

S.A.D. to Glad Manual

*How to Overcome Stress, Anxiety, Depression,
and Feel Happy Again*



By

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S.A.D. to Glad Manual	1
How to Overcome Stress, Anxiety, Depression, and Feel Happy Again	1
Read First Before Beginning the Program	4
Power Meditations List	6
Key Points For Session One:	7
Suggested Exercises for Week One:	7
Little Known Inspiring Movies and Books List:	8
Key Points for Session Two:	10
Suggested Exercises for Week Two:	10
Week Two Handouts	11
Common Thought “Mistakes”	11
Rebuttal Sheet	13
Suicide Prevention Contract	15
How to use Power Phrases	16
Sample Power Phrases	16
Key Points for Session Three:	24
Suggested Exercises or Things to do from Session Three:	25
Week Three Handouts	26
How to Handle Insomnia	26
7 Minute Workout	29
Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.)	30
or How to Cure the Winter Blues	30
Supplement Guide	31
Pros and Cons of Supplements	34

Key Points for Week Four:	36
Suggested Exercises for Week Four:	36
Week Four Handouts	37
Creating a Deep Connection	37
Top 10 Quickest Ways to Boost Your Happiness	39
Three Good Things	41
How to Be Much Happier in Two Minutes a Day	41
Key Points for Session Five:	45
Suggested Exercises and Things to do from Session Five:	45
Week Five Handouts	47
Your Ideal Obituary	47
A 3 Minute Guide to Letting Go of Negative Emotions Quickly, Easily, and Effectively	49
A Dozen Good Guidelines for Spiritual Growth	51
Key Points for Session Six:	53
Suggested Exercises and Methods for Session Six:	53
Week Six Handouts	54
Letter of Completion Exercise	54
Erasure Technique Instructions:	55
My “New/True Story” Instructions	57

Read First Before Beginning the Program

Congratulations on purchasing this program. By buying this program, it proves that you have the will, (and now the information and methods) for overcoming the challenges you are facing.

In order to get the maximum benefit from this program, we have some simple suggestions. First, your purchase includes these 4 distinct programs:

1. From S.A.D. To Glad: How to Overcome Stress, Anxiety and Depression and Feel Happy Again
2. Deeper Happiness: One Month to a Lifetime of Greater Fulfillment
3. Abolish Anxiety
4. Escape From Depression

Although you're welcome to listen to any of the programs whenever you like, we suggest that you start with "From Sad to Glad" and then listen to any of the 3 other programs as you have time, interest, and the motivation to do so.

Second, in order to get the maximum benefit from the "Sad to Glad" program, it's important that you try some of the exercises offered each week. As part of the Sad to Glad program, you downloaded many pages that describe specific exercises aimed to help you quickly feel better. One handout in particular is important. It's called the "Sad to Glad Rating Sheet." On these two pages, you'll find a summary of every exercise and information sheet written for the "Sad to Glad" program.

We suggest that after each session of the "From Sad to Glad" program (there are 6 sessions in total), that you look at this sheet to remind you of the various exercises discussed. In addition, you'll notice that after each exercise listed, there are 4 columns for you to consider. The first column is called "Check when Used." This is to help you keep track of which

exercises you've used, as well as how many times you've used it. Simply put a checkmark in this column every time you use a particular method.

The second column is called "Value Received 1 to 10." This column is to help you keep track of how *valuable* you found any particular method. If you found a method extremely effective, rate it a "10." This rating system will help you to know which method(s) you found particularly effective—so you can know to use them later.

The third column is called "To Use in the Future." This column is for you to note whether or not you think the method is worth looking at or doing again in the future. A simple "yes" or "no" will suffice.

The fourth column, "Your Notes," is simply for you to write to yourself any notes that might be helpful in relation to the exercise given.

By filling out this Rating Sheet, you'll be able to keep track of what you've actually done ---as well as what you've found to be most effective in helping you. The more exercises you do, the more quickly you are likely to get better. Fortunately, many of the exercises only take a couple of minute to do, so you need not take a lot of time to do them. Even though they can be done quickly, they are very powerful, so we hope that you'll try a lot of them and see which ones work the best for you.

If you have any questions as you go through the program, you're welcome to email your questions to us at:

Thanks again for your commitment to your well-being. We wish you the best on your journey....

Warmly,

Dr. Emmett Miller

Jonathan Robinson M.F.T.

Power Meditations List

MEDITATION NAME	MINUTES	PURPOSE OF MEDITATION
1. Becoming Present	10:43	To be grounded in present moment, at ease & at peace.
2. Pure Love Instruction	2:34	To teach how to prepare for Pure Love Meditation
3. Pure Love Meditation	??	To feel peace, gratitude and connect with inner wisdom
4. Caring Heart Meditation	3:17	To quickly feel peace, gratitude and love___
5. Gratitude Meditation	9:27	To connect with all the things you're grateful for
6. Release Negative Feelings	7:03	To let go of any negative emotion and feel peace again
7. Reframing Traumatic Events	21	To help reframe a negative event so it feels empowering
3 Good Things	2:57	To help you feel better, more hopeful, and empowered
9. Cape Walk	1:56	To help you feel energized, confident and powerful
10. Releasing Limiting Beliefs	6:18	To help you let go of a belief that has held you back
11. Releasing Relationship Issues	7:28	To help you let go of anger or stress about a relationship

Key Points For Session One:

1. There is a continuum of emotions from depressed and anxious to peaceful and happy. Our aim to move you towards greater peace and happiness—no matter where you're starting out.
2. We recommend you listen to one 70 minute session about once per week. At that pace, you'd finish the course in 6 weeks. Yet, ultimately, do what feels right and works for you.
3. Consult your doctor if you have questions about medications.
4. By trying out the integrative approach we use, we're confident you'll find something(s) that work extremely well for you.
5. Make sure you download the Deeper Happiness program and the Escape from Depression Program from the website www.FromSAD2Glad.com/.
6. To get out of negative emotional ruts, you need to make use of positive momentum and try a bunch of different things to see what works.
7. Be willing to experiment with new ideas, methods and behaviors.
8. Acting AS IF you felt good or confident can actually lead you to feeling better.
9. The methods we introduce will not prevent you from ever feeling bad, but they'll help you avoid feeling stuck or help you get out of feeling bad more quickly.

Suggested Exercises for Week One:

You need not do all these exercises, but the more you try, the more you will know which one(s) work really well for you.

1. CAPE WALK MEDITATION # 9: pretend you're Superman or Wonder Woman or a favorite confident celebrity you know and walk, talk, and act as if you were that person. Power Meditation #9 will help guide you to do this.
2. SMILE: fake it till you make it. It can really help you feel better.
3. SING AND MOVE: play favorite fun songs and move your body and/or dance to change how you feel.
4. EXERCISE: even if only for a minute or two. Walking in nature can especially help.

5. WARM TO COLD SHOWER: this will definitely change how you feel, and it's easy to do.
6. YELLING: get out your anger or frustrations by yelling in your car or singing to loud rock n roll music.
7. SCHEDULE SOMETHING YOU ENJOY: Put it in your calendar—you deserve it.

Little Known Inspiring Movies and Books List:

...Inspiring movies and books are an easy way to feel better and to tap into a feeling of motivation. Here are some you probably haven't heard about that you might enjoy:

Movies: (in no particular order)

1. Brother Sun, Sister Moon
2. Shirley Valentine
3. Joe vs. the Volcano
4. Pow-wow Highway
5. Peaceful Warrior
6. City of Joy
7. Warm Springs
8. Yes Man
9. Almost Famous
10. The Girl in the Café
11. The 7 Faces of Dr. Lao
12. Inside Moves
13. I Love Huckabees
14. Contact
15. Inn of the 6th Happiness
16. August Rush
17. Razor's Edge
18. Resurrection (with Ellen Burstyn)

19. You Can't Take It With You
20. Lost Horizon

Books:

1. Another Heart in His Hand by J. Jaye Gold
2. Finding Happiness by Jonathan Robinson
3. The As If Principle by Richard Wiseman
4. Journey to the East by Herman Hesse
5. Handbook to Higher Consciousness by Ken Keyes
6. The Translucent Revolution by Arjuna Ardagh
7. Instant Insight by Jonathan Robinson
8. Authentic Happiness by Martin Seligman
9. Stumbling on Happiness by Daniel Gilbert
10. The Sedona Method by Hale Dwoskin

Key Points for Session Two:

1. While this course is about changing what's between your ears, if you can easily change something in your environment that is triggering bad feelings, then do so.
2. Getting plenty of restful sleep is important in handling S.A.D. Make a point of doing so.
3. If sleep medications don't work for you, or you want to avoid them, try relaxing by trying Power meditation # 3 or 6.
4. An explanation was given of how negative thought patterns arise and are maintained.
5. One of the best ways to handle negative feelings is by changing the underlying thoughts that lead to bad feelings. This is often called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or CBT.
6. There are common thought "mistakes" that it are helpful to be aware of.
7. By writing out rebuttals to common negative thought patterns, you can overcome their effect on you.
8. By making fun of negative thought patterns, you can lessen their impact on you.
9. By asking and answering questions such as "what could be good about this?" you can refrain from going down a negative thought pattern.
10. Coming up with "power phrases" or affirmations can be useful in overcoming negative thought patterns.
11. Taking small actions toward solving a problem can sometimes work wonders in getting out of overwhelm.
12. Feeling connected to someone and knowing that they care is a big boost in getting out of feeling S.A.D.

