

## **Resolving Mental and Emotional Blocks in Clinical Practice**

### **How to Identify, Assess, Counsel and Treat Patients Successfully**

NDs see patients with a variety of health conditions. Patients will often have a variety of underlying mental/emotional difficulties and *negative mental learned behaviors* that cause debility and contribute to frequent internal discord and impact daily health and well being.

Some patients have complicated medical conditions and it is easy to spend all available clinical time just dealing with those and the difficulties listed above may not be addressed.

This lecture will give NDs a guide to keenly recognize and assess mental/emotional difficulties and negative mental learned behaviors.

In addition, several tools will be presented that will allow NDs to increase patient awareness, give patients a choice to use and incorporate the tools for self help, learn new ways of thinking and being which ultimately helps them increases health and quality of life.

**Assessment Tools** - Goal here is to pick up and identify items to “possibly” discuss with the patient to explore if the issue is a root of moderate to severe internal mental-emotional discord that might influence overall health and wellbeing AND present as physical manifestations.

- Identify items worth exploring: Questions to Ask
- ND recognition from patient’s words – I am sure, I believe, that’s the way it is, etc.

**Treatment Tools** - Goal #1 is to understand what “most” people do with thought patterns that may lead to ill health. Goal #2 learn to converse with people that hopefully teaches them new healthier thought patterns.

- The Prime Key
- Past-Present-Future
- Position Belief Fact Persuasion
- Basic Tenants of Buddhism - - Desire, wanting; people want things to be different than they are... which = suffering
- What Do You Want, Mind Management\*, Commit To Change and Let Go
- Relaxation and Mind Clearing to Reduce Stress\*
- Relating Improvement
- Walking Program

## QUESTIONS THAT ELICIT MENTAL-EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES & CHALLENGES IN PATIENTS

If you are in a relationship, will your **significant other support you** in your dietary or lifestyle modification(s)?  
Yes or No

Do you feel you are adequately loved by others?  Yes  No

Can you accept love when others offer it or demonstrate it?  Yes  No

Do you have people in your life that you love?  Yes  No

Do you experience joy and happiness on a regular basis?  Yes  No

Are you passionate about and fulfilled by some aspect of your life, such as work, a hobby, family, some combination of, etc.?  Yes  No

Are you sexually satisfied?  Yes  No Is this important to you?  Yes  No

Are you a "relaxed" person?  Yes  No Do you know how to relax?  Yes  No

\*\*\*\*\*

Do you **presently experience** any of the following on a regular basis? Please circle all that apply.

Loneliness Sadness Crying Spells Depression Despair Suicidal Thoughts Fatigue

Tension Low Threshold for Frustration Anxiety Fear Panic Attacks Nightmares

Obsessive or Compulsive Behavior(s) Jealousy Possessiveness Shyness Inability to Communicate

### **When something troubles you, how do you deal with it?**

Please check the answer that best characterizes your response.

I don't. I deny or avoid it.

I deal with it independently, directly and privately.

I discuss it with a loved one.

I discuss it with a friend.  I discuss with clergy or counselor.

Are you currently being or have you been **abused** in any way? (physical, emotional or sexual) Yes or No

Do you **love** yourself? Yes or No Don't Know Is it easy for you to **forgive** yourself and others? Yes or No

Is there **anyone in your life you have not forgiven** and harbor resentment toward? Yes or No  
If yes, please list.

---

Rate your **self esteem** (circle) Very Low Low Moderate High Very High

What is your **stress level at work** ? (circle) Non-Existent Low Mild Moderate High Severe

What is your **satisfaction level at work?** (circle) Non-Existent Low Mild Moderate High Extremely High

Are you doing the **type of work that you would most enjoy** above all else? Yes or No

Have you identified what your **most important wants** in your life? If so, are you getting them? Yes or No

**PERSONAL EMOTIONAL HISTORY**

Please list the 5 most stressful events in your life in descending order of importance and indicate whether or not they are still impacting your life.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No

Please list any **major decision(s)** you are presently facing.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please **list any major change(s)** in your life that you experienced recently or expect to experience in the near future.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# The “PRIME KEY”

Heighten your awareness of thoughts, feelings, perceptions, meanings, assumptions and realities made.

Evaluating above as to whether or not they serve or hinder you... choose to think and behave different.

*Always* express feelings/thoughts, ensure what is communicated is forward moving vs. argumentative, badgering, or **not** solution oriented.

Make requests for what you want, always.

Assume nothing. Always attempt to get and evaluate the facts.

Be grateful for what you have in your life.

Learn to let go of and accept what you cannot control or change.

