

WISE
Teacher
Well-Being
Workbook

WISE Teacher Well-Being Workbook

The Wellbeing In School Environments (WISE) Workbook is to help you develop your own personal well-being plan. It was written for teachers, educators, and those working in schools, but can be useful to others such as students. It is not to be read through all in one sitting, or even necessarily in the order of the chapters here.

Read the first chapter to get oriented about well-being, and how the materials and topics fit together.

You may prefer to skip around after Chapter 1, since some of the content will be more important to you at different times.

Each chapter will focus on important components of well-being, such as physical, occupational, intellectual, social, or emotional well-being. Effective skills and tools for each component are then provided for you to consider to enhance your own well-being.

There are measures for you to use at the beginning of each chapter to help you identify your strengths and opportunities to enhance your well-being. It is most productive for you to complete these measures *before* you proceed to the skills/tools described later in each chapter. These measures help identify your unique patterns and preferences so that you can tailor the chapter to you and areas specific for your unique skill set. Each chapter concludes with a one-page summary SKILL GUIDELINES to help you review and incorporate the most important components of that chapter in your well-being plan. You may wish to review these SKILL GUIDELINES frequently as you refine your well-being plan. At the end of each chapter, you can identify the particular strategies you most wish to implement in your own life, and also in your classroom/school.



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1. Be Well

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter you will be able to):

1. Recognize three impacts of your well-being on your professional effectiveness
2. Identify your well-being in five categories
3. Describe the “stages of change” model and decide which stage best fits you
4. Describe three effective tactics to help make life changes

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to manage obstacles to change
- B. How to make your Well-Being Plan

Opening Activity – Looking Back and Looking Forward

Consider your path to becoming a teacher. Think back to the experiences that come to mind when you think about your schooling. Use all your senses as you recall the sights, smells, sounds during those moments. Recall how your body felt and what emotions you felt during those experiences. Think about the exact moment when you realized you wanted to become a teacher and how all those sensations impacted you. Consider what you want to take from teachers from your past, and how you want to make schooling better for students with your unique talents.

1. Find a comfortable seated position, in which your body is relaxed, and your mind is alert. This can be in a chair, with your back strait, shoulders rolled back, chin slightly tucked, feet touching the ground, and with hips and arms relaxed.
2. Your eyes can be closed, or if you are feeling sleepy, keep your eyes open, with gaze relaxed but fixed somewhere in front of you, where your attention can be drawn inwards, towards your own experience of your breath, your body, and your mind.
3. Close your mouth, and breath through your nose.
4. Begin by noticing the sensations in your body, starting with the pressure against your feet as they rest against the ground, inhale and exhale while noticing the sensations in your feet,
5. Then moving up to the pressure against your lower and upper legs, supported by your chair, inhale and exhale while noticing the sensations in your legs
6. Then move up to your lower, middle and upper back as they rest against the chair, inhale and exhale while noticing the sensations in your back, then moving to your arms and hands, where they rest against the chair, inhale and exhale while noticing the sensations in your arms and hands
7. Move up to your shoulder and neck, inhale and exhale while noticing the sensations in your shoulders and neck
8. Finally, noticing the sensations in your face, inhale and exhale while noticing the sensations in your face.
9. Now shift your attention to your breathing, noticing the sensations at the tip of your nose, the back of your throat, the expansion of your chest and abdomen on the inhale, and the relaxation of your abdomen and chest, the passing of the air past the back of your throat and the tip of your nose on the exhale.
10. Follow the breath in this way several times.

Begin with the end in mind:

- 1) What Impact Do You Most Wish to Have on Your Students?
- 2) What Do You Hope Students Will Remember About You?

Now set an intention for the next month, an attitude that you want to bring to your work as a teacher, something you think will enhance and magnify your impact on your students. Experience this attitude, the emotions it may evoke in you, any sensations it may evoke in your body, and hold this intention lightly for several breaths. As you inhale, allow this intention in by repeating the words in your mind. On each exhale simply focus on feeling the emotions/sensations associated with it. Write this intention down, or set a reminder on your smartphone. Each day, remind yourself of this intention.

Perform this same exercise daily at a time that suits you, perhaps when you get up in the morning, before you get out of your car on your way to class, or just before your day of teaching starts. Try to do this each day for about 1 month, and reflect on how this may influence your interactions with your students, and how you feel during the day.

What is Well-Being?

“Well-being” has broadened the term “wellness,” which referred to one’s *physical* health, to include additional components or dimensions of positive health. There is no current agreed-on definition of well-being, as it continues to evolve, with anywhere from 5-8 components or dimensions of well-being now described. For example, SAMSHA identifies “wellness” components now to include physical, emotional, social, occupational, intellectual, environmental, financial, and spiritual.

Significant cultural differences influence well-being, as different components of well-being may receive more emphasis in different cultures, and as the values and specific tasks and aspirations within each component may be defined quite differently. For example, cultural variations abound in how one should take care of one’s body, how to manage emotions (e.g., express vs. restrain), the relative importance of independence vs. interdependence (or personal success vs. contributing to the greater good), what roles/careers are most valued and sought, and what yields meaning in life (achievements vs. caring for family, etc.).

This workbook will focus on five components of well-being:

- 1) **Physical** health (nutrition, sleep, healthy activities such as exercise and music, sleep)
- 2) **Occupational** health (creating positive life roles and career)
- 3) **Intellectual** health (continuing to grow, flourish, and find meaning as one’s life progresses)
- 4) **Social** health (creating positive social relationships and having positive social encounters)
- 5) **Emotional** health (feeling positive emotions and managing distressing emotions effectively)

This workbook will address each of these 5 broad components of well-being as applied to teachers, with specific measures of each component for you to take to assess your well-being in that domain, and then specific tactics to enhance each of these 5 areas.

Many factors contribute to teacher well-being, including the organizational culture and climate of a school, available supports and resources, demands placed on teachers, and the relationships between school leadership and teachers. This workbook focuses on those factors over which you have more influence, but we also recommend considering ways to assess and improve other factors that contribute to well-being, when possible.

Well-Being Matters (Why is Well-Being Important?)

Being well **improves our lives both at work and at home**. Good well-being optimizes our ability to be fully engaged in our classrooms and to deliver the teaching skills we worked to develop. Being well at work improves our well-being at home, and vice versa.

Using well-being skills allows us to **better respond to stress and adversity**. Teaching is an intense, taxing profession. About 20-30 kids per hour will be looking to you for direction, inspiration, support and intervention when trouble arises, which can be draining at times. Teachers who report greater stress find it more difficult to offer praise and nurturance to students, and are less productive at work. Preparing for adversity with strong well-being allows us the flexibility and resilience to respond to the stress and challenges inherent to teaching.⁴

Finally, when we model and teach well-being in our classrooms, we are **equipping students with well-being skills** to improve their current and future lives.

We'll look at the 5 spheres of well-being: (1) Physical, (2) Occupational, (3) Intellectual, (4) Social, and (5) Emotional. To help identify your well being in each of these areas, complete **Well-Being Self-Assessment**. If you prefer to color rather than circle (quantify) your answers, you can complete the alternative activity: **The Well-being Wheel** activity (on the following page). As you complete the POISE or the Well-Being Wheel, please remember:

- Each person is unique.
- There is no right or wrong wheel.
- Responses will vary depending on your experiences and stage of life

Name: _____ Date: _____

POISE Well-Being Self-Assessment Scale

Please **circle** the best answer for each item (*focusing on the past 2 weeks*), with **1=not at all (<10%)**, **2=a little, (~25%)**, **3=moderately (~50%)**, **4=mostly (~75%)**, and **5=almost always (>90%)**.

1. I get uninterrupted restful sleep for 6+ hours most nights.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I eat and enjoy nutritious foods and how they make me feel.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Most days I exercise/physically move for 30+ minutes (7000+ steps).	1	2	3	4	5
4. I move about so I'm not sedentary or sitting for more than 1 hour at a time during the work day.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Music and/or artistic activities are a regular enjoyable part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My work in this school fits with and fulfills my sense of purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have a strong and reliable network of supportive others at work.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I manage my time well and complete most tasks on time.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am able to achieve my goals despite obstacles that occur.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My supervisors and I communicate well and agree on priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I stimulate my mind by reading, listening, or watching (e.g. tapes, videos, movies, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
12. I regularly explore/pursue my interests or improve my skills.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am able to help and enjoy others more than feel depleted by obstacles that interfere with helping others.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I journal, write (e.g., poetry or music), or capture pictures and take videos of my life story.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I rely on deeply held principles or spiritual values to guide my life.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My relationships with other adults are satisfying.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I seek and benefit from the input and feedback of others.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am aware of what annoys/triggers me, and I am aware of what I do that annoys/upsets others.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I support others and acknowledge (with words/acts) their successes.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am able to resolve conflicts in most areas of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I can stay with and tolerate my painful emotions and learn from them.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I feel calm or serene most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have developed reliable, effective ways to cope with stress.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I can manage my emotions to stay on task or work when necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I enjoy living in the present and worry little about the past or future.	1	2	3	4	5

The Teacher Well-Being Wheel Activity

For each statement below, fill in the corresponding pie-shaped section of the wheel to reflect the degree to which the statement relates to you. For example, if you get restful sleep most nights (item 1) about half the time, you can color 50% of that section; if you sleep well all the time, then you can color 100% of the section, etc. Use a different color for each section (set of 5 items) of statements if possible.

1. I get restful sleep for a similar interval most nights.
2. I am proud of what I eat and its nutritional value.
3. I look forward every day to some recreational physical activity.
4. I try to move about so I'm not sedentary or sitting for more than one hour at a time.
5. Music and/or artistic activities are an enjoyable, regular part of my life.

6. I enjoy my work and what it requires of me.
7. I stay focused and present when I do my job.
8. I manage my time well and complete most tasks on time.
9. I continue to grow and flourish in my job.
10. I am proud of my career.

11. I like to stimulate my mind by doing activities such as reading, listening, or watching.
12. I like to explore my interests more deeply or improve my skillset.
13. I seek or think of better ways to do things.
14. I journal, write (e.g., poetry or music), or capture pictures and videos of my life story.
15. I rely on deeply held principles or spiritual values to guide my life.

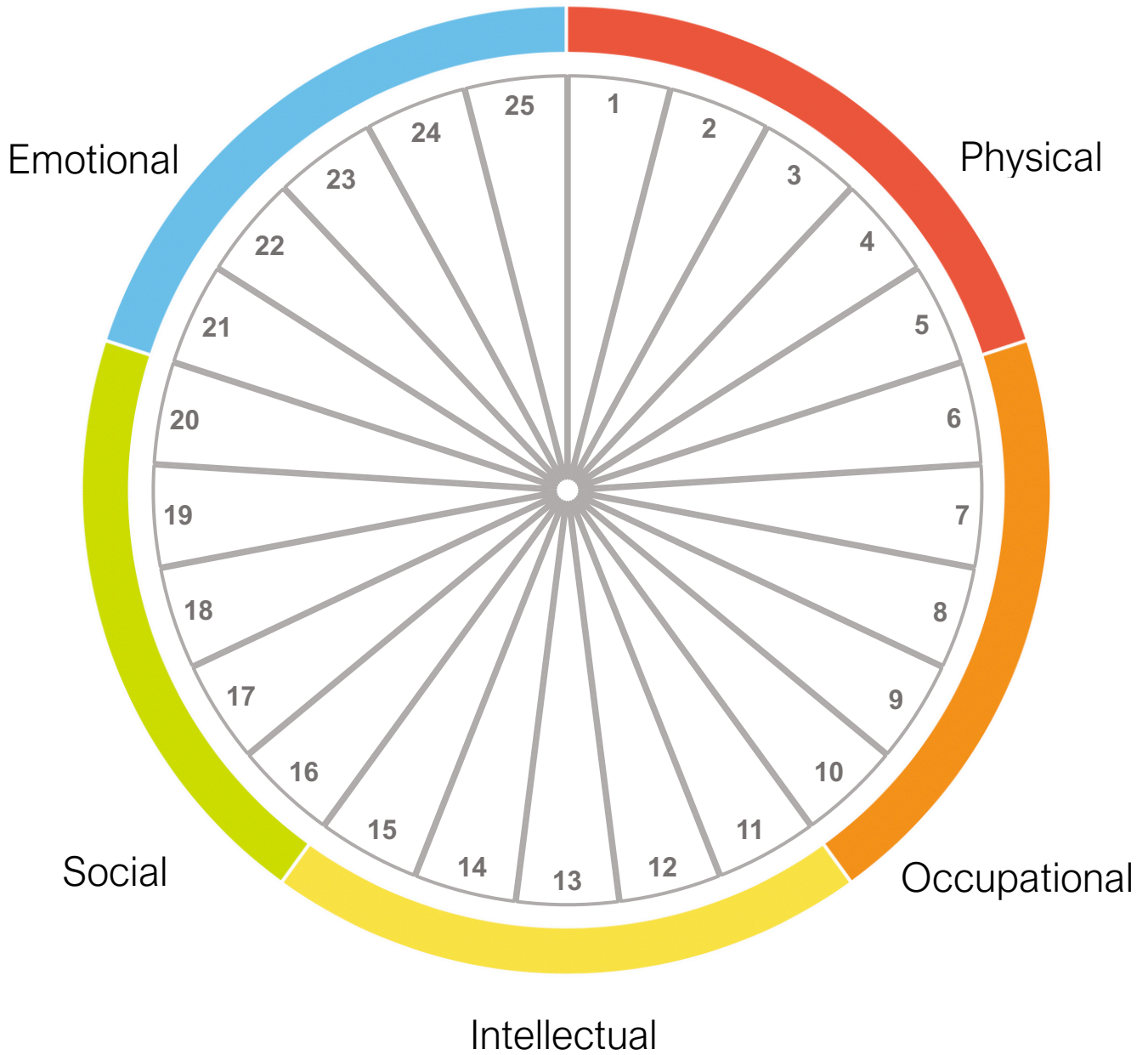
16. I am able to engage with and enjoy others, including those unlike me.
17. I regularly seek input from good friends, even if they're not in close proximity.
18. I am aware of what annoys me, and I am aware of which of my actions may bother others.
19. I am able to set and respect my own and others' boundaries.
20. I am able to resolve conflicts in most areas of my life.

21. I value all the different emotions I feel.
22. I feel calm or serene most of the time.
23. I can stay with and tolerate my painful emotions and learn from them.
24. I can manage my emotions and stay on task or work when necessary.
25. I enjoy living in the present and worry little about the past or future.

After completing the wheel, examine your overall POISE level. Which general components are you doing well in (most colored in)? Which specific areas do you wish to improve upon (least colored in areas)?

My Teacher Well-Being Wheel

POISE



We will provide you steps and strategies to develop each of the 25 items (POISE, or spokes of the wheel if using the Wheel activity) within each of the 5 well-being areas. Below is a summary of the topics we will address:

i. **Physical** (Sleep, Exercise, and Nutrition): ITEMS 1-5

- Getting Restful, Rejuvenating Sleep
- Developing a Healthy Diet
- Getting Healthy Exercise; Living a Non-sedentary life
- Integrating Art/Music Activities into Daily Living

ii. **Occupational** (Satisfaction & Rewards of Job): ITEMS 6-10

- Recognizing and Addressing Work Environment Components
- Managing Your Time Effectively
- Overcoming Procrastination
- Negotiating Within a Hierarchical System (where you may be trying to effect system changes with staff who are in higher positions of authority than you)

iii. **Intellectual** (Doing What Matters and Has Meaning; Exploring Life Opportunities): ITEMS 11-15

- Finding Meaning in Daily Life
- Stimulating my mind and growth
- Doing activities that promote self-expression
- Comparing What I Do with My Time to What I Value Doing During this Life

iv. **Social** (Positive Relationships and Getting Along Well with Others): ITEMS 16-20

- Sustaining Good Relationships
- Managing and Deescalating Conflict
- Identifying My Friendship Triggers
- Identifying My Humor Style
- Identifying My Classroom Triggers

v. **Emotional** (Experiencing Desired Emotions and Managing Difficult Feelings): ITEMS 21-25

- Regulating My Mood
- Coping with Stress
- Creating Calm/Serenity in My Life
- Living in the Present

You may notice that certain “areas” of your well-being are going relatively well (your scores on those 5 items are mostly 4’s or 5’s), and some areas are going less well (your scores are mostly 1’s or 2’s). Sometimes these areas remain consistent, and sometimes they may change or fluctuate over the course of a year. We will provide you specific strategies, through the **Teacher Well-Being Workbook (available freely at www.medstarwise.org/Resources)** to address EACH of these topics, so that you can focus on those particular areas (or specific items, such as sleep, coping with stress, managing conflict, etc., if you have a low score on just that item within a POISE area).

Effective interventions will be provided for you to choose from, which will allow you to test what best improves your well-being in each area. At the end of each chapter, suggestions for how to extend this from your personal life and into the classroom will also be provided; you may find that some skills are appropriate for your students, so recommendations for classroom teaching of these skills is provided in Part II.

Over the course of a school year, certain areas may become more or less important to you. *Know that it is normal and appropriate to skip around, and return to, these chapters based on your unique, changing needs at any time over a school year.*

Before you proceed with other chapters, it's helpful to know what the science says about making changes in one's life. The next section addresses how people make life changes, and what tactics are most effective for making changes that last.

Making Changes (Even Good Ones)

You may have identified areas that you wish to improve. Just know that change can be more difficult than it seems. Often, we realize how to make improvements, but our real desire to make such a change is not strong enough to motivate us to stick with that change. In addition, there can be obstacles to make changes that keep us from doing what we plan to do.

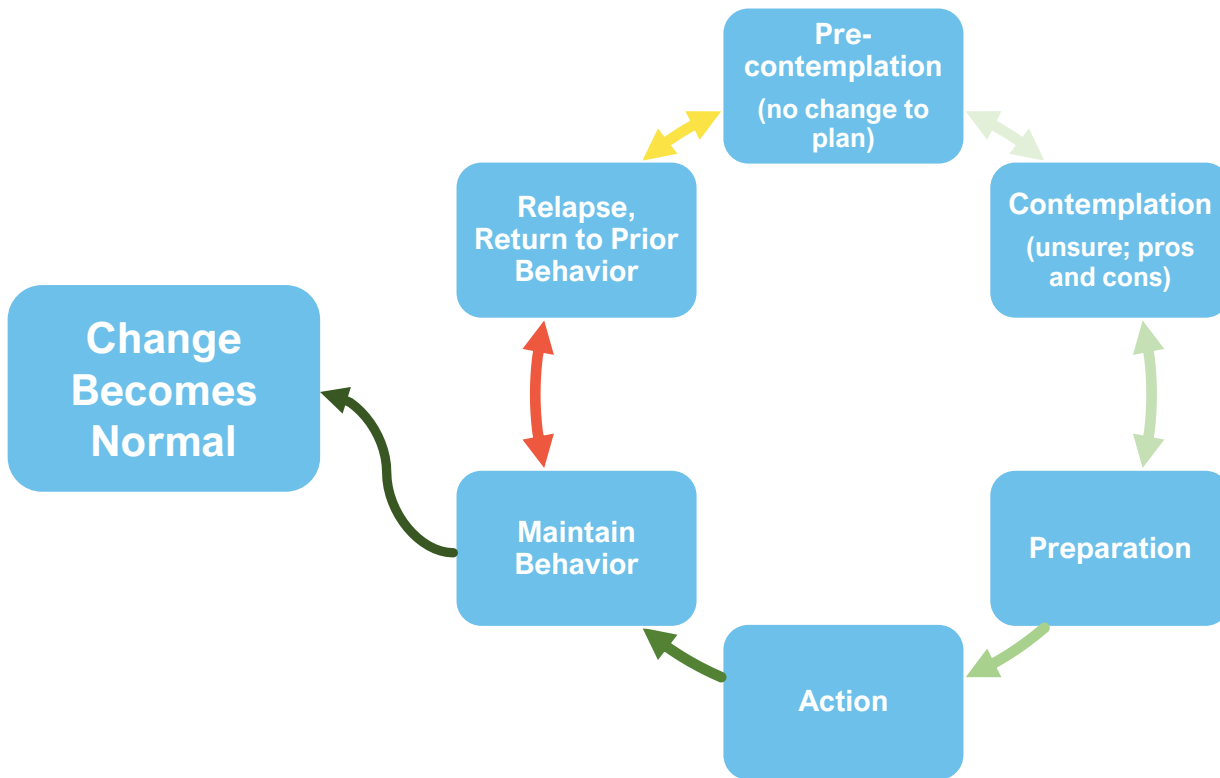
Consider the following examples from someone contemplating changes in activity or nutrition:

"I want to exercise more often. But I find that when I get home that I'm tired. I unwind by watching some TV, and then it's really hard to get up, change into workout clothes and go workout at 8:30 p.m."

"I want to eat more fruits and vegetables. So I bought several kinds of fruit, but (a) it was expensive, (b) the time it took to peel and cut it up was frustrating, and (c) it wasn't satisfying—I didn't really like eating it very much so it went bad and I felt worse for wasting my money."

The **People Change Model**, sometimes called the Transtheoretical Model,¹ identifies stages that people progress through as they make a behavioral change. The diagram below shows this model:

People Change Model



The stages of change are:

- 1) Pre-contemplation:** The person has no intention to change. Often the person is not even thinking about changing, or the cons far outweigh the pros, and the person is not really considering making any changes.
- 2) Contemplation:** The person is ambivalent about change and sees both pros and cons to the behavior. In this stage, one often recognizes the need for change, but does not foresee an immediate need or desire to change.
- 3) Determination/Preparation/Decision-making:** This is typically a brief stage as the person resolves ambivalence and decides to make a change.
- 4) Action:** The person takes some action toward resolution of the problem behavior.
- 5) Maintenance:** The person maintains successful behavior change, which typically for at least 6 months, but is still at risk for relapse.
- 6) Relapse:** This is the resumption of the original behavior. Relapse is a normal, expected part of behavior change.
- 7) Exit/Termination:** In this stage, relapse is highly unlikely and the person's new lifestyle is stable.

Here are examples of how a person might act at each stage (after going to see the doctor, who checks blood pressure and conducts some lab tests).

Precontemplation: *"I don't know even know why we're measuring my blood pressure or doing these lab tests—I feel fine and like my life the way it is."*

Even confronted with information that shows a need for change, a pre-contemplative person at this stage would likely think or respond, *"I don't know why my blood pressure is up, or why I have diabetes now, since I'm only drinking 3 beers a day and have eaten fast food without any problems for the past 20 years."*

When the doctor encourages some behavioral changes, the person might respond:

"There are lots of people bigger than me, who drink more and eat 2-3 hamburgers at a time; my friends all like me and bring me burgers and beer, and I don't wanna lose those buds by rejecting their kind offers."

Contemplation: *"Now I'll probably have to take diabetes meds like my uncle; I may die at 45 like my dad—gee, that's 3 years from now...I could use the beer money for a better car; yeah, but I really like beer, and I'm happier when I drink. I love hamburgers, and I can still walk up and down stairs to work—Dad couldn't do that at my age...and I know plenty of people my size who live to be too old as it is. I can't believe my doctor keeps griping at me—she's such a jerk...I'm tired of thinking about this. I need a beer that's cold so I can chill out and wash this burger down without choking."*

Preparation: *"I want to see my grandchildren get old enough to remember me, so maybe now it is worth it to change. Should I eat less or exercise more?"*

Action: *"I'm going to join a gym, only drink light beer, and eat chicken every other time instead of just burgers."*

Making Changes in Your Life

Consider 2-3 changes you'd like to make now in your life. These can be things you've been thinking about for a long time, or something you just noticed during the Well-Being Wheel activity.

For each of these changes, identify both the reasons you want to make this change now, and what may be obstacles to this change. You may also notice that certain pros or cons are simply much more important (higher value) than others.

For example, if you want to drink less alcohol, you might list pros such as *"will save that money for a vacation, will be easier to lose weight, won't say or do things that bother others so much,"* etc., BUT...you may also say *"I'll lose all my friends since that's what we do, and it's been fun for years and I'm not ready to stop."*

Even if multiple good reasons exist for change, just one obstacle can count more than all the pros supporting change. Such obstacles have to be addressed for any change to persist. One might need to replace the social benefits of drinking; for example, *"It's time for me to leave the bar scene and develop friends doing more with their lives; so I'm going to try at least 3 different dance classes over the next 2 months to move my time away from drinking AND to see if I can find some dance friends to hang out with."*

As you contemplate any changes, keep the following in mind:

- The more, and the earlier, a person argued for change, the better the outcome.²
- The goal is to increase the amount of time a person engages in change-talk and minimize the amount of Sustain-Talk (talk supporting sustaining the current, less helpful, behavior).
- Specific techniques have been shown to decrease resistance or Sustain-Talk. These are:
 - *Exploring the problem*: what are different ways to see this problem (e.g., I drink too much.)?
 - *Looking backward*: how has it *really* been this last year (when I drink)?
 - *Looking forward*: What do I want to be like this in a year (drinking same, more, less)?
 - *Considering importance*: What impacts does this (drinking) have on my life?
 - *Exploring values and discrepancies with this behavior*: Is this the kind of person I want to be?
 - *Considering pros and cons* (and also valence of each; some count much more than others)
 - *Exploring Extremes*: If I did much more (or less) of the behavior (drinking), what would be the result?
 - *Planning and Committing*: Identifying others who will help and sharing with them this commitment to change.

Apply these techniques as you complete the **Change Plan Worksheet** on the next page.

Change Plan Worksheet

1) The changes I most want to make right now are:

2) The most important reasons I want to change are:

3) The steps I plan to take in making this change are:

4) The ways other people can help me change are:

<u>Person</u>	<u>Possible ways to help</u>
---------------	------------------------------

<hr/>	<hr/>
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5) Some things that could interfere with my plan are:

6) I will know whether my plan is working if:

Signature

(Adapted from the MET manual, NIAAA clearinghouse Publication # 94-3723)

Goal-Setting (SMART Goals)

Having identified some worthwhile changes to make, establishing goals toward that change are now important. We will work through several steps to make the goals **SMART** and optimize your successful attainment of these goals. Goals may be revised during this process. Here are some helpful hints as you get started:

Determine your overall long-term goals: Base this on your identified needs and wants for the next year.

Be specific and realistic with your short-term goals: This helps you know whether or not you are making progress toward your long-term goals.

Make your beginning-steps process small and build upon that base: The more success you experience, the more motivated and successful you'll continue to be.

Choose one or two goals: It will be easier to achieve goals and avoid feeling overwhelmed by focusing on fewer goals.

Remember that goals actualize at different rates: Some things may change quickly while others seem to move very slowly.

Be patient with yourself and frequently acknowledge your progress: If it has taken you years to build the habits you want to change, then it will take some time to unlearn and change them.

Make these goals **SMART** (there are several versions of "SMART" goals and the one below is designed for teachers):

- **Salient-** Choose meaningful goals that are easy to understand.
- **Measurable-** Define exactly what needs to be accomplished.
- **Active-** State what actions are needed.
- **Reachable-** Make these realistic, based on one's skill and experience.
- **Timed-** Set a clear date for completion.

Practice by reviewing each of these goals and revising them to become SMART goals:

- 1) **PHYSICAL GOAL:** "I will walk more from now on during each school day."
Made SMART: "I will walk at least 7000 steps each school day and monitor progress after 4 weeks."
- 2) **OCCUPATIONAL GOAL:** "I will better manage my time starting tomorrow."
Made SMART: "I will complete my homework grading each school day by 7pm, and monitor progress after 2 weeks."
- 3) **INTELLECTUAL GOAL:** "I will read more about the subject I teach."
Made SMART: "I will read 3 books about effective WWII military decisions by (Date)."
- 4) **SOCIAL GOAL:** "I will make more friends this semester."
Made SMART: "I will ask 3 friends out for coffee each month, and monitor progress after 2 months."
- 5) **EMOTIONAL GOAL:** "I will not allow myself to get into a bad mood this week."
Made SMART: "If I feel a distressing emotion, I will regroup and resume functioning within 5 min, and monitor my progress after 4 weeks."

Write goals down and post them where you will see them often. Work on your goal for brief intervals (e.g., 10 minutes). Think positively and visualize success. Ask for help. Support from peers working on a similar goal can be an invaluable motivator.³

We are more likely to reach a goal when we:

- Anticipate and address our **initial motivation** and **likely obstacles**.
- Make goals for **Every Day/Week/Month/Year**
- **Revise** our goals as we reach them or as we find we cannot reach them
- **Share our goals with others** so that we feel a commitment to ourselves to reach the goal, but also to meet the expectations of others.

Use the **SKILL GUIDELINES** for Goal Setting over the coming weeks as you devise annual, monthly, weekly, and daily goals. Start with personal goals in the physical, occupational, intellectual, social, and emotional categories. As you go through other chapters, you can add or fine-tune goals in these categories as well, and throughout the year as circumstances change or evolve.

SKILL GUIDELINES: Goal-Setting

Revise your daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly goals as needed to ensure you're making progress toward them (all). Keep the goals "**SMART**."

♦**Salient**- Easy to understand and meaningful.

Are they *clear*? (Do I know what I actually have to do?) "I want to make algebra more enjoyable for students this year."

Are they *important*? (Does it truly matter that I accomplish them?)

"I want students to find algebra more appealing and applicable."

♦**Measurable**- Make your beginning-steps process small and build upon that base

Example: "I'll find 10 fun algebra activities to do for next year."

♦**Active**- State what action is needed

Example: "I'll read at least 3 books on algebra games and talk to 2 teachers at my school."

♦**Reachable**- Make it realistic based on skills/experience

Example: "I have 3 books on this, and I know the other 4 teachers who teach high school algebra."

♦**Timed**- Set a clear date for completion

Example: "I will have this list identified and the activities coupled to specific chapters by August 1."

My Well-Being Plan

After reviewing your responses to the POISE Self-Assessment Scale (or The Teacher Well-Being Wheel), consider which well-being area (Physical, Occupational, Intellectual, Social, or Emotional) you most want to improve right now.