Suggested Exercises for Week Two:

1. Use the "Fill in the Blank Rebuttal sheet" to come up with rebuttals to destructive thought patterns.
2. Fill in the Suicide Prevention Contract if you ever struggle with suicidal thoughts
3. Use the Disney Voice Method to make fun of thoughts that give you trouble.
4. Change the focus of your thoughts by asking:

- a) What could be good about this?
 - b) Will these worries matter in five years?
5. Use “power phrases” or affirmations to interrupt and alter negative thought patterns.
 6. Get Yourself Into Action by asking the “Five Problem Solving Questions:”
 - a) In a single sentence, what’s the problem?
 - b) Exactly what would I like to be different about this situation?
 - c) Are there any people or resources that may be able to help me with handling this problem effectively?
 - d) How can I break this problem down into bite sized steps?
 - e) What is the first action step I’ll take in handling this problem, and by when will it get done? **Write out all your answers.**
 7. If you have a friend or person you’d like to connect with, see if you can schedule a time to spend with them.

Week Two Handouts

Common Thought “Mistakes”

Overgeneralization

You make a sweeping negative conclusion that goes beyond the current situation. You view a negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.

Mental Filter

You pay undue attention to one negative detail instead of seeing the whole picture. You dwell on the negatives and ignore the positives.

All or Nothing Thinking

You view a situation in only two categories instead of on a continuum. You look at things in absolute, black and white categories.

Fortune Telling

You predict the future negatively without considering other more likely outcomes (jumping to conclusions about events). You predict that things will turn out badly.

Labeling

You put a fixed, global label on yourself or others without considering that the evidence might more reasonably lead to a less disastrous conclusion. Instead of saying "I made a mistake", you tell yourself "I'm a loser", or "a jerk".

Mind Reading

You believe you know what others are thinking, failing to consider other, more likely possibilities (jumping to conclusions about people). You assume that people are acting negatively toward you.

Discounting the Positives

You tell yourself that positive experiences, your accomplishments, or qualities don't count.

Emotional Reasoning

You think something must be true because you "feel" (actually believe) it so strongly, ignoring or discounting evidence to the contrary. You reason from how you feel: "I feel like an idiot, so I must be one."

Magnification/Minimization

When you evaluate yourself, another person, or a situation, you greatly magnify the negative and/or minimize the positive. You blow things out of proportion or you shrink their importance.

Personalization

You believe others are behaving negatively because of you, without considering more plausible explanations. You blame yourself for something you weren't entirely responsible for, or you blame other people and overlook the ways you contributed to the problem.

"Should" Statements

You have a precise, fixed idea of how you and/or others "should" behave and you overestimate how bad it is that these expectations are not met. You criticize yourself with "shoulds", "shouldn'ts" "musts", or "oughts."

Rebuttal Sheet

Fill in the blank.

Example:

Old Thought: Oh God, my hair looks terrible, and why do I look so fat?

Rebuttal: Nobody I'd want to be friends with would judge me badly just because I have a bad hair day. As to my weight, yes I'd like to lose a few pounds, but I'm not fat. I'm attractive in some ways, and average in other ways, and that's okay.

Old Thought: Nobody is gonna want to go out with me when I look like this.

Rebuttal: Actually, I *do* get asked out on occasion. When I feel good and am friendly, I get a lot of attention.

Old Thought/Type of Thought Mistake:

Rebuttal(s):

Old Thought/Type of Thought Mistake:

Rebuttal(s):

Old Thought/Type of Thought Mistake:

Rebuttal(s):

Old Thought/Type of Thought Mistake:

Rebuttal(s):

Suicide Prevention Contract

I _____, will not attempt to kill myself. I will not harm myself physically in any way. If am feeling like I want to commit suicide, or that I want to die, I will call the following people, who care about me:

(Put Contact Name(s) and Phone Number(s) below)

If I am in immediate danger of harming myself, I will dial 911.

I will call 1-800-Suicide if I am unable to reach my contacts.

Signed _____(Your name)

Date: _____

How to use Power Phrases

How To Make Power Phrases Work For You

Become present, quiet your mind, imagine, have a fantasy of yourself in future as your true self. Your goal is to align your brain, your nervous system, and the cells of your body with your vision of your ideal self. These phrases will help. Choose about 6-10 of the statements below that you want to be true about yourself. If you wish, you may alter them so they best motivate and inspire you, or even create your own. Practice installing them now, then throughout the day:

- Pause
- Relax briefly
- Visualize your image ideal – *you*, looking, feeling, and acting the way you really want.
- Feel the positive emotions (love, excitement, joy) that you associate with this image and intensify them. Remember, your emotions *empower* your future.
- Repeat the statements you have chosen while realizing that, as Albert Einstein said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge,” that your imagination has the power to transform your life.

It is important to say the phrases slowly with feeling (either out loud or to yourself.) Many people find it helpful to write the affirmations a number of times.

Give yourself time to let your body "feel" the affirmation. For instance, if your affirmation refers to "Love," then allow yourself to "feel" Love all around you. If it is joy, feel the joy dance through you like a happy river.

The repeat your power phrases to yourself, with the utmost conviction.

Sample Power Phrases

Choose 6-10 of these phrases and write them on a card you can carry with you for review throughout the day. And remember, Practice makes Perfect.

Relaxation – Power Phrases

I am calm and at peace

Breathing in, I relax . . . breathing out, I let go

I have the power to relax and be fully present.

I give myself permission to stop, think, and honor my deeper wisdom

I release unwanted thoughts, feelings, and other distractions.

Power of Mind and Imagination – Power Phrases

I am perfectly in tune and clear with my vision

I Imagine the future and make it so

I use my imagination for positive and creative purposes

What I can conceive and believe I can achieve

I use positive mental images to create the positive changes I wish in my life

I now easily imagine and create my wonderful new life

I am able to use my imagination creatively. It is one of my most powerful tools.

Through my mind, I intentionally guide my emotions, my attitude and all my behaviors.

I have the power to choose my thoughts, my emotions, and my actions.

My mind is more powerful than any negative thought, and I choose to free my mind of useless

negative thoughts

Higher Power Phrases

I am filled with gratitude for the many gifts in my life

I act in accordance with my higher self.

I am continually aligned with my higher purpose.

My higher power guides me through my intuition

As I follow the path of my heart, I discover my true treasure.

I consult my higher power and guide my life with wisdom

I am a magnificent being with an abundance of power and love to give

I am ready to release my inner barriers to fulfilling my purpose on earth

There is more than enough to go around for everyone, including me.

I release my unnecessary attachments to people, things, or situations in the world.

Spiritual – Power Phrases

I can transcend differences, limits, and possessions and discover the ecstasy of commonplace, unconditional, being.

I call upon the power of the spirit within to melt away obstacles and do good job I came to do.

I feel a deep oneness and connection with all things and people around me, and draw power from this oneness to make wise choices.

I can pause and prepare myself by touching into a deep awareness of who I am, my gratitude for the many gifts in my life, and Mike commitment to follow teachings of my wise Self.

I am grateful to God for this wonderful life. I am thankful to every body who has touched my life and made it worth living.

God within me is my unlimited, overflowing supply of every kind of good.

When I contact the God in me, all things become possible.

God is with me through every change; guiding, protecting and directing me all the way.

I am bold in the power and love of Jesus Christ

I do what God wants me to do.

