

Enhancing Well Being in Health Care Providers: Mindfulness and Acceptance Practices

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Series Introduction by Matcheri Keshavan MD

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New England (HHS Region 1)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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At the time of this presentation, Tom Coderre served as Acting Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use at SAMHSA. The opinions expressed herein are the views of the speakers, and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this presentation is intended or should be inferred.

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The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

Mental Health Self-Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic for Health Care Workers and First Responders



Resilience

Health is a balance

Risk Factors



Level of Risk



- Covid risk, illness in self/ loved ones,
- Medical illness
- Burnout/ job loss, closed schools
- Sleeplessness, sedentariness
- Social distancing, Loneliness
- Fear, Misinformation
- Stigma

Pandemic and stress

Protective factors

Risk

Resilience





Vaccines

Integrated care

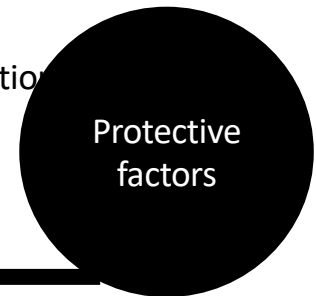
Exercise

Sleep hygiene

Enhancing social connections

Limit overinformation

It is OK to talk



Reducing stress
and enhancing
protective factors

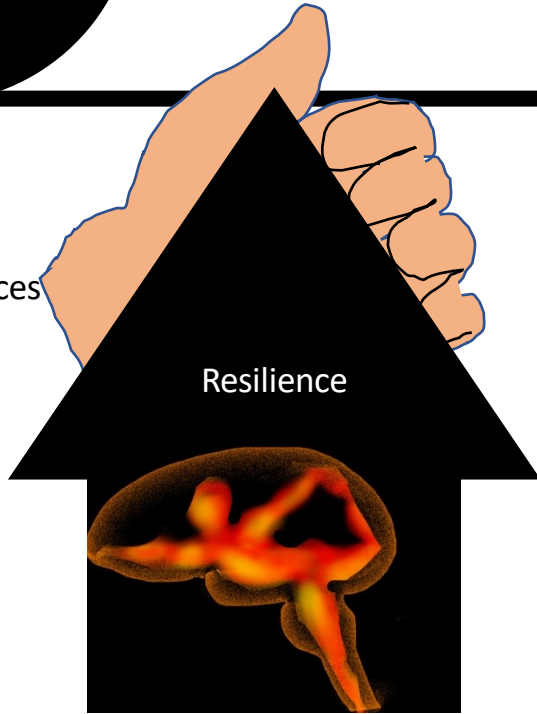




Building resilience



- Yoga
- Mindfulness practices
- Acceptance
- Engagement

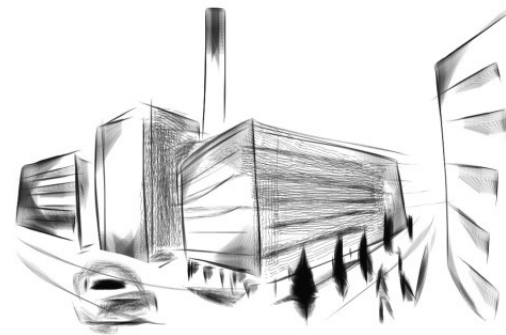


MHTTC Wellness series: building resilience

- Acceptance and Commitment (Friedman-Yakoobian) 5/25/2021
- Yoga (Varambally, Bhargav, and Gangadhar) 6/15, 6/17
- Mindfulness based resilience building (DeTore and colleagues)
- Sleep hygiene (Cunningham)
- Enhancing positivity (Yen)

Other upcoming topics:

- Music and wellness
- Substance abuse
- Meditation



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Matcheri Keshavan MD, Raquella Mesholam-Gately PhD, Rachal Hegde MS

Enhancing
Well Being in
Health Care
Providers:
Mindfulness
and
Acceptance
Practices

Overview:

What is Acceptance and
Commitment Therapy
(ACT)?

Overview of ACT practices

How to use ACT practices
to enhance wellbeing and
cope with pandemic stress

What is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)?

- Incorporates acceptance and mindfulness strategies to help disentangle from difficult thoughts and feelings
- In order to do things that you most value



What is the goal of ACT?

“Creating a rich, full and meaningful life while accepting the pain that inevitably goes with it.”

Harris (2009) *Act Made Simple*, New Harbinger Publications, Inc., p 7.

Type in chat:

During the past year, what has caused you physical or emotional pain at work?



What have
you tried to
get rid of
painful
emotions?



Distraction?



Opting out?




Thinking?




Substances?

Did these work short-term and long-term?