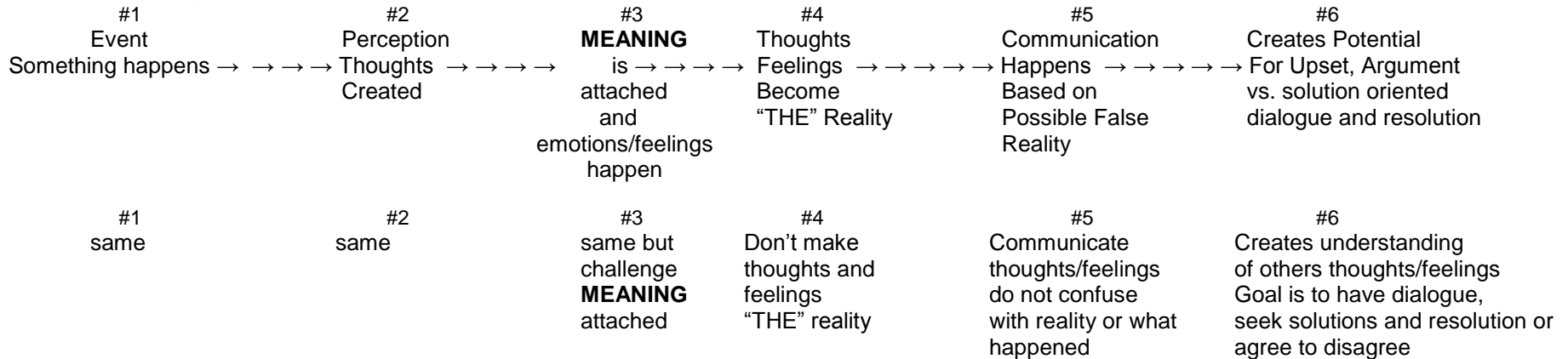
Do all of the above repeatedly for the rest of your life without being asked.

\*\*\*\*\*

All of this falls under Mind Management. Your mind needs to be watched, by your constant awareness. Your mind needs to be managed and directed to what suits you vs your thoughts running wild and wreaking emotional havoc. A parent pays constant attention and manages a young playful child to keep some level of control over the child’s behavior for safety and chaos management.

The mind requires you to be constantly aware of thoughts, evaluating those thoughts and purposefully choosing what is best for you to achieve what you want.

Understand This;



# Past, Present, Future...

## Where is your mind most of the time?

Do you experience *"in the present"* fear, grief-sadness or suffer in some way from the past events that occurred in your life?

*"In the present"* do you think of the future and have emotional turmoil because the future is uncertain or you fear something bad will happen in the future?

*Do you miss some major part of the present* because your thoughts, emotions and some behaviors are generated from the past or you are concerned, worried, fearful of the future?

If you do some or all of these this can be changed by establishing your want list, building thought and emotion awareness, managing your mind actively and perpetually, thinking creatively, asking for what you want, defining what actions to take to fulfill your needs then completing those defined actions, learning how to handle breakdowns and doing the above all over again, again and again.

## Position Belief Fact Persuasion

HEADLINE: ASSUME THE POSITION

**A position is a belief stated as a fact.** We have them, we believe them, and we defend them. Most people assume the position easily. And once we assume a position, we tend to stick with it as long as possible. Positions are how we anchor our understanding of the world around us. Once we fix our positions, we defend them like castles; building logical fortifications and emotional moats behind which we can shoot down any assailants who dare to challenge us.

When two people or parties take positions and defend them, a long battle of attrition ensues, each person attacking the other's position, trying to undermine it or outright destroy it. At best, the victor wins a hollow victory, as the beaten and vanquished opponent is coerced into submission and surrender. This is clearly not a good environment for persuasion. And this is specifically why I say that if you need to be right, you're doing it wrong.

Taking a position about someone's position is clearly not the solution. The real solution to dealing with positions is to introduce doubt, reframe meaning, or find out the interests behind positions and address those interests in new and creative ways. Persuasion happens when positions change.

STRONG, WEAK, OPPOSITE

Strong positions are tied to a person's sense of identity, and are buttressed with conviction. A person with a strong position has likely defined it in stark terms, black and white, no shades of grey. The more rigid the position, the more susceptible it is to small changes in meaning.

Weak positions are surrounded by doubts. Succeed in understanding the doubts and a person will quickly accept an alternative idea that addresses those doubts.

Opposition is the position opposite to your own. When dealing with opposition, it is your position that is in play. There are any number of reasons for people to take a position opposite to your own. Opposition draws its strength from standing against another position. So it is possible to create opposition in others by voicing your own strong positions before understanding theirs. Yet some opposition is simply created out of thin air by people who oppose as a way of standing out from the crowd.