True Self – Power Phrases

I love and accept myself exactly as I am

I am highly creative

My imagination is always active

My imagination is free

I am a naturally creative person

I am full of inspiration and creativity

I let go and release unwanted parts of my self image.???

I am growing more aware of my true identity – I was conceived in beauty, love, and joy

I was conceived in beauty, love, and joy – my true identity.

Beyond the distortions produced by trauma, I am in touch with the beauty, love, joy,
happiness
within.

I know who I am, and I accept myself fully, without judgment, criticism, or concern about what others may think.

Resilience – Power Phrases

I bounce back energetically from any setback

Because I know that each moment it is an opportunity to learn something new, I seek the positive lesson in each moment, release negative thoughts, and move on.

I don't sweat the small stuff, and it's all small stuff.

I know negative obstacles are only temporary, I see them as challenges, overcome them, and move on.

I manage my physical energy wisely. When I notice I am feeling tired, I take time to renew.
Empowerment

I own my own power and am fully responsible for the choices and decisions I make.

I say no when asked to do something I don't really want to do.

I take over conscious control of my thinking when confronted with negative thoughts by being aware of the right have the power to do this.

I refuse to give my power away to those who would control or manipulate me.

Because I own my own power, I am fully responsible for the choices and decisions I make.

No one can stop me from choosing to live my life that is happy and free.

I choose to have power over the past—I forgive, release, and focus my choices wisely in the present moment.

I have the power to say no to things I don't want to do.

Because negative feelings are the result of false beliefs, I choose to set myself free from the past and choose the power I have *Now*.

Creating Your Future – Power Phrases

I can clearly see and *feel* my future self . . . healthy, happy, and wise.

Through the wise guidance of my emotions, I (am creating) create the body and the world I visualize within.

As I am rehearsing my future, so shall it be.

I live my life with focus and intention.

Relationship – Power Phrases

I am free of any need to judge or criticize others, I accept others as they are and the choices that

I make.

I contribute to the healthy growth of my relationships.

I love and accept myself the way I am and I love and accept others in the same way.

Good and positive love is flowing to me and through me at all times.

I trust my own power and open the door to love.

I deserve to be treated well because I am worth loving.

I only attract positive people into my life.

I have the power to forgive myself and others completely, and choose to use it wisely.

I am creating a network of resources and an effective support system, and I call upon them whenever they will be valuable in dealing with any challenge. (or negative thought.)

Happiness – Power Phrases

Every day in every way I am getting happier and happier.

Happiness is my birthright.

I choose to be happy and I deserve to be happy.

My happy disposition attracts happiness into my life.

Being happy comes easy to me; happiness is my second nature.

For me, happiness is not a destination, it is a way of travelling.

I am kind, I am loving, I am happy.

I look beyond imperfections and minor details and allow myself to see the overall beauty of the

whole.

I realize that happiness doesn't come from getting something I don't have, but from recognizing and appreciating what I have and who I am.

Happiness is the key to success, not the other way around; doing what I love what I am creating my success.

My happiness comes not from the absence of problems, but from my ability to confront and deal with them.

My happiness doesn't come from what I have, who I am, where I am, or what I am doing—it comes from what I am thinking about and how I am thinking about it.

Because I have learned the power of sincere and selfless contributions, I experience life's deepest joys and fulfillment.

Key Points for Session Three:

1. Your brain consists of three primary parts. The Reptile system is the oldest part, followed by the Limbic system (in charge of emotions), and the Neo-cortex (the newest part).
2. Our goal is to use the Neo-cortex to influence the Reptile and Limbic part of your brain—so you can have more choice and freedom.
3. By trying a lot of different methods and supplements, you'll soon find what works best for you.
4. By altering our bodies through nutrition, exercise, and/or supplements and medications, you can alter your thoughts and emotions.
5. Approximately 75% of the effect of anti-depressants is due to the placebo effect. This shows that your beliefs and attitudes can heal you.
6. Nutritional supplements can often help with mild or moderate depression. St. John's Wart and 5HTP have often been found to be effective, and have only about half the reported side effects of anti-depressants.
7. It can take one to three months before the effects of supplements or anti-depressants are noticeable.
8. Besides helping with depression, Sam-E can be useful for PMS, joint pain, fibromyalgia, and increasing motivation. Yet, it must be taken on an empty stomach.
9. Exercise has been shown to powerfully decrease the chances of getting depressed or getting Alzheimer's, and is very effective in improving the mood of people who are depressed. If possible, find a buddy to exercise with, or some other way to stay motivated.
10. By eating more vegetables and less sugar, you increase your chances of having greater emotional and physical health. A Nutribullet type blender for creating healthy smoothies, stevia as a sugar substitute and daily fish oil (2 grams or more) are highly recommended. The website, www.vitacost.com can save you a lot of money over health food stores when purchasing supplements.
11. Your gut bacteria can influence your health and mood. Lacto basilica (often found in yoghurt) and Bifodobacterium (bifidum) may be useful for helping your gut. Some probiotics contain these bacterium.
12. Good sleep is critical to good physical and emotional health. Melatonin, Kava and Valerian Root can all be helpful natural supplements in the aid of a good night's sleep.

Suggested Exercises or Things to do from Session Three:

1. **READ HANDLING INSOMNIA HANDOUT:** It will give you a couple of ways to overcome occasional difficulty in falling asleep.
2. **DO A 7 MINUTE WORKOUT:** Use the enclosed sheet to exercise every part of your body at home in only 7 minutes.
3. **READ THE “WINTER BLUES” HANDOUT:** Seasonal Affective Disorder is something that affects a lot of people, yet is in most cases is easily remedied.
4. **TRY POWER MEDITATION #1:** Learning to be present in your body is an important step in both feeling better and in achieving greater health.
5. **READ THE SUPPLEMENT SHEET HANDOUT AND TRY A SUPPLEMENT:** In many cases of mild or moderate anxiety or depression, the right supplement can make a major difference. Try buying and taking one of the recommended ones and see if it works for you.
6. **CONTINUE TO USE EXERCISES FROM PREVIOUS SESSIONS THAT WORKED FOR YOU.** Look over your rating sheet and continue to use any method that seemed to be helpful to you.

Week Three Handouts

How to Handle Insomnia

Insomnia is a hidden epidemic in our culture. It affects one in three people on a fairly regular basis. In Western society, the traditional remedy is to take sleeping pills. However, prescription sleeping pills can interfere with normal sleep patterns, and some can even be physically addictive.

Most insomnia is caused by a build up of stress during the day, or by too much caffeine--or by being over stimulated at night. If you watch an exciting TV show right before going to bed, it's going to make it more difficult to fall asleep. I recommend spending the hour before you go to sleep in a relaxing manner, such as taking a shower or bath, talking to a loved one, or reading something that will not keep you awake.

If you live a stressful life, and fail to take periodic "relaxation breaks" during the day, you are more prone to being wide-awake when it's time to go to bed. Simple relaxation helpers such as deep breathing, a leisurely walk, or listening to a calming CD during the day can help interfere with a build up of anxiety. These same ideas can also be useful right before you go to bed. However, if you have a history of insomnia, or if you are experiencing a particularly stressful time in your life, you may need something more. Fortunately, there are ways to lull yourself to sleep that don't involve pills.

As a licensed hypnotist, I see a lot of people in my private practice who complain of insomnia. I have found that 90% can be helped by using one of two simple methods. The first technique I call The Blackboard Countdown, and the second I call The Hypnotic Bore. In The Blackboard Countdown (TBC), after crawling into bed, picture a blackboard in your mind with the number 1000 on it. Imagine erasing the board, and then seeing the words "Deep Asleep" written on it. Imagine erasing the words "Deep Asleep," and then picture the number 999 on the board. Erase the number and picture "Deep Asleep" once again. Keep counting back, followed by "Deep Asleep." If you ever lose track as to what number you're on, simply start over at 1000.

The Blackboard Countdown is a bit like counting sheep, but it's much more potent. The reason it's effective is due to the hypnotic rhythm it creates, an endless repetition of going from counting back to the suggestion "Deep Asleep," over and over again. It requires just enough concentration to keep your mind occupied, but not enough to actually keep you entertained. Studies show that, after only five minutes of this type of meditative mental activity, your heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing rate equals that of normal sleep. What that means is, even if you don't fall asleep right away, your body will be receiving as much rest as if you were actually asleep. Since this method requires no pills or gadgets to carry, you can use it anywhere, anytime. Many people are surprised by the results.