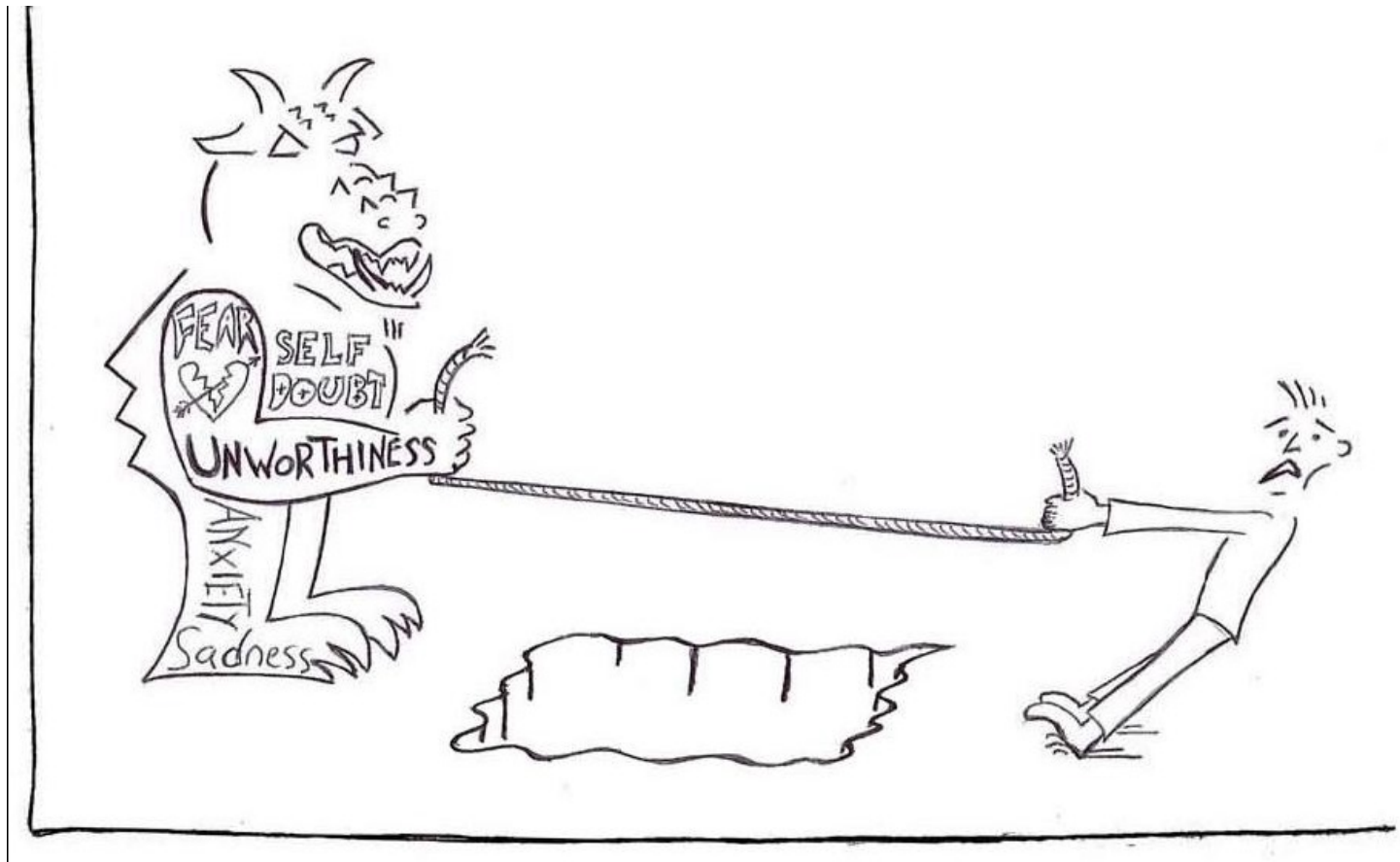


Have any of
these strategies
come with
costs?

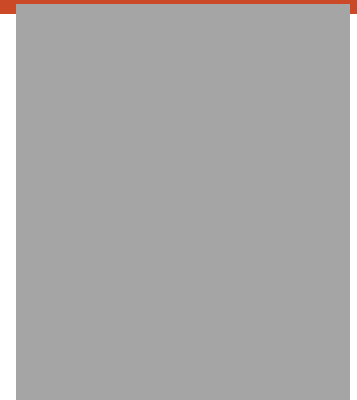
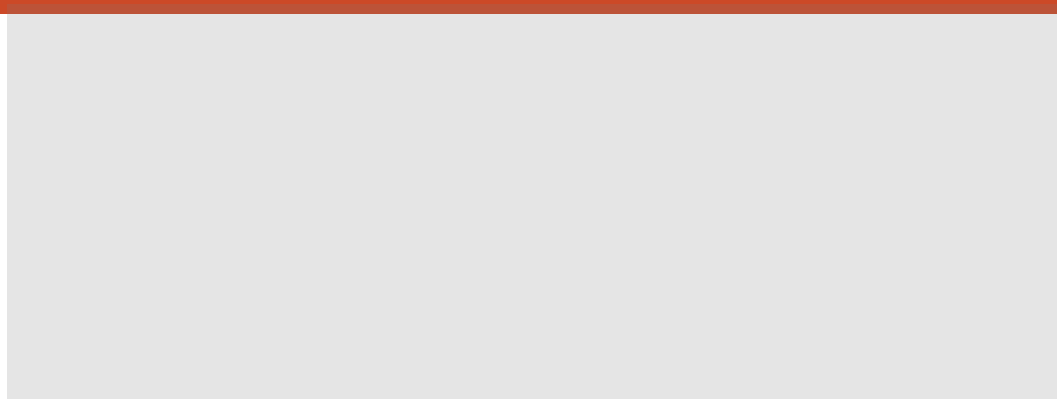
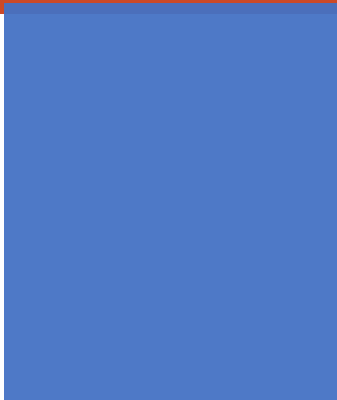


What happens when you struggle with pain that inevitably shows up in a rich, full and meaningful career?