1. Create 2 SMART goals that you want to implement in your own life, starting this week. For example:

Physical goals might be: "I will eat salads for lunch 3 days per week and measure my success in one month," "I will work out 4 times per week for at least 20 minutes beginning next semester and measure after 2 months," "I will sleep at least 7 hours for 5 nights per week and see how I've done after 2 weeks," or "I will listen to a playlist of my preferred music for at least 15 minutes going and returning from work and measure my success after 2 weeks."

Occupational Goals might be: "I will get my lesson plans (or grade homework) by 7pm each day and monitor my success after 1 week," "I will find 2 teacher mentors who I want to learn from by (Date)," "I will only check email/social media at 4 times each day, and monitor my success after 1 week," "I will work for 50 minute segments and then take 10 minute reward breaks, and measure my success after 2 weeks."

Intellectual Goals might be: "I will read one nonfiction book per month about history for the next 6 months," "I will journal ½ page at least 3 times per week for this semester," "I will read inspirational passages every night for 5 minutes at least 3 times per week and monitor my progress after 4 weeks."

Social Goals might be: "I will try to say 3 positive things to every person for every 1 negative thing I say and measure my success after 2 weeks," "I will arrange to be with my friends at least 3 times per week for at least 1 hr each time, by next month," "I will use open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective comments, and summary statements in my conversations with colleagues/students during 50% of my conversations, starting tomorrow."

Emotional Goals might be: "I will do activities that make me serene for at least 1 hr on 3 occasions per week, and measure my success in one month," "I will seek to figure out what a survive emotion teaches me on 2 occasions per week and monitor my progress at 1 month," "When a distressing emotion occurs, I will regroup within 10 minutes and measure my progress after 2 weeks," "I will seek to be fully present with others for at least 10 minutes on 5 occasions each week, and monitor my progress after 3 weeks."

2. Create 2 SMART goals that you will implement in your classroom/school to improve well-being for your students.

3. Set a daily intention each day during this month.

2. Emotional Well-Being: Coping With Stress

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Describe why we have distressing reactions
2. Recognize what types of circumstances trigger stress in you
3. Recognize your body's reaction to stress progression
4. Identify 4 ways to cope with stress effectively

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. Healthy techniques to cope with stress
- B. Designing and implementing a coping-with-stress plan

Opening Activity – Stress and Breathing

Think of a time when you have felt particularly stressed out. Examples:

- A time when too many things were going on at the same time
- A big test or assignment that felt overwhelming
- A situation in which you could see no solution or way out

How does your body feel as you recall this experience? Notice any changes in your breathing. What are the types of thoughts that come and go through your mind as you recall this experience? Give yourself a minute to let all the thoughts come through.

Write down the 3 thoughts that were most striking to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Did it lead to conclusions (“I always put stuff off.”) or themes (“certain classes stress me out” or “driving gets me going”)?

1. Gently direct your awareness to your breathing, with your mouth closed, breathing through your nose, notice the sensations of the breath at the tip of your nose, the back of your throat, the expansion of your chest and abdomen on the inhale, and the relaxation of your abdomen and chest, the passing of the air past the back of your throat and the tip of your nose on the exhale.
2. Allow your inhale to happen naturally, without trying to manipulate or control the inhale.
3. Do not hold your breath after inhaling.
4. Now try to extend the length of the exhale by 1-2 counts. Do this using your diaphragm, by gently and slowly drawing your abdomen inwards and upwards.
5. Or, do this by pursing your lips and exhaling out of your mouth.
6. Or, do this with your mouth closed by creating a prolonged “hah” sound, again drawing your abdomen gently, slowly, and gradually inwards and upwards.
7. If none of these methods works for you, do this by humming, with your mouth closed, “Mmmmmm”.
8. Notice the natural pause between the exhale and the inhale. If you can, lengthen this pause.

9. If your next inhale feels like you are gasping for air, shorten the pause in between the exhale and the inhale, or shorten the length of the exhale.
10. Inhale naturally, and exhale slowly, gently, and evenly.
11. Do this at least 10 times.
12. Then breath naturally, and notice the quality of your breathing, the state of your mind, your emotions, and any physical sensations in your body.

If this technique is not effective for you, then try some long stretches. If you need to stay seated, extend your fingers (or toes, but not both) as far as you can as you count to 5, then relax your fingers. You can alternate between fingers to toes. If you are standing, you can try this exercise: reach slowly to the sky, as high as you can, then bring your arms down wide (like you're making a sun shape) to a count of 10 until your arms cross down below your waist.

Set an intention each day for the month that you believe will help you keep a calm state of mind. Examples include acceptance, allowing, presence, etc. If you can, practice the stress reducing breathing exercise each day, and bring this intention to mind after finishing the breathing exercise. Notice how this effects your state of mind in the classroom, before starting your day, and after you get home.

A little stress is good. A lot, not so much.

Stress is a physical, mental or emotional response to events that causes bodily or mental tension. Stress comes from a situation or a thought that makes you feel anxious, nervous, frustrated, or frightened. *It's not always the situation itself that is stressful, but how you perceive that situation*; some people don't feel much stress even in trying circumstances, while others are unable to function amidst what seem like small frustrations. What creates such differences in people's reactions to stress?

A little stress is good. It keeps us alert, attuned to our environment, and aware. Our mind stays sharp; we anticipate deviations from what we expect, and we prepare to problem-solve. Too much stress overwhelms our brains causing us to flee, lash out, freeze, or hide to avoid thinking about our best options.

Humans have two nervous systems responding to the environment: (1) the **parasympathetic** (digestive) nervous system which is active most of the time and focuses on channeling our energy toward the digestion of food; and (2) the **sympathetic** nervous system which is the "fight-flight-freeze" nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system is activated, usually for a brief interval (minutes), when we come across something that appears dangerous or requires imminent action (e.g., a rabid dog coming toward us, unfamiliar people approaching us in a dark alley), but this system is also active during exciting moments such as playing a sport or performing in front of others. We mostly want to remain in the parasympathetic state, and only occasionally do we want to activate the sympathetic state so that blood and oxygen is channeled away from our digestive tract and toward our muscles, heart, and sensory organs so we can better notice if a situation is safe or dangerous. Staying in the sympathetic hyper-alert, ready-to-run state depletes the body and leaves us feeling tired and worn down. Activities that are stimulating, such as a fast game of tennis, are health enhancing; whereas being in a fight-or-flight state for extended periods can be debilitating. Whether one is running a marathon or playing a tennis match, it turns out that staying relaxed is preferable to the fight-flight-freeze state.

In the pre-modern era, having a sensitive sympathetic nervous system made one more aware of predators and vigilant in avoiding common, dangerous situations (e.g. ominous places or weather, toxic or poisonous plants or conditions, etc.) and gave one a better chance at survival. In the modern era, we all have new stressors such as frequent newsflashes and media reports apprising us about impending dangers (e.g., media reports about school shootings, fears of wars with or terrorism by other countries, threats of death by various germs, viruses, or bacteria, etc.). Now people are constantly aware of potential looming dangers and fear the pending daily-reported, cataclysmic threats that keep us on-guard or anxious.

In addition to our hearing and seeing of more examples of danger around us all the time, our brains have evolved to most be aware of potential trouble. We are more likely to notice and remember negative or bad things than to remember good ones. In the past, this helped us to remember to avoid certain dangerous places, plants, situations etc. Today, with so much information coming at us, our brains have not yet adapted to cope productively with the onslaught, and we may be overwhelmed by negativity. What's even more important for teachers to know is that when humans feel stress, they rely on their brain's emotional center, the amygdala and less on the memory center, the hippocampus, and the frontal lobe (where logic is more prominent). Ongoing stress can result in an enlarged amygdala region and a decreased hippocampal region. People become focused on looking for and anticipating threats (even if it's not a real threat), and it becomes harder for them to take in useful information as they instead are considering the danger of each event. So, for those who are in traumatic or chronically stressful situations, the brain focuses on being ready for threats and dangers rather than remembering information (such as math, reading, etc.). Thus, living with constant stress alters the brain and makes it more difficult for people to do normal, safe tasks; they become used to a fight-flight-freeze reaction even when the information they receive or the events they encounter are not dangerous.

Let's first examine what types of situations you find most stressful by completing the Pullis Stress Inventory (adapted for teachers). Please complete this scale to help illuminate the types of situations that are most likely to trigger a fight-flight-freeze state for you.

PULLIS STRESS INVENTORY (Adapted for Teachers)

Part I: Sources of Stress

Please rate your anxiety level, most days, from the stress for each of the items.

0= Not anxious at all 1 = Mildly anxious 2 = Moderately anxious 3 = Extremely anxious

In general, how stressful do you find:

1. Loud, noisy, disruptive students?	0	1	2	3
2. Students' impolite or rude behavior?	0	1	2	3
3. Poorly motivated students?	0	1	2	3
4. Dealing with the parents of the students?	0	1	2	3
5. Students' defiance of teacher/school/professional authority?	0	1	2	3
6. Threat of aggression or physical harm?	0	1	2	3
7. Lack of appreciation from your students?	0	1	2	3
8. Being a teacher/school professional?	0	1	2	3
9. Poor career opportunities?	0	1	2	3
10. Inadequate salary?	0	1	2	3
11. Low status of the teaching/school profession?	0	1	2	3
12. Inability to meet your personal or professional goals?	0	1	2	3
13. Lack of fun/enjoyment involved in working in schools?	0	1	2	3
14. Inadequate disciplinary policy of the school?	0	1	2	3
15. Attitudes and behavior of the building principal?	0	1	2	3
16. Lack of recognition for good teaching/work?	0	1	2	3
17. Inadequate equipment and instructional materials?	0	1	2	3
18. Lack of effective consultation and assistance?	0	1	2	3
19. Attitudes and behavior of other teachers/professionals?	0	1	2	3
20. Having to punish students or use aversive techniques?	0	1	2	3
21. Lack of participation in decision-making?	0	1	2	3
22. Evaluation by principal or supervisors?	0	1	2	3
23. Not enough time allotted to do the work?	0	1	2	3
24. Participation in IEP or other mandatory meetings?	0	1	2	3
25. Too much work to do?	0	1	2	3
26. Responsibility for the students' progress/learning?	0	1	2	3
27. Writing and on-going evaluation of IEPs (paperwork)?	0	1	2	3
28. Constant monitoring of the students' behavior?	0	1	2	3
29. Demands on after-school time?	0	1	2	3
30. Number of students/lack of time to spend with individual kids?	0	1	2	3

Other Sources of Stress: Please describe other factors that are stressful to you, especially those sources of stress associated with the types of students or setting where you work.

After completing the Pullis Inventory, look at the scores to the right. Notice if you scores are highest in any particular group of items.

Items:

- 1-7:** indicate how stressful you find **students and their challenging behaviors**,
- 8-13:** indicate how stressful you find the **teaching profession itself**,
- 14-22:** indicate how stressful you find the **staff/school**,
- 23-30:** indicate how stressful you find the **workload**.

If your highest scores are in a particular group of items, you may want to make changes in that area:

Student Behaviors: efforts to find better ways to work with students and classroom management, and how to work best with these students (e.g., age group)

Teaching/Profession: efforts to find other faculty members whose approach is similar to yours, or to ascertain what it is about the school that is stressful and whether changes are feasible.

Staff/School: efforts to find others or by identifying which faculty either engage around similar approaches, or what about the school is stressful (and whether changes are feasible)

Workload: efforts to possibly alter the workload by sharing tasks with others or identifying more efficient ways to accomplish demands may be helpful.

You may find that your scores are not higher in one of these groupings, but instead you have scattered high scores about “specific” things in various areas that you find stressful. In this case you'll want to prioritize those items that make you most stressful, AND that you have some reasonable opportunity to alter or change (you may not be able to alter the school resources at this moment, etc.).

What patterns did you notice for yourself?

Now that we have examined what types of situations are most stressful to you at school, let's look at how stress actually "looks" in you, and then we'll do an exercise to address your stress symptoms. Please now complete the **Stress Symptoms Checklist**.

Stress Symptoms Checklist

Your responses to this exercise will help indicate how ***your body*** reacts to, and is impacted by, stress. Circle the items that you *often* experience.

Musculoskeletal Signs

Frequent Headaches	Eye Strain	Eye Twitching
Joint/Neck Stiffness	Tense Muscles/Back	Muscle Twitching
Trembling/Shaking	Restlessness	Tapping Feet
Stuttering/stammering	Voice quivering	Grinding Teeth
Biting nails	Picking Skin	

Visceral Signs

Heart pounding	Dizziness	Light-headedness
Cold chills	Cold hands/feet	Numbness
Dry mouth	Stomach upset	Diarrhea
Profuse sweating	Sweaty palms	Flushed skin
Frequent Insomnia	Interrupted Sleep	Tingling

Mood and Demeanor

Preoccupied	Forgetful	Confused
Uneasy/uncomfortable	Nervous	Distressed
Edgy	Irritable	Angry
Anxious	Worried	Depressed
Exhausted	Hopeless	Helpless

(Adapted from Center for Advancement of School Health)

Stress Symptoms Checklist Reflection

By looking at the Stress Symptoms Checklist, you can see what types of symptoms you have in response to stress. After you identify the specific symptoms, see if you can detect any pattern or order to your symptoms. For example, some people start with a racing heart and sweating, which can lead to a headache and nausea. Others may only notice mood symptom changes when they become stressed. See if you can recognize your stress reactions and their progression. It may help to recall what types of things trigger a stress response for you, and how these responses progress over time. We will look at more specific triggers in later chapters; for now, just think about what most commonly seems to cause you stress. Consider how the stress episode plays out or concludes. See if you can recognize any patterns in your stress responses: what tends to cause them, what symptoms start and come later, and how these episodes finally stop.

What Most Often “Triggers” My Stress Symptoms:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Progression of My Stress Symptoms:

First: _____

Then: _____

Then: _____

Then: _____

Then: _____

How it Ends/Stops: _____

Positive Ways of Working Through Stress

Please read each item below and think about how you have coped with stressful experiences. Using the following rating scale, **circle** to what extent you have used the strategies listed below.

0=Don't Use 1=Use a few times per Month

2=Use most Weeks

3=Use most Days

1. Used a substitute healthy activity to clear my mind for a bit.	0	1	2	3
2. Let my feelings out in a safe place/way.	0	1	2	3
3. Wrote/drew/journaled about my experiences.	0	1	2	3
4. Exercised/jogged/worked out.	0	1	2	3
5. Listened to music that improves how I feel.	0	1	2	3
6. Tried to sleep or eat better to improve my body readiness for stress.	0	1	2	3
7. Looked for the good/positive side or lessons I could learn.	0	1	2	3
8. Accepted the next best thing to what I wanted.	0	1	2	3
9. Told myself that I would survive and benefit from this experience.	0	1	2	3
10. Didn't let it get to me; focused on what I could influence.	0	1	2	3
11. Joked about the situation; tried not to take it so seriously.	0	1	2	3
12. Imagined/prayed/meditated for clarity/guidance.	0	1	2	3
13. Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step.	0	1	2	3
14. Tried to analyze the problem to explore additional options.	0	1	2	3
15. Examined my role in the situation and what I could do differently.	0	1	2	3
16. Watched to see how others were perceiving and addressing the problem.	0	1	2	3
17. Drew on my past experiences as I've been in a similar situation before.	0	1	2	3
18. Tried to see things from the other person's point of view.	0	1	2	3
19. Accepted understanding and support from someone.	0	1	2	3
20. Apologized or took steps to improve the relationship.	0	1	2	3
21. Talked to someone who could do something about the situation.	0	1	2	3
22. Asked another teacher/colleague I respected for advice.	0	1	2	3
23. Talked to someone about how I was feeling.	0	1	2	3
24. Thought about how a person I admired would handle the situation.	0	1	2	3

(Adapted from Folkman et al. [1986]. Dynamics of a stressful encounter in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.)

From this exercise, you can see what types of responses you most often use when stressed.

Items:

- 1-6:** *Healthy Alternative Activities* (doing something else, that's healthy for you to distract yourself or stand back and then regroup to examine the stressful circumstances when you're in a better state)
- 7-12:** *Reframing* (finding the lesson to be learned in this situation)
- 13-18:** *Problem Solving* (breaking down the issue or trying to look at it differently)
- 19-24:** *Social Support* (seeking ideas or clarity from others)

What are your strongest/most comfortable ways to respond to stress?

1) _____

2) _____

Which of the coping strategies listed above do you not currently practice regularly but appeal to you to try?

1) _____

2) _____

On the next page, let's review the basic coping mechanisms that people use to manage stress.

There are basically **4 ways you can cope effectively** with stress, and several ineffective tactics as well. These are shown in the Figure below:

Coping Responses

When I Feel Distressed, I Can:

Healthy	Unhealthy
Healthy Alternative Activity Exercise; Listen to Music; Do Other Positive Activities, such as Read, Journal, Take A Walk, Meditate	<i>Deny</i> <i>Act as though the experience</i> <i>never occurred</i>
Reframe Experience Consider how this experience affects me. How can I accept this situation? What did I learn from this experience? Use positive self-talk. Reflect (Why is this on my path?)	<i>Ignore</i> <i>Forget about it</i>
Problem-Solving How can I respond differently? What parts of this situation can I change?	<i>Avoid this circumstance, or anything</i> <i>similar to it, in the future</i>
Social Support Ask: How do others see/describe this? Can others give me a “reality check”? Are there others who might have useful input? Can I partner with others to manage this?	<i>Numb</i> <i>Drink alcohol, use drugs to dull</i> <i>the distress</i>

There are **4 positive or effective ways to respond to stressors and distress**. While we would wish to anticipate or prepare for every situation so that no distress occurs, we’ve all had experiences go badly, unlike what we expected, and leave us feeling surprised or feeling greater distress than we anticipated. It is helpful to have skills for coping with post-event distress that lingers or haunts us after a troublesome event. The first two effective coping strategies are more frequently done after a stressful situation in response to lingering distress:

(1) **Do something else that’s healthy and positions you to function better:** rather than numbing your feelings with alcohol or other substances, engage in healthy activities such as exercise, dance, improving sleep hygiene, listening to music, eating more nutritiously, etc. These methods can be used in preparation for a particularly stressful class or time of the school-year to diminish the impact of stress so that you are less worn down by difficult circumstances and better equipped to move past stress, solve problems, and engage positively with others.

(2) **Reframe the situation to improve your mindset:** recognize the parts that can be changed and those that cannot and accept the situation. Find the (sometimes small) successes and identify the positive learning experience from potentially difficult situations. In an unruly classroom, you might wonder what should be learned or added to your teaching skills. Consider that perhaps these students may need something different during class than anticipated. Try to understand that your students may feel that they have no control over their lives, and they may suffer from their own stressors. Taking the time to identify and support an individual student’s life will foster compassion and provide a framework for your student-teacher relationship going forward.

Problem-Solving and **Social Support** often work best when dealing with the stressor in that moment. They are also useful coping responses after the stressful event to help you make a better plan for future, similar events:

(3) **Problem-solve:** a good approach is to break the stressor down into parts that can be altered or addressed. To problem-solve, one usually looks at what leads to the undesirable behaviors and how they benefit the students. Examples:

- In an unruly class, talking and disrespectful students will cause the teacher to consider what circumstances lead to talking (“hmmm....when I go to the board and start writing, they all start talking—I may need to keep them busy as I transition to the board,” or “certain students start talking and others follow, so I need to either get other students to help lead activities, or give the troublesome students a different role—“Hubert, can you prepare the board, and Jamie, can you please write down what people say?” etc.).
- Similarly, when students are disrespectful (e.g., “when Student X cannot do an assignment, she creates chaos in the room, hoping the distraction will save her from appearing unintelligent to others or herself, so I need to make sure that she can do the assignment ahead of time; maybe I can practice one problem with her before class starts or as they’re doing homework to prevent embarrassment and ensure she knows how to do it.”).

(4) **Get social support from others:** get a reality check from others so that you have reasonable expectations; identify helpful allies (other strong, good role-model teachers) vs. toxic influences (embittered, frustrated, complaining colleagues); and get input from successful/thoughtful peers. In an unruly classroom, the teacher might go to a veteran teacher who has good classroom control and ask for their opinion about effective classroom management. Experienced teachers can help new teachers set more reasonable and realistic expectations, and they can observe teacher and student behaviors that may warrant changing.

There are also **negative, unhelpful ways people cope** with stress:

(1) You can *avoid or deny the stressor* itself; for example, if students are talking too much and being disrespectful, you might continue lecturing as though the students are engaged (*deny the stressor*), or even skip the class or call in sick (*avoid the stressor*).

(2) You might *numb or blunt your reactions* to the stressor or avoid the distress it causes. For example, you might use alcohol or eat too much to soften the angst caused by the situation; you might watch mindless television to distract yourself, or look for different jobs to do in the evening to avoid thinking about why the class is disrespectful.

(3) You can *use your social support system to justify your actions and predicaments*. Rather than truly seek their input, many of us will describe a circumstance so that others will reinforce our choices. Similarly, sometimes we seek out those who will blindly take our side or amplify intense emotional reactions to our descriptions, instead of give us objective input using their unique lenses to provide alternative interpretations or insight in some circumstance.

We all use different coping mechanisms, and some work better for each of us, and some work better in different situations. Matching a coping strategy with a stressor may help diminish stress; sometimes additional problem-solving helps; sometimes you need others to help clarify the problem, or to provide additional ideas. Sometimes you need to clear your mind with exercise or music to help problem solving. Sometimes the stressor is not amenable to change. In such a case, it may help to reframe the problem so that you can change your reaction to it (“this is to teach me to be more patient”). As well, recalling and attempting these different, effective coping approaches can break a stress reaction or cycle more quickly.

To revisit how you respond to stress, and how you might want to improve your reactions to stress, please complete the **My Positive Coping With Stress Approach** on the following page.

My Positive Coping with Stress Approach

1. Identify the **3 Stressors** you want to address this week (can be the 3 most troublesome ones, the 3 you feel need most immediate attention, or the 3 you most want to improve). Your #1 should be the most troublesome/most in need of attention, or the one you most want to improve.
2. Identify the main **symptoms/pattern you experience** when you experience that stressor. Include the important Musculoskeletal, Visceral, Mood/Demeanor symptoms you experience from this stressor, including the progression or pattern of symptoms if you can identify the pattern.
3. Identify **2 Positive Coping Strategies** you wish to try this week to improve your stress reaction).
4. Monitor the Results over a one-week interval.

Use a scale of -2 (much worse), -1 (little worse), 0 (no change), +1 (little better), or +2 (much better).

STRESSOR	Stress Symptoms/Pattern I Experience from this Stressor	Positive Coping Strategies to Try	Results (-2 to +2)
1.		1. 2.	1. _____ 2. _____
2.		1. 2.	1. _____ 2. _____
3.		1. 2.	1. _____ 2. _____

5. What symptoms improved/worsened with the approaches you attempted?

Sometimes coping can be harder because of our past experiences. Sometimes, we are exposed to difficult circumstances or events that impact us. Indeed, sometimes we find ways to cope with difficult events that enable us to survive, particularly when we are young and may not be able to escape or avoid exposure to difficult events. Yet, these ways of coping may be primitive and not preferred as we get older. For example, a child exposed to adults screaming or fighting in the house, may hide, turn up the TV, complain of being sick to get the adults to stop fighting, create a fight with siblings to stop the adults from fighting, etc. Sometimes these behaviors “work” (stop the adults from whatever they are doing that is distressful to the child), yet not be good patterns for the future (creating other conflicts with others, running away, turning up the television, etc.). And sometimes these behaviors become so familiar, we’re not even aware of doing them deliberately—they are our go to behaviors when we become stressed.

The Adverse Child Experiences study, initiated now over 20 years ago, illuminated how being exposed to traumatic circumstances in childhood took a toll on children. Specifically, the more adverse childhood experiences that adults reported, the more vulnerabilities they described to other bad outcomes in their own adult lives.

So on the next page, complete the ACES questionnaire to see which adverse childhood experiences occurred to you, as another step to recognizing how some coping mechanisms may have emerged in your own life, which at the time may have been necessary for your survival, but now which may get in your way of a happier life.

Adverse Childhood Events (ACES)

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life (*please circle “YES” or “NO”*):

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...
swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
OR, act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt? | YES | NO |
| 2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...
push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?
OR, ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured? | YES | NO |
| 3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever...
touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
OR, attempt or actually have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal) with you? | YES | NO |
| 4. Did you often or very often feel that ... no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?
OR, your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other? | YES | NO |
| 5. Did you often or very often feel that ...you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?
OR, your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it? | YES | NO |
| 6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced? | YES | NO |
| 7. Was your mother or stepmother : often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? OR, sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?
OR, ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife? | YES | NO |
| 8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs? | YES | NO |
| 9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide? | YES | NO |
| 10. Did a household member go to prison? | YES | NO |

Add up all the *items* (1-10) where you circled “YES”: _____ This is your ACES score.

(from Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control; originally devised by Felitti VJ, Anda RF, Nordenberg D, et al. Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Am J Prev Med. 1998;14(4):245- 258)

Most adults report experiencing a few of these adverse experiences, so do not feel worried if you answered “yes” to some items. And even those adults who reported more adverse experiences, often did adopt, then or over time, effective coping mechanisms. So you are not “broken,” damaged or such if you experienced some or even many of these. You are more vulnerable to having adversity in your adult life if you have more of these events. What that means is that you should be aware of how these events might have impacted you, then and now, and to think about how you cope with stress now. Do you tend to rely on strategies that may have worked well at that time, but now do not work so well? Do others (friends, etc.) report that you deal with stress in difficult or unhelpful ways?

What one does to survive at one age is not always preferable at later times, when one has more control over circumstances and just a deeper understanding and greater awareness of options for dealing with adversity. So appreciate that you may have done things to cope when you were younger or stuck in difficult circumstances which enabled you to survive that time in your life. Some of those coping skills may remain helpful and still useful to you today. However, if you find that some of your coping mechanisms now work less well for you, appreciate that you may not have had better options to choose from back in difficult circumstances, so those coping strategies indeed may have been the best option that you had then. Now may simply be a time to widen your repertoire to include additional coping skills now.

Adverse Teacher Experiences (ATES)

Adverse experiences of course are not limited to childhood. Many of us would describe the most difficult events of our life occurring after childhood. Becoming a teacher can be very rewarding, but also has its own potential for difficulties. Some students come from complex environments, may themselves experience ACES, and may act or cope in difficult ways at school and in your classrooms. So being aware of how difficult events may occur at school, and impact your “usual” coping skills remains important. The Adverse Teacher Experiences (**ATES**) on the next page may help you to consider adverse events you may have experienced as a teacher, and that impact your coping skills. Please complete the ATES questionnaire on the next page.

Adverse Teacher Experiences (ATES)

Since you have been a school staff person (so these occurred when you were a teacher/school staff, not from your own student experiences), circle the correct answer:

1. Did anyone in your school often swear/ insult/humiliate you, or put you down? Act in a way that you might be physically hurt?	YES	NO
2. Did anyone in your school often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? Hit you so hard that you had marks/were injured?	YES	NO
3. Did anyone in your school ever make unwanted sexual comments toward you? Or attempt to have unwanted sexual activity with you?	YES	NO
4. Did you often feel that <i>no one</i> in your school supported you?	YES	NO
5. Did you often feel you did not have adequate resources necessary to do your job, or that your administrators were unable to protect your safety?	YES	NO
6. Did you ever have a close Staff/Student die through traumatic circumstances?	YES	NO
7. Are other staff members often pushed, grabbed, slapped, thrown at, kicked, bitten, hit with a fist or something else hard?	YES	NO
8. Have you worked in a school with a staff member whose substance or alcohol use negatively impacted you (person acted belligerent/inappropriately toward you)?	YES	NO
9. Did a close Student/Staff ever get seriously depressed, mentally ill, or attempt suicide when you worked together?	YES	NO
10. Did a close Student/Staff at your school ever go to prison?	YES	NO

ADD UP YOUR “YES” ITEMS: _____. THIS IS YOUR ATES SCORE

SKILL GUIDELINES: Positive Ways of Coping with Stress

Healthy Alternative Activities

- What *Healthy Activities* can I do to improve my state right now?
- What distracts me so that I can clear my mind and relax?

Reframing

- What can I learn from this situation?
- How will this situation make me better?
- How can I accept this situation better?

Problem-Solving

- What are the different parts of this stressor?
- How can I break this problem down?
- What other ways can I view this problem?

Social Support

- Who would have good ideas about this problem?
- What would I think (an *Admired Other*) will say?
- Who will tell me the truth about my perception of this problem?
- Who will provide me helpful support and encourage me to stretch?

3. Emotional Well-Being: Managing Emotions

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Distinguish between thrive and survive emotions
2. Identify benefits to 8 survive emotions
3. Make a plan to enhance your well-being

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. Making a plan to experience positive emotions daily.
- B. Employing 3 therapeutic techniques to manage distressing emotions.

Think of a time when you felt very happy. Recall everything you can about from that moment. What was occurring around you? Do you recall whether it was warm or cool, light or dark, quiet or loud; do you recall any smells, tastes, or sounds at that time? Let your mind drift as you just focus on that moment. What are all the thoughts and images that come through your mind? Allow yourself at least 30 seconds for all the thoughts to come through. Allow this memory to gradually go, and perhaps some of the residual joy may still remain.

What types of thoughts came up as you recalled that experience? Was the euphoric memory something you expected, more of a surprise, or something that happened out of the blue? Does anything ever remind you of that feeling or evoke it these days?