If the Blackboard Countdown doesn't work for you after a couple of tries, I would suggest trying what I call the Hypnotic Bore method. I used to have a math teacher who could put anyone to sleep. Even after drinking a couple of cups of coffee, I'd be off in la-la land after just a few minutes of hearing him pontificate. He seemed to have the same effect on everyone else in the class. I surmised that it was something about his voice. He spoke in a slow monotone that never had any rhythm, emphasis, or speed. Unfortunately, I never recorded his voice, so I can't sell you tapes of his talking to help with occasional insomnia. It's too bad, because it surely would have worked. However, the next best thing is to record your own voice into a digital recorder or Smartphone, and play it back to yourself when you have the need. Below is a transcript of what to say into the recorder. It's important that you speak very, very, very slowly, and with a constant monotone:

"Take a deep breath and let out any tension with your breath. Take another deep breath, and once again relax fully as you exhale. Notice any part of your body that feels a bit tight or uncomfortable, and see if you can relax that part of your body as you exhale. Check your legs and make sure they feel comfortable and relaxed. Notice your arms, and see if they feel comfortable and relaxed. Imagine breathing in a favorite soothing color deep into your lungs, and feel how it relaxes and soothes you with each breath you take. Allow the feeling of relaxation to soothe your jaw, cheek and forehead muscles. Good. Now imagine that you're at the top of a flight of stairs, and as I count back from 100, with each number I count back, you'll feel more relaxed and tired. Eventually you will simply drift off into a peaceful, restful sleep."

(As you begin the countdown, of which going from 100 to 90 is written below, have your voice grow increasingly soft and slow, until by the time you're at 30, it should be a slow whisper)

“100. Imagine yourself slowly walking down some stairs to a deeper level of rest and relaxation. 99. With each number I count back you feel like you are drifting into a restful sleep. 98. You can put aside any thoughts or concerns, knowing that you can easily handle things in the morning. 97. All your thoughts are drifting farther away, as if on a cloud, leaving you more and more tired. 96. Deeper and deeper with each number. 95. Letting go even more. 94. Your whole body and mind feeling so tired. 93. You are already experiencing a deeper rest and relaxation. 92 You will soon simply drift off into a restful sleep. 91. Drifting off into a deep, sound sleep.”

The above countdown should take several minutes. When continuing the countdown all the way to zero, just use the above transcript, but substitute the number 90 (then 80,70, etc.) for the number 100. For example, the next part of the countdown would be: “90. Imagine yourself slowly walking down some stairs to a deeper level of rest and relaxation. 89...” Remember to speak softer (or hold the tape recorder a bit farther away) with each group of ten that you count back. That will make it easier for you to simply drift off into a natural sleep.

When you have the thing recorded , you can go to Radio Shack, and for about \$10 buy what's called a “pillow speaker.” This is a small, flat speaker that fits under your pillow. When you are having a hard time getting to sleep, simply plug the pillow speaker into the recording device, put the pillow speaker under your pillow, and listen to your own monotonous voice lull you to sleep. Many people report that using such a recording results in a particularly good night's sleep. And once you have established your regular sleeping pattern, you'll feel better about yourself and have more time to enjoy life. Sweet dreams.

7 Minute Workout

This column appears in the May 12 issue of The New York Times Magazine.

Or, you can watch a [video of the 7 minute workout](#).

Exercise science is a fine and intellectually fascinating thing. But sometimes you just want someone to lay out guidelines for how to put the newest fitness research into practice.

An [article in the May-June issue of the American College of Sports Medicine's Health & Fitness Journal](#) does just that. In 12 exercises deploying only body weight, a chair and a wall, it fulfills the latest mandates for high-intensity effort, which essentially combines a long run and a visit to the weight room into about seven minutes of steady discomfort — all of it based on science.

“There’s very good evidence” that high-intensity interval training provides “many of the fitness benefits of prolonged endurance training but in much less time,” says Chris Jordan, the director of exercise physiology at the Human Performance Institute in Orlando, Fla., and co-author of the new article.

Work by scientists at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, and other institutions shows, for instance, that even a few minutes of training at an intensity approaching your maximum capacity produces molecular changes within muscles comparable to those of several hours of running or bike riding.

Interval training, though, requires intervals; the extremely intense activity must be intermingled with brief periods of recovery. In the program outlined by Mr. Jordan and his colleagues, this recovery is provided in part by a 10-second rest between exercises. But even more, he says, it’s accomplished by alternating an exercise that emphasizes the large muscles in the upper body with those in the lower body. During the intermezzo, the unexercised muscles have a moment to, metaphorically, catch their breath, which makes the order of the exercises important.

The exercises should be performed in rapid succession, allowing 30 seconds for each, while, throughout, the intensity hovers at about an 8 on a discomfort scale of 1 to 10, Mr. Jordan says. Those seven minutes should be, in a word, unpleasant. The upside is, after seven minutes, you’re done.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.)

or How to Cure the Winter Blues

1. Many people, especially those living far from the equator, experience feeling more down during the late Fall and Winter months.
2. You may have Seasonal Affective Disorder if you find:
 - You get more depressed or fatigued or irritable during the Winter
 - You have other family members who get more down during the Winter
 - There's a pattern of feeling down during this part of the year more so than during the Spring and Summer months

What You Can DO About It:

1. Besides practicing the various suggestions from this program, you can also:
 - Buy a “light box” and sit in front of it for about 30 minutes a day. A good light box costs in the \$75 to \$150 range. You can see the latest reviews of various light boxes by going to Amazon.com and typing in: Sad Light Box
 - Make your home and work environment brighter by pulling back blinds, curtains, and sitting by windows
 - Get outside as much as possible during the winter months—even if only for a few minutes each day
 - Get plenty of exercise during the Winter months

Results you can expect:

- If you have Seasonal Affective Disorder, you will likely find that sitting in front of a light box helps you to feel better in as little as 2 to 4 days.
- If you do not feel better in a week after using a light box, consider focusing on the many suggestions in this program and/or seeing your doctor for further help.

Supplement Guide

Effectiveness and Typical Dosage for Supplements

Supplement	Effectiveness	Typical Dosage
St. John's Wort	<p>Some studies have concluded that St. John's Wort is more effective than placebo, and perhaps as effective as some antidepressants for mild to moderate symptoms.</p> <p>http:// summaries.cochrane.org/ CD000448/st.-johns- wort-for-treating- depression.</p>	<p>Most often taken in liquid or pill form or as a tea. The most common dose used in studies has been 300 mg, three times a day. Preparations in the U.S. have varied amounts of active ingredient in them. So be careful to note how much you're getting in your tablets.</p>
5-Hydroxy-Tryptophan	<p>There have been several preliminary studies of 5-HTP. The best of these trials was a 6-week study of 63 people given either 5-HTP (100 mg 3 times daily) or an antidepressant in the Prozac (fluvoxamine) family (50 mg 3 times daily). The results showed equal benefit between the supplement and the drug.</p>	<p>A typical dosage of 5-HTP is 100 to 300 mg 3 times daily. Once 5-HTP starts to work, it may be possible to reduce the dosage significantly and still maintain good results.</p>

Supplement	Effectiveness	Typical Dosage
S-AdoMet	S-Adenosylmethionine is frequently used to combat depression, but the evidence for its effectiveness is equivocal at best. People with osteoarthritis have reported it helps, and thus, potentially you could be “killing two birds with one stone.”	Most common dosage is 800-1600 mg daily, in four divided doses. Best results when taken one hour after and one hour before eating. To ramp up gradually to the 1600/day dose, start with 200 mg twice daily, for the first day, then increase to 400 mg twice daily on day three, then to 400 mg three times daily on day 10, and finally to the full dose of 400 mg four times daily
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	Fish oil supplements are probably valuable for everyone, the best source of omega 3 fatty acids.	Eat oily fleshed, wild caught, cold water fish 2 or 3 times a week, and add at least 2 to 4 grams of fish oil (vegetarian sources are usually inadequate. Make sure you're getting 2 to 4 g of total omega-3 fatty acids, not just of oil.