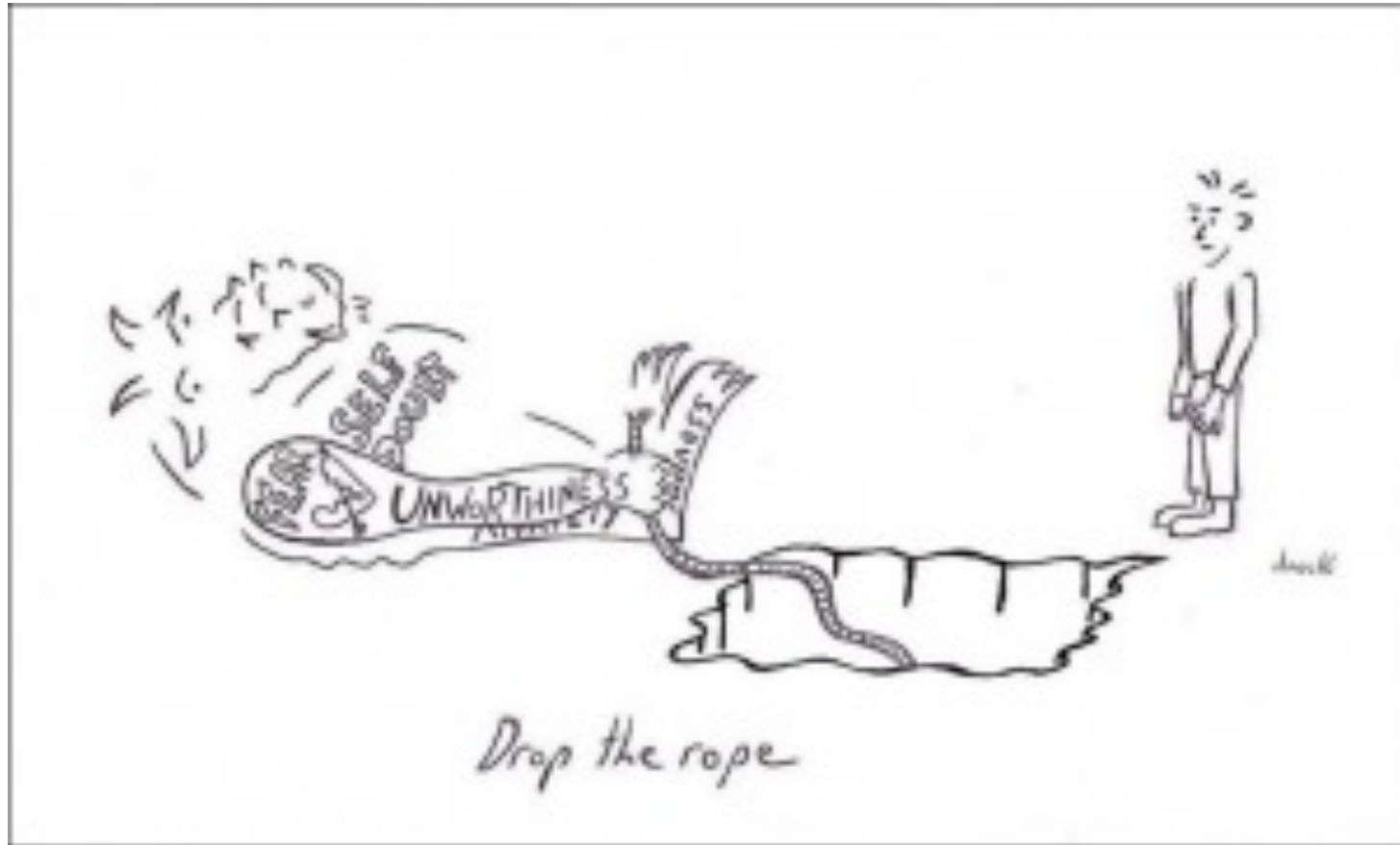
The Control-Agenda/ Unwillingness/ Experiential Avoidance



What's the alternative to
struggling to control
emotions?



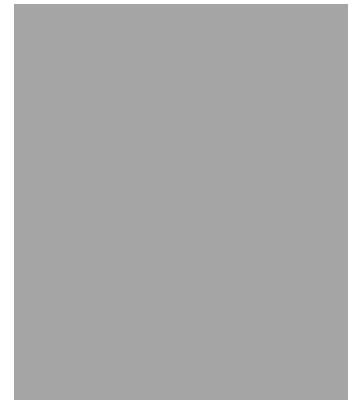
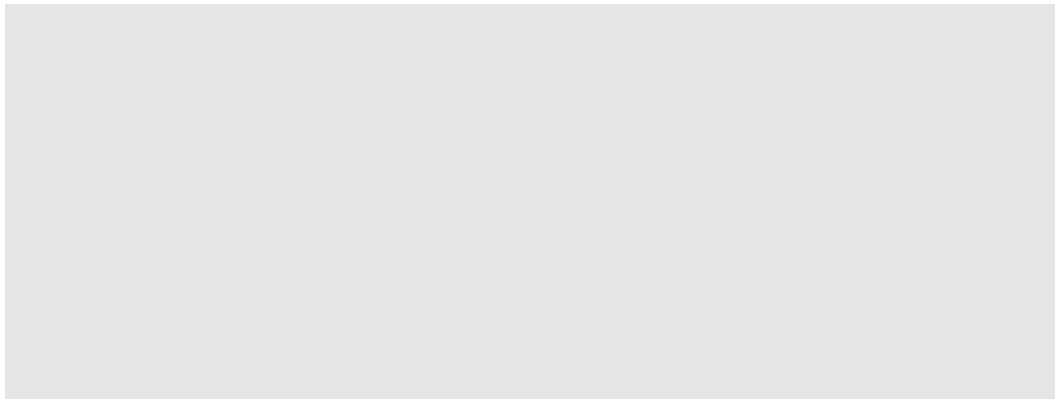
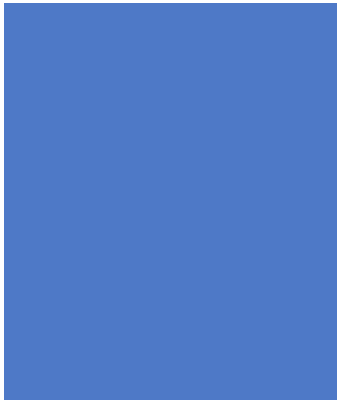
Willingness/ Acceptance/ Space

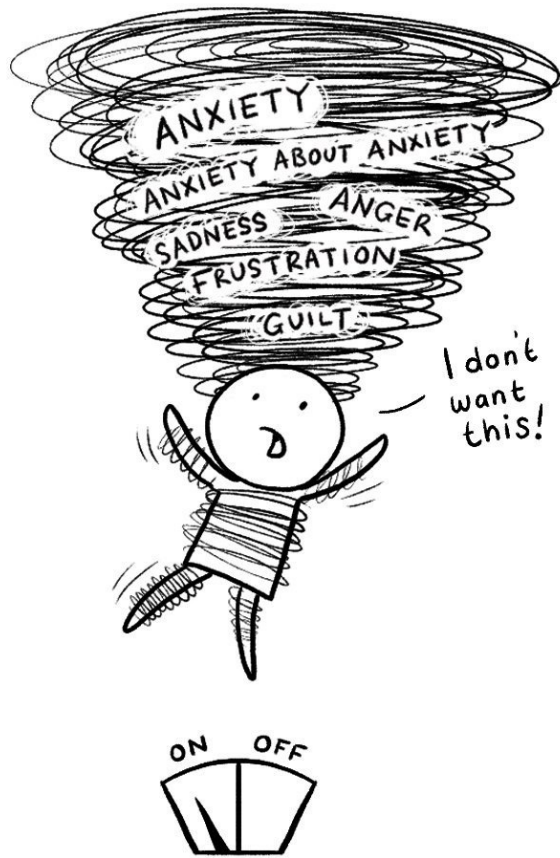




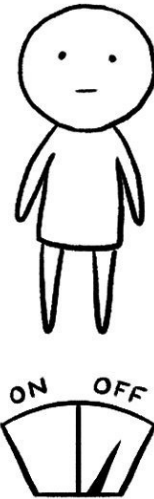
Maria – “I don’t know why I can’t concentrate anymore.”

