happiness, and gratitude look at what you are supposed to do and the general demographics of the people involved. Rarely do they provide you with specific examples of what success looks or feels like.

Haley Quinn in her June 26, 2017 article *"47 'little signs' you're recovering from anxiety"* does provide those examples. Here are a sampling from users of her themighty.com online community.

"Coming out from social withdrawal. When anxiety hits hard, I sometimes close off and shut people out. I get edgy and easily overwhelmed during episodes. When I find myself actively seeking out and talking to people in my life again, it means I am doing better. Cleaning my important personal spaces and being productive are also signs of improvement." — *Taziana B.*

"I have energy again! And it takes me by surprise, like a spring in my step and a confident stride. A smile across my face is real and relaxed. I feel brave." — *Cathy C.*

"I feel. I feel more emotions than just panic or hyper-focus. It can mean a genuine, therapeutic deep down cry, or a day full of seamless activity. It presents as sitting with my children and not noticing the mess we are making and just enjoying the moment. As well as acknowledging that I am feeling in that moment and not on survival autopilot." — *Brianna J.*

"I don't feel a surge of panic when my phone rings." — *Mark R.*

"I'm actually hungry. My anxiety causes severe appetite loss and nausea and can make food seem repulsive, so feeling hungry and being able to enjoy food is a little thing I appreciate literally every day." — *Gwendolyn R.*

"When I'm able to reflect back on whatever triggered my anxiety and I don't feel tense or guilty anymore. It helps to remind me that I am bigger than whatever I am facing and that it will pass as always." — *Alihanra G.*

"My muscles seem to relax. My breathing gets better. And my heart stops racing" — *Harry C.*

"I chose my clothes based on what I want, not on what I can use to make myself disappear. I take my hands out of my pockets. I can concentrate again. I sing under my breath." — *Caitlin M.*

"Not picking at my skin. When I feel anxious, I'm always picking. When I'm doing better, I leave it alone." — *Samantha M.*

"A Good Day Vs. a Bad Day with Anxiety? When my body no longer feels heavy and I'm not as irritable with people." — *Amanda F.*

"I can dream again. When I'm having an episode I find that I can't dream, but when I get a bit better I can." — *Cara H.*

"When I'm laughing again and I'm able to say, "You're OK." There's a sense of relief I feel when the anxiety passes. It feels like I'm floating sometimes." — *Em R.*

"When I walk out into the hallway of my apartment building without listening for doors or people before walking out the

door. When I can walk past someone without averting my gaze. When I can talk to someone without talking so fast they have to tell me to slow down and repeat myself. When I have to make a phone call and don't panic. When I can actually see my surroundings with no detachment. When I can focus on watching a movie without missing 90 percent of it because I was lost in thought." — *Julie S.*

"I am able to live in the moment, without thinking about what happened yesterday, what might happen tomorrow, what others might be thinking about me, or all the other things I 'should' be doing. Those moments, whether they last a couple minutes or a couple hours, are pure bliss." — *Lana R.*

"I can order my own food at restaurants without being too nervous." — *Marisa R.*

"I can watch TV or movies, follow the storyline and not over react. It's small but promising." — *Patricia D.*

"I remember my coping mechanisms! I usually just spiral, but remembering to stop and focus on my breath or count backwards from 100 by seven is a huge step in the right direction!" — *Paige M.*

"I start joking more with people and I don't take myself as seriously as I would mid-crisis." — *Hannah W.*

Strategy and Practice

How do you know when your efforts are working? Write some of them out. The physical effort of writing them down reinforces the strategies that led you to these successes.

Strategy 28
What Next? Repeat!

We get lost in trying to find the 'right answer' to our difficulties, our anxieties, and our depression. Is it mindfulness? Is it a specific therapy? Is it a change in our diet? Is it more exercise?

Yes (to any and all).

Our physical and mental health require many different approaches for us to be the person we want to me. Very few people want to be a couch potato with few friends. Most of us crave a sense of meaning and an intimate group of very close family and friends. To get that, we need to explore many different strategies until we zero in on the ones that help us the most.

So the answer to "what next?" is really, go back through the strategies in this book and continue to work at them.

Nurturing relationships requires daily practice.

Choosing to be happier more often requires daily practice.

Gratitude is an attitude that requires daily practice.