Supplement	Effectiveness	Typical Dosage
SSRIs	<p>Of questionable effectiveness in mild to moderate depression, often very valuable in moderate to severe depression.</p> <p>One study of people with severe major depression found that folate supplements at a dose of 500 mcg daily significantly improved the effectiveness of fluoxetine (Prozac) in female participants. Improvement in male participants was not significant, but blood tests conducted during the study suggest that higher intake of folate might be necessary for men.</p>	Varies with the medication

Pros and Cons of Supplements

Supplement	Pros	Cons
St. John's Wort	<p>The Cochrane Collaboration concluded that extracts of St. John's Wort worked better than placebo and with about half the rate of side effects. http://summaries.cochrane.org/CD000448/st.-johns-wort-for-treating-depression.</p>	<p>One NIH study showed no statistically significant difference between St. John's Wort and placebo on improvement in HAM-D scores or percentage of complete responses. http://nccam.nih.gov/news/2002/stjohnswort/q-and-a.htm</p>
5-Hydroxy-Tryptophan	<p>The primary use of 5-HTP is for depression. Several small short-term studies have found that it may be as effective as standard antidepressant drugs. It may also be valuable for insomnia and anxiety, but there is only very preliminary evidence as yet that it works for these.</p> <p>Some, but not all, studies suggest that regular use of 5-HTP may help reduce the frequency and severity of migraines, as well as help other types of headaches. Additionally, preliminary evidence suggests that 5-HTP can reduce symptoms of fibromyalgia and perhaps help you lose weight. 5-HTP has also been studied as a potential treatment for menopausal symptoms.</p>	<p>Few side effects and many can make you drowsy. Side effects appear to be generally limited to short-term, mild digestive distress, dizziness and possible allergic reactions.</p> <p>One potential safety issue with 5-HTP involves an interaction with a medication used for Parkinson's disease: Carbidopa. Several reports suggest that the combination can create skin changes similar to those that occur in the disease scleroderma.</p>

Supplement	Pros	Cons
SAMe	<p>Researchers have also studied the effectiveness of oral SAMe in combination with pharmaceutical antidepressants. In one study, adding SAMe to the treatment increased the rate at which patients responded to their antidepressant medication.</p>	<p>Poor evidence of effectiveness.</p>
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	<p>Low tissue levels of EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) in this NIH study, were associated with a wide variety of mental and emotional disorders and balances, including depression, violent behavior, suicide, and general instability. http://www.nih.gov/news/health/aug2011/niaaa-23.htm</p>	
SSRIs	<p>May be effective and even lifesaving for the more severe forms of depression</p>	<p>Expensive, often unpleasant side effects and drug interactions. Dry mouth, sleepiness, nausea, headache, sexual dysfunction, weight gain, dizziness, anxiety, suicidal behavior (especially in younger patients).</p>

Key Points for Week Four:

1. Traditionally, psychology has tried to lessen negative feelings, but the field of Positive Psychology has aimed to increase a person's positive feelings as a way of helping people past their difficulties.
2. The field of Positive Psychology has hundreds of well documented studies showing the efficacy of their approach and the power of individual methods.
3. Dr. Seligman has identified that there are 5 keys to a fulfilling life: Positive emotion and Pleasure; Engagement in activities you enjoy; Relationships that are satisfying; Meaning, and Accomplishment of important goals. Together, they create the acronym PERMA.
4. One especially powerful method is called "3 Good Things." It consists of listing 3 things you've enjoyed or appreciated in the last day, and asking yourself Why that good thing happened.
5. There are many ways to boost happiness that only take a couple of minutes to do. (see list of Top 10 Ways to Quickly Boost Happiness). You can combine many of them for even greater effect.
6. Studies show that volunteering and acts of kindness are especially helpful in helping people feel a lot better—even if they have been depressed.
7. Getting energy moving through singing, dancing, or any physical activity you enjoy can help break up stuck emotional patterns.
8. The most important key to alleviating stress, anxiety and depression and creating high levels of happiness is to have people who you connect with on a regular basis. The handout "Creating a Deep Connection" can help with this.
9. By deliberately infusing yourself with positive emotions (through the many suggestions given here), it can help inoculate yourself from negative emotions.
10. Use any exercises from the list below and then rate how well each one works for you.

Suggested Exercises for Week Four:

1. Find a friend or romantic partner who would be willing to spend 45 minutes with you in order to get to know each other better. Then, share the "Creating a Deep Connection" handout with them by going through the 15 questions.

2. Look at the handout “Top 10 Quickest Ways to Boost Your Happiness,” and choose one to help you to feel better. At least once this week, do an act of kindness for a stranger or friend and notice how you feel.
3. At least two times this week, use the “3 Good Things” exercise, at least for a minute. If possible, do it everyday...
4. If you feel down, or as a great way to start your day, try singing and/or dancing as a way to get your energy moving.

Week Four Handouts

Creating a Deep Connection

To enjoy the fruits of this “deep connection” experience, all you need is a willing partner, about 45 minutes of time, and a somewhat quiet and private location. You can do this exercise with a lover, parent, child, friend, co-worker, or new acquaintance. Yet, since it leads to a deep level of sharing, make sure you do it with someone you’d like to be closer to. Below, you will find the instructions and the fifteen questions. Before you begin the process, make sure you have plenty of time, and are in the mood to fully open and connect with another human being.

Instructions:

Besides being a great way to get to know someone at a deeper level, this exercise also demonstrates a process by which relationships can become more intimate. When we ask a friend or partner meaningful questions, it opens the door for a more profound level of connection with him or her. Yet, asking good questions is only half the story. The depth to which you can truly listen to your partner in a non-judgmental manner will determine the experience you have in this exercise. Try to listen with an open heart and a quiet mind.

If you enjoy this exercise, feel free to make-up your own questions. As long as you create an atmosphere of safety and warmth, people appreciate the opportunity to talk about themselves. In our fast paced world of gadgets and hype, this experience can be a great way to share the wonders of being human with someone you care about.

Really getting to know another person involves a learnable set of skills and attitudes, risk taking, trust, and acceptance. The following questions are designed to assist you in getting to know another person on a fairly intimate level. They can be answered to whatever degree of self-disclosure you wish. Take as long as you like to answer each question. Once you're done, ask the same question of your partner, and let him or her respond while you carefully listen. When you're the one asking the question, feel free to ask related questions that might further clarify or expand upon your partner's initial response. If a conversation naturally unfolds from your partner's response, that's perfectly all right as well. Once both of you have answered the first question, proceed to the next. If you give this exercise enough time and sincerity, I think you'll find it to be a very satisfying and powerful experience.

1. When are you the happiest?
2. What is your greatest strength?
3. What is your greatest weakness?
4. What was the most difficult time in your life?
5. What is extremely important to you?
6. When do you feel most affectionate?
7. What are you avoiding right now?
8. What helps you to feel really loved?
9. What is the thing you most regret having done?
10. How do you think I see you?
11. What is your heart longing for?
12. What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishment?
13. What was your first impression of me?
14. What do you like best about me?
15. What kind of person have you dreamed of becoming?

Top 10 Quickest Ways to Boost Your Happiness

Hi, I'm Jonathan Robinson. I'm going to tell you what scientific research shows are the top 10 things you can quickly do to boost your level of happiness. By doing any of the 10 items that follow, you will almost surely feel dramatically better in under three minutes. In addition, by combining items from the list below, you can increase their effectiveness even more...

- 10. Look at pictures of people and animals you love on your smartphone or computer.** As you look at each picture, remember an enjoyable time you had with them, and send them a wish that they be happy.

- 9. Exercise—even if only for 3 minutes.** Take a quick brisk walk, do some jumping jacks, whatever gets your heart going and your lungs breathing more deeply. In even a minute you'll start to feel better. Hallelujah for such a simple thing.

- 8. Give someone money.** Research shows that when we give a needy person money, we immediately feel better about ourselves. It helps another person too, so it's a win-win.

- 7. Get cooler.** By going from a hot or warm environment to a cooler one, our mood and sense of happiness tends to go up. Hooray for air conditioning!

- 6. Work towards an important goal.** Whether it be cleaning your desk or selling more widgets, when you feel like you're making progress towards a specific and important goal, you invariably feel better.

- 5. Write down three things you feel grateful for in your life.** They could be big things—such as your children, or small things such as the great burger you had for lunch. By writing them down, you'll immediately see that there is a lot of good in your life.

- 4. Do a 60 second “heart meditation”** that consists of taking a deep breath and imagining exhaling out the center of your chest. Then, close your eyes and imagine someone you love—such as a pet, child, or friend. Remember special times with this

being, and bask in the gratitude that they're in your life. This simple method can take you from stressed out to blissed out in about 60 seconds.