Mindful meditation on one of the 'thrive' emotions (gratitude as an example):

1. Take a moment to find a comfortable seated position, and gently guide your awareness to your breathing.
2. Breathing only through your nose, follow the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the tip of your nose throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths.
3. Notice the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
4. Now follow the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the back of your throat throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths.
5. Again, notice the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
6. Now follow the physical sensation of the expansion of your chest throughout the inhale, and the relaxation of your chest throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths, continuing to simply notice the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
7. Finally, follow the physical sensation of the expansion of your abdomen throughout the inhale and the relaxation of your abdomen throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths, noticing the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
8. When your mind starts to wander, gently guide it back to the feeling of your breath, with an attitude of amusement, as if to smile at your mind for its tendency to wander.
9. Focus on the physical sensation of the breath that you find the most pleasant, the feeling that is most noticeable to you.
10. Now bring to mind a situation that caused you to feel grateful, or someone in your life who you are grateful for. Take a moment to hold that situation or person in your mind.
11. Allow the feeling of gratitude that this situation or person evokes in you to grow, filling more and more of your awareness.

12. Focus on this feeling of gratitude, holding it lightly, like you would cotton in your hand.
13. When your mind starts to wander, gently guide your awareness back to your breathing, and then back to this feeling of gratitude.
14. Continue to hold gratitude for about 10 minutes
15. When you are ready, gently shift your attention from gratitude to the physical sensation of your breathing, for about 3 breaths
16. Notice any sensations in your body
17. Notice the state of your mind
18. Open your eyes

Try to practice this meditation, with the focus being on a thrive emotion, for about 10-20 minutes a day. Set a timer on your phone, perhaps choosing an alarm with a pleasant and gentle sound.

Emotions

We all experience emotions. Emotions naturally, instinctively occur, in response to situations. Unlike our reasoning and thinking brain activities, emotions provide us another reaction to events that, while sometimes illogical or distressing, can give us invaluable input at an important time. For example, we may think that someone would be a very good friend yet have reactions to various situations with them that tell us otherwise. Emotions often arise quickly and can help motivate us to avoid or leave a dangerous or bad situation. However, our emotional reactions are not always “right” or superior to our thinking. Our emotions often follow from previous events where bad things have happened. These emotions may inappropriately apply to another situation that reminds of us the previous situation, evoking a strong emotional reaction. Emotions AND our reasoning skills are both helpful and can work together to help us best assess many situations. Emotions also can draw us to stay connected or participate with others when we might ordinarily not.

Some of us feel emotions deeply and express them freely. Others contain our emotions, both good and bad, and show little outward signs of feeling much at all. This chapter will look at the range of emotions we experience, and how all of our emotions can be helpful to us and guide us to make better directions.

Thrive Emotions

Please identify how you experience some positive emotions, or “thrive emotions,” those that help us prosper or flourish. *For each question, consider what brings about this emotion, perhaps a recent experience that made you feel this way, or a moment that stands out from your past that always reminds you of this feeling.*

What makes (or has made) you feel:

1. Calm or serene?

2. Hopeful?

3. Awed?

4. Love?

5. Joy?

6. Inspired?

7. Grateful?

Thrive emotions help us enjoy life, and they also improve our mental and physical health. For example, being grateful improves physical health in multiple ways; a person being grateful consistently (three or more times per week) averages (compared to those who do not practice being grateful) (www.happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude/):

- 16% fewer physical symptoms
- 10% less physical pain
- 19% more time spent exercising
- 8% more sleep
- 25% increased sleep quality (more REM, and deeper stage sleep)

When making decisions, these thrive emotions can be stronger drivers than our logical thinking brain. Perhaps you have done unusual things at some point in your own life because of love? These emotions also assist us to remain grounded, engaged with others, and open and passionate about improving the planet for future generations. In addition, these thrive emotions have evolutionary value; they make us stronger, more committed, and more engaged in improving our environment(s) for others.

Table 3A
Benefits of Thrive Emotions

Thrive Emotion	Evolutionary Benefits	Example
Serenity	We feel safe and secure in our environment, able to remain and engage	Calmness watching students apply instruction to homework or tasks
Hope	Helps us persist and continue amidst obstacles or difficulties	Seeing students describe aspirations and goals to better themselves
Awe	Makes us less afraid of new or unexpected experiences	Students do something far beyond your expectations with assignment
Love	Encourages us to engage with others, to connect, to work together, to	Feel proud and/or tear up as students end year and prepare to move on
Joy (Internal Events)	Produces a feeling of good fortune and delight; and helps us fully experience events and engage more with all parts of our environment	Students feel pleased with their success, and take delight in learning
Inspire	Helps us consider new possibilities and to believe we can attempt these with less risk of danger	See others do something that looks fun and worthwhile that want to also do
Gratitude	Helps us recognize and appreciate those people and events that are good for us	Recall kindnesses in words or deeds of student toward you

Do you try to build in activities in your daily life that help you to feel these emotions? Is it a regular part of your day to plan such activities so that you frequently feel these good emotions?

Are any of these thrive emotions ones that you are neglecting or not experiencing very often? Are there steps you can take to make these thrive emotions a more regular part of your daily life?

Consider some options to create more of these thrive emotions in your life:

SERENITY: Do I have times and places throughout the day that bring me serenity such as going on nature walks or meditating in a quiet place that inspires reverence? Do I notice my breathing or the stillness in my thinking?

HOPE: Do I plan things today to make my future better? Do I identify small steps forward to gradually make my life become more like what I want it to be?

AWE: Do I view, in real life or online, places or events that awe me? Are there wonderful places I want to go, and am I making plans for how and when to get there?

LOVE: Do I regularly engage with others? Do I actively seek and create romance in my life? Do I make regular time available to enjoy speaking or being with family members? Do I make efforts to sustain and improve relationships with others (e.g., colleagues) who share my interests or passions?

JOY: Are there activities I regularly schedule (and do) that bring me joy? Do I follow through with creating and pursuing activities that I think will bring me joy?

INSPIRATION: Who and what inspires me? Do I seek out and read about those who inspire me?

GRATITUDE: What am I grateful for today? Do I notice those things that I'm fortunate to have in my life? Do I make efforts to let others know that I am grateful for what they have given me over the years?

Now, what emotions do you most notice feeling at school, even unexpectedly?

Some examples of thrive emotions teachers may experience:

- Happiness when lesson plans go smoothly and students understand concepts
- Liking of students
- Joy in seeing students achieve goals

Some examples of negative emotions teachers may experience:

- Frustration/anger when students are not on task
- Envy of other teachers who get sought-after promotions, awards, or accolades
- Fear of mounting workload

Traditionally we have sought to avoid, ignore, deny, or blunt negative emotions. However, if we view them more as survive (instead of negative) emotions, we may find them helpful for our longer-term survival, and they may even help increase our happiness. For example, fear makes us uncomfortable, but is an important aspect of survival to be wary of possible danger (e.g., seeing large animals in the woods may cause us move away from them). These survival emotions are often powerful in the moment we experience them, yet ideally *brief*, and steer us back toward doing those things, and being in those places, that provide us more thrive emotions.

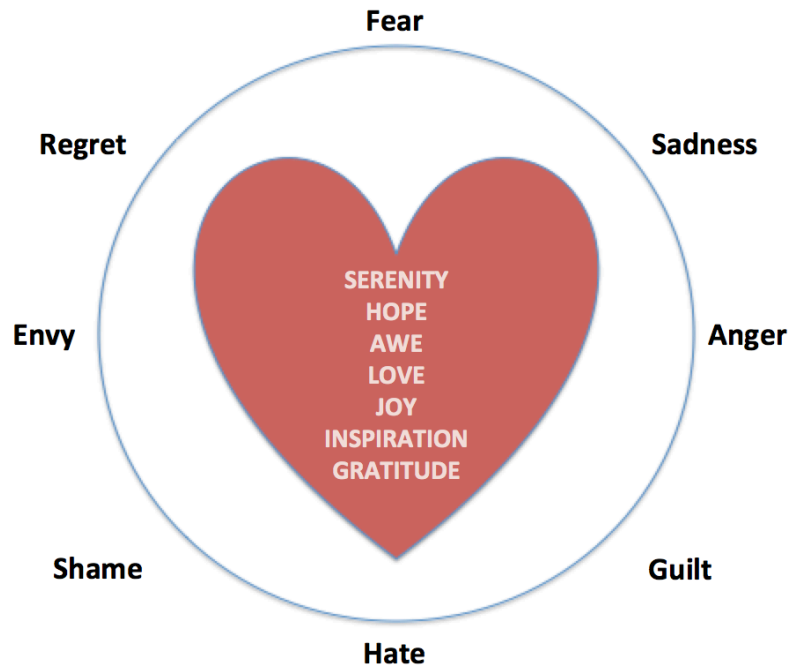
Consider these common survive emotions and how each might be useful in keeping us alive and in better places. Table 3B below helps describe these:

Table 3B
Benefits of Survive Emotions

Survive Emotion	Evolutionary Benefits	Example
Fear	Prevents or inhibits dangerous behavior	Fear of discussing a student's bad behavior with a parent because it may increase the parent's complaints to school administration.
Regret	Helps us recall past bad choices so that we don't repeat them.	Recalling that when I screamed at a student, I felt badly and was reprimanded.
Envy	We resent the fact that others have more success or more wealth; it can encourage us to work harder to achieve more. Jealousy is similar, but associated more with fear of "losing" some one, and thus confounded by a sense of "ownership" or "entitlement" over others. While this can make one work harder to keep the other person satisfied, the expectation of owning/having someone else is often destructive.	Resenting another's new car or award.
Shame	A painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety. Remembrance of shame may help us avoid decisions that could cause us to experience it again.	Being embarrassed for having yelled at students in the past
Hate (intense avoid)	Feeling of aversion may cause us to avoid things or people likely to harm us.	Impedes persisting efforts that might leave us vulnerable to someone untrustworthy
Guilt (past acts)	Help us recall past actions that harmed others so that we make different choices.	Choosing not to reprimand a student in front of the class because I have caused serious pain when I did so in the past.
Anger (hurt lies beneath)	Strong feelings, if controlled, can help us stand up for ourselves and others.	Sternly reprimanding a student who made fun of another student
Sadness	May draw others to support/help us when we feel wounded/vulnerable	Not hiding my distress from my class when they do not engage in an activity.

These survive emotions can work together with thrive emotions to keep us from going away from what may be good for us and toward situations which may make our lives worse. Survive emotions are helpful for *bouncing back* when we feel badly. They signal our brains to learn from an action that causes us problems. The following figure illustrates how these survive emotions can surround our thrive emotions to help us bounce back toward the thrive emotions:

Figure 3A: Survive Emotions Return Us To Thrive Emotions



Consider a time when have experienced each of these emotions; can you identify (a) *what event/circumstance* made you feel these emotions, and then (b) *how that emotion helped you survive or change* what you were doing?

1. Fear _____

2. Regret _____

3. Envy _____

4. Shame _____

5. Hate _____

6. Guilt _____

7. Anger _____

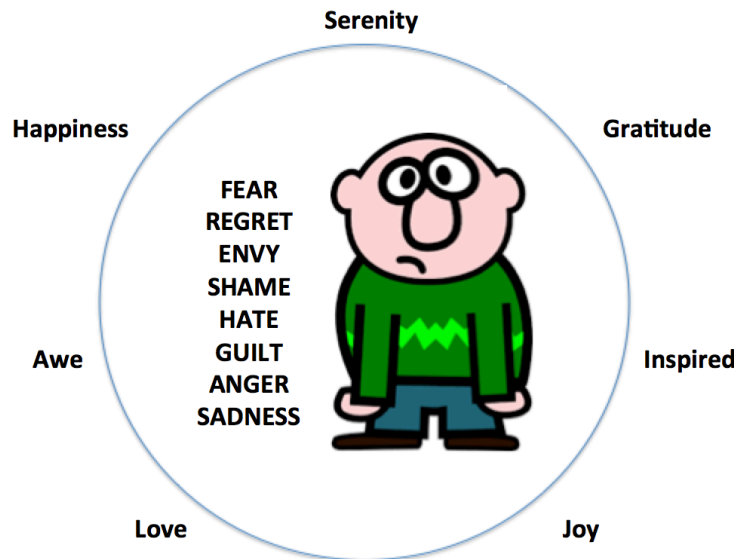
8. Sadness _____

For survive emotions to be helpful (rather than overwhelming or paralyzing) they should be a **brief and quick** reminder or lesson from the brain, and not something that we dwell on and feel bad about. The goal is to feel that emotion, make sure that we take it seriously, and finally make corrections, apologizing or making amends as appropriate.

Think about putting your finger on a hot stove. Your body immediately tells you to remove it by giving you a painful sensation on your finger. This sensation reminds you to avoid placing your finger on a hot stove in the future. Your brain gives you this signal because leaving your finger on a stove would result in a serious burn. Similarly, staying over-focused on your survive emotions is like leaving your hand on a stove—you do more damage rather than benefit by learning not to repeat the action. Some people feel so much regret or fear, they fail to explore or experience much that they could enjoy. Consider the first time you thought about riding a roller coaster; it is usually scary to anticipate. People characteristically describe more regret about what they did not do than about what they did not succeed in when they tried. This doesn't mean you should leap into dangerous situations or do things without thinking them through; it does mean you should weigh the pros and cons, see how others like you feel about and experience something, and then decide with that evidence if it is worth trying.

Some people reverse their attention toward their emotions. They focus on the survive emotions more than they do on thrive emotions. These individuals experience the survive emotions excessively, seek to be ready for trouble, and are prepared for disappointments, adversities, etc. They often become better at worrying and avoiding opportunities, and they struggle to live in and enjoy the present.

Figure 3B: When Survive Emotions Become the Priority



When you become overfocused on survive emotions, it becomes difficult to experience thrive emotions. Even when thrive emotions occur, they usually last briefly as the core survive emotions soon take over again.

You cannot ignore survive emotions. Trying to ignore/suppress/hide urges (e.g. substance use) leads to even more intrusive thoughts.^{1 2} For some people, attempts to suppress thoughts of insomnia increased dreaming about insomnia.³ So how do you keep these survive emotions from intruding too much into your life?

The **Coping with Stress techniques**, described in Chapter 2, often help manage emotions:

- 1) What **healthy alternative actions** can I take right now to at least **distract me** from this persisting painful state? Can I work out, listen to or play music, do something nice for others right now that may alter this painful state?
- 2) Is there some **reframe** of this situation, or reason I am in this situation that will make me a better person?
- 3) Can I **problem-solve** what is causing me to feel distressing emotions? Are there multiple ways to see this situation, and have I considered alternative explanations (vs. the first one that comes to mind) that may make the situation easier to remedy?
- 4) Can I use my **social supports** to get a **reality check of helpful input from others**? Do others see what is causing my distress in ways that may provide clarity or ideas for fixing my situation?

It's helpful to learn from all of these emotions and what they can teach you. Thrive emotions suggest what activities and others evoke your best self, and survive emotions help clarify when it's time to reevaluate a course you are on or changes you may need to make in yourself (e.g., envy or jealousy).

Therapeutic Approaches Applied to Well-being

Several therapeutic approaches provide tools for managing emotions:

From *Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT)*, a useful tenet is to accept emotional states like a passing wave. Emotions need not persist for long intervals of time; even painful feelings usually decrease within minutes, so recognizing what they are to teach you about, but letting them wash over you like an ocean wave can make them less frightening.

From *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)*, several tools can be useful to regulate emotions:

The **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Triangle (Thoughts – Feelings – Actions or TFA)** can be helpful in determining how our thoughts, feelings, or actions can sustain unpleasant moods or emotional states. This triangle basically indicates that a thought or feeling or action can lead to subsequent negative, unhelpful actions, thoughts, or feelings. TFA can go in any order (you can start with a distressing thought or feeling or action and then go around [or even across] the triangle as you examine the feelings that surround that thought or action, or how those feelings led to different thoughts or actions, etc. Bad thoughts can lead to bad actions or bad feelings to bad thoughts, etc., so breaking this cycle, usually by examining your thoughts that “support” these negative feelings or actions can alter how long you feel bad.

EXAMPLE: Feeling Leads to Action that Leads to Worse Feeling: If I am feeling guilty, then act by writing a series of emails to illustrate how others have mistreated me, I may create and sustain additional conflicts with others, leading me to feel worse (both more guilt and sadness).

EXAMPLE: Action Leads to Thought that Leads to Feeling: I drive too fast, get a ticket, then think, “The police are out to get me,” and feel angry, overwhelmed, and afraid of the police.

- 1) **Managing Feelings:** Let Feelings Wash Over You, Determine What You Should Learn From this Feeling
- 2) **Manage Actions:** Instead of Fight/Flight/Freeze type reactions, or Immediate Actions (Ready...Fire...Aim), use a competing response to stop Amygdalar Actions:
 - a. **Breathe:** Slow and Deeply
 - b. **Stretch and Release:** Hyperextend your fingers or toes, count to 5, then “relax” them and notice the sensation as relax fingers (or toes)
- 3) **Manage Thoughts: Recognize Unhelpful Thoughts or “thinking traps”:** Too often, we use our frontal lobe, but ineffectively, making illogical conclusions, or falling into “thinking traps” such as the following:

IDEA JUNC

- **I Statements (Personalization):** *He’s acting mad; wonder what I did to set him off?*
- **Distortions (Overgeneralize):** *I always do badly on tests.*
- **Emotional Reasoning:** *I feel awful—what’s wrong with me?*
- **All or None (Black/White) Thinking:** *No one ever wants to be with me.*
- **Jump to Conclusions:** *I don’t know this—I bet I’ll fail this test.*
- **Unusual Expectations (Should/Ought):** *I should be more popular at work.*
- **Notion (Mindreading):** *They all think I’m an idiot.*
- **Catastrophizing:** *I’ll never be successful...I should just go live in the woods..alone.*

- a. **Challenge your thoughts** surrounding painful emotions. Often we make unusual, even unhelpful conclusions about an emotion we experience, as at least the thoughts and feelings may now “match.” For example, we may feel sad, decide it’s occurring because a friend didn’t meet us for dinner as planned, and then “conclude” that it’s because the friend doesn’t truly like us and is avoiding us. While this could be true (and may suggest that you need to find some different friends), it could also be that the friend had to deal with a broken-down car, finish a work/school assignment because of a deadline, or some other very good reason. Our need for thoughts-feelings-actions to “fit” sometimes leads us to use the available information, or our fears/perceptions, to jump to conclusions.

So a very helpful step is to consider:

- (1) Is the thought helpful? (helps me understand better or know what to change to alter the feeling?)
- (2) How true/accurate is this thought? How do you know this thought is true or false?

So the following table can help one determine where a particular thought best fits:

IS THIS THOUGHT:	Helpful	Unhelpful
<i>True</i>		
<i>False</i>		

- b. It’s often helpful to **examine all the evidence** surrounding a negative thought or conclusion about ourselves. You may think, “I’m no good at sports,” because you lost a ping pong game, when in fact you rarely play, the other person plays more often, and you were distracted by other events.
- c. Consider **alternative explanations** for an event: what are the other possible explanations for my thoughts?
- d. How do **others see or describe** this situation?
- e. **Positive Self-Talk**: What did I see or learn from this experience? What can I do that is one step forward from this situation?
- i. **EXAMPLE**: My lesson didn’t work out as I’d hoped at the end, but they liked the warm-up activity, and were engaged until I got to the part about when and where historical events occurred---so good job on the first half, and just make that when/where part shorter and more interesting (“Hubert, can you find this place on a map? How many years ago did this happen? Were your grandparents alive then?” and then do the discussion part but add what else was going on then in other places so it’ll be more interesting.

EXAMPLE (writing emails): “Now, by sending those emails, instead of making others feel guilty, I’ve said things I regret and made myself feel guilty.”

EXAMPLE (getting a traffic ticket): “The evidence is that I’ve driven for years without getting a ticket, so the notion that the cops are out to get me isn’t consistent with the facts; I have no reason to keep

on feeling guilty. I do need to remember how bad this felt when I start driving too fast because I don't want to get another ticket."

4) Mixed Emotions

Many of us have simultaneous thrive and negative emotions, and this is both normal and often helpful, since mixed emotions can more readily lead to change (e.g., while you may feel sadness over job loss, you may also feel excitement over the new job opportunities and applying recent learnings to a new career).⁴

After you complete this chapter, notice your thrive and survive emotions over the next week as they occur. At the end of the week, complete "My Mood Review" worksheet later in the chapter (p. 46).

Practicing My HARPS

For each of the following stressors, consider how you can use the “**HARPS**” strategies (**HA=Healthy Alternatives, R=Reframing, P=Problem-Solving, and S=Social Supports**).

EXAMPLE: you find that you become jealous about your significant other engaging with others, even though there’s no reason, no past history of cheating or betrayals, etc., to suggest any inappropriate behaviors by your partner.

1. How is your jealousy helpful to you? (e.g., “I stay on my toes to remain attractive/appealing, I appreciate how attractive my partner is to others, I don’t take my partner for granted.”)
2. So now “Play your HARPS” to cope with this distressing emotion. In this example:
 - a. **Healthy Alternatives** (when I feel jealous): I can work out, write my partner a letter, cook or prepare food, write about my jealousy, and then let it go as the wave goes through me.
 - b. **Reframe**: I can recognize that I must be pretty good also for my partner to choose to be with me, or wonder how this can make me stronger or help me learn to be more trusting and secure in myself.
 - c. **Problem-Solving**: I can identify what makes me jealous (“Hmmm...it’s my partner’s being away at meetings and spending long hours with others that makes me jealous.”) You can also problem-solve if you think your jealousy is warranted (“My partner is cheating on me.”), by following your partner or having someone do that, checking phone records/texts, checking social media sites, or searching through your partner’s things. All these behaviors, however, may only lead to additional worries (“If only I’d checked the phone records last month,” or “I should have followed them on Tuesday.”), and these may increase both fears of cheating and create greater problems than they solve.
 - d. **Social Supports**: I can ask my friends how my partner describes me, how my partner acts toward me in their presence or acts around them when I’m not present. I can ask several of my friends what they notice during times when I’m feeling jealous, and if they think my feelings are warranted, or if I appear irrational.
3. Now APPLY HARPS to the following situations:
 - a. You feel envious when another peer receives a promotion and you do not get a similar promotion, and you cannot stop thinking about it.

i. How does my ENVY help me?

ii. HA:

iii. R:

iv. P:

v. S:

- b. You give a student a poor grade on an assignment, then learn months later the student had lost her home that day, her pet was given to a distant rescue organization, and she had to go live with an unfamiliar cousin. You now feel guilty and unsure how to act when you see the student (after the summer)

i. How does my feeling of GUILT help me?

ii. HA:

iii. R:

iv. P:

v. S:

- c. Your boss asks you to create and present a model lesson plan on bullying prevention at your school. You feel fear about saying something that will alienate half the faculty, and speaking about something you don't know that much about.

i. How does my FEAR help me?

ii. HA:

iii. R:

iv. P:

v. S:

- d. You get excited about a topic and spend an entire weekend developing a lesson plan and putting together materials for the next week. The students, however, show little interest, make little effort and

do poorly on the outcome measures. You feel discouraged about all your work and sad that you have not been able to engage the students in a topic important to you.

i. How does my FEAR help me?

ii. HA:

iii. R:

iv. P:

v. S:

Thinking Traps

- A. For each statement below, Circle the “type” of thinking trap one appears to be falling into. Sometimes multiple traps are occurring, but try to identify which trap seems most prominent.
- “My class was so noisy—I bet the other teachers heard all that, and think I have no control; now they are acting funny and avoiding me in the teacher lounge.”
 - Notion (Mindreading)
 - All or Nothing
 - Catastrophizing
 - “These students fail year after year; no matter what anyone does, they all just keep failing.”
 - I Statements
 - All or Nothing
 - Emotional Reasoning
 - “The Principal is acting weird today—wonder what I did to set her off?”
 - Jump to Conclusions
 - Catastrophizing
 - I-Statements
 - “I felt so bad after that class—what did I do wrong?” (Emotional Reasoning)
 - Emotional Reasoning
 - All or Nothing
 - Catastrophizing
 - “The students did really bad on this worksheet; they’re all going to fail the exam—none of them are going to pass at this rate.”
 - Catastrophizing
 - Notion (Mindreading)
 - Emotional Reasoning
 - “These kids all hate me—why am I doing this?”
 - I Statements
 - Distortion (Overgeneral)
 - Emotional Reasoning
 - “The kids couldn’t do the worksheet accurately—I am not a good teacher.”
 - Notion (Mindreading)
 - Catastrophizing
 - Jump to Conclusions
 - “I’m only doing one class per day on my own; I’m way behind everyone else—I should be doing at least 3 classes per day by now.”
 - Unusual Expectations
 - Distortion (Overgeneral)
 - Notion (Mindreading)
- B. For the statement below, make a comment that shows an unhelpful thought (**IDEA JUNC**):
- “I studied really hard for this test, and then got a grade way below what I expected.”*
- On the back, write a comment for this statement that shows (a) I-Statement (personalizing), (b) Distortion (overgeneralizing), (c) Emotional Reasoning, (d) All or Nothing, (e) Jumping to Conclusions, (f) Unusual Expectations, (g) Notion (Mindreading), and (h) Catastrophizing.
 - On the back, write a comment to the above statement that shows (a) Evaluating All the Evidence, (b) an Alternative Explanation, (c) Enlisting Others, and (d) Positive Self Talk (what learned, step up for next time).

Thinking Traps: ANSWER KEY

- A. For each statement below, Circle the “type” of thinking trap one appears to be falling into. Sometimes multiple traps are occurring, but try to identify which trap seems most prominent.
11. “My class was so noisy—I bet the other teachers heard all that, and think I have no control; now they are acting funny and avoiding me in the teacher lounge.”
 a. **Notion (Mindreading)** b. All or Nothing c. Catastrophizing
 12. “These students fail year after year; no matter what anyone does, they all just keep failing.”
 a. I Statements **b. All or Nothing** c. Emotional Reasoning
 13. “The Principal is acting weird today—wonder what I did to set her off?”
 a. Jump to Conclusions b. Catastrophizing **c. I-Statements**
 14. “I felt so bad after that class—what did I do wrong?” (Emotional Reasoning)
 a. **Emotional Reasoning** b. All or Nothing c. Catastrophizing
 15. “The students did really bad on this worksheet; they’re all going to fail the exam—none of them are going to pass at this rate.”
 a. **Catastrophizing** b. Notion (Mindreading) c. Emotional Reasoning
 16. “These kids all hate me—why am I doing this?”
 a. I Statements **b. Distortion (Overgeneral)** c. Emotional Reasoning
 17. “The kids couldn’t do the worksheet accurately—I am not a good teacher.”
 a. Notion (Mindreading) b. Catastrophizing **c. Jump to Conclusions**
 18. “I’m only doing one class per day on my own; I’m way behind everyone else—I should be doing at least 3 classes per day by now.”
 a. **Unusual Expectations** b. Distortion (Overgeneral) c. Notion (Mindreading)

B. (next page)

B. For the statement below, make a comment that shows an unhelpful thought (**IDEA JUNC**):

"I studied really hard for this test, and then got a grade way below what I expected."

19. On the back, write a comment for this statement that shows

- (a) I-Statement (personalizing): *It's always on the material I don't know or when I'm absent.*
- (b) Distortion (overgeneralizing): *I just cannot take tests.*
- (c) Emotional Reasoning: *I did awful—why am I so stupid?*
- (d) All or Nothing: *I didn't know anything on that test.*
- (e) Jumping to Conclusions:
- (f) Unusual Expectations: *I should have known all this; it's ridiculous to get a C on this test.*
- (g) Notion (Mindreading): *That teacher hates me, and loves making me look stupid.*
- (h) Catastrophizing: *I'll never graduate....I need to seek another job.*

20. On the back, write a comment to the above statement that shows

- (a) Evaluating All the Evidence: *Well, I did well on the previous 2 tests.*
- (b) An Alternative Explanation: *I didn't read the material this time or spend as much time studying.*
- (c) Enlisting Others: *I wonder how everyone else did on this test---hmmm....they did worse, too.*
- (d) Positive Self Talk (what learned, step up for next time): *Okay, this was harder and less interesting, but I'll need this information to do well on the final, and it could be useful if I teach World History.*

Hope

We will briefly focus on hope; most emotion researchers view hope as slightly different than emotions. While hope can be elicited by sensory stimuli, often hope has an attitudinal component; often associated with optimism. Hope remains a particularly important value to nurture, especially early during your career. Hope impacts your *physical health* significantly. Those reporting higher levels of hopefulness also have increased pain tolerance,⁵ make better health choices, respond better to treatments,⁶ and tend to live longer.⁷

Conversely, those reporting lower levels of hope, experience a 3-fold increase in absenteeism⁸ and increased risk of death from almost all conditions (e.g., during surgeries, from heart attacks, from cancer, even from violence).^{9 10}

Sometimes we become so involved and absorbed in our daily grind that we are simply going through the motions and keeping our life stable instead of growing and evolving to enjoy all that is around us. Please complete The Future Scale to examine how you perceive your future. Once you complete this scale, you can use the Moving Forward exercise to interpret your score and identify steps to plan for your future.

The Future Scale

Rank how each item describes you most days over the past 2 weeks.

1 = Mostly False
2 = More False than True
3 = More True than False
4 = Mostly True

1. _____ I establish specific goals when I begin a job/project.
2. _____ I tend to break my goals down into specific tasks and timelines.
3. _____ I accomplish tasks best when I create a plan.
4. _____ I may alter my goals along the way but I don't give up.
5. _____ I can think of many ways to fix a difficult situation.
6. _____ There are many ways to resolve a problem.
7. _____ I can think of many ways to accomplish my goals.
8. _____ Even when others are discouraged, I know I can find solutions.
9. _____ I enthusiastically pursue my goals.
10. _____ My past experiences have prepared me well for the future.
11. _____ I'm achieving the goals I set for myself.
12. _____ I've been pretty successful in life.