What could dropping the rope look like for Maria?





Here's anxiety
I do not want it
or like it but I'm not
going to struggle
with it



THE STRUGGLE SWITCH
THE MORE WE STRUGGLE THE WORSE IT GETS

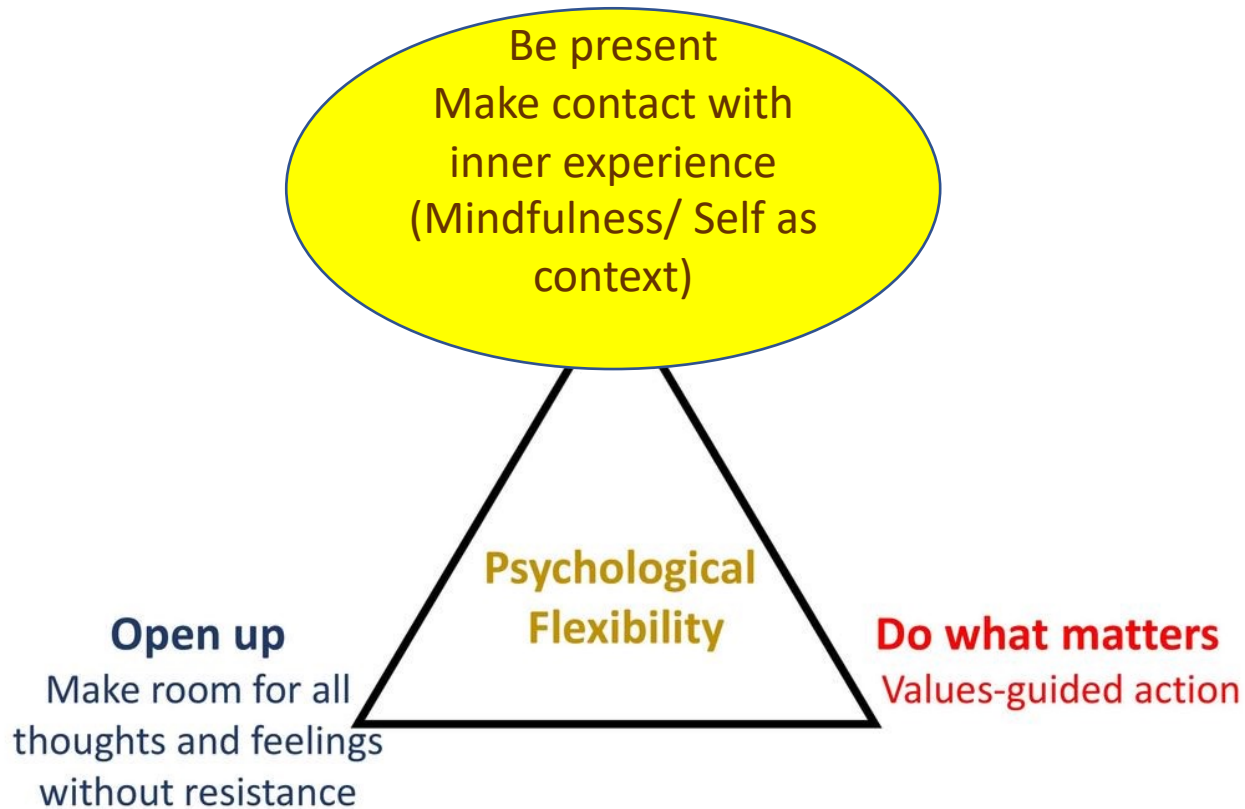
Making
space for
difficult
internal
experiences
while taking
action
towards
values

ACT Practices



*Harris, R. (2009). *ACT made simple*. Oakland: New Harbinger

ACT Practices



*Harris, R. (2009). *ACT made simple*. Oakland: New Harbinger

Mindfulness/ Present Moment Awareness



Paying attention on purpose to the present moment, without judgment.

Some Present Moment Mindfulness Exercises

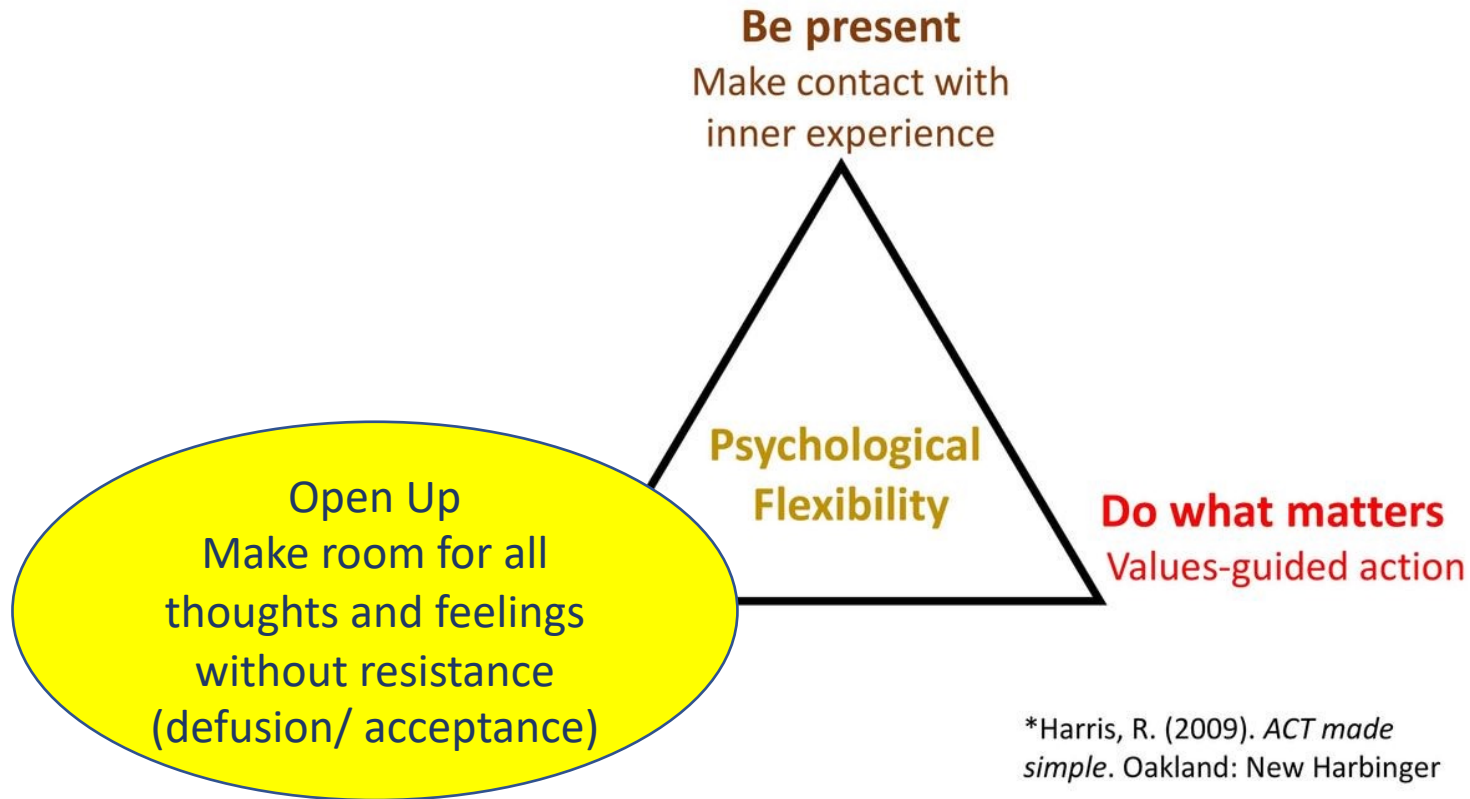
- Paying attention to breath
- Body Scan
- Clap and notice how long sensation lingers
- Listening to music with full attention
- Playing with pet with full attention
- Mindfulness concentration games