For the moment, suffice it to say (or don't, it is entirely up to you!) that whenever you face opposition, it is useful to know as much about it as possible. Understanding the motivations behind a position can give you the information you need in order to speak persuasively and address the concerns.

**TO SUMMARIZE: PEOPLE ASSUME THE POSITION WHEN THEY MISTAKE THEIR BELIEF FOR THE TRUTH.**

**PEOPLE ARE MEANING MAKING MACHINES...**

Positions come in different strengths, from strong, to weak, to opposition. What can you do with positions? You can sow seeds of doubt with questions. You can reframe the meaning of some small aspect of a position, while retaining the position. And as you gain insight and understanding into the reasons and interests behind a position, you can take this information into account when presenting your proposition.

You can gain a comprehensive set of options for dealing with positions and opposition in the 'Insider's Guide To The Art Of Persuasion,' available as an 8 CD 6.5 hour audio program, a 248 page book and an exercise book filled with questions and activities to help you learn each part of the program, at [www.TheArtofChange.com](http://www.TheArtofChange.com) webstore, 24/7. <http://www.TheArtofChange.com>

## Basic tenants of Buddhism

### Four Noble Truths,

I. Suffering: - In this world people suffer. What is suffering? Wanting wealth when one is poor, that's suffering. Desiring youth when one is middle aged, that's suffering. Feeling pain but wanting to be free of pain, that's suffering. Having a cake delivered for your birthday when one wanted chocolate cake, that's suffering. Having a child become sick and die when one wanted that child be healthy and grow, that's suffering. From the trivial to the profound, suffering is merely the gap between what one wants the world to be and the way it really is. The greater the gap the greater the suffering.

II. Causation: - Desire, wanting; people want things to be different. People are not satisfied with the way things are. People try to fix things so they are perfect. Improve things so they are better or hold on to old ways because things were better back then. That human trait is the source of suffering.

III. Cessation: - Each individual create's their own wants and desires. Thus it is possible for people eliminate suffering by eliminating their self created desires. The ability to eliminate suffering is inherent in all, whether one's intelligent and well read or slow and illiterate, One does not need to call upon some god or goddess, teacher or guru, doctor or lawyer to "save" one from suffering.

IV. Eight fold path: - The eight fold path is the method which the Buddha taught his follower's the way to eliminate their desires and wants. Buddha did not teach how to eliminate pain or how to eliminate illness, old age, or death. Nor did he teach about the existence or non-existence of gods, goddesses, or of a supreme being. He only taught about suffering, how people create it, and how it can be eliminated.

**The Eight Fold Path:** - The eight fold path is a way to live one's life. One does not have to master each item before going on to the next, though one can do so if one wishes. One can start in the middle and work towards the end or start at the end and work towards the beginning. One can even work on all of them at once.

I. Right Understanding: - Just being able to comprehend that there is a difference between what is and what one desires to be is sufficient. But note, there is an infinite regression on the why's and how's things came to be the way they are. That is call karma. The important thing is to see how one creates suffering. Then one will see's how others create suffering, that process deepens understanding and develops compassion.

II. Right Thought: - Wants and desires are thoughts. One can learn to select those thoughts which alleviate suffering. Thoughts which cause desire and suffering in life are given up for thoughts which bring peace and tranquility. Frivolous thinking can be given up for thinking about what is needed to meet basic necessity's of life.

III. Right Speech: - Talking can spread ideas and thoughts of wants and desires from one to another. It also re-enforces wants and desires which come to mind. One gives up frivolous talk and gossip. One also gives up hurtful and angry language for they stem from wants and desires. Talk reduces to what's necessary to teach or meet basic needs.

IV. Right Action: - One's actions are also modified. One refrains from harming others and from trivial activities. One acts only to meet their basic needs or, out of compassion, to help other's meet their needs.

V. Right Livelihood: - How one chooses to live and bring sustenance to their home becomes important. One gives up lying and taking from other's even if it is considered "legal" by society in favor of giving to self and others. Careers, jobs, or hobbies which promote peace and prosperity for all are taken up over those which bring fame or fortune to oneself.

VI. Right Effort: - The Buddha didn't say this would be easy. One should expect lapses, mistakes, and failures to crop up. But over time the ability to follow each element of the eight fold path will get stronger.

VII. Right Concentration: - Concentration is the ability to quickly discard distracting thoughts and views which come into the mind that keep one from being focused on the immediate task at hand. Some schools of Buddhism use meditation to develop and strengthen this skill. Other schools use elaborate ceremonies and chants.

VIII. Right Mindfulness. - Mindfulness is the ability to bring oneself back to the task at hand when one's concentration has lapsed. It is also the ability to change focus when new needs or priorities come to one's attention. The various schools of Buddhism use meditation, ceremonies and chanting to develop this skill as well.