Mindfulness requires daily practice.

Although…it is only practice until it becomes a habit.

When you learn to ride a bike, you need to practice and be thoughtful about each of the steps otherwise you will fall. At some point, you just ride your bike.

When you learn human anatomy you need to memorize many definitions, processes (e.g., digestive process) and many interactions between the muscles, bones, nervous system, blood system, etc. And then you know it. It becomes second nature and you don't need to practice it any more.

So nurturing relationships, choosing to be happier more often, being grateful and mindful will become part of your personality. Your personality will draw in more people who want to be near you because you are nurturing, happier, grateful and mindful — that reinforces those very things you have practiced. It becomes a loop that you help create, that changes the world around the people within your circle — both the ones very close to you as well as the ones you meet in class or on a bus.

So that's it really — repeat the strategies that are most important to you until they become part of who you are. Then look for other strategies that can enhance your personality — to help you be more resilient and happier more often.

Strategy and Practice

Pick one or two lists from the book and see how they apply to you the first time you finish this book. After some time away, read/skim the book a second time and do the list(s) again. For example:

Thoughts to remember when you feel lost:

1. Always remember that your present situation is not your final destination.
2. Sometimes the bad things that happen in our lives put us directly on the path to the best things that will ever happen to us.
3. If you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree.
4. You can't start the next chapter if you keep rereading the last.
5. If it doesn't open, it's not your door.
6. Sometimes you need to step outside, get some air, and remind

yourself of who you are and where you want to be.

7. Sometimes you need to talk to a three-year-old just so you can understand life again.
8. Listen and silent are spelled with the same letters. Think about it.
9. Sometimes you have to stop thinking so much and just go where your heart takes you.
10. You don't have to have it all figured out to move forward.

Your 10 Rules for being Happier More Often (and Successful!)

This repeats the rules from earlier in the book. We will go from 10 down to number 1. Each rule is important in its own way so don't sneak ahead in the list. Each rule will help you choose to be happier more often starting today.

10. **S**mile and laugh more often. A 10-minute belly laugh massages your internal organs better than hours of quiet meditation.
9. **B**reathe slowly and deeply at least 3 times a day for 5-10 minutes. You can do this while you are working at your desk, driving your car, walking your dog, waiting in a line, etc.

8. **M**usic – listen, sing, write, or dance. Use energizing or relaxing music, depending on how you would like to be happy at that moment.
7. **R**elationships – nurture the ones you have; create new ones with people older and younger. If you study 10-12 hour a day, then make sure to nurture relationships with those around you. Enjoy their company. Find ways to include your most important people in your day. Life really is too short to waste your time being away from the people you care about the most.
6. **E**motional joy – find out what makes you smile, laugh, and feel peaceful and write down your favourite 10. Then do them more often. It could be watching your child sleep, sitting quietly on a park bench, watching a favourite comedy on TV, going for lunch or a walk with a dear friend you rarely see, sharing a family meal together more often, holding hands with your sweetie, eating some of Mom's homemade cookies or working with your Dad on a project. Whatever works for you, do it more often. Don't wait for retirement or for when you have more time.
5. **I**ntellectual interests – knowledge is power and power gives one a sense of

confidence and happiness. Find out about what you need to know to live a good life, as you define it. Learn about managing your finances instead of letting money manage you. Find out about what you need to do to stay healthy. How will you provide care to your parents, spouse, children, friends, or neighbours? Learn these things as you need them and teach others when they need the same knowledge and skills. Always look for the wonder in learning and teach what you learn to others. Inspire others through your experiences.

4. **P**hysically move around to release natural endorphins that make you feel good and to act as distractions. Even if you are stuck in one place, find ways to move your body and at your earliest chance, move it to a different place (e.g., home, forest, beach, playground) to benefit from the change of scene as well.
3. **P**ractice a life-affirming belief beyond yourself. Whether through religion, a more general spirituality or a love of nature, go beyond yourself so you have something to hold on to when you need that strength, courage, and persistence. Belief only in yourself or your family and friends may mean you

do not have the resources to struggle through really difficult times nor the comfort of feeling part of something bigger and better.