(modified from CR Snyder et al., 1991)

Interpreting The Future Scale

Identify your score for each subscale of this measure:

- A. _____ Goal-Oriented Approach (Items 1-4, higher means more you are goal-oriented)
- B. _____ Pathways (Items 5-8, higher means you access more pathways to achieve goals)
- C. _____ Agency (Items 9-12, higher means perceive yourself more able to achieve goals)

I plan to focus on (check the top 3 you wish to spend most energy on):

1. _____ Reviewing/Revising my specific goals for the next 2 weeks for my current class.
2. _____ Trying to further break my goals down into specific tasks and timelines.
3. _____ Creating a broader (semester or year-long) plan to clarify my priorities now that I know my students better.
4. _____ Identifying the specific obstacles I currently face in my classroom and prioritize them.
5. _____ Generating 3 viable, feasible, sustainable ways to address my biggest problem.
6. _____ Brainstorming 5 ways to solve 3 of my biggest problems.
7. _____ Reaching out to 2 others to find solutions to 2 of my current problems (can be different people for each problem).
8. _____ Spending at least 30 minutes/day for the next week on these plans.
9. _____ Reviewing my past experiences and how they give me ideas to be successful now.
10. _____ Using my positive talk (about thrive emotions) to give me energy toward achieving these goals.

I will move forward with these steps to enhance my students' progress and to enhance my thrive feelings/emotions about my work. I will discuss this with at least one colleague/trusted other to get their input as I proceed.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

My Mood Review

Please answer the following questions about how you experience thrive and survive emotions the week after you read this chapter.

1. Which thrive emotions do you feel most frequently?

2. What role do others have in making you feel these thrive emotions?

3. What actions do you take to bring these thrive emotions about in you?

4. What most interferes with your feeling thrive emotions?

5. How important is it to you to experience these thrive emotions?

6. Which survive emotions do you feel most frequently?

7. Do others usually evoke or bring about these survive emotions in you?

8. Is there a particular situation that brings about survive emotion(s) for you frequently?

9. How long do these survive emotion feelings usually last for you?

10. How much time do you experience survive emotions compared to thrive emotions? _____

SKILL GUIDELINES:

Managing Emotions

- 1) **Use your Coping-with-Stress techniques**, as they often help with emotions.
 - a. What **healthy alternative actions** can I take right now to at least **distract me** from this persisting painful state? Can I *work out, listen to or play music, do something nice for others* right now that may alter this painful state?
 - b. Is there some **reframe** of this situation, or reason I am in this situation that will make me a better person?
 - c. Can I **problem-solve** what is causing me to feel distressing emotions? Are there multiple ways to see this situation, and have I considered alternative explanations (vs. the first one that comes to mind) that may be more fixable?
 - d. Can I use my **social supports** to get a **reality check of helpful input from others**? Do others see what is causing my distress; can they help my situation?
- 2) **Learn from all these emotions** for what they can bring to your life. Thrive emotions = do more, and survive emotions = do something differently.
- 3) **Accept emotional states like a passing wave**: Painful feelings usually decrease quickly if you let them pass over you. What are they there to teach you about? Once you know, let it (the emotion) go (it'll go slowly, like a wave receding from the beach).
- 4) **Challenge your thoughts** surrounding painful emotions. Are you making unhelpful conclusions to justify/support/continue your feeling? What other explanations are there?
 - a. The **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Triangle (Thoughts – Feelings – Actions TFA)**: thoughts, feelings, or actions can sustain unpleasant moods or emotional states (and also alter them).
 - b. Am I **examining ALL the evidence** surrounding a negative thought or conclusion?

4. Emotional Well-Being: Mindfulness

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Distinguish mindfulness from mindlessness experiences
2. Identify 4 benefits on one's health from mindfulness activities

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to do mindful breathing
- B. How to do a complete body scan relaxation exercise

Take yourself to a quiet place, where you are comfortable and alone. Just take 3 slow, deep breaths right now, inhaling slowly as you count to 7, and then exhale slowly as you count to 7. Now just let your mind wander. Allow all thoughts to come and go as they please, striving to accept all thoughts, just letting them go where they will.

Allow this to go on for a minute. Thoughts come, and thoughts go. All are fine.

After a minute has passed, just notice how you feel right now.

- How does your body feel (tense, relaxed, tight, loose)?
- What types of thoughts did you most notice? Did you have all types of thoughts coming in from all over the place, or just a few?
- What “tone” remains with you now? Do you feel better or worse, more up or down, more alert or chill, etc.?

Mindfulness

Mindfulness refers to paying attention in a particular way: *on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally*.¹¹ (We’ve been doing a version of this at the beginning of each chapter, focusing more on your memories than the present moment.) Mindfulness also refers to doing daily activities the way we usually do them but with increased awareness of surroundings, feelings, and movements. Some examples of mindfulness are:

- Drinking a cup of coffee and focusing on the feeling of warmth, the taste, etc.
- Engaging in exercises with a focus on being in the moment, such as yoga
- Being more fully engaged with how emotions all feel in the moment through meditation

Sometimes it’s easier to consider mindfulness in contrast to mind/lessness. **Mindlessness** is the opposite of mindfulness; instead of focusing on the moment and increasing awareness, it can be a form of “numbing” oneself to the surrounding environment. Mindlessness can be an “escape” mechanism and allows an individual to ignore truths about one’s reality (e.g., distracting yourself by “doing other things” such as drinking coffee, turning on the radio, “going through the motions” during tasks (teaching next class, getting items at grocery store, etc.) to ignore how you otherwise actually feel in that moment; when you’re mindless, you often know you did a task (went to grocery store, etc.) but don’t recall being there (just see that picked up needed items), so there’s not much meaningful or important about that life experience that remains with you.

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We may seek to do tasks mindlessly so that we might better try to “*multi-task*” or separate our thoughts from the task at hand while we prepare for something we perceive more important. But this comes at the expense of our present moments being “forgotten.” Rather than enjoy the good in the present moment, we may try to tune it out in favor of allocating our mental energy to something else, from the past or the future. Here are some common examples of mindlessness:

- Watching bits of television while doing other tasks, snacking, multitasking
- Browsing the internet/social media
- Driving to work on “autopilot”
- *In school*, mindlessness often occurs through tasks or work that is non-engaging, or doing (then forgetting) an assignment/homework/class activity quickly

Why is Mindfulness Important?

Mindfulness is associated with multiple traits we all want to develop:

- *Happiness*: higher levels of life satisfaction, vitality, optimism, sense of autonomy, and self-esteem, ¹² (agreeableness). ¹³
- *Improved Mental Health*
 - Less likely to have depression, neuroses, rumination and anxiety ^{14 15}
 - Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) reduced self-reported levels of anxiety, depression, anger, rumination, psychological distress and perceived distress ^{16 17 18}
 - Less likely to experience negative automatic thoughts and better able to overcome negative thoughts ¹⁹
- *Attention and Executive Functioning Skills*: Associated with increased working memory, focus, cognitive flexibility; decreased rumination, stress, emotional reactivity ²⁰; Increased ability to perform tasks requiring focused attention ²¹
- *Physical Health*
 - Decreased blood pressure
 - Pain management
 - Weight loss
 - Substance abuse relapse prevention, improved cravings etc. ²²

Practicing Mindfulness

Mindfulness is more practical or experiential than something to know. That is, mindfulness is something to integrate into your daily life, focusing on the present, taking seemingly mundane/boring experiences and noticing details that enrich your life. By decentering or re-perceiving, you try to shift focus from the busy tasks of daily life and toward witnessing what is occurring around you; instead of ignoring all that’s happening around you (“it’s not dangerous, so ignore it”), you seek to learn and cherish the new, unexpected things that emerge amidst the seemingly mundane moments each day.

The essence of mindfulness is to notice. This noticing refers to what is occurring in you as you are struck by something as you pay close attention to your senses and feel emotional reactions as you allow these experiences to stretch you. You are also not using significant mental energy to ignore, purge, or avoid thoughts that come into your awareness; rather, you accept them, allow them to pass through your mind, and then refocus on what is at hand. Breathing and noticing your breath can help you work through this process. This can also occur by resuming focus on your taste of some food, or resuming looking at a particular object.

Mindfulness Activities

The following activities can be used to practice mindfulness to make this a more familiar part of your daily routine.

Mindfulness Activities

1: Mindful Eating-The Raisin/Craisin, M&M, Chocolate, Gum, Water Flavor Exercise

- 1) Select an object, such as a raisin (or other small food such as an M&M, cranberry, Skittle, grape, etc.)
- 2) Before eating, spend some time examining the raisin. Notice the shape, size, color, and texture of the raisin.
- 3) Close your eyes and touch the raisin. Appreciate the texture, shape of the raisin. What does it feel like?
- 4) Smell the raisin, avoiding judgments like good or bad smell. What does it smell like? Is it sweet? Is it sour?
- 5) Place the raisin in your mouth without chewing. Slowly bite down on the raisin. Notice the change in the texture and shape. What does it taste like? Does the taste/flavor change as you continue to (slowly) chew the raisin?

Review

- What was it like to pay such close attention to the raisin?
- Was this something you do on a regular basis already? Did you notice any difference between your normal eating habits?
- What do you think might happen if we practiced this type of focused attention during mealtimes?

2: Mindful Breathing

- Find a comfortable position as you sit in your chair. Place your feet firmly settled on the floor.
- Sit up straight – engage those core (abdominal) muscles gently so you're not slouching. Your shoulders should be relaxed as if your shoulder blades were sliding down into your back pockets.
- Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so. If you prefer, or if your mind is feeling dull or sleepy, simply gaze forward on something in front of you or on the ground.
- Start by allowing your attention to rest on the sensations of your feet, all the sensations in your feet as they are gently supported by the ground.
- Now shift your attention to any points of contact between your legs and the chair, noticing the pressure of the chair against your legs.
- Now shift your attention to any points of contact between the chair and your back and shoulders, simply noticing the pressure of the chair against your back and shoulders.
- Now shift your attention to any points of contact between the chair and your arms and hands, and your hands against your body, noticing the pressure against your arms and hands
- Now gently move your attention to your breathing, closing your mouth, and breathing in and out of your nose.
- Take a moment to notice the quality of your breathing – is it fast, or is it slow, is it short, or is it long, or somewhere in between, do you breathe with ease, or is it difficult today and now?
- Notice the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the tip of your nose throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale. Do this for 3 breaths.
- Now notice the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the back of your throat, throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale. Do this for 3 breaths.
- Now notice the physical sensation of the breath in your chest, the expansion of your chest during the inhale, and the relaxation of your chest during the exhale. Do not try to control the breath, just observe the sensations throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale. Do this for 3 breaths.
- Now notice the physical sensation of the breath in your abdomen, noticing the expansion of your abdomen during the inhale, and the relaxation of your abdomen during the exhale. Do this for 3 breaths.

- Choose the physical sensation that you are best able to notice, and simply allow your attention to rest on this place, noticing the sensation of the breath throughout the inhale, and throughout the exhale, noticing the natural pause between the exhale and the inhale.
- When your mind begins to wander to a thought, a memory, an emotion, or anything else, take a moment to notice that your mind has wandered, without judging this as “good” or “bad”, and gently guide it back to the physical sensation of the breath throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale.

Spend 2-3 minutes of quiet time as you practice breathing

Review

- What was that experience like for you?
- How did this breathing exercise feel?
- Did your mind quiet down?
- How hard was it to focus your mind on your breathing?
- What did you learn from the experience?
- How might we apply this breathing technique into our everyday?

This experience may have felt comfortable or, particularly at first, it may have felt uncomfortable. It's quite common to feel uncomfortable with new experiences. We get so used to being in control, our mind can start to interfere with the act of breathing (something that is normally handled unconsciously by the autonomic nervous system).

Mindfulness requires practice. Practice by pausing briefly and repeatedly throughout the day to shift your attention from whatever is going on to the act of taking a single, purposeful breath. Just this brief pause can help the “thinking” part of the brain align with the “emotional” part.

3. Mindful Pausing:

S: stop what you are doing

T: take several intentional, deep breaths, following the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the tip of your nose, the back of your throat, expanding the chest and expanding the abdomen during the inhale, and the relaxation of the abdomen and then the chest, the passing of the breath in the back of your throat and the tip of your nose throughout the exhale. Notice the natural pause between the exhale and the inhale

O: observe your thoughts and your emotions, observe the state of your mind – is your mind agitated, dull/heavy, distracted, focused or completely absorbed in what you are doing. Try not to judge these thoughts, emotions, or the state of your mind as “good” or “bad”

P: bring to mind your purpose at this moment (maybe it is to complete a task, or drive home, etc); rehearse the steps you need to perform to complete this task and thereby fulfill your purpose in this moment; now proceed

Try to use mindful pausing daily. It can sometimes be difficult to remember to use mindful pausing; to facilitate remembering to use this method, try linking it to a daily activity, such as entering/exiting home or work, or set an alarm on your smart phone, using a pleasant sound, to remind you to take a mindful pause during your day.

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction is a very useful tool for both relishing our experiences of daily life AND for keeping our mind away from wandering into worrying and feeling stressed. MBSR is a stress reduction method that one usually learns through an 8-week course. Here are the components of MBSR, and you can explore these components if you wish to gain some familiarity with MBSR. You can then perhaps better determine whether MBSR might benefit you and if you may want to take an MBSR course.

MBSR has 3 fundamental components:

- 1) Mindful Meditation
- 2) Body-Scanning: this involves lying on your back and focusing on body regions, starting with your toes and moving all the way up through your body to your head
- 3) Movement (simple yoga type poses)

MBSR relies on 3 underlying approaches to these activities:

- 1) *Intention*, or a personal vision, about what one is seeking in life, such as increased peace or understanding; this often changes over time
- 2) *Attention*, or a heightened awareness of all that is around you, particularly by focusing on the here and now, such that the usual methods of experiencing events (“that sound is not important—ignore it,” or trying to think about and shift between multiple topics) are suspended
- 3) *Attitude* of openness, compassion, acceptance, curiosity, non-striving, and acceptance while

Here is an example of a body scan exercise, which you can use to get a sense of what MBSR includes:

Body Scan Mindfulness Exercise

- 1) Make yourself comfortable sitting or lying down on a chair or couch where you will not be disturbed. Gently close your eyes. If you are feeling sleepy or dull in the mind, keep your eyes open, and direct your gaze downwards.
- 2) Just notice your breath and the sensations in the body for about 10 seconds. Attune to the physical sensations of pressure in your body. Each time you breathe out, allow yourself to sink a little deeper into the chair/ground.
- 3) Allow yourself to recognize and accept these sensations, without concerns about changing how your body feels right now.
- 4) Your mind may wander away from the breath and body awareness at times, as this is what your mind normally does. When you notice it, gently acknowledge it, noticing where the mind has gone off to, and then gently return your attention to the part of the body you intended to focus on.
- 5) Notice how your abdomen feels as you breathe in and out. Take a minute to feel the sensations as you breathe in and as you breathe out. When you are ready, go down to the feelings in your left thigh; notice any sensations in that region, and slowly proceed to noticing how your knee feels, then your lower left leg, then your ankle, then your left foot. Follow your sensations through your left foot and through each toe, including how the toes may feel touching each other.
- 6) When you are ready, inhale slowly, and allow the breath to enter your chest, and pass down through the abdomen, into the left leg, the left foot, and out to the toes of the left foot. As you exhale, feel the breath coming all the way back up from the foot, into the leg, up through the abdomen, chest, and out through the nose. Continue this for a few breaths, breathing down into the toes, and back out from the toes. Enjoy this

process as you may notice different sensations as you breathe slightly differently, or with successive breaths. Your only goal is to accept the sensations you feel as you breathe.

- 7) As you continue, focus on just your foot as you breathe in and out. Recognize and then let go of the sensations in your foot as you focus on your lower leg (calf). Continue this process of inhaling and exhaling as you attune to the sensations to one area, such as your foot or lower leg. Allow yourself about 15-30 seconds for each part, then let it go as you move back up the leg to your knee, your thigh and pelvic region. Breathe into that region as you inhale, and let go as you exhale.
- 8) As you become aware of tension in some areas, "breathe in" to that area—using this inhaling breath to bring awareness to the sensations, and, as you exhale, allow yourself to let go and release the sensation.
- 9) Continue to notice the physical sensations in each part of the rest of the body, now moving from the abdomen to the right leg and down to the toes on your right foot. Stay with each region for about 15-30 seconds so that you notice initial and changing sensations as you continue to breathe.
- 10) As you complete your legs, now shift to breathing in and noticing your sensations in your left arm, down through your hands and fingers. Take time to notice the sensations in your shoulder, your upper arm, elbow, lower arm, wrist, hand, and your fingers. Like before, as you inhale, breathe into that area, and as you exhale, let sensations go as you exhale. Do the same for your right arm, hands, fingers, etc.
- 11) Continue up through your neck, face, and head, noticing the sensations as you inhale to that area, and let go as you exhale.
- 12) After you have "scanned" the whole body in this way, spend a few minutes being aware of a sense of the body as a whole, and of the breath flowing freely into and out of the body.

This process often makes one feel relaxed and even sleepy, so it may be easier to do while sitting up, although you may also enjoy doing this while lying down on a couch or in a bed.

(Adapted from <https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/mindfulness-exercises-techniques-activities/>)

SKILL GUIDELINES:

Mindfulness Practices

Take Time to Breathe

Take In Deep Breaths, Imaging the Breaths going all through your body

Notice All Your Senses as you Breathe

How does your body feel? Do you feel warm or cool? Tingling or Tension?
Do you notice any smells, tastes, or sounds?

Allow all Types of Thoughts to Enter -- Let your Thoughts Flow Through You
(Like waves coming to the shore)

Acknowledge Sensations and Thoughts, Accept Them, And Let them Pass
Through

Scanning My Body

Get Comfortable

Focus on Breathing Slowly

Breathe deeply so that the breath goes all the way to your feet

Notice the Sensations in Each Body Part as you Inhale Several Breaths

Let the Sensations Go as you Exhale

How Does My Left Foot Feel? My Ankle? My Leg? My Joints?

My Other Leg?

My Pelvis? My Back?

My Fingers? My Hands? My Arms? My Shoulders?

My Chest? My Neck? My Head? My Face?

Notice how your Whole Body Feels as you Breathe Slow and Deep

5. Physical Well-Being: Sleep & Nutrition

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Identify 5 techniques to improve sleep
2. Describe 3 tactics to decrease insomnia
3. Identify 4 techniques to improve your nutrition

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. Create your Healthy Sleep Plan
- B. Create your Healthy Nutrition Plan

Imagine yourself going to sleep tonight. Think about what time you'll likely go to bed, and how the bed will feel when you get into it. How will the temperature be in the room? In the bed? Will there be any smells (candles, smells of the sheets, plants in the room, etc.)? How will you position your body? How will that feel? What types of thoughts usually go through your mind when you lie down to go to sleep?

Tonight, notice how it feels when you climb into bed. Notice what comes into your mind once you get situated in bed, comfortable, and not moving. Just let the thoughts tonight come and go as they will. Tomorrow morning try to write down 2 thoughts that stood out or that most stayed with you.

Mindful Eating Exercise:

For this exercise, choose a small meal or snack (a piece of fruit, a nutrition bar, nuts, etc) to practice mindful eating. Consider where you are and what you are doing when you are eating (at your desk versus outside or in a dining area, thinking about the day or completely absorbed in your meal, during a stressful state versus a relaxed state), and how this effects your eating behavior.

1. Start by observing the state of your body – any physical sensations you are having, such as rumbling in the abdomen, feeling energized or fatigued, satisfied or hungry. Just notice these sensations without judging them as “good” or “bad”.
2. Now take a moment to notice the state of your emotions – are you feeling stressed, are you calm, are you angry, sad, grateful, excited? Try not to judge these emotions as “good” or “bad”, and simply notice them.
3. Now take a moment to notice the state of your mind – are you agitated, heavy/dull, distracted, focused, or completely absorbed in the moment? Just notice the state of your mind, without judging it as “good” or “bad”.
4. Now shift your attention to the food you are about to eat, gaze with curiosity upon the visual sensations of the food, taking in the colors, textures and shapes as if seeing it for the first time.
5. 2. If possible hold it in your hand, close your eyes, and notice the texture and weight of the food.
6. Bring the food close enough to smell the aroma, noticing the sensations the aroma of the food elicits in your body and mind.
7. Now bring the food to your mouth, with full awareness of the movements of your arm, hand, fingers, chest, neck, head and mouth.
8. As you take the first bite of your food, notice the texture, taste, and sensations in your mouth, and how these change.



9. Begin to chew the food slowly, and as you do, noticing the movements necessary for chewing, noticing your jaw, teeth and tongue, noticing the texture and taste of the food as you chew.
10. When you are ready to swallow, notice the physical sensation of the food as it moves to the back of your throat, down your esophagus, and into your stomach. Notice any lingering flavor and sensations.

When you have finished eating your meal or snack, take a moment to again notice the physical sensations in your body, the state of your emotions and the state of your mind.

In this chapter, you will examine your sleep and eating patterns as you decide if you wish to alter any of your current sleeping or eating routines. Your sleep or eating may be going well at this time, but at different times throughout the school year you may have more trouble sleeping or notice that your eating habits are not as you would prefer, so this chapter will include strategies to help with both sleeping and healthy nutrition.

Sleep

First, consider your current sleep routine as you answer the following questions:

- 1) How many hours do you average sleeping each night? _____
- 2) How often do you nap during the week? _____ For how long? _____
- 3) Has this changed in the past year? _____
- 4) How long does it usually take you, on average, to fall asleep? _____
- 5) How often do you awaken during the night? _____ For how long? _____
- 6) How rested do you usually feel (1=not at all rested; 10=very rested)? _____
- 7) Do you read, do emails, watch TV/devices while in bed? _____
- 8) How do you prepare for bed to fall asleep easily? _____



Sleep in Adults

Work-related sleep disturbances and sickness in both men and women have increased over the last few decades.¹ Americans currently get an average of **6.8 hours a night** of sleep vs. 7.8 hours from the 1940s.²

Teachers have even lower sleep averages with <6 hours a night for 43% of teachers, and 50% miss work or make errors due to sleep deprivation; 25% of teachers believe their teaching skills are significantly diminished because of sleep deprivation.³

There are a number of reasons that teachers appear vulnerable to sleep-deprivation:

- Teaching is not a “fixed hours” position, so teachers must do significant work after hours at home, or plan/revise lesson plans the night before teaching any lesson.
- Teachers often participate in after-school or extracurricular activities (e.g., coaching, band, academic clubs, school plays, etc.) that extend their work hours for some seasons or times of the year.
- Teaching salaries may require individuals to have additional part-time jobs

The optimal amount of sleep for most adults is **7-8 hours**. There is a range of sleep hours, as some people notice they feel well rested at 6 hours and some feel best at closer to 9 hours. Research on sleep shows that those adults sleeping less than 6 hours and those sleeping more than 9 hours report more “sick days” than those sleeping within the 6-9 hours a night range.⁴

A number of practices are available for those who struggle to fall or remain asleep. Check those below that currently apply in your life.

Sleep Readiness:

- _____ Caffeine restriction: beginning in the afternoon, limit caffeine intake
- _____ Meals/drinks: have small meals 2+ hours before bedtime, and limit drinking of all beverages, particularly alcohol as bedtime approaches
- _____ Complete exercise 3 hours before you plan to go to sleep

Temperature:

- _____ The optimal bedroom temperature for most of us is between 60-67 degrees F, so cooling the room in preparation for sleep can help induce sleep
- _____ Wearing socks to bed or keeping something warm next to your feet/hands helps your body's core to cool faster
- _____ Warm baths or showers make your body temperature change more dramatically as you get out of the water and into your room, which makes it easier to fall asleep
- _____ More dramatically, some people (not everyone) report benefit from immersing their face in cold water right before bedtime, as this “resets” your body thermostat and lowers your blood pressure and heart rate)
- _____ Melatonin (non-habit-forming sleep aid); cools body and improves response to darkness

Light:

- _____ Adequate exposure to daylight during the day and no bluelight at night (fluorescent lights, LED, etc.) best prepares your brain for sleep;
- _____ If you need to use your computer or look at your phone within hours before going to sleep, you can go to your computer/phone settings and set for night (red or yellow light instead of blue)
- _____ Apps/Software (currently free) are available that allow you to change light settings on your devices:
 - _____ FLUX (for Mac: www.getflux.com)
 - _____ TWILIGHT (for Android)
- _____ Some people report benefit from wearing tinted glasses at night
- _____ Other screens should be turned off 1-2 hours before you plan to go to sleep, or you should adjust your screens for blue-light
- _____ Try not to have phones, computers, devices, etc. on or in your bed as they may trigger anti-sleep messages ("beeps," light, etc.)
- _____ Consider using candlelight for dinners or baths to diminish lighting that impedes sleep

Sound

- _____ Try classical or slow music at 60-80 beats per minute for 45 minutes before sleep
- _____ White noise or fans may provide ambient noise that diminishes your body's notice or response to small noises (and fans may enhance cooling)

Smell

- _____ Sniff lavender oil for several minutes about 30 minutes before going to sleep

Breathing

- _____ Blow bubbles as this relies on deeper breaths, which decreases stress
- _____ 4-5-6 breathing: inhale through nose as count to 4, then hold for 5 seconds, then exhale for 6 count, then repeat 3 additional times (this increases oxygen in your bloodstream, thereby releasing more carbon dioxide from your lungs, which lowers your heart rate).



Insomnia

The most common cause of insomnia is anxiety.⁵ In addition to the sleep hygiene practices described above, there are other things you can do if you are having trouble sleeping. Check any of these practices you will employ if you have or develop insomnia:

- _____ Sleep restriction and stimulus control (your bed should be your *stimulus*, or signal for falling sleep and not a stimulus for you to worry, think, plan, etc. Some people employ a “I’ll think about and rehearse my lesson plan while I’m in bed tonight,” which can turn your bed into a stimulus for “think time” instead of a stimulus to “go to sleep now”)
- _____ If you cannot sleep after 15 minutes, do an activity outside of your bed for 10 minutes (color, do puzzles, etc.)⁶
- _____ Stop trying to sleep where you are; move to a different room, try reading in a different spot, etc.
- _____ Picture yourself in a relaxing, calming place (beach, etc.) instead of trying to count sheep; a relaxing beach with waves coming in is more effective for most people.
- _____ Hide your clock so that you cannot see the time, since seeing (or hearing) increases worry.

Nutrition

Complete the “My Daily Food Preferences” sheet.

My Daily Food Preferences

Please complete the following as accurately as possible; this will allow you to target which food strategies may be most helpful for you. Please answer these for a typical week (not for the past week if it was a holiday week [e.g., Thanksgiving, Lent, Yom Kippur, etc.]).

1. Usual Number of **Meals** per day: _____
2. Usual Number of **Snacks** (different from meals) per day: _____
3. Usual Cups of **Coffee** (caffeinated) per day: _____
4. Usual Glasses of Water per day: _____
5. Usual Number of **Sodas (non-diet)** per day: _____
6. Usual Number of **Sodas (diet/sugar-free)** per day: _____
7. Usual Number Servings of **Fruit** per day: _____
8. Usual Number of Servings of **Vegetables** per day: _____
9. Usual Number of Servings of **Sweets** (cookies, cakes, bakery items, etc.) per day: _____
10. Usual Number of Servings of **Nuts** (almonds, peanuts, cashews, etc.) per day: _____
11. Usual Number of **Smoothies** I drink per day: _____
12. Usual Number of times I eat garden/vegetable **salads** per day: _____
13. Usual Number of **Protein Bars** I eat per day: _____
14. I usually eat _____ (number) meals **made at home** each day.
15. I usually eat out _____ (number) meals at **restaurants** each day.
16. I eat “**fast food**” _____ (number) times each day.
17. I **most often eat** at these fast food restaurants are (top 3 and **# meals/week**):
 Restaurant #1: _____
 Restaurant #2: _____
 Restaurant #3: _____

How often do I (circle the best answer):

- | | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| 18. Review/research what I'll buy before going | Never | Rarely | Often | Usually |
| 19. Read/examine the labels on products | Never | Rarely | Often | Usually |
| 20. Stick to my shopping list/or buy healthier products | Never | Rarely | Often | Usually |



Now, Calculate your own Body Mass Index.

What is your weight (lbs)? _____ What is your height (inches) ? _____
 (e.g., 140 lbs) Square your Height (e.g., 5ft 5in = 65in height X 65 = 4225)

Now Calculate Your weight _____(lbs), divided by (your height-squared),
 Then X 703 = _____ (your BMI) (e.g., 140lbs divided by 4225 = 0.033, now X 703 = 23)

A BMI of 18-25 is considered in the normal, healthy range. According the CDC, In the USA, approximately 2/3 of adults are *overweight* (*BMI* > 25). Approximately 1/3 of adults affected and 1/6 of children are *obese* (*BMI* > 30). Obesity is associated with increased disease risks including cardiovascular disease, stroke, heart attack, diabetes, depression/anxiety,⁷ and sudden death.

Now, let's examine why humans eat as they do.

The amount we eat impacts our physical and mental health, and also *what we eat* impacts our moods.

- High-sugar snacks prolong feelings of unpleasant mood (dysphoria)⁸
- Rodents fed high-fat/high-sugar diet show decreased levels of Brain-Derived Neurotropic Factor (BDNF), which is associated with higher levels of depression and anxiety⁹
- High sugar diets are associated with increased risk for depression and increased risk for common mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression¹⁰
- Consumption of **fruit** is associated with lower rates of anxiety, depression and emotional distress as compared to chocolate snacks¹¹

Why Do We Seem to Prefer Unhealthy Foods?

You shouldn't feel guilty for liking to eat unhealthy foods. It's important to know that humans have evolved to seek out high fat and sugar foods when food was not readily available like it is now. Our brains remain wired for survival more so than resistance. Multiple body mechanisms combat our sudden loss of food, such as when we attempt to diet: (1) dieters notice food more when it's absent/sparse and thus seek it more: (2) diets increase hormones to make us again feel hungry (or more hungry); and (3) when we try to lose weight, our bodies shift to storing calories as fat to retain the food we last ate, since there may not be more food coming to sustain us (T. Mann, Secrets from the Eating Lab, 2015).