Self as observer separate from experiences



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz_nexLqY_8

ACT Practices



*Harris, R. (2009). *ACT made simple*. Oakland: New Harbinger

What is acceptance/ willingness?

- Allowing thoughts/ feelings/ internal experiences to be as they are
- Opening up /making room – dropping the struggle
- Investing energy and time into what can be changed

A black and white graphic with the Serenity Prayer text. The text is arranged in a vertical stack on a black background. The words 'SERENITY', 'COURAGE', and 'WISDOM' are in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. The surrounding text is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The entire graphic is framed by a thin white border.

GOD GRANT ME THE
SERENITY
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS
I CANNOT CHANGE
COURAGE
TO CHANGE THE
THINGS I CAN AND
WISDOM
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

What acceptance is not:

Passively accepting
a bad life situation
rather than taking
action to change it

“Bucking up”

A technique

Acceptance is a process that involves practicing
being willing to make room for thoughts/
feelings/ internal experiences that come up
while doing things that matter.

Pain vs. Suffering



YOU CAN'T GET RID OF YOUR FEARS...
BUT YOU CAN LEARN TO LIVE WITH THEM



<https://www.thecareerpsychologist.com/tug-of-war-with-the-anxiety-monster/>

Cognitive Fusion:

Fixed beliefs, rules, judgments that seem like self-evident truth to an individual and influence their willingness to engage in valued actions.

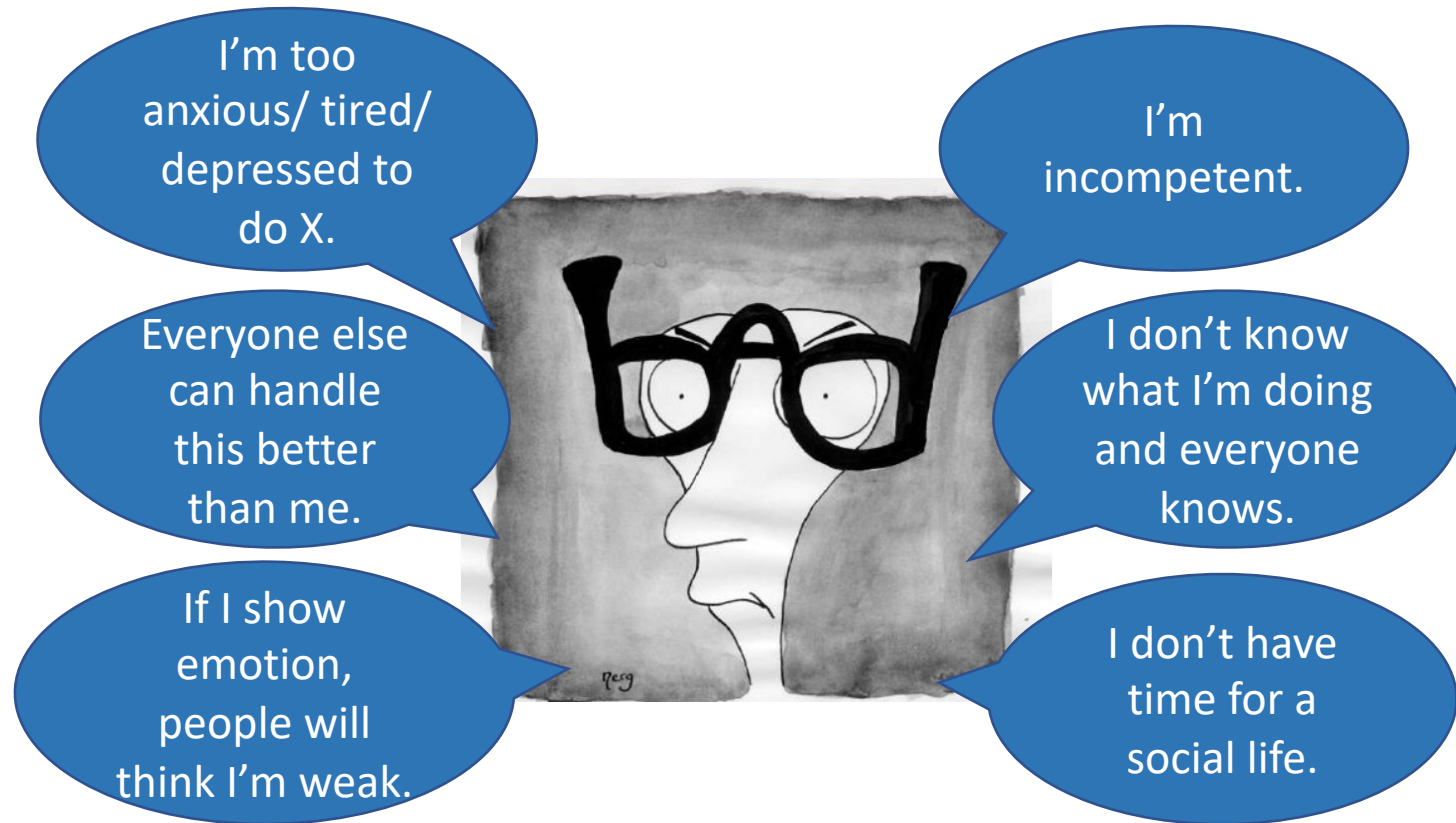


Illustration from Ciarrochi & Mercer (2005)