3. Spend time with a beloved pet, toddler, and/or nature environment. Pets, young kids, and trees live in the moment they are in. You and I, on the other hand, spend most our time thinking about the past or worrying about the future. If you spend time playing with a pet, toddler, or enjoying nature, some of their ability to be present in the moment will rub off on you...

2. Play a song that you really enjoy and sing along. Here's something to try: sing along with "I Want to Hold Your Hand" by the Beatles and try to feel depressed. You can't do it. By *singing* along with your favorite songs, you can lift yourself out of almost any bad mood.

1. ... And the winner for the single most effective way to quickly boost your happiness is: do an act of kindness for a stranger or friend. Yep, it's true. When you do a small act of kindness, *you* feel better, your friend feels better, and the world has a bit more kindness in it. Even something small like saying what you appreciate about someone will immediately boost *your* level of well-being—as well as theirs.

...So now that you know the top 10 ways, do something about it! Happy people are more giving than "normal" people, and they make \$750,000 more over their lifetime and live 9 years longer than the rest of us. For more *free* tips on the most effective ways to feel happier, go to www.FindingHappiness.com OR get my book, "**Find Happiness Now**," to learn 50 great ways to increase your happiness level.

Three Good Things

How to Be Much Happier in Two Minutes a Day

In the last two decades, there have been a lot of studies to test which (if any) methods can dramatically increase one's level of happiness in a short period of time. The good news is that many methods have been repeatedly shown to be amazingly effective. In this article I want to talk about one of my favorites. It's called 3 Good Things.

The method I will outline here was created by Positive Psychology pioneer Marty Seligman. This technique is *so* powerful that doing it for only one week has been shown to increase your level of happiness by up to 25% six *months* later. Now I don't know if that sounds like much to you, but in the world of happiness research, this scientifically validated outcome blew everyone away.

Increasing someone's happiness level by 25% is not an easy thing to do. Case in point: if tomorrow you went into your office and your boss told you he was *doubling* your salary, that would feel pretty good, wouldn't it? Yet six months later, your happiness level would have only increased by about 2%. You'd have only a 2% gain in your overall level of happiness—despite having a lot more money. Yet with the Three Good Things method, your happiness level is likely to increase by a full 25%—that's over 12 times the effect of having your salary doubled. Now that's pretty good for a method that only takes 2 or 3 minutes a day to do.

Before going into the mechanics of how to do this method, I want to explain *why* it works so well. How good we feel at any moment is largely determined by what we focus on. If you focus on all the bad things happening in your life or the world, you can probably work yourself up into a *tizzy* of anxiety and depression. On the other hand, if you intensely focus on the good things happening in your life, you'll likely feel pretty happy. Unfortunately, you'll likely feel contented only for the period of time that you're *focused* on the good things in your life. That's why just focusing on the positive for a few moments each day has very little effect on your level of happiness.

In trying to remedy this situation, Dr. Seligman tried to find a way to better *cement* this positive outlook into one's *identity*. The Three Good Things method he came up with has three simple parts. The first part is to think of something that happened to you during your day that you felt was good, or in some way made you happy. It can be a little thing such as your appreciation of the day's weather, a nice conversation, or even the yummy sandwich you had for lunch. Step two is to simply write down in a journal or on a piece of paper what it *was* that made you feel good. Step three, which Dr. Seligman emphasizes is the most important part of this exercise, is to reflect on *your* role in creating that moment of goodness or happiness. That's it.

Doing these three steps should really take less than a minute or so to complete. Then you repeat this exercise two more times so you have a total of three good things you've written down, each time asking yourself "*why* did that good thing happen to me today?"

In order to make this exercise a bit more clear, I'll use an example of me coaching a workshop participant through this process. After explaining the process to the audience, I asked for a volunteer to work with. A woman named Sharon raised her hand, and I asked her to come up with the first good thing that had happened to her that day. She said, "I don't know. I've been feeling kind of down a lot lately." I replied, "Well even if you've been feeling down, perhaps some *small* thing has happened today that you can see as a *good* thing. What might that be?" She said, "Well I've liked this workshop so far. That's good." I said, "*Great*. Not only have you come up with a good thing, but it also shows you're a woman of discriminating tastes."

Now if she were doing this exercise on her own, step two would involve her writing this down. Of course, instead of writing this stuff down, you can always do it *verbally* with your mate or your child. Just ask *them* what's an example of something good that happened to them that day, and why did it happen? My wife and I often do this right before we go to bed and it's a great way to feel good about our day and prepare ourselves for a restful night of sleep.

Anyway, back to my workshop. Next, I asked Sharon *why* did this good thing happen—this going to the workshop and enjoying herself. She thought for a moment and then tentatively

replied, “I guess it happened because I signed up for it.” I explained to Sharon that, though her answer was technically correct, it didn’t point to something *specific* about *her* or her character that she could feel good about. So I asked her straightaway, “What about *you* made it so you’d sign up for a personal growth workshop?” She replied, “I guess I’m desperate.” At this point, some people in the audience laughed. Her answer wasn’t really what I had in mind, but sometimes you’ve got to roll with the punches.

So I said to her, “That may be true, but there’s also a *positive* reason why you signed up. After all, there are a lot of desperate people in the world, but not all of them sign up for one of my workshops. Yet *you* did. Despite feeling down, you invested your hard earned dollars in hopes you could learn something that would change your life. In other words, the divine spark in you that knows happiness is possible is still very much alive in you. That means you still have hope, you still have curiosity, and you’re still willing to learn. *That’s* why you signed up for this workshop. And not only did you sign up for the workshop, but you’re finding *value* in it. Not everybody does. Some people go to a workshop like this and their cynicism or something else blocks them from enjoying it. But you, on the other hand, are *still* open to learning. You may think this is a good workshop, but in reality it’s *your* openness to learning that’s creating your good experience.”

After I said all this, a tear slowly dripped down Sharon’s face. I asked her, “What’s going on?”

She replied, “I sometimes get down on myself, thinking I’m hopeless. But now I see that there’s plenty of reason to have hope. There’s some goodness in me.”

I present this example because it helps to convey the potential *power* of this exercise, as well as how *not* to do this exercise. When I originally asked Sharon why she went to the workshop, her answer was “I guess I’m desperate.” What I said in my response to her about her hopefulness, curiosity, and openness to learning was *also* true. In fact, it was only when I *elaborated* about these traits in her that she really got deeply touched. Now imagine that each night before you went to bed you got in touch with specific positive *traits* in you that help to create some magical moments in that day. Can you see how that would help you to feel good about *yourself* and your life? Maybe not all at once, but over time you’d start to feel you have

some control and that *you're* able to create good moments in each and every day. That's a powerful feeling. Studies show that the effectiveness of this exercise increases the longer you use it, but even if you just use it for one week, its effects can linger for many months.

Having watched how lazy I can be, as well as the laziness manifested by other people, I feel I need to let you know of an even easier way to do this exercise. While it's best to come up with *three* good things per day to list --and then ask why each thing happened, if you're as lazy as I am you may choose to only list one or two good things per day. It's *still* effective, and instead of taking 2 to 3 minutes to do each night, it only takes one or two minutes to do. Another option besides writing stuff down or telling your mate about the good things in your day is to simply *speak* your answers out loud. In the privacy of your bedroom, you're allowed to speak to yourself. Some people find that easier to do than writing it down in a journal. I'm giving you these potential shortcuts so you'll be even *more* likely to do this exercise on an ongoing basis.

I've given this method out to a lot of people. I've seen its power. When you really get that certain traits or things about you help create positive moments in your life, your life changes. You begin to look at the world through new lenses. You start to understand that no matter how difficult a situation you're in, your ability to laugh, or connect with others, or learn something new or whatever is good about *you* can help create a special moment. The power *is* within you. This exercise helps you not only see that-- but be inspired to create those special moments on an ongoing basis.

Now the key to really being impacted by this exercise is to make sure you take a few moments to really feel good about what you created each day. Don't just make this an intellectual exercise. Instead, after you've come up with something good from your day and asked yourself what role *you* played in creating that moment, take time to feel good about yourself. You might feel grateful that you have a certain ability, or perhaps proud of yourself for doing something well. Whatever you feel, allow yourself to *savor* that good feeling for a few moments. Such feelings are like a healthy tonic that help to feed hope and happiness within you. The effect from doing this exercise will gradually increase until you realize that you've become a significantly happier person.