Humans learned to prefer fatty foods because they provide more energy per unit, and this energy can be stored to provide the most energy for potentially longer intervals between meals. When humans don't have food readily available, which was the case up until the last century for most humans, they might only be able to eat once every day or two; eating fatty foods allows humans to survive longer with less access to regular meals or foods they might prefer. Now we have all types of food readily available all the time, yet our bodies have not adjusted to that change, so we're more vulnerable to overeating.

Processed carbohydrates (e.g., chips, cookies, soda, crackers, white rice) convert into sugar very quickly and increase insulin, which converts these calories to fat and stores them, so we're still hungry; so it's easy to eat much of them quickly (and much harder to get rid of these calories later). Eating this way over time both decreases our *rate of metabolism* (it takes longer to burn calories), and *increases our hunger*, leading to weight gain.

It's not as much the "quantity" of calories, so much as the "quality" of the calories. High fat (and high calorie) foods such as avocados, nuts, olive oil, fatty fish, and dark chocolate do not raise insulin levels, and actually make us feel full more quickly, and indeed decrease risks for cardiovascular disease by approximately 30% (D. Ludwig, 2016, Always Hungry).

So it helps to also eat more slowly. It takes approximately 20 minutes for the body to recognize “satiety” (fullness) after eating something, so right after eating something, one will not immediately feel full. So mindfulness activities where one notices feelings and sensations while eating can help slow down how fast we eat, and this mindfulness approach has been associated with fewer weight fluctuations over time.

Why does Fried Chicken Taste So Good?

Fried chicken is a food that appeals to multiple of our bodily “needs”: (1) the texture of the crispy outer breaded layer enhances the multisensory pleasure of chicken (the “crispiness” and “crackle” enhances our food experience (as does the “fizz” from carbonated beverages) (Spence C (2015), Eating with our ears: assessing the importance of the sounds of consumption on our perception and enjoyment of multisensory flavour experiences *Flavour* 4:3, <https://doi.org/10.1186/2044-7248-4-3>); in addition, this crispy characteristic has been advantageous for humans to recognize “safe” from spoiled “mushy” foods that are decomposing; (2) the salty taste helps us retain water and thus increase saliva which allows us more intense tasting; (3) the “dynamic contrast” in textures (crispy outside, soft inside) within the same food increases our pleasure (similar to Oreo cookies or crème brulee) (Witherly S (2007), Why Humans Like Junk Food), (4) frying the chicken in oil creates chains of glycerol and fatty acids to make triglycerides that our bodies naturally crave.

Pleasure from Eating

In addition to unhealthy foods being stored between meals more easily, we also are wired to crave certain types of foods or tastes because we enjoy them more. Dopamine (a brain chemical associated with pleasure) interacts with brain receptors to give feelings of enjoyment, so the brain associates eating certain foods with pleasure and seeks to eat more of them. Humans/animals will seek nutrients when they have a deficiency (e.g., iron, thiamine, etc.), but humans now rarely have such deficiencies (vs. sailors who would not have had access to fresh fruits or vegetables and were thus vulnerable to scurvy), so we seek foods more associated with pleasure. Dark chocolate contains antioxidants, zinc, magnesium, and sugar, so it contains the best of both (nutrients + pleasure), so we tend to prefer chocolate over other sweet foods.

Unfortunately, food manufacturers have encouraged this pleasure preference rather than helping us adjust to having food available. In a landmark study, rats were fed high fat and high sugar foods that triggered reward centers like those triggered by cocaine, and they sought to achieve this same pleasurable sensation from eating (more and more), even if they were shocked (punished) while eating. The study had 3 groups (eat all one wanted, eat a limited amount, or eat no sugar), and the group that could eat as often as they wanted became more obese as tolerance developed so that they needed more chocolate to get the same pleasure, while the other 2 groups would stop eating if they were shocked.¹²

Similarly, in another important study, rats could eat Oreo cookies, regular rat food, or receive cocaine or morphine. Researchers examined the *nucleus accumbens*, the brain’s pleasure center, and found that more neurons were activated in the brain’s pleasure center in animals that were conditioned to Oreos compared to animals that were conditioned to cocaine [or morphine].” Sugar was preferable to cocaine and morphine (and rat food).^{13 14 15}

So why don’t we “crave” fruits instead of candy bars?

Fruit naturally provides a number of important nutrients while being low in fat, sodium and calories. Although fruits contain some natural sugar, the *fiber content* in fruit slows digestion and thereby prevents a spike in blood sugar that occurs with other sugary foods such as candy.

Sweet foods release endorphins so our pains are reduced. When sad, 50% of us prefer chocolate, which melts at body temperature, and is pleasurable in taste and tactile senses as well (while it decreases our sensitivity to pain).

What about artificial sweeteners?

Unfortunately, eating sugar OR artificial sweeteners turns down your body’s awareness of feeling “full” (satiated), so humans instead crave more even though they may not truly be hungry. This is especially notable



for sweets. Multiple brain chemicals influence this, all driven by body's preference for high-fat, high-sugar foods to provide maximum energy and maximum body stores.

Artificial sweeteners also activate the same part of the brain (*nucleus accumbens*) as regular sweeteners, so even when using artificial sweeteners, you prefer to eat more sweet things, and your overall appetite increases when you eat artificial sweeteners. People who use artificial sweeteners tend not to lose weight, and indeed find that their appetites and weight increase.

Eating the Same Foods Every Day

About 1/3 of Brits eat the same lunch every day. As long as one gets in the important vitamins and nutrients, obtaining them from the same "meals" is healthy. Indeed, a number of people employ this practice for several reasons (Pinsker, 2019):

- 1) Ease: one can make a salad or sandwiches for several days at once
- 2) Cost: buying larger amounts of the same items is cheaper, AND if purchasing the same items, one may find preferred bargains/deals since shopping is more focused
- 3) Food-allergies: for those with sensitive stomachs, a more consistent, predictable diet may decrease symptoms
- 4) Decreased Stress: not having to worry about getting all the ingredients, making the meal correctly, etc., can diminish stress
- 5) Cognitive Sparing: not having to think about what to buy/make for lunch, frees up one to concentrate on other topics

Eating the same, or similar meals, may be helpful. Often, people doing this describe having slight variations (using whatever fruits or vegetables are in season to slightly alter their salad or their smoothie, etc.), or rotating various salad dressings, etc.). This approach can also be used for other meals throughout the day (e.g., making a larger "batch" of smoothies for breakfast, using similar type granola or protein bars for snacks, etc.).

Food Intolerance

When we eat foods that our body is intolerant of and cannot digest easily (e.g., wheat or milk), this leads to cravings for that type of food because you are not digesting (taking in) the food as needed. This can be particularly notable for pizza and pasta.

Stress-Related Appetite

Stress-release cortisol, the primary functions of which are to increase blood sugar for energy by the body's cells, suppress the immune system and aid in fat, protein and carbohydrate metabolism, also increases hunger by blocking the release of other hormones (leptin and insulin) that trigger feeling full.

The fight-flight-freeze system is turned on when you are stressed, so CRF (Corticotropin Releasing Factor) is released from the hypothalamus, triggering the production of ACTH (Adrenal Corticotrophic Hormone). ACTH makes and releases cortisol from your adrenal glands, and similar to when you are under any other stress, your body prefers sugars for quick bursts of energy to your brain and will seek sweets rather than healthier alternatives. This also increases inflammation in your gastrointestinal tract.

Dieting

The reality show *The Biggest Loser*, which had contestants compete to see who could lose the most weight over a 30 week interval, with intense dieting approaches and fitness training, yielded 20+ lbs weight loss weekly, and an average weight loss of 127 lbs. in contestants. However, when these contestants were followed after the show, 13 of the 14 contestants followed, gained most of the weight back (Hall et al., 2016). Most notably, the rapid starvation approach employed led to a significant change in contestants' resting metabolism rate, burning up to 700 calories less per day, and this change in metabolism rate persisted for years. So starvation approaches do not work for sustained weight loss.

The **National Weight Control Registry** now has over 10,000 participants who have lost 30+ lbs and kept it off for over 1 year. The primary characteristics of these participants:

- 98% **modified their diet**; 55% used some specific type of diet or change, and many tried several to find the best one for them
- 94% **increased exercise**, mostly *walking* (so indeed it is worthwhile to aim for 7000 or more steps every day)
- They ate a legitimate **breakfast every day**
- **Less than 10 hrs of TV watching** per week
- **Motivation** for weight loss was not a weight “number” but instead to *live longer to see grandchildren, loved ones*, etc.



Managing Appetites Through Healthy Nutritional Practices

Below are nutritional practices for you to consider to enhance your physical well-being.

Eating Better

Consider **decreasing sweetened drinks** (with real or artificial sweeteners) by using regular water or waters without artificial sweeteners. Even diet drinks rely on sweeteners, which stimulate sweet centers of the brain so that you may still seek/crave more after drinking these.

Vegetables first. Before and during meals, serve/eat vegetables first, and **subsequently** eat/serve proteins, breads, sweets, etc.

Make smoothies. This will likely allow you to create drinks that have flavors desirable to you, as well as fruits, vegetables, and other nutrients tailored to your nutritional needs. Several simple practices can make your smoothies more enjoyable:

- *Kale or Spinach* are good to include
- *Pineapple or Oranges/Orange Juice* good, and can be frozen so you don't have to add water (and fruits help mask bitter/dull tastes)
- Yogurt can be good "dairy" to add (Greek yogurt preferred)
- Blueberries and other fruits for antioxidants

Comfort Foods can be difficult to avoid. Several practices may improve your snacking practices:

- Substitute fruit snacks in place of candy/cake/artificial sugars
- Simply place the unhealthy (candy, chocolate, cookies, etc.) snacks 2 or more feet away from you; having to get up and go obtain food decreases one's intake of such snacks
- Replace chips/"junk foods" with nuts, fruits, veggie sticks, or other healthier alternatives
- 1 piece of dark chocolate for cocoa phenols (instead of milk chocolate) or add cacao (to replace cocoa phenols) as a preferred type of chocolate to enhance mood and better meet these cravings
- Smell coffee beans instead of chocolate to activate same pleasure centers of brain

Read the Labels and shift food choices for next 3 major grocery-shopping visits; you may try relevant "apps" to monitor the nutritional value of products

- _____ Lose It (can scan barcodes to keep track of caloric intake)
- _____ Spark People (keep track of 3 million food items calories + exercise info)
- _____ My Fitness Pal (keep track of 5 million food items calories including restaurant items)
- _____ Fitbit (wearable activity tracker)
- _____ Pact (pay if fail to make goals)
- _____ Cron-O-Meter (tracks foods and also vitamins/nutrients)
- _____ Fooducate (scan barcodes at grocery to find sugar/fat, high fructose corn content, and suggests alternatives when scan food)
- _____ HealthyOut (restaurant recommendations for eating out)

(Adapted from <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/10-best-weight-loss-apps#section11>)

Eat Less

While this may be difficult, several strategies can be helpful:

- Eating small meals, with small portions, multiple times per day 5 times > 3 times a day
- Tracking your calorie intake each day
- Replace food with healthier alternative activities (exercise, listening to music, doing games) at key times

Manage Stress Eating with Alternatives

Use fruits/veggies as reinforcers/rewards for accomplishing other tasks (so consider sampling fruits such as blueberries, raspberries, mango, kiwi, etc., that you may not commonly have).



My Healthy Lifestyle Preferences Plan: Sleep & Nutrition

For each section, circle the healthy practices which most appeal to you and you are willing to implement in your daily life. Pick 3 specific practices (from 1 or more categories) that you find appealing and “good fits” for you such that you believe you can implement now and sustain for the next 3 months.

Sleep

Better Sleep Hours

1. Regular Sleep Time for ____ Hours/Night
2. Short Naps (20-30min) added in during week

Better Sleep Routine

3. Cool my room down to 60-67 degrees (F)
4. Sounds: listen to relaxing music 30+ min before bedtime and/or white noise for sleep
5. Turn off electronics 1 hr before bedtime
6. Use an app or setting on your computer/phone to decrease bluelight
7. Read before bed
8. Warm Bath/Shower before bed
9. Use lavender or other oils to provide positive smells for nighttime

Nutrition

Eat Better

10. Eat Breakfast (and a healthy one: omelet instead of bagels/pastries)
11. Omega 3 (fish/flaxseed oil) and Omega-6 (safflower, soybean, corn oils)
12. Replace sweeteners (real or artificial) with regular water
13. Substitute fruit snacks (berries, bananas, apples) in place of candy/cake/artificial sugars
14. Replace chips/“junk foods” with nuts (almonds), avocado, popcorn, yogurt
15. Read the Labels and shift food choices for next 3 major grocery shopping visits
16. Attempt smoothies once/day to get fruits, kale, spinach, etc., regularly into diet
17. Attempt protein bars to replace one meal/large snack per day
18. During meals, eat protein/vegetables *before* carbs such as bread
19. Use small amounts of dark chocolate/cacao powder instead of regular/milk chocolate

Eat Less

20. Think before you snack (why am I eating now? TV “triggers” appetite, as do smells, sights)
21. Replace eating with healthier alternative activities at key times (less sedentary)
22. Eat slower (talk with others while eat, write/journal, etc.)

SKILL GUIDELINES:

Sleep & Nutrition

Review how various options below impact your sleep and eating practices.

Sleep

Better Sleep Hours (use the average from at least 1 week)

- How many sleep hours am I getting each night _____
- How often am I using naps? _____ Naps for _____ hours

Better Sleep Routine

- _____ Cool my room down to 60-67 degrees (F)
- _____ Listen to relaxing music 30+ minutes before bedtime
- _____ Turn off electronics 1 hour before bedtime
- _____ Use an app or setting on my computer/phone to decrease blue light
- _____ Read before bed
- _____ Warm Bath/Shower before bed
- _____ Use lavender or oils to provide scents for sleep

Nutrition

Eat Better

- _____ Eat Breakfast (and a healthy one: omelet instead of bagels/pastries)
- _____ Omega 3 (fish/flaxseed oil) and Omega-6 (safflower, soybean, corn oils)
- _____ Replace sweeteners (real or artificial) with regular water
- _____ Substitute fruit snacks (berries, bananas, apples) in place of candy/cake/artificial sugars
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- _____ Attempt protein bars to replace one meal/large snack per day
- _____ During meals, eat protein/vegetables *before* carbs such as bread
- _____ Use small amounts of dark chocolate/cacao powder instead of regular/milk chocolate

**Eat Less**

- _____ Think before you snack (why am I eating now? TV “triggers” appetite, as do smells, sights)
- _____ Replace eating with healthier alternative activities at key times (less sedentary)
- _____ Eat slower (talk with others while eat, write/journal, etc.)

6. Physical Well-Being: Physical Activity and Music

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Describe 3 impacts of sedentary behaviors on physical health
2. Describe 3 strategies for getting in a healthy number of steps each day
3. Identify 4 healthy stretching poses to improve flexibility
4. Describe 4 healthy impacts of music on well-being

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to create a personalized daily activity plan
- B. How to integrate music into your daily routine to enhance functioning

Think about music you've recently heard that you like. Think about the beat, how fast it was, how you feel (calm, like dancing, etc.) when you hear it. Now imagine listening to that music while you do a desired physical activity; it could be while you do exercise such as jogging, walking, Zumba, or something calmer, like while you stretch, do yoga poses, or even play along (air guitar or real instrument) while you listen.

- How do you feel?
- How does the music amplify the experience?
- How is the experience different from how you ordinarily do this physical activity?

In this chapter, you will examine your activity and music (listening) patterns as you decide if you wish to alter any of your current routines. At different times throughout the year you may see benefits in changing your activity routine (certain seasons better favor certain activities), and you may also detect benefits to using or changing your daily music diet, so this chapter will include strategies to help with both activity and music routines.

Please complete the following survey of your physical activities.



My Weekly Activity Preferences

Please complete the following as accurately as possible; this will allow you to target which activity strategies may be most helpful for you. Please answer these for a typical week (not for the past week if it was a holiday week [e.g., Thanksgiving, Lent, Yom Kippur, etc.]).

1. How many steps I walk/take per day: _____ Estimate Steps for the week: _____
2. How many minutes of Comfortable Exercise (walking, yoga, etc.) per week: _____
3. How many minutes of vigorous Exercise (running, heart rate up) per week: _____
4. How many minutes do you sit each day: _____ Estimate minutes for the week: _____

Rank the following activities (circle the best answer), using the following scale

(0=Never tried; 1=Tried, don't like or do now; 2=Do occasionally (less than once per month);
3=Do several times/month; 4=Do 2+ times per week)

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Walking regularly (beyond to and from the car) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Yoga | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Dancing | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Individual Sport (Tennis, Swimming, etc.) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| What Sport(s): _____ | | | | | |
| 9. Team Sport (Basketball, Soccer, etc.) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| What Sport(s): _____ | | | | | |
| 10. Jogging/Running | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Strenuous Weight-Lifting | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Physical Activity

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), only 45 percent of Americans get adequate physical activity. It turns out that what is important is not doing vigorous exercise frequently, but instead simply moving about and being “non-sedentary.” So frequent movements (every hour when possible) to establish a non-sedentary lifestyle becomes the target.

James Levine coined the phrase *Sitting is the new Smoking* after a large National Institutes of Health study revealed that sitting 13+ hours a day doubled the risk of death, that those who sat for 90 minute intervals also had twice the risk as those who did not. Those who sat < 30 minutes during the day had a 55% lower risk for death. Mental health benefits of exercise and movement are also becoming clearer, as consistent exercise increases remission from serious illnesses,¹⁶ is associated with a lower risk of suicide,¹⁷ and physical exercise remains the most commonly used self-care strategy to increase enjoyable activities and relaxation techniques.¹⁸

Walking and steps (~2500 steps = 1 mile) can be an important part of one’s daily routine, regardless of your current fitness level. It is now easy to measure so that you can challenge yourself to increase in small amounts. Guidelines for the “number of steps” you should daily try to get in vary. To meet the Center for Disease Control recommendation, you would need to walk about 7,000 to 8,000 steps a day (<http://www.livescience.com/43956-walking-10000-steps-healthy.html>). The Mayo Clinic recommends that people using pedometers first set short-term goals, such as taking an extra 1,000 steps daily for one week, and then build up to a long-term goal (http://med.stanford.edu/news_releases/2007/november/pedometer.html).

How to Walk

Several strategies are available to enhance your walking routine:

- While making phone calls or listening to music (by using a headset), although be aware of others near you (who may be overhearing your half of a conversation [which is particularly annoying for others])
- Around your building (inside) before school starts, making visits to others daily
- When catching up on your day with others (which people might normally do during dinner)
- Walking with a friend, neighbor, or pet

An Effective Exercise plan for most Adults

Ideally, adults should strive for 30 minutes of exercise at least four times per week. Cross-training to use different muscle groups by doing different activities (or sports) and doing activities that work different groups of muscles in different ways improves physical health and decreases risks for injuries (by straining particular muscle groups with repetitive activities).

Consider attempting some simple yoga stretches that can be done easily.

1. Elephant: stand up, let your arms be your trunk and hang your arms down as far as you can go
2. Ostrich: while standing, raise one leg up and place your sole above the knee of your other leg
3. Cheetah: Cat pose and roll head with chin to chest
4. Wildebeest: warrior 1 pose

Now consider options to enhance your physical activity routine.



My Healthy Lifestyles Plan: Physical Activity

Consider which activities below might best “fit” for your routine, and identify 3 strategies below which you believe you can implement and “test” for addition to your routine.

Low Intensity

- 1) Steps (stairs, walking, biking with a step monitor) (____ hours a day: M T W Th F S Sun)
- 2) Walking throughout day (attempting 7000+ steps/day)
- 3) Monitor movement/exercise with pedometer or phone app, etc.
- 4) Identify walking buddy (family member/pet, etc.) to walk with regularly

Higher Intensity

- 5) “Reps” (crunches, chin-ups, squats, burpees); do 20 seconds, then break 10 secs (8 reps)
- 6) T-25, or other lower impact, dense calisthenics) (____ hours a day: M T W Th F S Sun)
- 7) Yoga (____ hours a day: M T W Th F S Sun)
- 8) Dance ____ hrs/week

Join an Exercise Activity

- 9) Join a Gym/Exercise Club and participate ____ hours a day: M T W Th F S Sun)
- 10) Join a “team” for exercise activities and meet ____ hours a week
- 11) Take a class to learn/play a sport/exercise activity (tennis, swimming, spinning, etc.)

Music

First, let's explore your musical preferences.

1) What songs make you feel calm when listening to them?

2) What songs make you feel angry or agitated?

3) What songs make you want to move (dance, get activated?)

4) What songs make you feel deeply (sadness, joy)?

5) Do you listen mostly to the music or more to the lyrics?

6) How do the lyrics affect you?



7) Do you sing, hum or whistle tunes? Certain ones over and over?

8) Do you play an instrument? (which ones?)

9) If you could be in band, which one would it be?

10) How do you learn about new music?

11) Do you listen to playlists? (what types of songs do use, in what situations?)

Purposes of Music

Music exerts a powerful influence on your mood states. The three main reasons we listen to music include **self-awareness, social relatedness and arousal and mood regulation**.¹⁹ Music increases **pleasure** for those who listen.^{20 21} Music is a means of **social/emotional communication**²² and is a factor contributing to social cohesion as in everything from war songs/national anthems to lullabies, etc.²³ Music enhances our positive moods, and makes us more hopeful after failures.²⁴ Music even makes medical procedures easier.^{25 26}

Music has several notable impacts on mood:

1. Music can quickly alter mood; within a few seconds of hearing a song, your mood can drastically shift, or you may have an immediate reaction.²⁷
2. Melodies impact your emotions (whether positive or negative) more than lyrics. Indeed, lyrics usually detract from the happy/positive emotions induced by melodies.²⁸
3. Sad music appeals to us because it releases endorphins (decreasing pain) and also induces prolactin (increasing gratification and relaxation).²⁹
4. Listening to sad music in a group setting is associated with feelings of depression and increased rumination; listening to positive/inspiring music is associated with positive interactions/feelings.³⁰

Now, consider how music may be used to enhance your daily routine. Please complete the worksheet on the next page to identify types of music and situations where music can be most helpful.



My Healthy Lifestyles Plan: Music

Consider which activities below might best fit for your routine, and identify 3 strategies below which you believe you can implement and “test” for addition to your routine.

Add Music to My Day

_____ Listen to new/different music _____ hours a week

_____ Inquire of Others about music/Join music club (to receive music):

Others to Ask: _____

Refine Music for My Day

_____ Create MY Playlist to enhance my moods and do it _____ hours a week

Songs to Consider: _____

_____ Classical/Jazz/Smooth in gaps (morning, commutes, evening rituals): _____ + _____ hours a day

_____ Connect Music to Activities: to rev up or calm down to fit
my daily routine

Play an Instrument

_____ Instruments to Consider Playing (or software/midi for composing): _____

_____ Practice a preferred instrument _____ hrs/wk

SKILL GUIDELINES:

My Healthy Lifestyle Preferences Plan: Activity & Music

For each section, check the healthy practices which most appeal to you and that you are willing to implement in your daily life. Pick 3 specific practices (from 1 or more categories) that you find appealing and good fits for you such that you believe you can implement now and sustain for the next 3 months.

Exercise

Low Intensity

- _____ Do stairs, walking, biking with steps monitors) (____ hrs/____ days
- _____ Walk a lot (attempting 7000+ steps/day); during meetings, use stairs, "walk" hourly
- _____ Monitor movement/exercise with pedometer or phone app, etc.
- _____ Identify walking buddy (family member/pet, etc.) to regularly walk with

Higher Intensity

- _____ "Reps" (crunches, chin-ups, squats, burpees); do 20 seconds, then break 10 secs (8 reps)
- _____ T-25, or other low impact, dense calisthenics) (____ hrs/days: M T W Th F S Sun)
- _____ Yoga (____ hrs/days: M T W Th F S Sun)
- _____ Dance _____ hrs/week

Join an Exercise Activity

- _____ Join a Gym/Exercise Club and participate _____ hrs/day: M T W Th F S Sun)
- _____ Join a "team" for exercise activities and meet _____ hrs/week
- _____ Take a class to learn/play a sport/exercise activity (tennis, swimming, spinning, etc.)

Music

Add Music to My Day

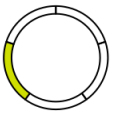
- _____ Listen to new/different music _____ hrs/week
- _____ Inquire of Others about music/Join music club (to receive music)

Refine Music for My Day

- _____ Create/Refine/Update MY Playlist to enhance my moods and do it _____ hrs/week
- _____ Classical/Jazz/Smooth in gaps (morning, commutes, evening rituals): _____ hrs/day
- _____ Couple Music to Activities to rev up or calm down to fit my routine

Play/Practice Music

- _____ Play or practice an instrument (or compose on a keyboard)
- _____ Practice an instrument _____ hrs/week



7. Social Well-Being: Relationships

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Describe 5 positive effects of social relationships on your well-being
2. Identify 3 desirable traits of friendships
3. Describe 4 types of humor

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to avoid lying
- B. How to respond to gossip
- C. How to write a gratefulness letter

In this chapter, you will examine your friend relationships, what traits matter to you, and how to engage with others effectively to sustain positive relationships.

Recall your best friend from childhood. What memories and thoughts come to mind as you think of this friend? (Let all memories come through; some may linger, some may pass through quickly. Just do this for at least one minute.

After 1 minute of just letting thoughts flow through, write down 3 prominent thoughts

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____

Notice how your body feels. Did you notice any smells, particular pictures as you thought of your friend? Did you feel your body getting more excited, your breathing going faster, or did you have more calm, serene sensations?

Consider what attributes/variables/traits turned out to be most important to you from this friendship. Not only does this provide clarity about what traits of others most matter to you, but also this may increase your awareness of what friendship traits you too want to be mindful that you want to develop in yourself.

Compassion Meditation:

1. Take a moment to find a comfortable seated position, and gently guide your awareness to your breathing.
2. With your mouth closed, breathing only through your nose, follow the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the tip of your nose throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths.
3. Notice the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
4. Now follow the physical sensation of the breath as it passes the back of your throat throughout the inhale and throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths.

5. Again, notice the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
6. Now follow the physical sensation of the expansion of your chest throughout the inhale, and the relaxation of your chest throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths, continuing to simply notice the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
7. Finally, follow the physical sensation of the expansion of your abdomen throughout the inhale and the relaxation of your abdomen throughout the exhale for at least 3 breaths, noticing the natural pause in between the exhale and the inhale.
8. When your mind starts to wander, gently guide it back to the feeling of your breath, with an attitude of amusement, as if to smile at your mind for it's tendency to wander.
9. Focus on the physical sensation of the breath that you find the most pleasant, the feeling that is most noticeable to you.
10. Now bring to mind someone in your life who you care for deeply, and with whom you have an open, simple relationship, without any conflicts.
11. Picture this person, as if they are sitting/standing in front of you. Notice the expression in their eyes, and their face. Perhaps there is smell you recognize, or the sound of their voice.
12. Hold this image lightly, and if your mind starts to wander, gently guide it back to the physical sensation of your breath, and bring this image to mind again.
13. With this person in mind, say to them, in your mind "May you be filled with love and kindness...may you be free from suffering...may you know peace and joy.."
14. Notice any emotions that may arise, do not judge these emotions as "good" or "bad". And repeat again "May you be filled with love and kindness...may you be free from suffering...may you know peace and joy..."
15. Again, notice your emotions, and if your mind has started to wander, gently guide it back to your breathing, and back to the image of this person you care for deeply.
16. And repeat once more: "May you be filled with love and kindness...may you be free from suffering...may you know peace and joy..."
17. Now allow this image to fade away.
18. Continue to hold the feeling of compassion lightly, like cotton in your hands.
19. Notice where you hold that feeling in your body. Eventually, it may start to fade, and this is okay.
20. When it does, or when you are ready, shift your focus back to the physical sensation of your breath, throughout the inhale, and the throughout the exhale, noticing the natural pausing in between the inhale and the exhale, for 3 more breaths.
21. Open your eyes.

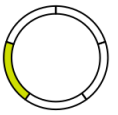
To cultivate compassion, practice this meditation daily. Gradually add to this meditation in the following order:

1. Envision someone you care for deeply, with whom you have an open relationship, without conflicts
2. Envision someone you care for deeply, with whom you have a relationship that contains some conflict
3. Envision someone you find difficult to care for, with who you have conflict
4. Direct the compassionate statements towards yourself.

The Importance of Social Relationships

Significant benefits occur from having strong social connections and relationships:

- You tend to live 22% longer ⁵⁶
- Exercise done with friends results in greater effort and endurance on your part
- Harder obstacles can be taken on



- Stress decreases when you feel lonely, your blood cortisol level - measure of your stress level - goes up within next day ⁵⁷
- Illnesses are shorter, and you're less likely to get sick ⁵⁸
- Influence to others; Good feelings spread from you to your friends, then to your friends' friends, and then their friends

Please complete **My Friendship Profile** below to identify how you engage with friends.

My Friendship Profile (MFP)

Please read each item below and think about how you react to situations. Using the following rating scale, **circle** to what extent below.