2. **A**pply ancient wisdom – We are not alone. We are not the first people to try and figure out the meaning of life or how to live a good life. Learn what other people have concluded after lifetimes of study and experiences. We have so much more in common with people of different cultures and from different centuries.
1. **H**appiermoreoften now – Put the other 9 rules to work starting now. Return to them often. When you reverse the order of the rules above you will get a HAPPIER MBS. This is a tongue-in-cheek way of saying there is so much BS in the world, find the true gems of how to enjoy your life every day; more often than you do now. When you do, you will be happier more often and have earned a Masters in Being Successful (MBS)! Congratulations!

H appier more often
A pply ancient wisdom
P ractice a life-affirming belief
P hysically move
I ntellectual interests
E motional joy
R elationships – nurture and create new ones

M usic
B reathe slowly and deeply
S mile and laugh more often!

There are so many ways of defining how to live your life. It is important that you create your own list. You can take from some of the lists in this book and from what you know works for you.

_____

_____

_____

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Strategy 29
Bonus: Math and Other Disciplines

In Strategy 13 we looked at memorization as a way to focus the mind. Other disciplines have similar effects. By focusing on certain things, one distracts the mind from worrisome, anxious thoughts.

For example, working on basic math problems in your head can help. Whether it is going through the times tables that most of us no longer memorize, to working out word puzzles, mind-bending questions or playing a strategic game of some sort. All of these activities focus our minds on something that interests us (we choose what to do after all) while distracting us from other thoughts.

One high school student was particularly bad at math. Not because he wasn't smart enough but because he was bored and distracted by other activities that his math class seemed almost irrelevant. He barely passed.

His overall marks were just good enough to get into university. Once there he took a survey course that gives you an overall look at what you can learn. He discovered he loved math when numbers

were attached to dollar signs ($). In other words he loved money. He loved budgeting, analyzing spread sheets, and doing high level formulaic predictions of financial trends. He became a chartered account and retired at age 52.

Another student was also very bad at math because he just didn't think he could do it. He didn't continue his studies beyond high school and went into the construction business as an apprentice.

He continues to think he is not good at math, some 40 years later even though he can build you a house from the foundation up, have all his measurements using fractions as small as 11/16th of an inch to build perfectly aligned walls at 90 degree angles. To think he is not good at math is just wrong but you cannot convince him of that. He was told this as a child and he continues to believe it.

These examples are to highlight that teachers can be wrong about your skills. Parents can be wrong about what they think their children can learn. Many students who thought they were not good at something later find out that needing that skill in their profession means they have to get good at it and do get good at it. They end up knowing more about the skill than the adults who told them they weren't any good at it.

You can't do every job you might like. If you are tall, you can't be an astronaut for example. The physical size of the capsules are just not big enough. Not everyone can sing well enough to make a living at it nor can everyone become a great commercial artist. Not everyone can be a physician or a lawyer or an accountant — thank goodness.

We need to do what we enjoy and what we are good at. But we all are more competent than we might think. So do not give up on a dream just because someone told you you are not smart enough. Use this strategy to develop the knowledge and skills to do the job or the hobby that you love. It may take longer if you do not have a 'natural' talent for something — like the construction contractor not good at math supposedly. No one asks a professional if they completed their training in 4 years or 6 years. They just want the job done. So take the time to learn what you need to learn.

P.S. If you are a mature student who has raised a family, you are good at lots of things that do not get a grade in school. You have had to do budgeting, project management, cold calling for services, public speaking, conflict resolution, art, music and dance, and so much more.

Never underestimate the skills learned in 'real life.'

Let us look at some specific skills to use in distracting your mind (or just for fun!).

The more things you do with your brain muscle, the more you will improve your memory, your creative skills, and your enjoyment.

There are many good books and websites that teach both children and adults memory magic. There are resources on math tricks and card tricks that involve using your memory, slight-of-hand tricks and others. There are puzzle books, mathematics problem-solving websites, and mystery novels that require you to remember things you have read. There are resources on tricking your brain into working harder than you are used to. Do an Internet search to find videos and materials to improve your memory and entertain your friends and colleagues.

The following are some mind games that stretch your intellectual muscle and memory.[36]

[36] van Bommel, (2005).

Math Magic

You will need two pieces of paper or recipe cards. On one piece of paper you will write three 20-digit numbers. Give someone the list of numbers and tell them you have memorized all three 20-digit numbers and would like their help in testing your memory skills. Ask them to tell you which number they would like you to write down on your piece of paper or recipe card (i.e., the first, second, or third number). When you have written it down, pass your paper to them to make sure you have done it correctly.