## **Basic tenants of Buddhism**

Concluding Thoughts:

There are many spiritual practices which alleviate suffering. This is but one. One can only try it. If it works, it works. If it doesn't, try something else. Spiritual practice is best done in a community with a teacher. It is easy for misinterpretations to be blown out of proportion and become a hindrance to goal of eliminating suffering. Furthermore Remember this about all spiritual practices; when used properly they can carry one across life's difficulties like a boat across a river, but one should never used them as a ram and smash and dash other people's boats!



## What Do You Want?

### What specifically do you want? In what area of your life?

- Work or Career
- Financial
- Significant other relationship
- Family and friend relationships
- Personal – psychological (self esteem, self love, confidence, attitude, etc.)
- Personal – physical fitness, body image, overall health, etc.
- Other??

It helps to write out your wants, desires or goals. Written wants that are clearly defined have a much greater possibility of being accomplished than vague thoughts swimming around in your head. Be specific and always frame them from the positive vs. the negative. Example: I don't want to be fat vs. I want to weigh 150lbs and here is what I have to do to get there. Your subconscious mind can work on achieving positively framed items but not negatives.

### How are you going to get what you want?

- What do you have to do?
- What do you have to learn?
- What specifically needs to change?
- What do you have to do less of? More of?
- With whom must you speak to gain knowledge to help you attain your goal?
- If you want "X", are you always choosing to work on actions that will get you closer to having "X"?
- Can you accept that achieving a goal may take the form of accomplishing many small successful steps over a fairly long period of time?

### How will you deal with getting off track, or being stalled? How will you deal with set backs, minor or major failures?

- The road to a goal is not a straight line.
- What will you do to deal with the psychological and emotional impact of setbacks or failures?
- Any amount of failure can be a learning tool to figuring out what needs to be done to move forward. Use failure to your advantage vs getting paralyzed by it. Accept failure(s) as a normal part of any accomplishment process and learn how to turn lemons (failures) into lemonade (successes).

### How do you get back on track when you have a set back or failure?

- Forgive yourself (if you need to) and resolve to move forward.
- It is always your choice to either chase your tail or move forward.
- Remember that achieving a goal may take the form of accomplishing many small successful steps over a fairly long period of time.
- Most problems have solutions. It is your job to find the solutions.
- Are you unstoppable? If a roadblock gets put in the way of your path or goal can you figure out a way to go under it, over it, around it, move in another direction to still end up where you wanted? Declare yourself unstoppable. All it takes is the declaration and the will to be persistent in turning problems into solutions.
- If you find yourself stuck, realize *it is your choice* to stay stuck or start finding solutions to achieve your wants and desires. Remember, a new choice can always be made in an instant.

**CONNECTICUT CENTER FOR HEALTH**  
**Naturopathic and Acupuncture Clinic**  
**860-347-8600**

## **MIND & THOUGHT MANAGEMENT**

Most people never learn to manage their self talk and thoughts. In fact, they let their self talk run undirected from moment to moment all day long every day. This can produce stress, tension, worry and physical problems. Learning and using the following steps will help you relax, decrease worry, stress and tension by changing your mind, letting go and redirecting negative thoughts. This is a skill. The more you practice it, the better you will get at it and the easier it will be. Have fun with it. Be light and not too serious. It' will come to you in time.

Step #1. When a negative or unpleasant thought enters your mind ***notice it and catch yourself being there.*** Unless you learn to do this part, you can't move to the next level.

Step #2. Once you notice you are thinking negative or unpleasant thoughts, ask yourself if you want to continue to let your mind go there. In other words, ***choose where to put your mind's thoughts.*** Your choice is whether to continue to think negative/unpleasant thoughts or redirect your mind to other beneficial thoughts or neutral ground. If necessary, ask yourself a series of questions that may illustrate the futility of continuing with a negative/unpleasant thought pattern.

- a). Is this benefiting me to continue this line of thinking?
- b). What does it cost me to continue with such thoughts?
- c). Do these thoughts create emotions or feelings that are supportive and beneficial or are they emotionally disturbing and stress provoking?
- d). If my thoughts are disturbing and stress provoking, am I willing to commit to stopping them and learn how to change or redirect my thoughts, so that I am more relaxed and content?