Noticing the thoughts: (Try this out)

- Think of a nasty belief or judgment about yourself that has shown up for you recently (i.e., I am incompetent)
- Focus on it (repeat it out loud or in your mind and fuse with it) for 30 sec
- Now think of that judgment again, but this time add this phrase first
- “I’m having the thought that _____”
- Now add, “I’m noticing I’m having the thought that ____”

Defusion exercises:



Noticing what your mind is telling you

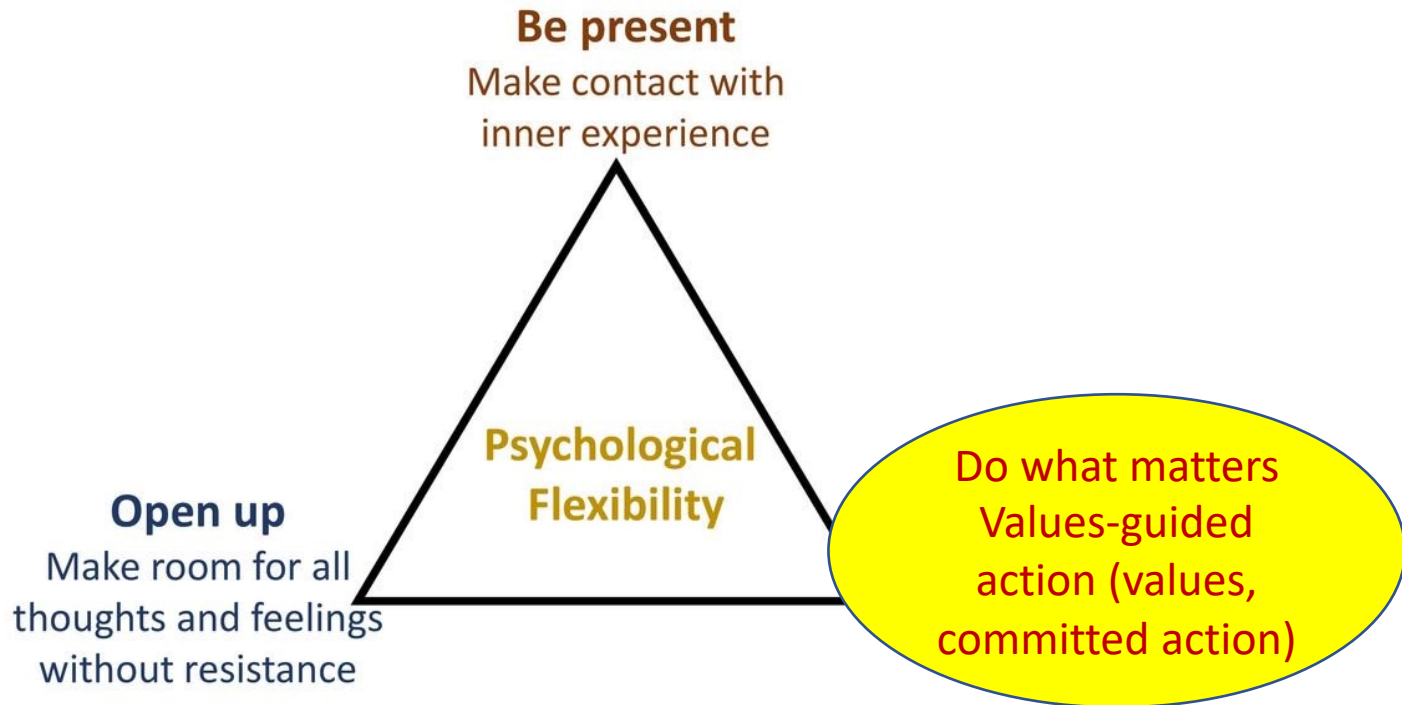


Ask yourself - How useful is it to get all caught up in what my mind is telling me right now?



How long have I had these fused beliefs? Are there early life experiences that have contributed to developing these rules/ judgments/ beliefs?

ACT Practices




*Harris, R. (2009). *ACT made simple*. Oakland: New Harbinger

Values vs. Goals



Values = directions.
Goals = destinations.