0=Very Rarely	1=Somewhat	2=Occasionally	3=Almost always
1. Follow through and do what I said I would do.	0	1	2 3
2. Do not provide details to my best friends if it would make me look bad.	0	1	2 3
3. Defend my friends even they may be wrong.	0	1	2 3
4. Exaggerate events to impress others (those at event might dispute my story).	0	1	2 3
5. Make myself available to friends even when it's inconvenient.	0	1	2 3
6. Go along with gossip or criticism of others rather than create conflict.	0	1	2 3
7. Not share a friend's secrets with anyone else.	0	1	2 3
8. Justify my acts with a different, better story, after an event.	0	1	2 3
9. Share embarrassing information about my mistakes/failures.	0	1	2 3
10. Lose friends by being too honest.	0	1	2 3
11. Accept/get over/forgive others when they disappoint me.	0	1	2 3
12. Get bored when my friends talk for more than a few minutes.	0	1	2 3
13. Give my friends money/items and don't expect repayment.	0	1	2 3
14. Criticize my friends' bad decisions or choices.	0	1	2 3
15. Believe I can provide the right kind of help my friends seek.	0	1	2 3
16. Sit with the pain my friends experience more than provide advice.	0	1	2 3
17. Look forward to doing different, strange, familiar things with friends.	0	1	2 3
18. Fear I'll worsen things if I say what I think about a friend's situation.	0	1	2 3
19. Laugh at my friends' comments and/or make them laugh.	0	1	2 3
20. Find that my friends seem to seek others instead of me to have fun.	0	1	2 3
21. Drag my "cautious" friends onto the dance floor.	0	1	2 3
22. Leave the planning of friend events to others.	0	1	2 3

Scoring the MFP:

- 1) Add up the scores for items 1, 3, 5, 7, 9: _____ (A)
- 2) Add up the scores for items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10: _____ (B)
- 3) Subtract B from A: _____ (**Integrity Score**)
- 4) Add up the scores for items 11, 13, 15: _____ (C)
- 5) Add up the scores for items 12, 14, 16: _____ (D)
- 6) Subtract D from C: _____ (**Caring Score**)
- 7) Add up the scores for items 17, 19, 21: _____ (E)
- 8) Add up the scores for items 18, 20, 22: _____ (F)
- 9) Subtract F from E: _____ (**Congenial Score**)

There is no preferred or desirable profile, but rather these items show your preferences and practices.

Review the odd-numbered items, as these show current strengths and practices toward *Integrity, Caring, and Congeniality*. These show areas to continue to develop and strengthen.

The even-numbered items illuminate traits that usually *impede* sustaining positive friendships. These may provide targets for intervention as you take steps to enhance your friendships.

Integrity

One of the components of Integrity that comes up frequently is loyalty and trustworthiness, and sometimes when those traits don't seem present, such as when people lie or gossip. Typically, 1 in 5 daily social interactions involve someone lying,⁵⁹ and we're lied to usually about 20-110 times per day.

People usually lie to:

- Make themselves look better or to have a stronger position ("yes, I have much experience using Excel spreadsheets");
- Avoid conflicts with others ("oops, I forgot to bring you what I said I would"), or to avoid potential trouble ("no I wasn't there when _____ happened").
- Believe things about ourselves that others don't really see (e.g., "that person didn't want to have coffee with me because it didn't fit their schedule" instead of "they don't seem to like being around me.")
- Get something that we don't otherwise know how to obtain ("I want that person to like me, but she's currently showing little interest, so I need to appear more important").

To avoid lying in everyday life (and increase your integrity), several techniques may be useful:

- 1) Use a *Competing Response* rather than lie; talk about neutral topics (weather, sports)
- 2) Practice telling about your own (real) vulnerabilities or weaknesses; most people actually respond well to others being vulnerable and saying, "yes, I'm nervous about this interview coming up, this assignment," etc.



- 3) *Truth Practice* with strangers; practicing telling the actual truth about your job, school success, etc., with others, such as strangers, where the stakes are low (the stranger or friend can't fire you or may not care much about your situation), so you'll have less fear of losing this relationship. You'll also be better able to understand how others respond to true comments about you.
- 4) Face the consequences of reality and setbacks/failures; acknowledge that, "I didn't get that job because of something I did---what are the most likely things?," or "I messed up and lost that relationship because I did _____." Practice telling your story or narrative of this event. Embracing our failures (*cherish the defect*) helps us to make positive changes and learn from our experiences. It may be helpful to remember that very few of us marry our 7th grade crush or even our high school or college sweethearts, so these chapters of our lives can be positive rather than failures if we recall the good aspects, what we learned, and then move forward, benefitting from what we learned into the next chapters of our lives.

EXAMPLE: Instead of "yeah, we broke up—she was such a whiner," a more accurate and useful narrative of that event may be "Yeah, we had some great times, she turned me onto techno music, and Cuban food—but we also realized we had different aspirations for careers and where to live, so I'll always be grateful she crossed my path, even for those 2 months, in this life."

Why Do People Gossip?

Gossiping is common, even though it's often particularly hurtful to those being gossiped about. There are several reasons that people may gossip:

- **Safety:** we often talk about others who are different as we get a reality check from others on how they see that person as well. Is that person really safe to include in our group?
- **My Social Role(s):** where will a new person fit and will they alter our current social hierarchy? Will this person affect the current balance of power in our group? Will I remain as important or liked as I am right now, or will this new person become more important than me?
- **Distractive Bonding:** we often talk badly about others as we "join" with others in our collective scapegoating of someone else. We both "share" our common interest in identifying problems in others, and we hope to distract others so they won't notice our flaws as we amplify the failings of others. So instead of talking about our own growth, we emphasize how bad others are so that our failings are less likely to be noticed.

Dealing with Gossip

Several tactics can help to reduce gossiping:

- 1) **Change the subject** (instead of talking about the gossip or other person, simply launch into another topic [no explanation needed])
- 2) **Wonder about the target's perspective** (or how they would respond to comments being made; e.g., "Hmmm...I think _____ would say he does that because _____.")
- 3) **Smile and shut it down** ("I like (person being gossiped about) so this is putting me in a hard place."). While smiling may seem inauthentic, smiling may show that the existing social relationships are still stable enough to allow a conversation about the person being gossiped about (vs. the group making disparaging comments but taking them "underground" by gossiping about the person when you're not present).

Caring

Others perceive caring in multiple ways that also sustain relationships:⁶⁰

- **Mirroring:** when we resonate with the other person, our facial expressions may look similar (e.g., both people are smiling, laughing, or sad, etc.), and/or we may physically adopt a similar posture to the other person (e.g., leaning forward or back like they do, etc.).
- **Language:** using similar words or remembering and using phrases of the other person shows interest and integrating of the other person into your life practices.

- **Same gestures:** we may find that we make similar gestures, both verbally and nonverbally (even gesticulations); this usually happens without our noticing, but is a good signal that people are connecting with each other.

Congenial

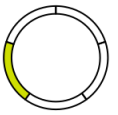
There are several ways to be congenial:

- **Self-Confidence:** Can you navigate the world and bumps in the road?
- **Sense of Humor:** Can you recognize life's absurdities and keep on going?
- **Fun:** Can you enjoy or enhance this day/event circumstance?

When people do activities together, they will accept greater challenges and push themselves more than when they are alone or with non-friends.⁶¹

Humor

Humor remains both an effective way to contend with stress and a way to signal liking and camaraderie with others. However, humor can also be offputting, appear insensitive to others, or even offend others. Complete the My Humor Style to help clarify the types of humor most appealing to you. This measure will help you discern what types you prefer, but also clarify the impacts and effectiveness of various types of humor have in different settings (e.g., the workplace, etc.).



My Humor Style

Please circle the response that is most accurate about your reaction to each statement.

0=Strongly Disagree

1=Disagree

2=Agree

3=Strongly Agree

1) If I am feeling down, I can usually cheer myself up with humor.	0	1	2	3
2) If someone makes a mistake, I tease or rib them about it.	0	1	2	3
3) I tend to make jokes about my flaws or my mistakes when around others.	0	1	2	3
4) I often laugh or joke around with whoever is around me.	0	1	2	3
5) Even when alone, I'm amused by the absurdities of life.	0	1	2	3
6) Some people seem offended or hurt by my sense of humor.	0	1	2	3
7) I put people at ease by saying funny things about my flaws or mistakes.	0	1	2	3
8) Making others laugh seems easy, as I add levity to most situations.	0	1	2	3
9) When distressed, I try to think of something funny about the situation to make myself feel better.	0	1	2	3
10) When telling jokes or saying funny things, I am usually not very concerned about how others are taking it.	0	1	2	3
11) I'll laugh about stories making fun of me without feeling hurt/embarrassed.	0	1	2	3
12) I like to tell jokes or amuse people with clever quips or comments.	0	1	2	3
13) My humor helps keep me from getting too upset about daily frustrations.	0	1	2	3
14) I will join in when people exchange insults or get rolling about other people's eccentricities.	0	1	2	3
15) My stories often include mistakes I've made or my flaws.	0	1	2	3
16) I often make other people laugh by telling funny stories.	0	1	2	3
17) Thinking about some amusing aspect of a situation helps me cope with various problems.	0	1	2	3
18) If I don't like someone, I tend to use humor or teasing to deal with them.	0	1	2	3
19) When situations get tense, I will often make jokes about my own failings.	0	1	2	3
20) I enjoy making people laugh.	0	1	2	3

(Adapted from Martin et al. [2003]. Humor Styles Questionnaire in the *Journal of Research in Personality*)

Scoring My Humor Style

For each Item, enter your score (from -2 to 2), then total your scores **FOR EACH COLUMN**:

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

TOTALS: _____(C) _____(A) _____(D) _____(S)

Each of the columns refers to a “type” of humor, so the **higher** your score in that column; the more that style of humor pertains to you. If you have a low (or even “negative” score for a column), that means you are less likely to employ (and may not appreciate) that type of humor.

C = COPING style of humor; humor is used to cope with difficulties, to see things as absurd or “funny” rather than distressful; this is the style of humor most associated with being successful individually and as part of a team. Taken too far, this type of humor can seem like making a joke about serious topics and not addressing real problems realistically.

A = AGGRESSIVE style of humor; this type of humor positions people to compete or try to lower the status of others so that one might feel better about oneself; this style of humor is associated with conflict and negativity (even bullying), and is least associated with team productivity.

D = DEPRECATING style of humor; this type of humor includes making self-disparaging or self-deprecating comments, which often diminish competitiveness and show vulnerability as well as being able to laugh at oneself; this type of humor is associated with positive team productivity and setting a tone that makes others feel safe as part of a team. Taken too far, this type of humor can appear like one has low self-esteem.

S = SOCIAL (or affiliative) style of humor; this type of humor sets a tone of collegiality and levity among groups and increases affiliation among others. This type of humor is associated with likability but not with group productivity, as “everything can become a joke and tasks become less important than having a good time. Taken too far, this type of humor derails people from focusing on or addressing actual tasks.



Gratefulness

Being grateful is strongly associated with well-being, and practicing this can be very helpful, (particularly in social relationships). Here are some simple practices for cultivating gratefulness:

- 1) Take time every day (morning or bedtime) to reflect on 2-3 things you are grateful for that you noticed today; it may be a kindness from a friend (or stranger), something that made your life better, or something/someone you just thought about (“wow, so grateful that having this car that allows me to get to places easier,” or “grateful for this music to listen to while riding the bus,” etc.).
- 2) Think about people who have positively influenced you and that may not know. Consider writing them a gratefulness letter. Here’s a sample grateful letter:

Dear Joe,

I thought about you the other day and realized how grateful I am for you. I thought for a long time we were friends because of the music we both enjoyed and how we played the same sports together (and that was fun). But over the years I’ve realized those were just a reason to hang out, as we always laughed most of the time, talked about all our ideas and plans, so it was that connection that was truly the gift you are. Just know your basketball skills were less the reason for our friendship over all these years, and it was more your listening and support that have made my life much more fun and meaningful. I still hear your voice now when things come up, and I just go “Joe would look, nod, listen some more, and then probably say “okay, let’s just do this and go for broke.”

SKILL GUIDELINES:

Social Engagement

Integrity: I Do What I Say I Will; I Model Loyalty

Instead of Lying:

Competing Comment (Talk about weather, something else)

Admit My Vulnerabilities

Tell a Stranger/Uninvolved Person (preferably first)

Practice My Story Ahead of Time

To Manage Gossiping:

Change the Subject

Wonder Aloud About the Target's Reaction

Smile and Shut It Down

Caring

Mirroring Facial expressions or emotions to gestures

Using Words Special to Us Remembering other's stories or events

Inquiring About other's (whole) life

Congeniality

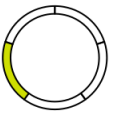
Using My Humor

Coping: Seeing irony/humor in daily life (embracing difficulties)

Aggressive: Putting others down (competing with others)

Deprecating: Laughing at myself—some (team safety)

Social: Making others comfortable (likability; increase attraction)



8. Social Well-Being: Managing Conflicts

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Distinguish active listening responses from other types of responses
2. Categorize responses into 4 categories based on their Active/Passive and Constructive/Destructive components
3. Recognize 9 types of communication/response triggers that lead to conflict.

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to Use the OARS approach to encouraging others to talk more openly and deeply.
- B. How to Identify Your Triggers and Respond to them more effectively.

“The best way to persuade people is with your ears—by listening to them.”
(Dean Rusk)

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand: they listen with the intent to reply.”
(Stephen Covey)

“Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of alternatives for responding to conflict.”
(Dorothy Thompson)

In this chapter, we will address the inevitable conflicts that occur in all our relationships and examine preferred tools for navigating conflicts effectively.

First, just take a quick true-false test.

1. T F Texting is an effective tool for resolving conflicts.
2. T F You're more likely to break up if any of your close friends recently have.
3. T F Couples who argue early in the relationship are happier long-term.
4. T F Couples who each have their designated “household chores” are happier.
5. T F Although couples are often initially attracted to those with different spending preferences, happier couples share similar spending habits.

When you've finished, review the following answers.

1. *Texting is an effective tool for resolving conflicts.* **False**⁶²

- For women: Using text messages to apologize, work out differences, or to make decisions is associated with lower relationship quality
- For men: Frequent texting to romantic partners is associated with lower relationship quality
- For all: Expressing affection via text *enhances* the relationship

2. *You're more likely to break up if any of your close friends recently have.* **True**⁶³

- You are 75% more likely to break up if a friend has, and still 33% more likely to if even a friend of a friend has broken up.

3. *Couples who argue early in the relationship are happier long-term.* **True**⁶⁴

- Couples able to express conflict are better off than those who avoid/deny conflict or cannot have/tolerate conflict.

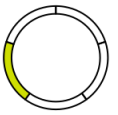
4. *Couples who each have their designated household chores are happier.* **True**⁶⁵

Sharing household chores was in the top three highest-ranking issues associated with a successful marriage—third only to faithfulness and good sex.

- 62 percent of adults said that sharing household chores is very important to marital success. Identifying who would do each chore was preferable to navigating, each month, who would do each chore that month, even though couples re-divide chores up over time.
- There were no differences of opinion reported between men and women, between older adults and younger adults, or between married people and singles.

5. *Although couples are often initially attracted to those with different spending preferences, happier couples share similar spending habits.* **True**⁶⁶

- While it's true that the more a person dislikes their own spending preferences, the more attracted they are to their opposites, over the long run, marriages between opposites result in greater conflicts over money and result in lower marital satisfaction (regardless of the couple's income, debt, and savings).



Speaking With Others

Interacting with others to create meaningful connections, and to sustain them, requires some specialized skills.

Positive Regard vs. Criticism

For relationships to last, comments should be at least a **3:1 ratio of positive: negative comments**. This ratio is also true in the workplace, as relationships with less than a 3:1 ratio lead to people's changing jobs.

The strongest relationships usually have a ratio of 5-8:1 *positive comments to negative comments*.^{67 68} Having a higher ratio of positives to negatives is associated with improved contentment and satisfaction in all types of relationships.

Sometimes, however, negative comments are treated as much more important than positive comments:

- (1) The “**time spent**” on the negatives can be much greater than the time on the positives, diminishing the effectiveness of positive comments.
- (2) Sometimes, one negative comment can be spoken with such emotional **intensity** (e.g., screaming at someone, while fist-pounding on furniture, etc.), that the “intensity” of the negative comments, even if fewer, still predominate.

Efforts to limit the time and emotional intensity of negative comments is necessary for the positive comments to feel as important as the negative comments.

Active Listening

Active listening is the process of focused attention and effort involving a social situation; it involves listening to both the content and the nonverbal cues within the message to “read between the lines” and prevent misunderstandings, particularly when the words and nonverbal behaviors do not seem to match up.

Example of Listener vs. Active listener:

- Speaker: I just finished a 10 page essay for my education course
- Listener: Oh good, now you can get started on the next assignment and your lesson plans.
- Active listener: It sounds like you put a lot of work into that essay. You must feel relieved to have finished it.

Essential Parts of Active Listening:

- 1) Requires **listening, empathy, and compassion**. The primary component is “what is the other person feeling?” rather than “what’s my agenda?” or “what do I want?”
- 2) Most of us think of ourselves as good listeners. At the same time, most of us feel, at one time or another, that we are not listened to or heard. And, all of us can give examples of miscommunications and the stress that comes with it.
- 3) Effective communication, such as active listening is *not automatic*, and instead takes focused attention and effort. It is an important strategy to reduce the stresses of interaction that can leave us feeling misunderstood, disrespected, and uncomfortable with others.

Common Responses (including Active Listening):

We all make many different types of responses; here are some examples of different types of responses to the same comment.

Example: “These kids are mean, disrespectful, and just don’t care.”

- 1) **Judgmental**: “What do you think you’re doing that’s shutting them down?”
- 2) **Advice**: “What have you tried to get ‘em more engaged?”
- 3) **Take Care Of**: “I found that giving them some food reward helps.”
- 4) **Active Listening**: (here are 4 examples of active listening responses to the same statement)
 - “Seems hard to keep going when many are not trying.”
 - “Sounds overwhelming—it’s so hard to keep up with all they’re doing.”
 - “It’s hard when they keep adding to your plate.”
 - “It hard to keep going when it seems that many of these kids are not trying.”

While well intended, the first 3 types of responses are usually less effective:

- 1) **Judgmental** responses usually make the respondent feel worse; these responses help the responder feel safer about being in the same predicament. Because there’s something the person saying is doing “wrong,” the judging person feels like that explains the person’s predicament and distinguishes them from the person making the comment. This creates a “distance” between both people.
- 2) **Advice**, unless requested, suggests that the person is doing something wrong, and needs to make a change. Often we make comments about our frustration to explain our feelings to others, not so much because we want them to tell us how to avoid the feelings or experience.
- 3) **Taking care of** responses suggest that others cannot fend for themselves and someone else needs to manage the situation for them. These comments are disempowering.

Active Responding

A more sophisticated way to view our responses is to consider whether our response is (a) Active or Passive, and either (b) Constructive or Destructive. Each response will fit into one of four categories (or quadrants). Responses include both the words (verbal) component and also the behaviors (nonverbal) component. So one’s response can be Active and then Constructive or Destructive, or Passive (and Constructive or Destructive). The distinctions are described in the boxes below and in the information below the table.



	Active (Engaging)	Passive (Disengaging)
Constructive (Building)	<p>VERBAL: Engaged; Enthusiastic support, Authentic, Add to other's comment, Put other's comment into context</p> <p>NONVERBAL: Eye contact, Inflection</p>	<p>VERBAL: Minimal (Feels like what one should say ("Great") but no real enthusiasm or add-ons; comment so can move on); "completes conversation" as appears of little interest to listener</p> <p>NONVERBAL: Low Energy, Delayed Response, Quiet</p>
Destructive (Tearing Down)	<p>VERBAL: Dismissive, Demeaning, Take person down</p> <p>NONVERBAL: Words may not match facial expression (smile while criticize)</p>	<p>VERBAL: Avoids topic or further conversation about it, Shifts to other person or unrelated topic</p> <p>NONVERBAL: Ignoring, Evasive, Avoidant, "Out of Sync"</p>

(Adapted from Gable et al. [2004]. What do you do when things go right? In the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.)

Let's practice recognizing each of these types of responses: Decide whether each response below sounds most like **active constructive (AC)**, **active destructive (AD)**, **passive constructive (PC)**, or **passive destructive (PD)**.

1. Example Statement: "I just got a new teaching position at the school I wanted." Responses:

- a. "Cool." _____
- b. "Hmmm...did someone there quit?" _____
- c. "I need a ride today; when are you done?" _____
- d. "That's great; you really earned it this year." _____

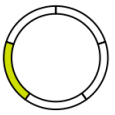
2. Example Statement: "I have no clue how to do this." Responses:

- a. "That's a bummer." _____
- b. "Not everyone is built for this." _____
- c. "Well, the real issue for me is dealing with Administration." _____
- d. "If you're struggling, suspect it's going to be tough for everybody." _____

3. Example Statement: "You did great on the math test." Responses:

- a. "When's the next test?" _____
- b. "In spite of no real teaching and getting no help." _____
- c. "I studied." _____
- d. "I worked hard to be ready...makes me like math even more." _____

Turn the page to check your answers.



1. Example Statement: "I just got a new teaching position at the school I wanted." Responses:
 - a. "Cool." (PC)
 - b. "Hmmm...someone there quit?" (AD)
 - c. "I need a ride today; when are you done?" (PD)
 - d. "That's great; you really earned it this year." (AC)
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 - a. "That's a bummer." (PC)
 - b. "Not everyone is built for this." (AD)
 - c. "Well, the real issue for me is dealing with Administration." (PD)
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 - a. "When's the next test?" (PD)
 - b. "In spite of no real teaching and getting no help." (AD)
 - c. "I studied." (PC)
 - d. "I worked hard to be ready...makes me like math even more." (AC)

Let's now look at possible responses to examples of unhelpful responses by students.

4. Active Destructive responses to "You did great on the math test.":
 - a. "Why are you telling my business in front of others?" **AD-Shift Topic**
 - b. "You seem surprised...you think I don't deserve it?" **AD-Personalize**
 - c. "Maybe I cheated." **AD- Provocative**
 - d. "I'll never use any of that stuff; was a huge waste of time." (**AD-Conflict about the Subject**)
 - e. "Like I even care about what you're saying." (**AD-Conflict that is Personal**)
5. Example with Negative Statement (responses to "I think this class is stupid."):
 - a. "The homework assignment is on p. 38." (PD)
 - b. "You're still passing." (PC)
 - c. "That's because you haven't learned any of the material and are way behind." (AD)
 - d. "It can be frustrating; it's hard to know right now how we'll use this." (AC)

Using Your OARS

To enhance your listening skills, you may find the OARS techniques helpful: This mnemonic refers to 4 ways you can respond to others to encourage narrative flow, or get them to talk more, explain more deeply their perceptions or thoughts. These 4 ways are:

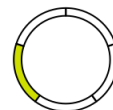
Open-Ended Questions

Affirmations

Reflections

Summaries

View the **OARS handout** on the next page for descriptions and examples of each of these techniques:



OARS – Open-Ended Questions/Affirmations/Reflective Listening/Summarizations

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Open-ended questions ask for more information, a further explanation that requires a longer discussion of the situation. It is the opposite of questions that elicit only “yes” or “no” answers.

- Tell me more about...
- Can you say a little bit more about... What waslike?
- What else? Say more about...

AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are statements that show appreciation or understanding of a person's situation or experience. They are not compliments – they are observations of ability, decision, or realization. This must be completely sincere without any tinge of irony or sarcasm.

- That sounds like.... That must have been...
- The steps you are taking show a great deal of ... It took a lot of strength to...
- It appears that you are going through ... It must have taken a lot of work to...

Use any of the following words that might fit

brave	self-control	kindness	painful	genuine
generous	dilemma	honorable	betrayal	restraint
indignity	hard work	obstacles	hurdles	character
will power	concern	willingness	sensitivity	strength
pressure	inspirational	abuse	authentic	patience

Simple REFLECTIONS

Reflections are statements that show the person you are listening, understanding while also asking for more information or corroboration.

To the statement, “I don’t need a job right now.”

A **simple reflection** is: So what I hear you saying is you’re okay without any employment right now.

SUMMARIZATIONS

Summarization is pulling all the current information into perspective so you know you both are on the same page, with understanding that the information exchanged is correct. Check it out.

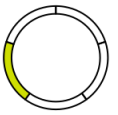
- So what we’ve been talking about is...Am I on the right track?
- So my understanding of what you’ve been describing is... Is that right?

Being aware of our listening approach, and whether our responses are active-constructive can enhance our communications with others and diminish or de-escalate conflicts in most cases. OARS provide an easy approach to considering responses that will encourage deeper exploration and comments by the person speaking with you.

Triggers

Most of us don't intend to respond in negative or destructive ways. Sometimes, though, we may recognize that we have triggers, which impel us to react more strongly than we might anticipate.

Complete the following My Friendship Triggers exercise to help identify your friendship triggers, that is, the traits or actions of others that may be particularly important to you. This exercise will help you identify which traits are most important to you, situations where you have reacted to a trigger, and alternatives to consider and employ when you find yourself triggered.



My Friendship Triggers

Please read each item below and clarify how much these circumstances set you off, or trigger you to become angry out of proportion to events. Using the following **frequency** rating scale, **circle** the most accurate answer. Then indicate how **intense** your reaction is to this trigger (how far out of proportion, how long it lasts, whether it makes you mad enough that you leave/avoid that situation, how much you think about it after) with 1=low to 10=high.

0=Never **1=A little (about monthly)** **2=Moderately (about weekly)** **3=Frequently (about daily)**

	Frequency				Intensity (1-10)
1. Someone criticized a comment I made.	0	1	2	3	_____
2. Someone changed my schedule at the last minute.	0	1	2	3	_____
3. Administrator gave others privileges (I more deserve).	0	1	2	3	_____
4. Someone got into my personal space.	0	1	2	3	_____
5. Someone lied or deceived me.	0	1	2	3	_____
6. Someone spoke badly about me to others.	0	1	2	3	_____
7. I found out someone I trusted had betrayed me.	0	1	2	3	_____
8. A smell, taste, texture, sound set me off.	0	1	2	3	_____
9. Someone made a sarcastic comment to me.	0	1	2	3	_____
10. Others suggested I do something differently.	0	1	2	3	_____
11. Students spoke badly about me to others.	0	1	2	3	_____
12. Students told me they did something that they didn't.	0	1	2	3	_____
13. Students did what they wanted while I was teaching.	0	1	2	3	_____
14. Students disrespected me, ignored what I said.	0	1	2	3	_____
15. Students forgot class rules and acted silly.	0	1	2	3	_____
16. Students pointed out my mistakes to others.	0	1	2	3	_____
17. Students treated me unfairly.	0	1	2	3	_____
18. Students talked over me or interrupted me while teaching.	0	1	2	3	_____
19. Someone touched me or put their hands on me.	0	1	2	3	_____
20. Students didn't respond to what I ask them to do.	0	1	2	3	_____

My Triggers – p. 2

Total your scores from these sets of items:

ITEMS: 1, 10 :	_____	= Criticism
2, 13 :	_____	= Chaos (vs. Predictability)
3, 17 :	_____	= Unfairness (vs. Fairness)
4, 8, 19:	_____	= Sensory/Surprise (vs. Predictability)
5, 12:	_____	= Deceit (vs. Honesty)
6, 9, 11:	_____	= Disdain (vs. Likability)
7, 16:	_____	= Betrayal
14, 18:	_____	= Disrespect (vs. Respect)
15, 20:	_____	= Helpless (vs. Control/Autonomy)

Your **highest** scores suggest areas where you are **most likely to be triggered or set off**. Each of us are triggered by various things, often because of past difficulties surrounding those triggers, and when we were young and had limited power, or lacked better skills to do anything about our situation. When triggered, we may employ primitive survival skills that are out of proportion to that situation, and that may work out poorly (e.g., yelling at students, refusing to speak with past friends). The goal is to recognize what triggers our reactions, and to identify and employ more appropriate (thoughtful, helpful) responses when we feel ourselves being triggered.

On the Trigger Activity Worksheet (next page), in the 1st (left) column, place the most common triggers (in order); in the 2nd column, write down some recent experiences that brought about a strong negative reaction to that trigger; in the 3rd column, write down how you reacted. In the 4th column, consider experiences from the past that may have brought about these reactions; write down any patterns you recognize in your responses to that trigger. In the 5th (last) column, consider alternative reactions to try when that trigger occurs now.

Here are some coping strategies to consider when you find yourself being triggered:

1) Healthy Alternative Activity

- Can I do something to de-escalate, or prevent doing something unhelpful?
- Is there some place or mind spot I can go to/think about to prevent the unhelpful reaction?
- What would be a more healthy reaction when someone does this? Can I visualize doing this in a variety of similar situations? Are there several things I can try in place of my unhelpful reaction?

2) Reframe:

- How can I see the trigger differently? How might I grow through this trigger (what should I learn?)?
- Did anything happen that has evoked this reaction in the past? Are there multiple times/events when this has occurred?

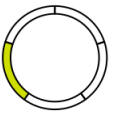
3) Problem-solve: when you're in a rational state,

- How can I *recognize* when I'm being triggered?
- What can I do to avoid *reacting* with the dysfunctional pattern?
- How can I *replace* the current pattern with something a bit better?

4) Social Support:

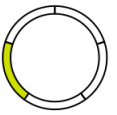
- Do others see me "set off;" do they have ideas about what triggers my reaction?
- Do others wish I'd do something differently?

We can now put this all together. Start with any triggers you are aware of in yourself, then consider your reactions to those triggers. Then see if you can see or look at the situation some other way, perhaps through a problem-solving lens; can you reframe the situation so that it can be helpful to you? Finally, consider preferred or better responses that are active-constructive, and that may include the HARP strategies in your responses. Put these all together as you complete the My Trigger Activity Worksheet.



My Trigger Activity Worksheet

Most Common Triggers	Recent Trigger Experiences	My Reaction (Then)	Other Ways to See Situation	New Reactions to Attempt



Mindful Listening:

For this exercise, choose one conversation in any given day, during which you intentionally do the following:

1. as you are listening to the other person speak, notice if your mind starts to wander
2. when your mind starts to wander, gently guide your attention back to the conversation, to listening to the person speaking with you
3. as you are listening, try not to judge what the person is saying as “good” or “bad”, simply listen to what they are saying
4. notice any sensations in your body while this person is speaking, notice any emotions or thoughts that they evoke, trying not to judge these sensations, thoughts or emotions as “good” or “bad”, and then bring your attention back to listening to them speaking

After the conversation is over, reflect on how listening mindfully effects your experience of the conversation, how you responded to what the other person was saying, and how you felt afterwards.