Step #3. You can redirect your mind's thoughts to many areas. It all starts with noticing first, then letting go of the negative/unpleasant thought, followed by placing your mind in another place (also called redirecting). The following are a few examples of redirecting your mind's thoughts:

- a). Think of something positive or peaceful.
- b). Be solution oriented. Direct your mind to figure out how to turn any bitter or sour situation in your life into something sweet.
- c). Notice your immediate surroundings and be relaxed in the moment.
- d). Notice tense parts of your body and relax them.
- e). Accept your best effort in any situation and let that be ok with you. Let go of the thought that you could have or should have done more. Learn from your errors and shortcomings and apply the lesson in the future. Relax and let go. Do this over again and again.
- f). Be confident that you can handle or learn to handle any turn of events that life gives you.
- f). Imagine the worst that could happen in any situation. Learn to accept it emotionally. Be solution oriented. Direct your mind to figure out how to turn any bitter or sour situation in your life into something sweet.
- e). As your mind goes back to the negative, let go of it and redirect to one of the above.

Step #4. This whole process is supported greatly by learning how to meditate and practicing meditation on a daily basis for 20 minutes. Handouts\Mind Management.doc

**CONNECTICUT CENTER FOR HEALTH**  
**Naturopathic and Acupuncture Clinic**  
**860-347-8600**

## **Commit To Change and Let Go**

Before reading this information please read the Mind and Thought Management Handout.

Altering what you think is not easy, but possible. The information written below is a life tool. Like any other tool, it won't produce any result unless it is picked up and used. The more you use a tool, the more productive you are, and the easier it is. Use this tool with the goal of producing tranquility, peace of mind and a relaxed mental and physical state.

***The first step*** starts with choosing to commit and then maintaining an unwavering commitment to alter something. Without a diehard commitment to alter something and produce an outcome, it will not come to pass.

You must Decide. Resolve. Be determined. Choose. Make up your mind. Elect. or Opt to do the following. Commit to change, forgive. let go of, or transform a thought pattern. The thought pattern may have resulted from life events, how you've learned to think about yourself, or other people or a particular situation.

***The second step*** is to constantly be aware and alert, to notice, observe, and note your thoughts through out the day. There is a big difference in noticing yourself in a thought pattern vs. automatically having the thought pattern run and you're stuck in it.

***The third step is to choose*** to redirect the thought pattern once you have developed your heightened awareness of it running. Usually people want to alter thought patterns because they are suffering. You have a choice to change, forgive. let go, or transform a thought pattern. The choice is simple. You may continue suffering at the hand of the established pattern, or you may alter the pattern by mastering the process I am outlining. Mastery is not simple. The option of choosing which way to proceed is.

***The fourth step is to constantly (several or more times a day) remind yourself of the choice and commitment you have made.*** You will challenge your own choice and commitment daily, if not several times a day. When you notice that happening, do your best to relax and remind yourself that you plan to stay the course and alter what you have set out to do (follow Mind and Thought Management Handout suggestions). Redirect your mind to another place more suitable.

This technique works. It takes a lot of practice for it to produce results. It is no different than learning a musical instrument. To play an instrument well, a good deal of daily practice is required.

I suggest you read this and think about it for a day or two. Then read it again and think about it for a day or two and do the same for a third time. Begin to practice it. If you have difficulty, thoughts you need to discuss or questions, please make an appointment to see me so we can review them in detail.

## **RELAXATION & THOUGHT CLEARING TO DECREASE STRESS**

Doctors often find that one of the primary causes of stress is a racing mind and thinking too much. Simply put, people have a difficult time shutting off thoughts, putting them aside, clearing the mind, and relaxing the body. Constant thinking creates brain activity and releases chemicals in the nerves that are stimulating. It is hard to fall relax and reduce stress with stimulating chemicals running around the body. However, mind clearing and relaxing releases a different set of chemicals that calm, soothe and allow people to let go, relax and decrease stress.

These guidelines if practiced routinely (daily) are *extremely* powerful and useful to help achieve and maintain a relaxed state and most certainly will improve the quality of one's life. Let's face it, we live in a stressful world and most people don't know how to effectively manage their thoughts, clear their minds, relax and let go of the stressors of life.

What to expect once you have made relaxation, meditation, and mind management a habit:

1. You have a connection between your mind and body that helps you let go physically, relax your muscles and quiet your mind.
2. You are able to let go mentally, redirect negative thoughts to pleasant or more productive thoughts and have a neutral mind (being present to your surroundings) more often.
3. You will notice your thoughts more readily and change your mind's focus if you choose. You can manage and direct your thoughts to focus on something more productive or pleasant.
4. You are able to recognize your emotions, deal with them more effectively and let go.
5. You experience a greater amount of mental peace and relaxation moment to moment in daily life.

### **GETTING STARTED:**

First, give it time. Relaxing/Meditation takes practice. If you're expecting to do it 'perfectly', you may actually create more stress for yourself than you relieve, and you won't want to stick with it. You need a willing attitude, an open mind and perseverance to get good at this and make it a useful tool. With practice, it becomes easier and more effective.