Living Your Values 

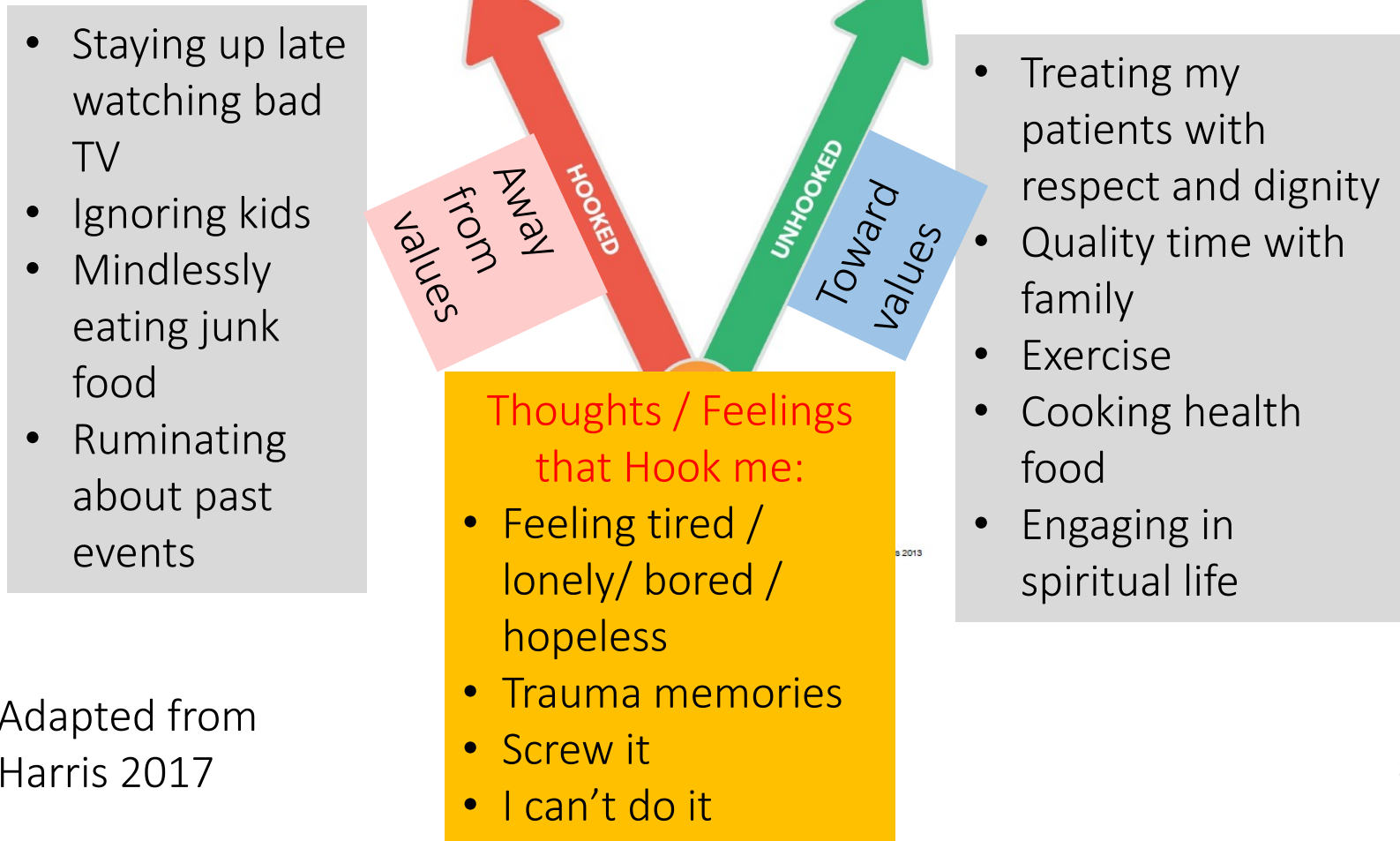
When you are living by these values, how will you:

- *Treat yourself?*
- *Treat others?*
- *Treat your body?*
- *Treat your work/education?*
- *Treat your interests/hobbies?*
- *Treat the world around you?*

Miracle Question



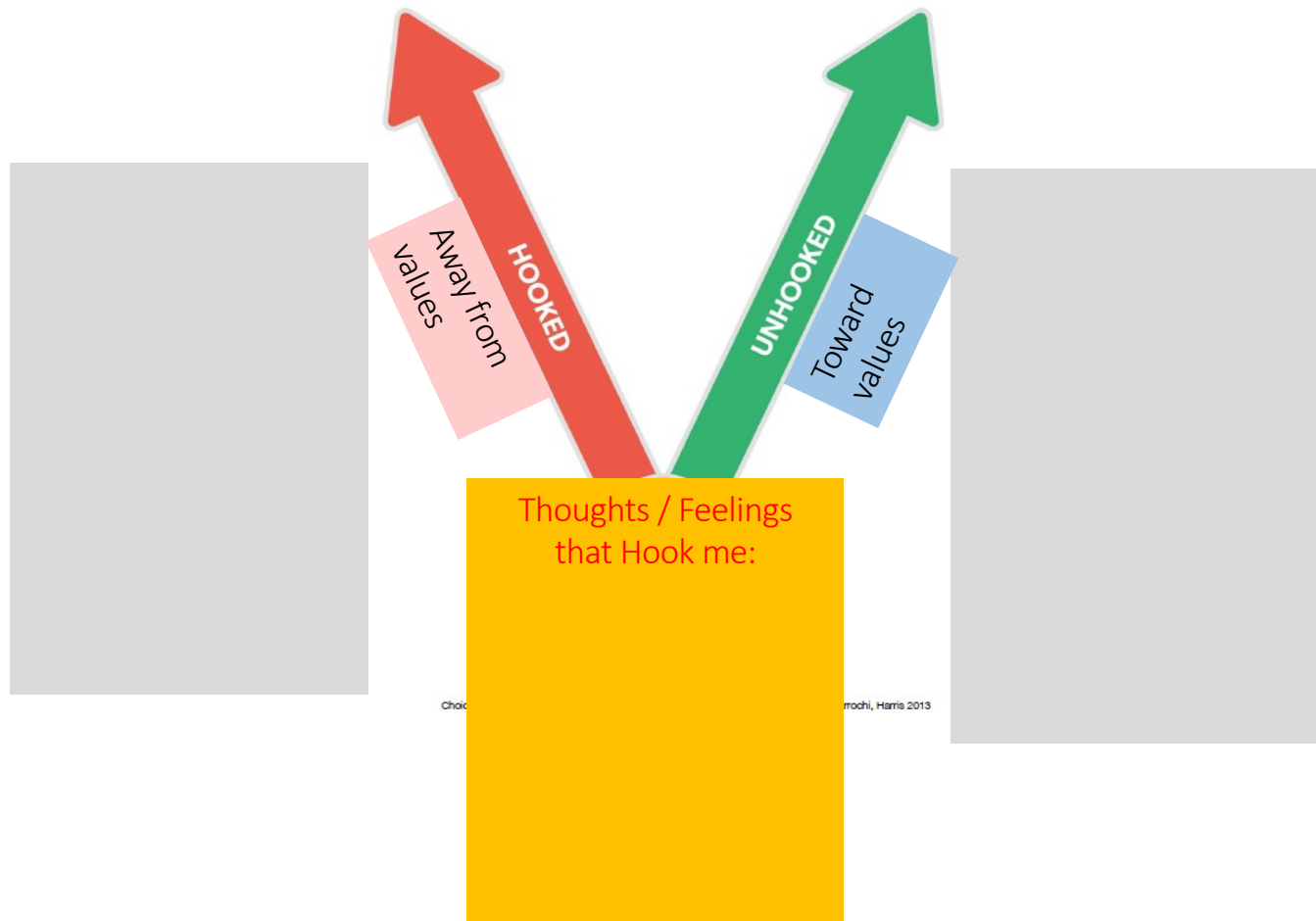
What actions do you value? Choice Point Exercise



Adapted from
Harris 2017

What actions do you value? Choice Point Exercise

Adapted from
Harris 2017



Choice Point Exercise, Harris 2013

Doing what matters includes cultivating time for rest and play



“If we want to live a wholehearted life, we have to become intentional about cultivating sleep and play, and about letting go of exhaustion as a status symbol and productivity as self-worth.”