I will give you an example of one such number and you will write out the other two for yourself. My number is:

29,101,123,583,145,943,707. Can you figure out how I came up with this number?

The trick is to pick any two numbers for your first numbers. In my case they are 29, for my birth date. Add those two numbers together. If the total is 10 or more just write down the last number. In this case 2 + 9 = 11 so write down 1 after the comma 29,1. Continue to add the last two numbers to continue until you get 20 numbers. Add along with me:

2 + 9 = 11	29,1
9 + 1 = 10	29,10
1 + 0 = 1	29,101,
0 + 1 = 1	29,101,1
1 + 1 = 2	29,101,12
1 + 2 = 3	29,101,123,
2 + 3 = 5	29,101,123,5
3 + 5 = 8	29,101,123,58
5 + 8 = 13	29,101,123,583,

(keep going to 20 numbers)

Once you understand my number you can pick your own two numbers to start with. Of course you can pick numbers that are longer or shorter than 20-digits. Your friend will be very impressed

Longest Word Memory Tester

Do you know the longest word in the English language? People who grew up in the 1960s might think it was "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" (from the film M*ary Poppins*) but they would be wrong. For a while many of us were going around thinking we knew the longest word was “antidisestablishmentarianism" (28 letters) which meant people who opposed the dis-establishment of a church or religious body. This word was used in the

1860s in Ireland when Prime Minister Gladstone disestablished the Irish Church (Protestant). Isn't trivia fascinating?

The actual longest word, according to Webster's Eighth Dictionary is:

pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis

which is pronounced:

NOO mon oh UL tra MY cro SCOP ic SIL i co vol CA no CONE ee OH sis.

This practically useless word will impress your friends and doctors especially when you say it knowingly and correctly. It means a lung disease caused by a tear (CONIOSIS) of the lung (PNEUMONO) that miners get when they breathe ULTRAMICROSCOPIC particles of sand (SILICOn) as they dig through VOLCANO rock.

The second longest word is more practical to end this section. It is:

“floccinaucinihilipilification”. This word (29 letters and so just beats out antidisestablishmentarianism) means deciding something is worthless! Have fun with both.

Strategy and Practice

Do a quick online search for a math quiz or word quiz or brain teaser. Write it here to help you remember it. Demonstrate your skills to family, friends and fellow students.

Strategy 30
Explore Further Resources

Universities across Canada have extensive resources to help you with your mental and physical health, academic success, and personal skills development. We ranked the top 12 websites alphabetically:

Acadia U https://counsel.acadiau.ca/Counsel-main.html
McGill U http://mcgill.ca/counselling/getstarted/mental-health/stress
McMaster U https://wellness.mcmaster.ca/counselling/#1498568969211-8113cfa7-4a5c
Memorial U http://www.mun.ca/counselling/personal/
Ontario College of Art and Design U (OCAD) https://www.ocadu.ca/services/health-and-wellness/services.htm
Ryerson U https://www.ryerson.ca/mentalhealth/students/
University of Alberta https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students/counselling/about-us
University of BC https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness
University of Guelph https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/counselling/mental-health-resources
University of Manitoba http://umanitoba.ca/student/?utm_source=FactsandFigures
University of New Brunswick http://umanitoba.ca/student/?utm_source=FactsandFigures
University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) http://studentlife.uoit.ca/mentalhealth/index.php

Some innovative services and ideas include:

A First Year Transition Plan with monthly advice as to what students can expect in the way of stress or anxiety and what services at the university might help (UOIT Student Life handout).

Lists of helpful iPhone and Android Apps (McGill University, Memorial).

Extensive online resources (e.g. U of Alberta, McMaster, Memorial, U of Guelph)

A university safe house for temporary housing for students at risk (Ryerson)

Affiliation with a university hospital/clinic for grad students to provide free services (e.g., U of Alberta, UBC, UNB)

Some universities also produce Resource Guides for their students, For example, Western University has a Mental Health and Wellness Resource Guide for Undergraduate and Graduate Students. Students can download a copy.