Key Points for Session Five:

1. People who have a belief or faith in anything beyond themselves tend to heal faster emotionally than those who don't have such beliefs.
2. Spiritual leaders pretty much agree that our purpose is to learn to be filled up from within with love and peace—and from this inner abundance, serve others as best we can.
3. You don't have to create peace of mind. Peace already exists hidden beneath the accumulated thoughts and habits we've learned.
4. Spiritual practice is about learning what helps you to get back to your center and/or what helps you let go of the inner “garbage” or obstacles that can get in the way of feeling the peace within.
5. By overcoming challenges in life, you can become wiser, stronger, and more compassionate. It's all a matter of how you interpret life's events.
6. People who die temporarily and then are brought back to life say they are often asked the following two questions:
 - a) What have you learned about being a loving person?
 - b) How well have you completed what is most important to you?
7. By writing your own ideal obituary, you can get clarity as to what's most important to you, and it can help inspire you to be your best self in the future.
8. Spiritual practices we discuss and recommend include: meditation, 12 step programs, yoga, prayer, reading from Holy books, singing, chanting, dancing, Tai Chi, and Chi Gong.
9. Try various practices and see which one(s) you enjoy and which ones help you to tap into a good feeling.

Suggested Exercises and Things to do from Session Five:

1. **READ “IDEAL OBITUARY” SHEET AND WRITE YOUR OWN:** This simple exercise will help you know what's important to you and keep you headed in the right direction.
2. **READ LETTING GO OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS HANDOUT:** This simple exercise will help you quickly release your negative emotions.

3. READ 12 GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH HANDOUT: No matter what spiritual path you're on, these 12 suggestions will accelerate your growth.
4. LISTEN TO POWER MEDITATION # 10: This will help you overcome any beliefs that no longer serve you...
5. LISTEN TO POWER MEDITATION #5: This meditation will help you get in touch with your heart and the many blessings in your life.

Week Five Handouts

Your Ideal Obituary

If your life is anything like mine, you forget many times a day what you're ultimately aiming for. Part of the reason we forget our ultimate aim in life is because most of us have never actually defined what it is. It's hard to hit a target when you don't know what the target is. Therefore, today's task will involve writing what I call your own "ideal obituary." Your Ideal Obituary is what you want to be known for, and what you want others to say about you at your funeral. The sky's the limit. Make it as specific, grandiose, and flowery as you would like. By writing down exactly what you want other people to say about you, it gives you a target to shoot for. It helps to define the direction you want to head and what your Best self would look like if you truly followed your deepest dreams.

Let me suggest a couple of pointers when writing your Ideal Obituary. First, make it as fantastic as you want. Think about what you really, really would like the people you know and love to say about you at your funeral. Do you want to be known for making a billion dollars through your cleverness, or would you rather be known for being a caring and loving friend? What spiritual qualities do you want to be known for? Who do you want to impact with your best qualities? Make sure you get as detailed and specific as possible. What do you want your mate to say about you? What do you want your kids, friends, or co-workers to say about you? Make sure you keep your pen or fingers moving for at least 3 minutes. You can always edit and rewrite it later. The important thing is to get a clear picture of who you would most like to be and perhaps what such a person would most likely do. If you can, use words that inspire you. Don't simply say "Joe or Jane was a really nice person." Instead, say "they were a radiant presence of love and compassion that inspired all they met to be kinder and more open to hearing their own caring heart." Hopefully you get the picture. Try out an initial first draft here, or on your computer...

A 3 Minute Guide to Letting Go of Negative Emotions Quickly, Easily, and Effectively

Perhaps the most important thing a human being can learn is how to quickly let go of negative thought patterns and emotions and quickly return to the peace and love that's hidden behind our turbulent minds. Once you can do this well, everything in your life changes. Here's a 3 minute mini-course on a very effective way to do this using a technique called The Sedona Method:

1. Notice when you are having negative emotions and/or thoughts that have been going on for awhile or making you feel stuck. Normally, we resist (through distraction, denial and/or blame) our negative emotions. Instead, WELCOME whatever your current experience is. Take time to welcome it fully and completely, like you would an old friend. Become curious as to where and how such thoughts or feelings actually feel in your body.
2. If you notice you're still resisting your experience, welcome the Resistance—the way you would a small child—with open arms and a smile. Allow your experience to be there-- exactly as it is.
3. Once you've fully welcomed your experience (and let go of resisting it in any way), ask yourself “Has this negative emotion arisen from my wanting CONTROL, or APPROVAL or SAFETY/SECURITY or my wanting to feel more SEPARATE (being special, being right or better than). Take note of which desire feels the strongest in you.
4. Once you're clear on what desire (control, approval, safety/security or separation) you have *most* wanted in this situation, ask yourself, “COULD I LET GO OF WANTING *THAT* (control, approval, safety/security or separation) JUST FOR RIGHT NOW?” Realize it is your feeling of “wanting” or lack that creates your suffering, and resolve to let that feeling of lack go.
Take a deep breath and allow yourself to let go of craving or needing whatever you felt you were needing—just for now.

5. Then ask yourself “**Could I let it go some more? How about even more?**” Feel where you felt the negative emotions (such as in your chest or stomach area) and imagine opening up a window there and letting the energy/feelings pass through you—dispersing into the air. With each breath you exhale, allow the feelings to disperse even more. Feel the spaciousness inside of you.

6. Finally, Welcome an opposite energy/feeling into your body. For example, if you were feeling anger, welcome a feeling of approval or calm. If you were feeling insecure, welcome a feeling of self-love with each inhalation you take. IF you have time, it’s a good idea to end your session by welcoming a feeling of gratitude-- or to tune into the peace and stillness that is always hidden behind our turbulent feelings and thoughts.

7. Practice makes perfect. The more you practice this form of “letting go,” the more you’ll become free of negative feelings and the more you’ll be able to tune into the peace and love that’s always inside of you. At first, this may take 3 to 5 minutes to do, but can eventually be done in a minute.

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A Dozen Good Guidelines for Spiritual Growth

- 1. Find Help.** Find a person or, better yet, a group of people who inspire you, challenge you, and can help you to become the person you want to be.
- 2. Practice Humility.** Avoid feeling better than people who are not consciously on a spiritual path. If you feel separate from others, you're headed in the wrong direction.
- 3. Take Risks.** Be willing to try new things and face small fears as part of your spiritual path.
- 4. Practice Honesty.** The more honest you are with yourself and others, the more likely you will be headed in the right direction.
- 5. Nurture Positive Qualities:** Kindness, courage, compassion, and curiosity are great allies on the spiritual journey.
- 6. Listen to Your Intuition.** By listening to the "still small voice" within, you can better stay on track.
- 7. Develop Mindfulness.** Watch your thoughts and behavior the way an impartial observer might watch you. As you grow your non-judgmental awareness, room for Grace is made available.
- 8. Experiment with Spiritual Practices.** Try several practices and find one(s) that feel right for you.
- 9. Practice Service.** Helping others is always a good thing. Every religion agrees on that.
- 10. Use Your Negative Feelings.** Your bad feelings can be a signpost to alert you to your shortcomings, and therefore a wake-up call of what you need to become more aware of.

11. Learn from Relationships. Relationships can be wonderful mirrors to help you see yourself and to help you learn about love and the obstacles to love.

12. Discover Your Inner Obstacles. The “kingdom of heaven” is already within you. Your job is to identify the obstacles (thoughts, behaviors, feelings) that prevent you from feeling more connected to spirit.

Key Points for Session Six:

1. Life involves a lot of stress, trauma, and loss. Sadness is a natural reaction to loss—and is only a problem if you get stuck in it in a repetitive or indulgent manner.
2. Welcoming one's feelings (instead of resisting them) helps them to move through you more quickly.
3. Talking to someone about your feelings and/or various therapies can help you to overcome sadness and/or trauma. EMDR, hypnosis, CBT and NLP are all therapeutic methods to help people move through past stuff more quickly.
4. The “Erasure Technique” can help you quickly neutralize traumatic memories.
5. It is helpful to have the perspective that past trauma can help you become a more compassionate and better person.
6. Always invest in your relationship with yourself in order to be better prepared for the inevitable loss in life.
7. It can help to write a “letter of completion” or some other ritual to move through feelings that arise from the changing of relationships.
8. By working on one's “weak link” in your life, you can quickly improve the quality of your life as a whole.
9. In order to succeed in any endeavor, you need two things:
 - a) Knowing the effective or right thing to do.
 - b) Doing the right thing consistently.
10. Be aware that you can write your own story by
 - a) Remembering who you deep down are
 - b) Letting go of what needs to be let go of.