Brene’ Brown

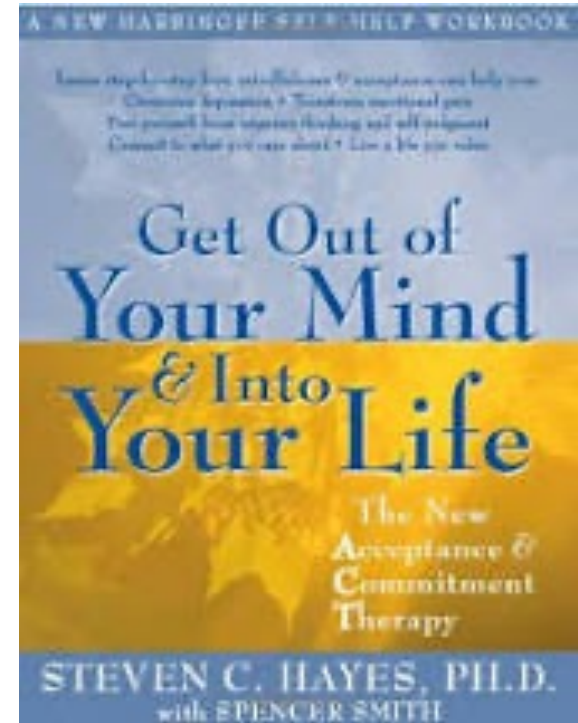
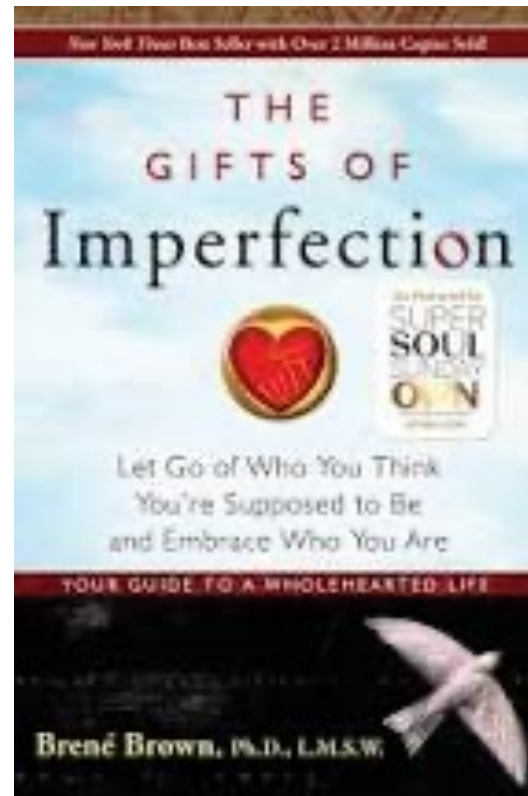
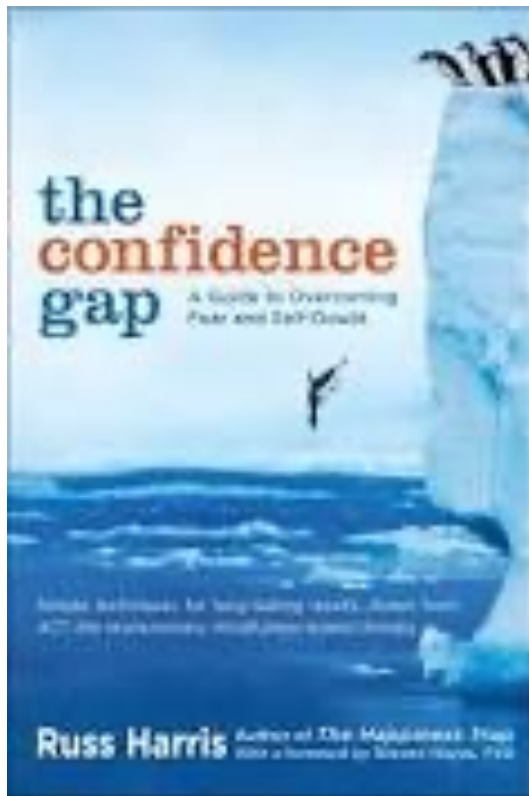
Schedule a nap rather than falling asleep while putting kids to bed

Plan a walk with a friend

Plan an activity with your kids that you actually enjoy

Give yourself permission to leave the laundry unfolded and get to bed

Treat yourself like someone you care about



To Learn More...

Websites:

- <https://contextualscience.org/>
- <https://thehappinesstrap.com/>
- Youtube videos:
 - The Struggle Switch:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCp1I16GCXI>
 - The Unwelcome Party Guest:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYht-guymF4>
 - The Demons Under the Boat:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-wyaP6xXwE>
 - The Myths of Happiness:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93LFNtcR1Ok&t=3s>
 - The Choice Point:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV15x8LvwAQ>
 - You are not your thoughts:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QXmmP4psbA&list=PLjJtOP3StluXFJ3jjjR3THLhHNMrFFJkM&index=5>

Upcoming Events:

- MAY 26**  **Family Compassionate Conversations: Wellness in Latinx Families**
Our next Family Compassionate Conversation will focus on wellness in Latinx families. This session
- JUN 03**  **Spirituality, Faith, and Religion: Creating a Time and Space for Connection, Wellness, and Hope for...**
People define their spirituality, faith, and religion as being a process involving growth
- JUN 07**  **Virtual 2021 New England School of Addiction and Prevention Studies! - 52nd Annual Summer School - ...**
The New England School of Addiction and Prevention Studies, often called Summer School, is a 5-day
- JUN 09**  **Motivational Interviewing for COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy**
There are enough COVID-19 vaccines for everyone in the United States, but some people aren't quite
- JUN 11**  **Ask a Peer: COVID-19 Vaccine Q&A for Youth and Families**
Young people who have experienced psychosis and their families may have unanswered questions about
- JUN 16**  **Self-Care for All: Infuse Wellness into Your Daily Life**
Join Dana Asby, MA, MEd, New England MHTTC's Education Coordinator, for this interactive webinar

To register, visit our website: www.mhttcnetwork.org/newengland

Contact Us

www.mhttcnetwork.org/newengland

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