Try to do this exercise at least once a day, gradually integrating mindful listening into your routine social interactions.

SKILL GUIDELINES:

Managing Conflicts

Sustaining Relationships

Ratio of *Positive to Negative Comments* (with friends, colleagues, students)

Active Listening

Listening, Empathy, Compassion

(vs. Unsolicited Advice, Judgments, Taking Care Of)

Effective Responses

Active/Constructive (Engaged, Supportive, Enthusiastic)

Active/Destructive (Critical)

Passive/Constructive (Acknowledges but little interest)

Passive/Destructive (Avoids further conversation about the topic)

Using My OARS

Open-Ended Questions (Ask for more; let the other person go where they want)

(“Tell me about ____.” “What are your thoughts about ____?”)

Affirmations (Restate what the other person said)

(“It sounds like you’re saying ____.” “You really were ____ [brave, kind, etc.]”)

Reflections (Restate and Add Feeling to your Response as well)

(“It sounds like it’s been hard since ____.”)

Summaries (Integrate multiple comments to identify main themes)

(“Okay, so if I understood this right, your concern is ____.”)

9. Occupational Well-Being: Managing My Workplace

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Identify 5 areas of your work environment that impact your wellbeing
2. Identify 5 tactics to improve your work environment
3. Describe 10 effective time management techniques
4. Identify 3 tactics to avoid distractions
5. Describe 3 tactics to counter procrastination

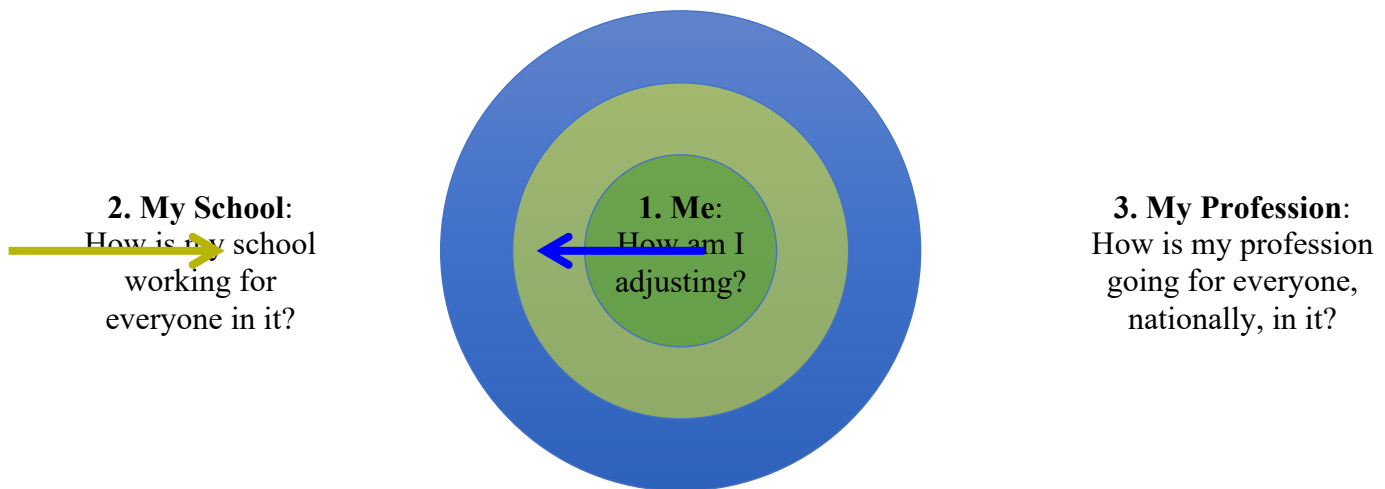
Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to Address Obstacles or Difficulties in your Workplace
- B. How to Use an Activity Log to Clarify Your Priorities
- C. How to Plan Your Schedule to Retain Positive Activities and Address Difficult Activities

In this chapter, you will examine your wellbeing in your workplace. What is really important to recognize is that sometimes there are skills and attitudes that **you** can cultivate to better thrive in your workplace, but sometimes there are difficulties within your **school building** or in the **profession generally** that are difficult for everyone and need to be addressed. While it's always good to see how **we** might adjust to different environments and make changes to better fit in a new place or with new colleagues (and students), sometimes we're trying to adjust to a system that has dysfunctional parts difficult for everyone. If you were riding a bicycle, and it wasn't going very fast, you might say, "Okay, I should pedal harder or sit higher, lean down lower, etc. But if the bike has a flat tire, your personal adjustments won't make much of a difference. Similarly, if you're healthy, and your bike is in good shape, but you suddenly find you're now at a lake, the target to address is not you, but instead the conditions and what is needed for that environment. So your biking skills can always be considered when you're not making progress, but if your school building has a flat tire (lack of books, unclear priorities, etc.), fixing that specific problem will be more effective (since it'll be more effective to fix the flat tire than to adjust to riding on a flat tire). And if the bike is no longer effective in the new environment, you may need a different approach altogether, and many people, on reaching the lake on their bicycles, might similarly need to work together to find a bridge, or a boat that can ferry their bikes to the other side of the lake, to make progress.

Sometimes the focus should be on you to advance your skills to adjust to your workplace; sometimes the focus is on different skills to help the system change so that it better works for everyone there; and sometimes, the focus is on changing the landscape or the conditions at more than just a building level (e.g., changing an antiquated practice) that doesn't work well for most everyone in every school building. So it may be helpful to think of occupational well-being as including 3 concentric circles, as shown in the figure below:

Spheres of Occupational Wellbeing:



Dealing with Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue, Burnout, and Demoralization

Teaching is a strenuous, difficult job, particularly when one starts and has to create and devise lesson plans, and also establish a classroom behavioral routine that fits the students you happen to have. Schools vary in the resources (paper to books to computer access) they have, and in support from other staff. About 15% leave teaching every year, and between 40-50% leave the profession within their first 5 years of teaching (Alliance for Excellent education, <https://all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/path-to-equity/>). This is more common for teachers in urban schools, in schools with lower income students, less resources, and less supervisor support (Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute).

The balance between **compassion satisfaction** and **compassion fatigue** helps clarify how one feels about their role as a teacher. Simply, the benefits of teaching, and the satisfaction from helping others, seeing children learn and grow, working together with like-minded colleagues to create a great school, contributing to a new, more informed, thoughtful generation, all have to remain more prominent than the depletion one feels from working where results may seem disappointing, others create conflict more than cohesion, and resources are inadequate to do an effective job. The *benefits from helping others lead to compassion satisfaction*, while the impediments to this lead to *compassion fatigue (trying to do something positive to help others that continues to not work)*. When the balance of compassion satisfaction tips over more toward compassion fatigue, and remains there without reasonable expectations for this to change, one becomes more vulnerable to leaving that position (or even profession). So it's not unusual to occasionally feel distressed or discouraged with one's job, but it's important to address the many factors that can lead to compassion fatigue, which can lead to burnout or demoralization.

Occupational *burnout* is characterized by a state of *chronic stress* that leads to **exhaustion**, **depersonalization**, and feeling **ineffectiveness** or **lack of accomplishment** (Maslach, 1982). According to Gallup polls, at any point about 23% of workers feel burned out, and an additional 44% report they occasionally feel burned out in their jobs. The term is often used loosely and has been distinguished from "demoralization," where the respect for teaching as a profession has changed, the job demands and expectations have changed, and teachers have become discouraged because the "job" (not them) has changed (Santoro, 2018). Often burnout has been identified with teachers perceiving they lacked skills or could not keep pace (and needed to accept their working conditions by them developing additional skills),

while demoralization has been associated with recognizing the job conditions may be in need of attention. Burnout and demoralization overlap, but it remains important to recognize that personal skills may help alter this course but job conditions may also need to be addressed to alter teacher turnover.

You took the **Pullis Stress Inventory** during the Emotional module, which helped identify what factors in teaching have been most stressful for you (students and their challenging behaviors, the teaching role itself, staff/school issues, and the teacher workload). So first let's look at how your school itself deals with stress, and what level of stress your school is (a) currently, and (b) most of the time. Please complete the **"What My School Looks Like In Varying States of Stress"** instrument now.

What My School Looks Like In Varying States of Stress

Consider how your school functions in varying states of stress throughout the school year. For each column (Smoothly, Mildly, Moderately, Severely), rate your school **0-3 (with 0=Strongly Agree, 1=Agree, 2=Disagree, and 3=Strongly Disagree)** with each statement in the Rows.

When My School Is at this Level of Stress	Smoothly, Not Stressed	Mildly Stressed	Moderately Stressed	Severely Stressed
1. Treatment at Work We all (teachers, admin) like each other, people are treated fairly and equitably, there's no harassment or favoritism, we have input on policies that affect us				
2. Workload The workload is reasonable such that most of us get it done the environment is pleasant/comfortable, we have adequate resources, our work feels meaningful, we address obstacles				
3. Role Clarity We now what is expected of us, most of our time is spent doing the job we're supposed to be doing, we stay on our mission, we have a good plan of coverage if someone is out or has to attend a meeting, and I'm being well-utilized (doing what I do best)				
4. Managerial Support We have adequate, regular, responsive, helpful supervisor support, and we feel partnered with our administrators and supervisors				
5. Time Pressure Our priorities remain stable and predictable, we maintain Our Work-Life balance, I can make deadlines, the other tasks I have to do fit with my job, and I'm able to keep up with everything				
6. Broad Social Support We feel appreciated by our community, are paid fairly, have Positive status, feel satisfied with our career in education, Have a positive, helpful teacher organization				

Currently, the stress level at my school is: ___Smooth ___Mild ___Moderate ___Severe
 Most of the time I've been at my school, the stress level is: ___Smooth ___Mild ___Moderate ___Severe

Use this instrument to ask yourself several questions:

- 1) Does your school look different when under different degrees of stress?
- 2) Does everything change (all the rows) or only certain rows seem to change with the stress level?
- 3) Does the current school stress level seem unusual/like it will be brief?
- 4) Do you see the school stress level changing, perhaps during different times of the school year, or in response to any particular events/changes (e.g., around annual standardized testing, when new personnel come in, etc.)?
- 5) Does it seem your school is always at the same level of stress (including none-mild or always severe)?

If your school remains mostly stable in some areas throughout the school year, this may reveal specific areas to target to improve the school, as they seem the “first to suffer” when the stress level changes, and these suggest ongoing vulnerable areas or system difficulties within your school. If all aspects of the school seem difficult all the time, it may be important to determine how the larger staff see this; if similarly, then the question of what areas to prioritize to improve may be the most appropriate step for all the staff to consider.

If your school is currently in a different stress level, it may be important to discern why this has occurred, will it last (are the factors leading to these changes likely to change/go away, and if so, how will the school likely change if those factors change).

Now it's important to consider how YOU feel amidst all these different school stressors. Please complete the **Teacher Work Environment Inventory (T-WEI)** that focuses on how you experience and function within your work environment. Please complete the T-WEI on the next page.

TEACHER WORK ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY (T-WEI)

^L_{SEP}

Please mark your answer to each item below.

SD = Strongly Disagree
Agree

D = Disagree^L_{SEP}

A = Agree

SA = Strongly

In general, I find my current work environment is a place where:

1. All the staff are treated fairly, equitably, and harassment is not tolerated.	SD	D	A	SA
2. My coworkers have my back and I trust them.	SD	D	A	SA
3. Administration/Supervisors shows favoritism in how they treat various employees.*	SD	D	A	SA
4. We have appropriate input and contribute to policies supporting a positive culture.	SD	D	A	SA
5. Our staff evaluation procedure is sufficiently clear and fair to everyone.	SD	D	A	SA
6. The workload is reasonable and most of us do it well.	SD	D	A	SA
7. What we do is important and meaningful.	SD	D	A	SA
8. The work environment is clean, well-kept, and a pleasant place to be.	SD	D	A	SA
9. We have big obstacles that keep us from making a difference in our students' lives.	SD	D	A	SA
10. We lack the resources here that are needed to do a good job.	SD	D	A	SA
11. I know what is expected of me each day.	SD	D	A	SA
12. I am usually doing what I should be doing in my role.	SD	D	A	SA
13. We change direction or focus often so my role often changes.	SD	D	A	SA
14. Days are unpredictable as I often have to cover for others.	SD	D	A	SA
15. I like my role at my school and am able to do what I do best.	SD	D	A	SA
16. I feel strong support by my Principal/Supervisor.	SD	D	A	SA
17. My supervisor regularly communicates with me an appropriate amount.	SD	D	A	SA
18. When I have a problem, I'm usually unable to speak with supervisors quickly.	SD	D	A	SA
19. My supervisor(s) provides me helpful, constructive comments.	SD	D	A	SA
20. If a problem occurs, I cannot rely on my supervisors to help fix it.	SD	D	A	SA
21. Priorities often change that keep me from getting tasks done on time.	SD	D	A	SA
22. My work life too often interferes with my personal life.	SD	D	A	SA
23. Deadlines are often unrealistic or unreasonable.	SD	D	A	SA
24. Many other activities (e.g., team/IEP meetings, etc.) interfere with my work.	SD	D	A	SA
25. I usually am able to keep up, and don't fall behind in my work.	SD	D	A	SA
26. I am treated with respect by parents and community members.	SD	D	A	SA
27. Teachers are paid fairly and adequately for what we do.	SD	D	A	SA
28. Teachers continue to have low status and are perceived poorly by society.	SD	D	A	SA
29. I have been satisfied with my career in teaching and plan to continue.	SD	D	A	SA
30. Our teacher organization has no input or impacts on school policies/planning.	SD	D	A	SA

*Please answer based on whoever most participates in providing evaluations of you; if you have a Principal who is supportive, but a Supervisor who is unsupportive, please answer based on your overall or general experience of your "administration."

Interpreting the Teacher Work Environment Inventory (T-WEI)

Items 1-5 measure **Fair Treatment at Work**, and if your school environment practices equitable policies for all employees, and includes everyone in creation and review of workplace policies. **When employees perceive their work environment is unfair, they are over twice as likely to experience high levels of burnout. Item 3 is “reverse-scored,”** so agreeing on that item means the environment shows favoritism to some and is less equitable.

Items 6-10 measure **General Employee Workload** the organization expects for all its employees, and whether this workload is reasonable for everyone (who then feels part of a team that can be successful), if the work environment is configured with appropriate resources and pleasant so that you can do what’s expected, if obstacles to the workload are acknowledged and addressed, and if the workload is perceived worthwhile and important/meaningful. **Items 9 and 10 are “reverse-scored,”** so agreeing with those items means that you perceive obstacles are making your workload difficult and that you do **not** have the basic workplace resources (e.g., books, materials, paper, etc.) to do your job.

Items 11-15 measure **Role Clarity** provided employees, and includes descriptions by Principals/Supervisors of what your priorities/goals should be (and they evaluate you on these vs. on other tasks/roles that come up), if the mission of the school remains clear (vs. frequently shifting or changing), and if you are often required to do other’s jobs/roles which take away from you doing what you were trained and told you needed to focus on. **Approximately 40% of employees feel like their role is unclear and inconsistent, making it hard for them to sustain momentum at work. Items 13 and 14 are “reverse-scored,”** so agreeing with those items means your role is not consistent and you spend significant amounts of your time doing tasks that should be done by others.

Items 16-20 measure **Managerial Support**, usually from Principals, but sometimes also from other supervisors, and includes knowing that your Principal/Supervisors support you, are consistently engaged with you, and readily available and helpful partners when problems arise. **Employees who perceive their “managers” provide such support are 70% less likely to experience burnout. Items 18 and 20 are “reverse-scored,”** so agreeing with those items means that you do not have appropriate access to Principal/Supervisors, and you do not rely on your Principal/Supervisor for help.

Items 21-25 measure **Time Pressure** perceived by employees, and includes clarity about what’s most important to get done, reasonable deadlines, expectations for “all” the tasks you do within your job, and being able to keep up with all that you’re expected to do. Time pressure can reflect employee weaknesses with has with time management, but also the organization may not understand the actual job, or have reasonable expectations. **Employees who feel they have adequate time to perform their job duties are 70% less likely to experience burnout. Items 21 and 23 are “reverse-scored,”** so agreeing with those items means that you do not feel identified priorities are easy to do because of competing demands, and that deadlines may not be reasonable or appropriate given the amount of time allotted for them.

Items 26-30 measure **Broader Social Support** for your job. This includes how you perceive community, State, and national support for your job. At the community level, sometimes

taxpayers or local school committees/boards may prioritize funding some agencies/services less than your school/job, and this can occur at the State and national levels as well. Accordingly, addressing these concerns with the appropriate system that has the funding and authority to effect changes is essential to bring about meaningful changes. **Items 28 and 30 are “reverse-scored,”** so *agreeing with them means you do not feel appropriately appreciated by society in general, and that your local teacher organization/union/professional organization has little impact on school policies or school planning.*

It's not the total number of stressors that matter but instead:

- 1) Are most of yours primarily in one of these categories? If so, then you may see a particular area you may want to improve in your school.
- 2) Are there certain factors that are highly important to you, that really “affect you” most days? If so, then those particular concerns may indicate what you should focus on to most impact your stress areas.

Using the T-WEI in Your Wellbeing Plan

Your scores on the T-WEI should help you identify whether components of your workplace environment are impacting your wellbeing. More importantly, depending on which aspects of the work environment are affecting you, different tactics may be helpful in addressing them. There are **both micro and macro interventions** to address potential work place factors; at the **micro (you) level**, there may be skills for you to develop to better navigate this work environment. If we dropped you off in a desert, you would have to likely change the clothes that worked well for you in northern Montana to acclimate. At the same time, **macro (systems) interventions** to improve the environment for you (and everyone else) might also be needed; at the macro (systems) level, you might try to ensure that there was a regular water supply available where you would be, etc. The chart below provides tactics to consider based on these system factors (please check the tactics that would help you improve your work environment:

Improving The Work Environment with Individual and System Tactics

Work Environment Domains	Micro (You) Tactics	Macro (Systems) Tactics
Worker Treatment 1. Staff treated fairly 2. Trust coworkers 3. No favoritism 4. Input on Policies 5. Evaluation clear, fair	___ Identify a school "mentor" ___ Include Proudful Identity ___ Eat/find time to chat with staff ___ Identify/create interest groups ___ Show trust, speak well of others ___ <i>Manage Up Skills</i> (favoritism) ___ Clarify Policy Procedures and Process for School Climate ___ Clarify evaluation procedure and check that you're doing well	___ Do we have existing policies to address fairness, harassment, etc.? ___ Monitor others' comments that they feel unfairness/favoritism, etc.? What is our mechanism to improve this? ___ Create a peer support group ___ Seek & examine other school's policies ___ Clarify process for contributing to policy ___ Review overall staff evaluation findings
General Workload 6. Most of us can do 7. Work meaningful 8. Work conditions 9. Address Obstacles 10. Resources exist	___ Identify/ask those completing tasks ___ Clarify how work fits school mission ___ Explore/examine other rooms/space ___ Clarify process to alter obstacles ___ Clarify resource options to address adversities	___ Compare workload to other schools ___ Compare schools' vision and curriculum ___ Identify school staff describing meaningful programs ___ Compare other school work conditions ___ Identify other school obstacle mgmt. ___ Search potential resource opportunities
Role Clarity 11. Know expectations 12. Usually do MY job 13. Maintain mission 14. Coverage in place 15. Role fits me	___ Clarify duties/roles with admin ___ Track hrs/wk spent on all duties ___ Ask admin about priorities for you ___ Clarify who can cover absentees ___ Track hrs/wk spent on strengths	___ Compare role descriptions at other sites ___ Clarify duties of other local teachers ___ Compare other school mission info ___ Examine other school coverage policies ___ Identify other school career paths (staff)
Managerial Support 16. Supervisor support 17. Regular contact 18. Quick Support 19. Supervisor input 20. Supervisors partner	___ Identify supervisors (plural) ___ Schedule wkly supervisor meetings ___ Identify Support Tree (list & order) ___ Reexamine how often use input ___ Agree/collaborate on solutions ___ Bidirectional collaborations	___ Identify successful supervisor programs ___ Compare district support policies ___ Identify effective scheduling support ___ Clarify input of effective supervisors ___ Compare school partnering practices
Time Pressure 21. Stable priorities 22. Work-Life balance 23. Make deadlines 24. Other tasks fit 25. Able to keep up	___ Create a reliable task schedule ___ Set times for work AND for life ___ Establish deadlines immediately ___ Anticipate & schedule other tasks ___ Monitor what comes up and revise ___ Allot down time in daily schedule	___ Identify effective time mgt practices ___ Compare work-life balance in schools ___ Compare deadline mgt practices ___ Examine effective options when tasks suddenly change ___ Identify system options if fall behind
Broad Social Support 26. Locally appreciated 27. Paid fairly 28. Positive status 29. Career satisfaction 30. Positive Teacher Organization	___ Ask parents/community how going ___ Identify options to increase salary ___ Provide visible results of successes ___ Detail satisfactions (by categories) ___ Monitor & report staff achievements to community (web/paper, etc.)	___ Examine schools with high local support ___ Compare benefits/salary with similar schools/sites ___ Identify/partner with other schools doing similar work/programs and publicize ___ Identify and include factors increasing career satisfaction ___ Identify and add positive components of effective teacher organizations

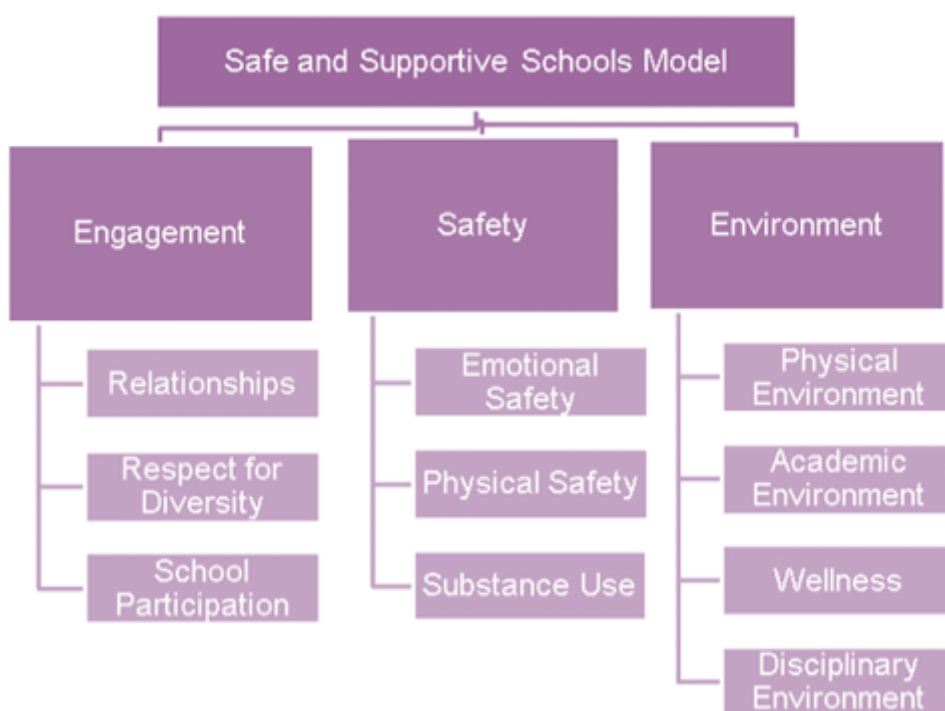
Improving Fair Treatment

To improve equitable policies for all employees, including participation, creation and review of workplace policies:

INDIVIDUAL TACTICS:

- Identify a school “**mentor**” who seems to well understand how best to navigate this system, including who actually interprets and enacts policies and procedures. This mentor can be a teacher in a similar grade or teaching the same subject, but also an admired staff person effective knowing “how to get things done.” Asking such a mentor about how practices/policies are created/changed, can be helpful, and also what progress has occurred recently, as sometimes practices are improving, but when one first enters a system, the trajectory of fair treatment practices may not be apparent.
- Include **Prideful Identity** by identifying practices that will enhance everyone’s experience at the school. Biases may exist that reflect lack of awareness of different cultural practices (e.g., nutritional choices, dress/clothing, music, social engagement expectations) that may enrich the school as well as “fit” with needs of students, and such practices may require explanation or contextualization to administrative staff for them to appreciate these alternatives.
- Eat/find time to **chat with staff multiple times per week**, even if the group constellation changes with the day or over time. Introducing yourself and joining different lunch group configurations may be initially awkward, so explaining your role and having a few questions (“What do these students tend to like in classes? What do the students tend to talk about? What do teachers most enjoy here?” etc.) can help you identify positive staff to share plans/ideas with.
- Identify/create **groups who share interests** to break up the school day. Inquire about extracurricular activities to help identify staff interests, as well as special interests of staff (e.g., music, sports, arts, cooking, hobbies, book clubs, etc.) to cultivate stimulating conversations around shared interests.
- Show trust, **speak well of others**. As described in the Social Module, speaking positively about others is usually helpful and expands opportunities to meet others sharing identified positive attributes. While others may disparage others to test your alliances to them, use tactics to evade gossiping, etc. (see the Social Module for tactics)
- **Manage Up** your skills to help your supervisors value you; “managing up” refers to deliberately working in ways that mutually benefit both you and your supervisor, rather than just you (or your supervisor) alone. **Your work satisfaction is MOST impacted by your relationship with your supervisor, yet only about 30% of employees report feeling “engaged” in their job, mostly those entering (or leaving) the workforce** (Gallup’s State of the American Workplace Poll, 2013) L McLeod suggests several tactics for working effectively with your supervisor (<https://www.themuse.com/advice/10-ways-to-get-your-boss-to-trust-you-completely>):
 - To work effectively with your supervisor’s personality or personal style, **watch** how your supervisor engages with others; what approaches work with this supervisor (e.g., emails vs. face to face, prefers data or ideas that just make good sense, etc.)?
 - Know your supervisor’s primary goals, how you fit into them and can help them attain them, and ask if you’re unsure. Align with the goals that work for both of you, and if other goals are more important to your supervisor, figure out how you can contribute to toward that goal. So if you see skills you have that may be useful, of your which your supervisor may be unaware, it may be helpful to identify traits that may contribute to your supervisor’s success.
 - If you see a “problem” in the school, try to think of a few solutions to suggest to your supervisor (and the pros and cons of these solutions).

- Know your supervisor's deadlines or how they'll be measured so you can anticipate and support them so that you both look good. Try to ensure that you can make all your deadlines that contribute to your supervisor's goals.
 - Rather than saying "no" to a supervisor's request, instead clarify the supervisor's priorities for you ("Okay, you want me to stop what I'm doing to cover another teacher's math class this afternoon---so turning in my lesson plan can wait another day?"
 - Try to recognize the value of your supervisor's time---make a list of discussion topics before you meet or seek time, and start/stop on time (or even end early).
 - If something occurs (e.g., a problem with parent or student, etc.), prep your supervisor by giving them the heads up and anticipate with the supervisor what will be helpful.
- Clarify Policy Procedures for School Climate
 School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. The **Safe and Supportive School Model** identified 3 key components of school climate: Engagement, Safety, and Environment, and proposed areas to consider to improve school climate, as shown in the figure below:



(from the National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments)

The National School Climate Center (Villenas & Zelinski, 2018) identified the factors that most contribute to **positive school climate**:

- 1) Effective leaders engage and work with various stakeholders (students, teacher, parents, community organizations, athletic clubs, etc.) across the community
- 2) Educators who appear and remain committed and trusted increase student success
- 3) Addressing and navigating conflict helps build trust within the community
- 4) Project-based learning and service learning improve student leadership skills and community engagement
- 5) Social emotional learning (SEL) skill integration in daily practice enriches school climate
- 6) All students having a voice and contributing improves equity
- 7) Peer support among students cultivates leadership skills in students and strengthens student bonds

So to improve school climate, including the community as well as all educators and students is important, and integrating partnering, collaborative, and social emotional skills is also important. Several strategies may be helpful:

- Clarify if there are school policies, when they are revised, and who writes/changes them.
- Identify committees that address issues and their roles in creating/revising policy, and before you commit or join, determine if the committee has been effective in recent years, and if the people on it are those you want to work with on this topic.
- How is school climate addressed? Do you hear the term used and efforts by others to improve the school culture?
- Tactics for Improving School Climate (<https://www.kickboardforschools.com/blog/post/school-culture-climate/5-ways-to-change-improve-school-climate-culture/>):
 - Examine **data about your school**, such as attendance, discipline, academic performance, test scores, student participation, and parent perceptions; use this data to identify priorities to then set a few goals that appear important to everyone in the school
 - Explore what the **staff at your school is doing well**, and share or widen that with others; if a certain teacher/staff is doing something that's creating a positive buzz in the building, explore how that can be recognized and perhaps implemented by others
 - Identify what **parents** are concerned most concerned about, and their desires to enhance the school climate; even if parents appear largely disinterested, "cherish the defect" by finding out what seems to be interfering with their participation (e.g., parents may feel overwhelmed at their jobs, such that afterschool programs are a priority, or that they don't really know what to do to reinforce academics at home, such that short, enjoyable tasks weekly for applying academics can provide them a vested role.
 - Extol **student achievements and their efforts** to enrich the school. Too often, "student problems" receive more attention (and awareness/discussion) than "what's going right," or what students doing well are interested in, etc. It's important for schools to maintain communication, input, and collaboration with those students who are doing well, while also addressing difficulties for those students struggling.
 - Identify and **prioritize expectations for everyone** (students, parents, staff) toward goals to improve the school climate. The more everyone has a role in contributing to successful school climate practices, the more momentum toward those goals you'll create.
- Clarify evaluation procedure and check that you're doing well
 - Identifying what the criteria are for your evaluations, and even seeing the document(s) that your supervisor or principal uses, before you are formally evaluated, can be helpful to prepare for evaluations. In addition, it may be useful to ask your supervisor/administrator about "how" you're currently doing with various criteria, and if they have any concerns (now) about any of these criteria. It may also be useful to ask your evaluators if they have seen or are aware of "exemplary practices" for various criteria so that you may be able to observe or discuss with other teachers how to well meet various evaluation criteria.