**Posture** - Different postures affect how the energy flows through the body and how alert the mind is in relaxing meditation. Lie down to enhance the letting go of body tension and achieve complete relaxation. Keep your arms at your side and legs uncrossed. Make sure you are really comfortable before beginning.

**How Long to Relax/Meditate** - Usually 15-30 minutes (goal is 20 minutes) is a good amount of time, although if you are new to this, you may want to start with 5 or 10 and build up. If you relax/meditate regularly, it can be helpful to do so about the same number of minutes each day.

**When to Schedule Your Relax/Meditate Time** - Although you can relax/meditate at any time, the ideal times are usually in the morning as a start to your day, or in the late afternoon in order to unwind from the activity of the day and be refreshed for the evening. However, anytime is better than none.

How Often to Relax/Meditate - Once daily is recommended and can make a huge difference. Twice a day if needed. A regular routine of relaxation/meditation is invaluable. *The benefit derived from meditation starts to carry over into our daily life and activity more when we relax/meditate regularly.*

Focus in Relaxation/Meditation – Achieving deep relaxation is all about bringing and keeping your focus and attention on two things, the thoughts in your head and relaxing and letting go of your muscles. Once you are in the proper position and ready, bring your focus to your thoughts. Your primary job is to keep your mind's attention on something neutral, pleasant and/or relaxing. By doing so you momentarily stop thinking about the everyday stuff of life that causes you stress, tension, and upset. As you start to practice this technique, you will observe that as you attempt to keep your mind focused on something neutral for a period of time (seconds or minutes), your mind drifts and starts thinking about everyday life. When that happens simply be aware that you are there and bring your mind back to the neutral, pleasant or relaxing focus.

Avoid beating yourself up if you frequently lose your focus and think about everyday life. REMEMBER THIS NEXT SENTENCE... Losing the focus through a relaxation/meditation session is normal. The best thing to do is bring yourself back to the neutral, pleasant or relaxing mind focus and keep it there as long as you can.

What to focus on in your mind - Anything that works for you. You can create it. The goal is to focus on something neutral, pleasant or relaxing and keep the focus as long as you can.

Some Examples:

- The Sounds of The Ocean, Soothing Music Nature Sounds, Running Water, Wind Chimes, etc.
- You can put your focus on and pay attention to your breath by keeping your mind and thoughts totally riveted on listening to your breath coming into your lungs, leaving your lungs and the pause in between.
- You can try to keep constant attention on the black in front of your closed eyes. This may sound silly but try and do it and at the same time let the muscles of your body loosen and relax physically.
- A word such as relax, down, or another of your choosing. As you say the word to yourself stretch the word out. Example; Use relaaaaaaaaaax and when you are saying the word in your head let the muscles of your body loosen and relax physically.
- Body Scan – Explained below.

Thoughts in Relaxation/Meditation - Thoughts arise spontaneously in the mind. They are a natural part of relaxing. The goal of relaxing/meditating is to become more at ease, relaxed and at peace with whatever is happening. Therefore, it is important to not resist anything that comes in, including thoughts. Simply notice that thoughts are present and let them go the way they come — effortlessly. When you find that your mind/thoughts have been caught up in an every day train of thought, easily come back to the focus of your relaxing/meditation.

Our experience of thoughts may change as we relax/meditate. As we disengage the gears of the mind, the mind has an opportunity to settle down. Sometimes you may experience a kind of dream-like state, somewhere between being asleep and awake. This also is a natural experience in relaxing/meditation. There may also be times when there is a state of “no thought”. No matter what happens just take it easy — take it as it comes!

**Body Scan Meditation – Learning to Let Go of Stress and Relax Your Muscles**

This is a relaxing/meditation technique where you are putting your mind's focus on individual body parts (scanning) and you are choosing to deeply relax the muscles of that body part.

Breathe in s-l-o-w-l-y and deeply through your nose. Feel your abdomen move upward as your diaphragm contracts and draws air into your lungs. Your chest should not rise noticeably.

While breathing slowly, direct your mind's attention to your feet. Feel your feet. Curl your toes once to fix your awareness to it. Now relax... as if you can feel your muscles and all the tension melting into the bed and disappearing. Relax this way as you go through each part of your body.

As you breathe in through your nostrils, slowly scan your legs from feet to knee, and up through your thighs. As you breathe out, trace your leg down to your feet. Do this 3 times, then take your mind off your breath and remain with your feet. Relax... as if you can feel your muscles and all the tension melting into the bed and disappearing. If thoughts appear, that's fine. Gently come back to your breath, and shift awareness over to your legs and feet.

Now focus on your stomach and lower abdomen. Feel it r-i-s-i-n-g as you breathe in. Sinking as you exhale. Nice and slow. Your heart probably slows down. This is normal. Remain aware of your stomach/abdomen, your breath... up and down. Become aware of sensations. Relax... as if you can feel your muscles and all the tension melting into the bed and disappearing.