Ryerson has their So They're Off to University guide for parents while Concordia University of Edmonton has their Thunder Storm 2017 Survival Guide. OCAD has a Student Distress Guide

A much more detailed guide called Transitions for first year students was developed by Dr. Stan Kutcher, M.D., FRCPC, the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health, IWK Health Centre, Nova Scotia [www.teenmentalhealth.org]. This 94 page online and downloadable guide looks at choosing classes, moving in/out, finances, relationships, sexuality, managing stress, mental health and disorders.

Other websites:

eMentalHealth.ca provides anonymous, confidential and trustworthy information 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. They are a non-profit initiative of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) for their children, youth and family members.

Their screening tool page is very thorough and was accessed on January 27, 2018: http://www.ementalhealth.ca/index.php?m=surveyList

The screening tools are for children, youth and adults and include:

Addictions
- Substance abuse for adolescents
- Depression for adolescents
- Video game addiction

Anxiety
- Anger
- Anxiety in children/youth
- Obsessive compulsive disorders in children and youth
- PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in children and youth
- Social anxiety

Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD/ADHD)
- ADHD in adults
- Lead poisoning in children

Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Social challenges

Depression
- Depression in adolescents
- Seasonal Affective disorders

Eating Disorders including Anorexia and Bulimia

Mental Health in General
- Happiness
- Relationships
- Self-Compassion

NOTE: Screening tools are just that – a tool to help you decide for yourself, if you are uncomfortable enough that you would like to talk to a mental health professional about your concerns. These tools are not for self-diagnosis and, therefore, self-treatment. Self-medicating is as dangerous as determining that you do not need professional help based on a screening tool when inside you know that something is just not right. When in doubt, talk to someone: family, friends, and a mental health professional.

There are many online resources on this website as well: The A-Z of Mental Health Conditions and Topics on eMentalHealth is based on regions across Canada. Also information sheets on many aspects of mental health and mental illness.

Healthy Minds1Healthy Campuses is a web portal (accessed February 11, 2018: https://healthycampuses.ca/about-us/our-history/ that is a collaboration between the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information by the Canadian Mental Health Association of BC.

Community members include (but are not limited to): student service professionals, students, faculty and staff, administrators, community organizations and government partners. Includes institutional support from the University of Victoria Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research and the BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services.

They post current research on issues of mental health. Here are a few samples from their page of posts relating to first year students: https://healthycampuses.ca/?s=first-year+university+students

Posted March 14, 2017: *Sharp decline in mental health of many first-year university students,*

even with incentive: study highlights that students leaving the scheduled routine of high school reduce their physical activity levels at university while psychological stresses increases when faced with the new challenges of university life.

Posted September 6, 2017: Ryerson University orientation focuses on making mental health accessible. Akeisha Lari, coordinator of student life program said: "It's really important for students to get to feel like they actually belong here because what we've found is that if students feel like they belong on campus they are more likely to stay on campus and finish their degrees here."

Posted March 31, 2017: Guelph university execs check door-to-door on student mental health. "In the aftermath of [four deaths by suicide in the academic year], the university's Residence Life team, which runs the school's on-campus housing, decided to dust off an old program in which faculty members join their staff, go door-to-door to check on students' health and hand out information on various supports available….The school's president, Franco Vaccarino, and provost Charlotte Yates, were among the 80 people who knocked on doors this week. The group also included deans, senior faculty members, alumni and students who work at the residences."

Posted January 31, 2017: Don't be so hard on yourself! UBC Study on first-year student stress: "Our study suggests the psychological stress students may experience during the transition between high school and university can be mitigated with self-compassion because it enhances the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which in turn, enriches well-being," said Katie

Gunnell, the study's lead author and a junior research scientist at Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute in Ottawa. The study was part of Gunnell's PhD work at UBC."

Posted September 11, 2017: New student mental health program to be piloted on seven Canadian campuses: "The Inquiring Mind is adapted from existing evidence-based programs, the Road-to-Mental-Readiness and The Working Mind and contains three main components: stigma reduction, building resiliency and the Mental Health Continuum Model….Specifically, the Mental Health Continuum Model categorizes mental health on a simple colour scale: green (healthy), yellow (reacting), orange (injured) and red (ill). "This allows for a discussion without formal labels," explains Szeto. "And it stresses that a person can move from green to red, and back again."