Suggested Exercises and Methods for Session Six:

1. **READ “LETTER OF COMPLETION SHEET”:** If after reading this handout, you feel it would be valuable for you to do this exercise, then do it.
2. **DO THE ERASURE TECHNIQUE:** All the steps for using this method to neutralize negative memories are included in the enclosed handout.

3. **WRITE OUT YOUR OLD AND NEW STORY:** The information on the method and the benefits of writing about your life in this way are all included in the handout titled “My New/True Story.”
4. **LISTEN TO POWER MEDITATION #7:** This guided meditation will help you to look at a traumatic event from your past in a new and empowering way.
5. **LISTEN TO POWER MEDITATION #11:** This guided meditation will help you to let go of anger, resentment and stress in relation to someone you know.
6. **BEGIN LISTENING TO THE “ESCAPE FROM DEPRESSION” PROGRAM:** See if this program resonates with you, and if so, continue to listen to it.
7. **LISTEN TO THE “DEEPER HAPPINESS” PROGRAM:** Begin with session one, session 12 and session 13 and see if this program resonates with you.

Week Six Handouts

Letter of Completion Exercise

Instructions:

In order to help you resolve and/or lessen the emotional charge in connection to a significant relationship (past or present), use the following guidelines.

1. Think of a person who you would like to write to in order to help heal or release the emotions surrounding your relationship to them. Take note of the various thoughts and feelings that come up for you as you think about this person. Allow yourself to be with (and not resist) the various thoughts and feelings that are stirred up.
2. Find a memo pad or sheets of paper in which you can hand write a personal letter to this person. (writing by hand is better than writing on a keyboard)
3. Write an honest letter to this person. After writing this letter, you’ll have a choice as to whether or not to send them this letter or keep it in a safe place—or even burn it. Since you won’t necessarily be sending them this letter, feel free to be fully honest. Attempt to cover all the following points:

- a) Why you are writing the letter (your highest intention)
 - b) What about your connection to this person has bothered you or troubled you. If relevant, include specific things they did that gave you difficulty and/or emotional pain.
 - c) How your relationship with this person led you to feel, and how you feel now towards them (even if they are gone or no longer in your life)
 - d) What you learned from this person, and/or the benefits you may have received from having known this person.
 - e) What, if anything, you feel you need to forgive this person for.
 - f) What, if anything, you feel you need to forgive yourself for.
 - g) Any other feelings, issues, or thoughts you feel you need to write in order to feel more “complete” with this person.
4. Once all this is written, read over your “essay” a few times. In fact, try to read it over and over again until it feels less and less emotionally charged. Eventually, you want to even be a bit bored with reading it and going over the story again.
5. Once you’re a bit bored or no longer emotionally charged by reading what you’ve written, you can decide to do one of three things with it:
- a) If appropriate and it feels right, you can send what you’ve written to the person you wrote it about. While this is often not appropriate, sometimes it can be helpful.
 - b) Put the pages in a small container or envelope and bury it.
 - c) Carefully burn the pages, allowing the past to be done and complete.
6. Celebrate in whatever way feels appropriate the fact that a previously troubling relationship has been more resolved or completed within you. Go out and have a good time doing whatever you enjoy doing.

Erasure Technique Instructions:

In order to help you neutralize negative memories from your past, the Erasure Technique can be very useful. The following instructions will guide you through this process step-by-step.

1. Think of an event from your past that still bothers you or haunts you. If you've experienced major trauma in your life (intense violence, etc), choose a less painful memory to start off with. Once you're experienced with the Erasure Technique, you may choose to use it to even neutralize traumatic memories.
2. In your imagination, try to recall the crux of the event that bothered you as if you were watching a movie of the event. Yet, in this "movie" or re-enactment, the entire movie should be in fast motion—and should only take somewhere between 5 and 20 seconds long to view in total. That means all the characters and action and any dialogue should move very much faster than they would normally take place.
3. Once you've reached the end of your "movie," play the entire movie in reverse—also at an accelerated rate (in reverse).
4. Next, play this scene again in your head, but this time put a Bozo nose on all the character's faces in the movie. Then, once again, proceed to play it in fast motion—both forward and reverse.
5. Play the "movie" again as best you can, but this time, imagine some fun "circus type" music or other ridiculous music playing in the background as the scene unfolds in fast motion—both in forward and reverse.
6. Finally, play the movie again, but this time include other ridiculous things happening—such as people slipping on banana peels, someone you don't like stepping in dog poo, etc . Try to be imaginative and even have fun with it. As before, attempt to include the ridiculous music in the background, and watch the movie in fast motion—both forward and reverse.
7. When your brain is given a choice between a negative memory and a ridiculous memory, it will usually choose to look at the ridiculous memory. To test this out, try to remember your original memory and notice if things like a Bozo nose pops up, or slipping on a banana peel, or any other weird thing pops up as you try to replay the memory. Notice how the memory doesn't have the "charge" that it used to have...

My “New/True Story” Instructions

At any given time, we each have a “story” in our head about our lives. This “story” is based on many things—including our past and present circumstances. Yet, the habitual story we tell ourselves about our lives is rarely inspiring or empowering. Therefore, it can be very powerful to summarize the current story you have in your head about your life, and then *decide* to write a more empowering story. In order to do this, use the following guidelines, and then read the included example to help you formulate your “old” and “new” story for yourself.

1. Either on your computer or on sheets of paper, create a one or two paragraph description of your life situation and how you got here. It can help to imagine that you’re talking to a therapist and you’re summarizing how and why you are having a hard time in life. For example, you may include a couple of sentences about your childhood, traumatic things you’ve been through, bad luck you’ve had recently, and/or why you’re having a difficult time in your life now. For most people, some version of a “bad luck or bad news” story is going on in their head at a subconscious level almost all the time. You are attempting to get this “story” out of your head and onto your computer or onto paper.
2. Once you are satisfied that the disempowering story you’ve written fits well enough for you, begin to think of how to write a more empowering story. Imagine that your life is a book and that you’re midway through the book (where the main character—you—is going through a difficult time). Yet, you find out that the book has an incredibly happy and successful ending. In that context, how might you look at the story of your life differently?
3. In writing your “new” story, consider touching upon the following topics:
 - a) How have the difficulties of your past helped make you a stronger, more caring and/or better person?
 - b) How are the current circumstances in your life a perfect or helpful situation for eventually becoming the person you want to be—and creating the life you want to create?
 - c) What or who are good things in your life that you are grateful for and can help give you the courage to move forward in an empowering manner?

Example of an “Old/Disempowering story”:

I had a horrible childhood, so I have plenty of reason to feel screwed up and depressed. Then I had to endure the burden of poor physical health for several years and a nasty divorce. I've been pretty unlucky in life, and it's not fair. Now I have to deal with a job situation that, through no fault of my own, is tanking and probably will be over soon. With all these bad things going on in my life, it's no wonder that I feel depressed and don't want to get out of bed in the morning.

Example of a "New/Empowering Story":

I was blessed to have a difficult childhood because it made me more compassionate and more willing to explore different ways to find meaning and purpose in my life. The fact that I had health challenges for a long time has made me appreciate the level of health I now have even more. I know I am a survivor and that I can even bounce back from great challenges like a messy divorce. Because I am willing to get help from friends and seminars, I know a lot of good information that has benefitted both me and those I care about. While I still have a lot of struggles, they are serving to make me a person of depth, substance, and deep caring. My challenges have helped me develop deep friendships with many people. My many good qualities and traits will continue to serve me well as I overcome my current challenges. I have the tools and the knowledge and the support to create an even deeper, more peaceful and more joyous life in the future.

NOW, USING THE INSTRUCTIONS ABOVE, WRITE OUT YOUR OLD AND NEW STORY. THEN, WHENEVER YOU GET TOO "LOST" IN YOUR OLD STORY, READ YOUR NEW STORY AND FEEL INTO ITS VISION OF YOU FOR THE FUTURE...

We hope you have enjoyed
S.A.D. to Glad: How to Overcome Stress, Anxiety, and Depression, And Feel Happy Again