Now follow the same procedure with your arms as you did with your legs. You may clench your fists at first to really direct your awareness to your hands. Breathe... Now scan up along the length of your arms, to your chest. Then down your arms to your hands. Remain there. Breathe. Sense and scan. Relax... as if you can feel your muscles and all the tension melting into the bed and disappearing.

Come back up to your chest, shoulders and head. Continue scanning up along your neck, to your face. Gently clench your jaws and release. Feel the back and top your head. Feel the sensations in your jaws, your throat. Breathe, scan and relax. Pay special attention to your face and jaw. Focus on them and relax deeply. Your jaw may flop open if you are very relaxed, let it happen. Focus on your shoulders and back of your neck, common places for tension to store. Relax... as if you can feel your muscles and all the tension melting into the bed and disappearing.

Now detach your mind's attention from all body parts. Breathe... Feel how everything is relaxed, resting gently. Just breathe, let any sensation come to you. Accept it as a part of you. Return to your breathing. You can end or go back and focus more and relax tense body parts.

Noise - It's enjoyable to meditate in a quiet place, but it is not always possible. The key is to not resist noise. Don't try to ignore the noise or to block it out. Simply let it be and continue with your meditation. Everything is a part of relaxing/meditation — the noise, your thoughts about it, the way the mind may start to resist it, the emotions that arise about it. Treat everything that arises in this practice the same way — let it be, let yourself be!

Falling Asleep - Hopefully in relaxing/meditation we enter a state of "non-resistance". This would include not resisting sleep if it comes. The goal of relaxing/meditation to establish a state of ease. Therefore, if sleep comes, let it come.

Strong emotions - When we enter into a state of relaxation in meditation, strong emotions can sometimes arise. This can happen for several reasons. When the mind settles down, we may become aware of an emotion that has been “under the surface” while we are busy in activity and focused on other things. It may also be that deep relaxation causes a kind of “unwinding” or purification, so that any emotion that has been held in the body is released. The relaxed state can be much like the dream state in which various issues are being processed.

If we are uncomfortable with a particular emotion, such as grief, the tendency may be to want to push it away, stuff or ignore it. Emotions are a flow of life energy, and if we resist that flow, the energy becomes “stuck”. If you notice resistance to emotions, let the resistance go. Allow the emotion to be experienced fully and the energy of the emotion can flow and resolve.

On the other hand, when a strong emotion arises, the mind may become very busy interpreting it or dramatizing it with a story about it. If anger arises, for example, the mind might pick up on something that happened in the past, or imagine something happening now as the cause of the anger. This involvement of the mind in the emotion intensifies and feeds it, and also obstructs it from moving through easily. When we become aware of being caught up in a train of thought or a story, let that go and bring the awareness easily back to the focus of the relaxing/meditation.

If the emotion or thought is so strong that you cannot easily come back to your focus (such as the focus on the breath), then simply allow yourself to feel the emotion. Let the awareness locate a physical sensation in the body that is associated with the strong emotion (or thought). Simply continue to feel that sensation in the body. With the awareness easily on the sensation, it will eventually dissolve and the mind will be free to continue with the focus of the relaxing/meditation.

Ending The Relaxing Session - It's important to take time to come out of relaxing slowly. Remain with your eyes closed for a minute or two. Stretch, move around a bit, and gradually become more active and get up.