Posted August 9, 2017: Student health and wellbeing focus of new UBC course: *"The course is for first-year students, when they're making that big transition to university," says Sally Stewart, senior instructor in the School of Health and Exercise Sciences. "We want to give students the tools and techniques to really thrive in a university environment. We already offer health programs – human kinetics, nursing, and facets of health and wellbeing in psychology courses, for example – but this course is more for students to develop health competencies.*"

WEBSITES: There are literally hundreds of reputable websites (and many more that one should be very cautious of) that deal with mental health, mental illness, coping strategies, programs, help lines and more.

Here are a sample. One could spend a whole project trying to evaluate each of these only to find that 100 new sites have gone up in the meantime. Be cautious what you accept as good for you. Do some comparison looking. For specific techniques, always do a search for websites or media articles that have strong opposition to those techniques.

For more extensive resource lists, useful iPhone and Android Apps, podcasts, videos, self-awareness quizzes, handouts and more check out the top 12 university websites under "U."

UOIT Mindsight: To learn more about mental illnesses: http://mymindsight.uoit.ca

ABCs of Mental Health: http://www.sickkidscmh.ca/ABC/Parent-Resource/Professional-Development.aspx

BC Anxiety: This website is recommended by the UOIT Mental Health and Career Counseling Centre: https://www.anxietybc.com

CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) has many online resources including a short video on transitioning from high school to college/university and hundreds of publications: http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/for_parents/Pages/default.aspx, http://www.camh.ca/en/education/about/camh_publications/Pages/default.aspx

Campus Mental Health is an Ontario government sponsored website for colleges and universities to 'enhance capacity to support student mental health and well-being" http://campusmentalhealth.ca/resources/

Canadian Association of Colleges and University Student Services: http://campusmentalhealth.ca/resources/ has an inventory for campus mental health environments. Their guide: Post-Secondary Student Mental Health: Guide to a Systemic

Approach—supporting the creation of a campus community that is deeply conducive to transformative learning and mental health can be downloaded for free at: http://cacuss-campusmentalhealth.ca/pdf/PSSMH-Guide.pdf

Canadian Mental Health Association's self-awareness quizzes: sometimes people use these self-awareness tools to determine whether they could benefit from therapy or when they can't afford to go to a therapist for a diagnosis. However, these quizzes are just simple tools – to get the real benefit of a long-term observation by a professional is the only way to get a definitive diagnosis.

Mental Heath Meter: https://cmha.ca/mental-health-meter

Work/Life Balance Quiz: https://cmha.ca/work-life-balance-quiz

Stress Index: https://cmha.ca/whats-your-stress-index

11 Myths about Mental Illness: https://reddeer.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/TOP-11-MYTHS-ABOUT-MENTAL-ILLNESS.pdf

Centre for Disease Control (USA): https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/

Cleveland Clinic, a renowned, patient first facility https://my.clevelandclinic.org

Council of Ontario Universities (http://cou.on.ca/blog/lets-talk-about-mental-illness/) has online resources to help students deal with mental health and mental illness including guides and materials on academic accommodations, translated materials, mental health and well-being course materials, and specific programs at various universities addressing mental health needs of students. One example is their Accessible Campus portal with information, tools and references to help students with

accessibility issues: http://www.accessiblecampus.ca

www.FindHelp.ca (or dial 211 on telephone)

Child Mind Institute www.childmind.org

Girls Health www.GirlsHealth.gov

Glenn Close: founder Bring Change 2 Mind: www.bringchange2mind.org

Internet Mental Health (www.mentalhealth.com) is a recommended site with information on many different disorders and their treatments, information on many psychiatric medications, and hundreds of reference articles from popular and professional publications. www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/myths-facts

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) https://www.hrsa.gov

The Healthy Aboriginal: www.thehealthaboriginal.net

Jack.org a national (American) network of young leaders on mental health: www.jack.org

The LEAP Project is an Alberta program of the Canadian Institute of Natural and Integrative Medicine (CINIM) to build resiliency: http://www.leapproject.com/index.php/main/nologin

Mayo Clinic, a renowned patient first facility https://www.mayoclinic.org

MHA: Mental Health America www.nmha.org

Medscape (www.Medscape.com) primarily a health news site for professionals but also has patient information section

Mental Health Helpline and Webchat is an Ontario Government sponsored 24/7 service and operated by ConnexOntario web portal that offers free and confidential service information for people experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs, mental health or gambling. http://www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca/Home/Quizzes?Length=4 People go online or call (1.866.531.2600), chat online, email and visit

their directory of services.

Mind Your Mind is a program of Connex Ontario Health Services: https://mindyourmind.ca/about/about-mindyourmind

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario that provides resources, quizzes, fact sheets and peer support groups. http://www.mooddisorders.ca/sites/mooddisorders.ca/quiz2/checkup.php

NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness for family and friends: www.nami.org

National Institutes of Health (NIH) https://www.nih.gov

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) https://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml

National Institute of on Drug Abuse (NIDA) https://www.drugabuse.gov

National Library of Medicine https://www.nlm.nih.gov

National Suicide Prevention Resource Centre www.edc.org/projects/national_suicide_prevention_resource_center

Network of Care www.networkofcare.org/home.cfm

Office of Women's Health https://www.womenshealth.gov

Smart Phone Apps: Check university (under "U") websites for current apps.

Stop Bullying www.StopBullying.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) https://www.samhsa.gov

To Write Love On Her Arms www.TWLOHA.com

Surgeon General of the United States (www.surgeongeneral.gov) with comprehensive reports on child and adolescent mental health issues.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) https://www.hhs.gov

U.S. National Library of Medicine (www.nlm.nih.gov) includes free access to world's largest comprehensive medical database.

YouTube: Kati Morton is an example of the type of online videos by therapists to help explain their field and provide resources for those experiencing mental health issues or those who want to help them. This is not an endorsement of this site – just an example. https://www.katimorton.com/katis-videos/

WebMD Health: www.webmd.com -- reliable source on health information.

Last Thoughts: Nurturing, Happier More Often, Gratitude, Mindfulness and Resilience

If you finish this book by saying: Well this was pretty basic stuff. Anyone could have written this. BRAVO!

Anyone could write this stuff because it is simple to understand, if not always easy to do. The usefulness of this book however, will come out of asking yourself, do I practice these basics? If so, which ones? Which don't I practice and what is stopping me from doing what I believe is best for me? Which of these ideas in this book make sense to me; which do not?

Why?

How would you write this book differently?

Why?

What are some of your stories that go with each topic? How could you help other people and yourself through your stories and those of people you know? Use this book as an excuse to do some thinking, talking and writing for yourself and for others.

Your have three choices now:

1. Choose to do nothing different for now and live life as it comes–your time to try different things may not be now.
2. Choose to be happier more often.
3. Choose to find other answers (and questions).

Enjoy whichever choice you make.

A Last Look at some Ancient Wisdom

There is no single right way to choose to be more resilient and happier. Recognizing each as a choice you make will get you started!

Here are some ancient wisdoms that may also help you:

Wisdom #1: Relationships are more important than good health, great vacations, and lots of money or prestige.

Wisdom #2: Words that divide us, harm us. There is no US and THEM – there is only US. We are all members of the human family and we cannot and should not be divided by how we look or act or by what we achieve in life.

Wisdom #3: Love and happiness, like fear and hatred, are choices we make. Don't let someone else tell you how to feel or how to live your life if these ways are harmful to others.

Wisdom #4: Concentrate on doing what is possible and doing that in positive ways. Do not concentrate on what is not possible as this drains your energy to do much of anything good in your life.

Wisdom #5: Learn from others who have spent their lives examining wisdom and how it applies to our daily living.

If you need one last piece of homework

before starting at the beginning of the book again, write out your list of most useful strategies and how you will apply them starting today.

Strategy	**How I will practice/ use this strategy**

How You Can Help Make This Book More Useful

You've gotten this far. Well done!

Now you can help others with what you have learned. You can also help us.

Please contact us with your ideas of how to improve the next edition of this book. This book is to help students mostly and also faculty and staff. The more practical feedback we get, the better the next version of this book will be.

Also, if you have suggestions of how else we can help students find ways to recover faster, feel better and push forward, please let us know.

harry@legacies.ca

References

The following references are only a few of the many excellent resources that you can find in your local libraries and book stores. You can also look for journal articles, magazine reports, films, videos and audio clips. Keep in mind how much you can learn from the people you know. Talk to older and younger people.

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Brashich, Audrey D. (2006). *All made up.* New York: Walker and Company

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