## HOW TO IMPROVE AND BE EFFECTIVE IN RELATING WITH PEOPLE

1. Be honest, authentic and candid by regularly sharing your thoughts, feelings, hopes, wants, desires, frustrations and upsets. Do this on your own without be asked. When you speak always be civil, respectful and compassionate. Speaking loud and angry causes the person listening to shut down and emotionally go away.
2. Some people do not easily express their thoughts and feelings. The reason they do not is almost not important. So, you must ask what is true for another and how they are. Ask questions to elicit specifics as to what they are feeling and thinking. NEVER EVER assume that you know what a person is thinking, feeling, planning or what the meaning is behind their behavior. Always ask about their intent, thoughts, and feelings and get the facts from them directly.
3. Work together with people you care about on creating better relating and help them manage themselves to relate better with you.
4. Being there for the other person means encouraging and helping them to fully express thoughts, feelings, hopes, wants, desires, frustrations and upsets. Demonstrate compassion, empathy and kindness.
5. Learn to be an excellent listener. Listen Well Means:...
  - a. Being quiet and paying close attention when they are speaking and expressing... thoughts and feelings. Wait until they are finished before you ask questions, or respond to what they have said.
  - b. Listen intently, write down key points if necessary so you will remember what to respond to; keep your mind and attention on what someone is saying vs. what you are going to say when the person stops speaking.
  - c. Understand what the other person is attempting to communicate by asking questions if necessary. Try to end any conversation only after each of you is satisfied that you have said all that needs saying. Allow for agreeing to disagree.
  - d. Remove yourself when you get to the point of "extreme" anger or upset. Listening stops with extreme upset. Come back when you have calmed down and be willing to dialogue and express what you have to say in a respectful manner. If you leave explain why vs. just storming out. Example: I'm mad/upset and need to go and cool down.
6. Make requests of your spouse, significant other or appropriate people in your life. If they decline to grant your request negotiate with them to see if they agree with some close version of your request. Be prepared to have the other person make requests of you and negotiate with them if needed. Write down ALL promises made so they are available for review in the future and to avoid misunderstanding.
7. How to hold another accountable? If another person has agreed to grant a request of yours, get their permission to hold them accountable for keeping their promise. If the promise has not been kept simply point out that they are not doing what they agreed to do and have a conversation about that. Treat them with some compassion, love, and forgiveness. Give them 1 or more opportunities to do better the next time.
8. How to hold yourself accountable? If you make a promise to someone and agree to grant their request be willing to hold yourself accountable for following through and keeping your promise. Review the promises and agreements you made with others. If you find yourself falling short admit that to the other person and speak about it. Also, allow them to hold you accountable for keeping your promise.
9. When holding someone accountable for doing what they say they would do, do so with kindness, respect and some tenderness.
10. Regularly show/speak gratitude for having another in your life, occasionally include the small stuff they do.
11. Manage yourself so you can accept others as they are, communicate with them about changes you would like to see them make and make a request(s) for such changes. Help them work at and produce the items/behaviors they agree/accept are important for them to put in place. Accept that you may have to regularly work at this on an ongoing basis.
12. With significant others... Work together on creating and accomplishing house projects, resolving money issues, creating joy, mutual and individual satisfaction.
13. Regularly have fun, go on small or large adventures and play together with people you enjoy.
14. Fulfill another's request(s) of you to do some activities special to them but are not on the top of your list. Make sure you do your best to be present and enjoy the activity as best you can.

Honesty - Telling the truth, admitting wrongdoing. Being trustworthy and acting with integrity.

Authentic - genuine, real, veritable share the sense of actuality and lack of falsehood or misrepresentation.

Candid - Characterized by openness and sincerity of expression; unreservedly straightforward. frank; outspoken; open and sincere; free from reservation, disguise, or subterfuge, straightforward.

Civil/Civility - courtesy; politeness, polite action or expression



## **WALKING PROGRAM**

### **SOME REASONS TO WALK:**

- A team of British researchers analyzed data from the best exercise studies to see if walking has any kind of effect on mild to moderate depression. The findings reveal that walking does improve mild to moderate depression. People walked 20 to 50 minutes three times a week to daily.
- Walking is the key to maintaining weight loss for 5 years or longer. Forty-nine out of 50 people in the National Weight Control Registry database who lost at least 30 pounds walk daily.
- Women who walk briskly at least 3 hours a week reduce their risk of heart disease by up to 40%. These brisk walks have the same effect as 15-20 minutes of vigorous daily exercise.
- Older people who start taking hour-long walks 3 times a week have better memory and judgement ability.
- A 12-year study of 60-80 year olds demonstrates that daily, moderate-intensity, 2-mile walks cuts the death rate by half.
- Three 10-minute walks increase fitness and decrease body fat just as well as one 30-minute walk.

**WALKING SCHEDULE** – When walking walk briskly and maintain the pace throughout the time you walk. Maintain a brisk pace that is *comfortable for you*. You can work up to longer distance and shorter time. Dress appropriately for the temperature.

**Week 1-4:** Walk 1 mile three to four times a week. (Time target 22-25 minutes)

**Week 5-8:** Walk 1.5 miles three to four times a week. (Time target 30-35 minutes)

**Week 9-12:** Walk 2 miles three to four times a week.  
(Walk as briskly as you can tolerate and be comfortable)

**Week 12 and beyond:** Walk 2 miles four to five times a week.  
(Walk as briskly as you can tolerate and be comfortable)

**Cooldown:** - Walk at a slower pace for the last 3 minutes and ideally do 2-3 minutes of stretching.

**Increasing intensity:** - To shorten a 30 minute walk to 20 minutes, step up the intensity of your workout by climbing steps or hills or interspersing a brisk walk with a light jog. Do this by walking fast or jogging for 2 minutes, returning to your normal pace for 1 minute and repeating that cycle for 20 minutes (6-7 times). For further information see Walking Magazine or visit their web site at [www.walkingmag.com](http://www.walkingmag.com).