SYSTEM TACTICS:

- Clarify with administrative staff what policies are in place and the process for creating and revising policies over time. Sometimes "committees" may be formed to initially to create policy, but then energy needs to be shifted to other topics. Are staff empowered (e.g., a **regular committee, or task force**, etc.) to identify and address inequities or policies that feel oppressive to any group?

- How are comments solicited, evaluated, and responded to? Are **regular surveys or assessments** done which staff feel comfortable completing, and which they feel lead to discussion and change about policies? Is there an **anonymous suggestion box** for concerns to be raised where staff do not feel safe identifying themselves with a topic?
- Are staff able to find a **time and space to meet around like-minded concerns or issues**? Staff should also be able to identify or describe mutual interests where both that interest feels safe to be discussed (and not alienating for those identified with that group) but also where other staff do not feel excluded.
- Staff (both teachers and administrators) benefit from ongoing practices for examining policies/procedures being advanced in other schools. Both mechanisms for this (access to periodicals or awareness of appealing new practices) and procedures for staff to review possible applications for this school are important.
- The process for all staff, at all levels, to contribute to policy is vital for policies to work for all the staff; establishing both groups to address specific topics, and to include diverse staff in different positions, remains important for system adoption of effective policies.
- A consistent, regular process for reviewing staff evaluations of policies and procedures improves recognition and refinement of ongoing difficulties identified by staff, and often illuminate priorities surrounding persisting obstacles for the school to address.

Improving Workload

The workload is doable, important and meaningful, and the environment is conducive to accomplishing the workload:

INDIVIDUAL TACTICS:

- Clarify if others in your position are accomplishing the workload; **reach out to others** and inquire how they are doing generally with the workload and also specifically, such as shortcuts or efficient strategies for grading, communicating with students/parents, etc.
 - If most others are accomplishing the workload, consider **reviewing your daily effort with those more successful** to identify where you may be able to alter practices that help you accomplish tasks more efficiently.
 - If you are employing effective practices, but they just take you too long, recognize that often occurs in new positions, and that one gets faster over time, so **give yourself some patience**; if you are not getting faster over time, consider the **time management strategies** described below.
- Identify if there are tasks that you and/or others are struggling to complete; **are these tasks important**, or should they be altered?
 - If important, but difficult to accomplish, **proponents may be able to revise what's needed** and how it can be accomplished more easily.
- Compare the daily tasks/curriculum with the **mission statement** of the school or school leaders, to ensure that tasks remain important and meaningful in the classroom.
 - Inquire of other staff and administrators both **what is expected** through these tasks, as well as the **spirit (importance) of these tasks**.
- Identify what tasks are **both meaningful/important to you and to the school mission** and emphasize completion of those tasks, as you also see if **other tasks may be better addressed by other staff**.

- Clarify your **available work supplies**, such as paper, pencils/pens/markers, staples, paper clips, tissues, clean up materials, etc. Find out **where these are housed, and the office process** for obtaining/signing out for these. If supplies seem limited, clarify with other staff if you can share materials such that you may have more “paper,” while others, based on their tasks, may need more cleaning supplies.
- Examine the work environment itself; this includes your classroom, but also areas where you photocopy, create materials for projects, materials to hang up in the classroom/hallways, etc. **Identify reliable places** where you can create/prepare materials.
- Consider how the **work environment can be enhanced (multisensory) to be inspiring and pleasant**, with posters, artwork, captions, photographs of students/local nature, quotes (visual), with appropriate music/sounds (usually instrumental, slow tempo, during non-instructional times for auditory), available cushions, pillows, rugs, sound dampeners on chairs, items to hold (tactile), and possible plants or safe pleasant smell devices (e.g., hand lotions/soap, rather than burning candles, or plug-in devices) such as lavender, vanilla, basil, mint, etc., mindful of potential any allergies).
- Identify obstacles that interfere with educational tasks in your classroom (e.g., certain students may frequently be late because of a bus schedule, some students may consistently struggle with classroom expectations and require additional supports [e.g., accommodations or interventions, or different staff support]), and the **algorithm of which staff can be helpful with diverse obstacles** (e.g., school lunch resources, transportation obstacles, special education staff for support, etc.).

SYSTEM TACTICS:

- Is **every task still vital** for staff to complete?
 - If yes, identify who is doing this task well currently, and how their approach(es) can be provided to other staff to optimize task accomplishment
 - **Information technology or other personnel** may be accessed to see if **simpler solutions can be embedded** beneficial to all staff?
 - If no, the task is no longer vital as currently required, what is the mechanism for having this reevaluated and reconfigured so that it can be done successfully?
- A common difficulty in workload is the “**additive approach**” to tasks. Rather than trade or replace outdated, less useful or important tasks/content, newly identified important tasks (standardized testing preparation, preparing students with computer skills, etc.), additional tasks may continue to be added to already dense workloads. Evaluate not only what is important to be added currently, but also **what should be decreased/omitted to allow time** for new, more important tasks/content.
- Clarify **opportunities for the school to obtain supplies**, both from existing school supply procedures, and also from community projects/agencies/businesses who may supply useful materials (from office supplies left over to plants, etc.).
- Consider how to make hallway and congregation areas more pleasant/inspiring, even by “wing” so that **common themes across classrooms** showcase student works, use common color schemes to help students “find” areas more easily, etc.
- Identify the process for recognizing and addressing obstacles that emerge or persist; identify **how the school processes obstacles, discusses with staff, students, parents, other relevant stakeholders** (e.g., Task Force groups for afterschool programs to help students receive help with homework), and how obstacles are measured over time to ensure improvement or clarify alternative approaches to make improvements.

Improving Role Clarity

INDIVIDUAL TACTICS:

- **Review and discuss your job description** with administrators and supervisors to ensure you know how the description translates to actual expectations on a daily basis.
- **Clarify the longer term vision and priorities of administrators/supervisors.** Current tasks may be in place briefly (e.g., “we’ll be switching next month to a different grading system/different reading software, more time for art/music/physical education,” so allocate energy to tasks that will remain or become more common).
- Clarify which staff have similar roles/tasks, and clarify with supervisors/administrators the process for collaborating with them or obtaining mentoring.
- When asked to do unexpected tasks by a supervisor/administrator, **clarify then the priority of this task** to relative to existing tasks.
 - “Oh, this report is top priority, so I’ll turn in my lesson plan one day later this week; will that work?”
 - “When does this new task need to be completed? How do you want me to manage/prioritize other tasks during this time---what can be done after this new priority?”
- Keep track of how often you have to cover for others or do tasks of others. **Use this data to help identify better solutions**, rather than who’s available at that moment.
 - “I’ve noticed that I’ve covered this teacher’s 5th period class on 6 occasions during the past month, and that 2 other teachers have planning periods then; I wonder if we can spread this out so that we’re not all feeling surprised each time until a more permanent solution can be implemented.”
- Identify roles where you feel ineffective, and seek mentor support or alternative tasks to function more effectively.
- In performance review meetings or meetings with your supervisor/administrator, **identify special interests you have that you perceive beneficial to the school’s mission** and ways your role might include these interests.

SYSTEM TACTICS:

- Examine the **staffing of your department**, including student: teacher ratios, additional paraprofessional staff, and broader “central administration” visions for your school.
- Identify what **newsletters or vision/mission documents** are created by your broader school system (district, charter board, etc.) to better understand the direction of the school(s) and how your roles might change.
- Clarify with **supervisors/administrators the workflow plan for covering** for other staff or tasks to minimize unexpected, unnecessary changes in your roles.

Improving Managerial Support**INDIVIDUAL TACTICS:**

- Seek **regular (monthly/quarterly) brief meetings** with your supervisors/administrators to clarify how you are doing in their eyes.

- Clarify **supervisor/administrator preferences** for when, how and what to communicate when potential difficulties/conflicts (e.g., parent complaints, staff conflicts, etc.) arise.
 - Discuss how to **address immediate/urgent issues vs. those issues that can wait** days or weeks.
- **Appreciate/acknowledge helpful feedback/input** from supervisors/administrators, and ask for suggestions/recommendations if they identify problems with your work. Try to remain non-defensive, and instead open and curious about situations and options to improve them.
- If supervisors/administrators do not provide helpful input, **ask if they would prefer you attempt 1-2 solutions you generate, or another solution they prefer**. Consider also seeking input from other staff who appear effective with similar issues/predicaments.

SYSTEM TACTICS:

- Clarify **how often staff meet with supervisors/administrators**, and what helps make these meetings productive.
 - Clarify if there are **evaluative measures/expectations for you**, what they are, and what needs to occur to receive excellent ratings.
 - Identify how the **evaluation procedure is refined**, and if new/different approaches are being considered/anticipated.
- Identify the **process for responding to supervisor/administrator evaluations** that may indicate your weaknesses or difficulties.
- **Clarify any chain of alternative staff to access if supervisors/administrators are unavailable** during emergencies or urgent situations.
- Clarify **school system preferences for how school problems can best be described and submitted** (to whom?) to help identify persisting school system patterns that warrant consideration.

Improving Time Pressure

If this is identified as a problem area for you, please proceed to the Time Management section below.

Broadening Social Support

INDIVIDUAL TACTICS:

- Engage with families/parents/community members, and demonstrate respect for them by using preferred greetings.
 - Seek parent/community member input on your school, your classroom, and current practices
 - Consider sending surveys to your parents about proposed projects or other activities/interests they may have.
 - Include parents/community members in your classroom activities and in their newsletters, etc., describing meaningful activities from your classroom.
- Reach out to your teacher support organizations and clarify what they provide you and other staff.

- **Identify like-minded, mutual interest staff** in your building and plan regular times to speak before or after school).
- **Attend appealing community events/activities** to support your students and families.
- Contact **local newspapers about student activities/projects** that would appeal to community readership.
- **Chronicle your achievements** in a journal/diary, etc.

SYSTEM TACTICS:

- Engage with teachers/staff in **other schools/districts to identify effective practices** to elevate your position.
- Engage with **State Education Agencies about plans and steps to improve school staff status, pay, and staff retention** (and consider apprising them of plans/programs being implemented in other States/regions).
- Clarify at your **building level, district level, and State level how you can best provide helpful input** about teacher status and retention.

Time Management

How you manage your time can be difficult as you seek to find the right balance between your occupational roles and other roles socially, within your family, and as you continue to grow in other spheres. What becomes ever more complicated is how to allocate your time and energies to all these competing demands. While you may wish to allocate more time to any of your roles, often the demands of work, friends, family, what you may need to do may eclipse what you would like to do, causing your stress load may increase.

First, complete the ***My Time Management Practices*** activity on the next page to clarify your time management preferences.

My Time Management Practices

Circle the best answer for the following items based on what you do most days.

(Strongly Disagree = 0; Disagree = 1; Neither Agree/Disagree = 2; Agree = 3; Strongly Agree = 4)

	SD	D	N	A	SA
	0	1	2	3	4
1. I make “to do” lists and follow them very closely.	0	1	2	3	4
2. I make several separate piles of bills/mail, and address them as needed.	0	1	2	3	4
3. I keep my devices (cell phone, computer, etc.) all together/around me to respond to whatever comes up while I’m working.	0	1	2	3	4
4. If I have a task to do, I stay up as long as I can to complete it.	0	1	2	3	4
5. When a problem emerges, I tend to pursue the first solution that occurs to me.	0	1	2	3	4
6. I tend to not start a task until I feel prepared and ready.	0	1	2	3	4
7. I work as long as I can (usually 2+ hrs) before taking a break.	0	1	2	3	4
8. I ease into harder tasks later in the day by doing some easy ones first.	0	1	2	3	4
9. I rarely say “no” to requests by my boss/coworkers and just do it.	0	1	2	3	4
10. I work best when multitasking (doing/juggling several tasks at once).	0	1	2	3	4
11. I check email/social media during a few specific times each day.	0	1	2	3	4
12. I schedule meetings with others to be very brief (<15min) and will walk with them or move about during these meetings.	0	1	2	3	4
13. I have particular “theme” days where I focus on writing, or reading, or doing particular tasks.	0	1	2	3	4
14. I keep a notebook/recorder close by and jot down ideas that come to me.	0	1	2	3	4
15. I do exercise or meditation in the morning to help prepare my mind.	0	1	2	3	4
16. I use pictures or visual reminders to help keep track of my tasks/chores.	0	1	2	3	4
17. I establish actual “dates” or “deadlines” for completion of tasks.	0	1	2	3	4
18. I keep track of my schedule (by 60-90 min intervals) and all the tasks done during these time blocks.	0	1	2	3	4
19. I work better when there is less clutter, so spend time daily cleaning up.	0	1	2	3	4
20. I like to route people to others “better for that task,” or delegate tasks to others if I think they can do it better and easier.	0	1	2	3	4

Scoring My Time Management Practices

1) Total up Items 1-10

Item #1 _____
 #2 _____
 #3 _____
 #4 _____
 #5 _____
 #6 _____
 #7 _____
 #8 _____
 #9 _____
 #10 _____

2) Total up Items 11-20

Item #11 _____
 #12 _____
 #13 _____
 #14 _____
 #15 _____
 #16 _____
 #17 _____
 #18 _____
 #19 _____
 #20 _____

TOTAL: _____ (A)

_____ (B)

3) SUBTRACT A from B, so

TOTAL for #11-20: _____ (B)

TOTAL for #1-10: _____ (A)

(B) _____ - (A) _____ = _____ (MY TMP SCORE)

4) This score indicates your preferences, and the higher the (positive) number, the more your patterns are consistent with findings of *effective time management*. Each item provides some potential suggestions for techniques to enhance time management (the first 10 items suggest what works less well for most people, while items #11-20 suggest more effective tactics to consider).

Effective Time Management

The first step is to use your SMART goals approach (Chapter 1) to determine whether your goals align with how you actually spend your time, or want to spend your time. Let's review SMART goals as they might apply to you now:

1) Is each goal **Salient (Meaningful)**?

Ask yourself,

- **Why** do I want to make this a goal?
- Is this really how I want to **spend the time that is my life**?
- Is this goal **worth the hours** required?

If the goals are worthwhile, consider whether these are:

- Vitally Important (Top)
- Good, But Not Essential
- Something I'm only Doing Because Others Want/Expect me to do this

You may discover that your goals don't really fit your true likes or interests. If you most value your friendships, then making choosing a goal of reading 40 books this year will be unrealistic. Instead, you may want to adjust your goal to "I will access my teacher friends for their best ideas to improve reading scores (and their friends, too)," or "I may divide up the reading plan tasks/lessons with a good friend."

2) Is each goal **Measurable**?

Instead of "I want to be the best teacher," the goal becomes "I want student reading levels to increase by 1 year by April." Instead of "I want to be happy," the goal becomes "I want to make 3 new friends this year, I want to exercise at 4 times per week, I want to learn how to sing/play 2 songs by contemporary bands, I want to chaperone 3 school events to get to know my students better."

3) Is each goal **Active**?

What exactly do I have to do to achieve this goal? Looking at the goals in (2), you'll need to identify ways and places to make new friends, decide what gym and which activities, what musical instruments, or which school events work for me.

4) Is each goal **Realistic**?

If your students are 3 years behind in reading, it may be unrealistic to "catch them up to current grade level in one year." If you have not met anyone at your new school yet, never taught this subject/grade, don't sing or play any instrument, and haven't exercised in 5 years, then you'll need to introduce your new activities gradually instead of trying to take them all on at once.

You may want to "**break the goal down**" to make it clearer (and to see if you truly value it):

- Start with a **12-month goal** (or even longer)
- Then break the goal down into what you'll accomplish in **2-3-month intervals**
- You may need to break it down to **weekly or daily** and even adjust/change it as you go along

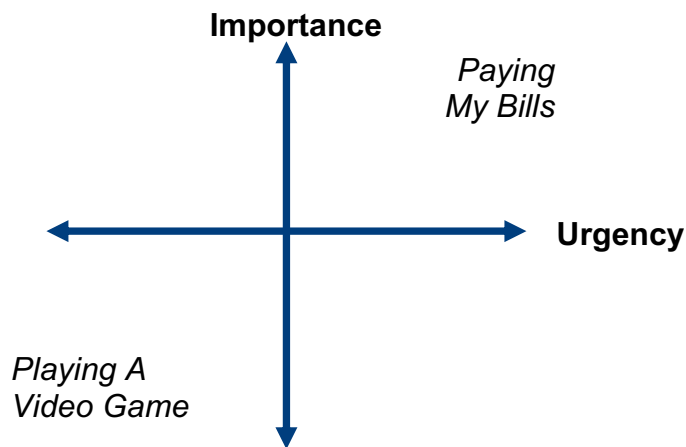
5) Is each goal **Time-Based**?

- **Commit to a date** (or time) when will achieve this goal

- If you see that you won't make it, then **revise the plan, the steps, or even the goal** (rather than give up); if you decide that the goal is not worth it ("don't really like playing the guitar, so I'm not going to learn 3 songs," that's okay, but instead of giving up, try to replace the goal with a different one ("okay, instead of practicing guitar, I'll use that time to make 3 paintings").
- **Post the date somewhere** so that see frequently (on wall, phone or computer screen, etc.), and it's even better if you tell others of your goal as you'll feel more inclined to do it, and they may offer encouragement/support or even join in/participate ("great, can I play bass while you play guitar on those tunes?").

Prioritizing Goals

Once you identify/revise your goals to meet the SMART criteria, it is helpful to prioritize your goals. An easy way to do this is to consider how important each goal is, and how urgent each one is. You can do that by using the following 2-axis figure to see where each fits.



To help determine your priorities, consider the following:

- a) How often have you done these identified tasks in the last month? In the last year? This may reveal that your chosen priorities differ from the way you spend your time.
- b) The *Pareto Principle* (from business research): 20% of your activities impact 80% of your achievement toward goals, so achieving some tasks becomes far more important than pursuing many tasks.
- c) Often we avoid activities because we're afraid of what's unfamiliar (e.g., success, or new skills, approaches), so we find reasons to evade these identified, vital tasks (and these are the tasks that actually make a difference, so that too may worry us, as we imagine having to change or be different than our "current [party-loving, procrastinating] selves")

Making an Activity Log

To more precisely identify how you are currently using your time, consider keeping an **ACTIVITY LOG For 3-7 days**, noting how you actually spend your time throughout the day (usually broken down by 15 or 30 minute segments; this reveals how much time you actually spend on a task, your real down time, and when you actually make your greatest efforts or struggle to complete tasks, (which can help with scheduling tasks for the future in terms of when to place tasks and how much time before you'll need a break, etc.). An example of an Activity Log is provided on the following page, divided into 30-minute segments.

You might notice some patterns from this example log, such as the person completing it seems to spend an unsatisfactory time watching TV, so this may be a time segment to change. In addition, the log can help identify changes or new ideas that will increase your satisfaction with built-in events such as the commute or cooking, improving a class approach, readying for bed, etc.

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What's more important--notice what provides significant satisfaction (the high-scoring activities). Too often, as we get busy, those rejuvenating, joyful activities get pushed to the side, so we become less happy as we do more of what we don't like and less of what we do. It's vital for well-being that you identify those activities you like, and you include them in your days and weeks. Yes, we all have to do more difficult, unpleasant tasks sometimes, but we want to notice the low-scoring activities, and think about doing them differently, so they're more enjoyable and meaningful for us and others, rather than just do more of some unlikable thing (which models to others and our students that you prioritize sacrifice and suffering over well-being).

If you look back at the Example Activity Log, what does that respondent most *enjoy*? Sleep, yet he struggles with just getting 6.5 hours a night and needs naps and is tired during the day. When we look at changeable activities, which provide little enjoyment for the respondent, it appears watching TV for 3.5 hours, even while trying to do some work, is not yielding much of value for this person. Planning better use of TV or some other competing healthy alternative activity may be a preferable change and worth testing.

A blank activity log page follows for you to use/adapt yourself to see how your time is actually spent, and how satisfying you find the hours of your life.

Example Activity Log

DATE: Wednesday September, 24

TIME	ACTIVITY	SATISFACTION (1-10)	COMMENTS
6:00am	Still asleep	10	
6:30am	Up, showered, coffee	8	Need better coffee flavors
7:00am	Commute to Work	5	Could read or listen to music
7:30am	Got set up for classes	7	Could split up tasks with aide
8:00am	1 st English class - review	3	Reviews are boring; need fun start
8:30am	Class Discussion	9	☺
9:00am	2 nd English class - discussion	8	Better if discuss to get 'em engaged
9:30am	Homework prep	6	Transition smooth
10:00am	Break—walked around	3	Just wandered and didn't make calls
10:30am	3 rd English class - discussion	4	Disruptive class, chaos
11:00am	Homework prep	4	Disruptive class, little effort
11:30am	Lunch	7	Did alone; graded papers
12:00pm	Prep Period	4	Was tired, didn't finish papers/plans
12:30pm	Prep Period	6	Got more done after nap
1:00pm	4 th English class - discussion	7	Tired but got going and good
1:30pm	Homework prep	8	Motivated, asking me questions
2:00pm	5 th English class - discussion	6	Group seemed tired, slow but nice
2:30pm	Homework prep	7	More engaged (more activities?)
3:00pm	Team Meeting	3	Sat, participated 5/30min
3:30pm	Staff Meeting	8	Good planning, like leader
4:00pm	Commute to Gym	5	Nap felt good
4:30pm	Workout	8	Felt good, couldn't do all planned
5:00pm	Shower/Spa/Clean Up	10	Felt great
5:30pm	Commute home	7	Chatted with gym friend
6:00pm	Make dinner	4	My salads are kinda boring
6:30pm	Eat, watch TV	4	Got fed, not sleeping
7:00pm	Watch Jeopardy	5	Won't use much of this
7:30pm	Grade papers	7	Got more into it
8:00pm	Grade papers	6	Fading fast
8:30pm	Call Mother	8	Good to catch up
9:00pm	Watch TV	3	Boring; should have planned lesson
9:30pm	Watch TV	2	Still boring, and feeling guilty
10:00pm	Watch TV and review Lesson	5	Better show and less guilt
10:30pm	Watch TV and plan worksheet	7	Like the worksheet
11:00pm	Watching TV	6	Not a good episode
11:30pm	Go to bed	8	Restless
12:00am	Sleep	10	Asleep
12:30am	Sleep	10	Asleep

Sample Activity Log

DATE:

TIME	ACTIVITY	SATISFACTION (1-10)	COMMENTS
6:00am			
6:30am			
7:00am			
7:30am			
8:00am			
8:30am			
9:00am			
9:30am			
10:00am			
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10:00pm			
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11:00pm			
11:30pm			
12:00am			

Time Management Strategies

Create a TASK CYCLE

While you may feel you can work 48 hours straight, or sustain a 90-hour work week, studies of productivity indicate work **output improves up to about 49 hours/week and then plateaus at about 56 hours/week** for most people. So rather than thinking “I’ll just do that later (tonight or during the weekend),” recognize that you instead may wish to spend your ~50 hours a week configured to get the most out of it.⁶⁹

- **Breaking down tasks into 60-90 minute segments**, then having a **15-20 minute break** during which you can move, eat, or sleep, can help you be more productive, and improve awareness and focus.^{70 71}
- Setting a **timer every 25-30 minutes** can help you adhere to a schedule and to build in helpful breaks (the Pomodoro Effect)
- **OHIO (Only Handle It Once)**: for tasks that take < 10 minutes, it is better to do them right away, rather than put off until later.
- Consider having a **work theme for certain days** of week (do research on Tuesdays, write lesson plans on Wednesdays, etc.)
- Keep and use a **notebook** to write down important ideas (vs. trying to remember later). Musicians, from Beethoven to contemporary artists, described keeping a notebook on them, or paper by the bed to get down inspirational ideas when they occurred (amidst sleep, while walking/running, during a commute, etc.)
- **Preserve 90-minute intervals** when you do not stop to respond to or attend to email, phone, etc. (except for true urgent matters); **plan 2-3 times per day to check email, make calls**, etc.
- Limit your To-Do Lists; instead, put tasks on an actual calendar (paper calendar, or on cell phone, etc.) what you need to do today and this week (knowing that about **41% of tasks on a calendar usually get done**)
- Know **your best work times**; some people are best at early morning or midday, and some people are truly night owls
- Most people find it easier to **do the harder tasks in the early** part of the day or early in your best timework cycle (so early in the evening if you’re a night owl, etc.)
- Write down when you will complete a task (**set a deadline**); even drug addicts were 90% more likely to complete a 5-paragraph essay when they committed to a deadline than those who did not (APA, Stress in America Survey); college students performed much better across classes when set deadlines⁷²
- **Reward yourself for completing a task** (or identified parts of a task) and take a break, do something else for 15 minutes

Establish a healthy routine

- Morning: Include some **healthy meditation/exercise** (< 60min)
- Use your **commute/travel time to complete tasks** (dictate grateful letters, etc.)
- Be home for dinner and other family rituals; embed those into your schedule and **anticipate time** to read to children, sort laundry, and help significant others with chores, etc.
- Use Apps to help you schedule tasks
 - *Rescue Time*: weekly reports of how you’re actually spending time
 - *Remember The Milk*: keeps track of your chores and will remind you of them
 - *Focus Booster*: for those who procrastinate, this app is based on Pomodoro Technique, enhances focus by decreasing anxiety
 - *Focus@Will*: uses music to improve focus and attention

Avoid time lost due to misplaced items

At times we all lose and misplace items; here are strategies to help:

- 1) **Homefulness**: everything (keys, etc.) has its place (“home”)...the same place...every day....every time.

- 2) Identify the place for **important items** (e.g., keys, phone/charger, etc.) particularly when going to new places (at home, my phone is charged/kept at _____, in my bag at _____, and at school at _____);
- 3) Identify the **place for new items** e.g., new book, new papers to review, new devices, etc.), and insure their place does not interfere with existing important items places

Mono-task instead of multi-task (Complete what's important)

While we all wish to believe that we're effective multi-taskers, the evidence suggests that's untrue for most tasks. If the tasks are walking while making a phone call, one can easily multi-task these two together

But when the tasks are **cognitive** (do math, review emails, read and send text responses, etc.), we just switch from one back to the other rather than do them at the same time. And we do it inefficiently. It usually takes about 20-40% longer to accomplish tasks when you go back and forth between tasks.⁷³ Multitaskers filter information more slowly, take longer to switch and shift gears between tasks, and have poorer memory as they switch between tasks and try to remember what's important.⁷⁴

Brainwise, multi-taskers have lower grey matter (brain cell) density regions for empathy, emotional control and cognitive control.⁷⁵ Indeed, multi-taskers had greater IQ decreases than those smoking marijuana, losing a full night of sleep, or even those who were watching reruns of television sit-coms.

Eliminate Distractions

- **Top 5 distractions:** cell phone/texting, Internet, gossip, social media, email, so put these away where they cannot distract you, and also may put on blocking software so cannot get news feeds, etc.
- **Limit E-mail/social media to 3 times per day and scheduled** (e.g., 7:00 a.m., noon, 7:00 p.m.);
- **Unfriend/Unfollow everyone who's not truly important** to you (measuring your life by the number of *likes* yields little quality to life)
- If it is hard to get yourself going because of multiple distractions around you, **set a timer for 2 minutes** and then *start (jump in to task)*

Contending with Competing Demands

Sometimes we plan well, but others interrupt us, or our flow and try to alter our schedule, impose other tasks on us, or try to shift our priorities. Several techniques can be useful for dealing with these situations.

- **Say "no"....nicely**
 - **Refuse in a friendly way:** "Gee, I wish I could, but I can't."
 - **Delegate:** "I don't think I can do it, but seems like it might work if we divided up this task among the 4 of us."
 - Let **others know you're shifting the priorities** and ensure agreement:
 - "I get the importance of that, so I could do after _____; will that work?"
 - "Okay, this is our immediate priority, so I'll move _____ to later. Does that work for everyone?"
- **Make meetings more efficient**
 - Avoid any unnecessary meetings and if you need to meet, try to **make it short** (10-15min) about a few (< 3) specific goals/tasks
 - **Combine Activities:** Move around, walk, or eat while meeting with others (effective multi-tasking since you're not doing multiple cognitive tasks simultaneously)

Countering Procrastination

If you struggle with procrastination (and many of us do), several techniques may be helpful.

- **Personify Procrastination** as a “Thief” or “Person” trying to steal or interfere with your time
 - “*Timethief*, I can only interact with you for 2 more minutes and then must leave you to resume grading tests.”
 - “*Crass*, stop trying to get me to play video games with you; leave me be; when I finish the laundry then I’ll play video games from then until 2:00 p.m.”
- Set short intervals before you begin a task, AND **short intervals to complete the task** (or parts of the task); once you get going, *momentum occurs* which helps push you toward completion
 - *Zeigarnik Effect*: when given hard puzzles and not enough time (told to stop), 90% of participants will finish them anyway; humans seek to complete tasks, so once they start/get going, the hardest part of the task has been accomplished
- **Schedule in some Down Time** since no one can work truly incessantly, then plan to do non-work-related activities
 - Replace mediocre, familiar actions (such as checking emails, social media, etc.) with more enjoyable or useful tasks
 - Make your day off so that you are truly *off*, or include nature/prayer/meditation, or a 30-90 minute flow activity (where you lose track of time because you’re so into it)

Do the Mastering Procrastination Activity on the next 2 pages.

- 1) Review the additional **Overcoming Procrastination** Strategies
- 2) Identify *times you procrastinate*, and then examine the options on the exercise sheet to consider practices that may work for you.
- 3) Complete the *preferred options* for the 3 events you identify.
- 4) Identify potential *obstacles* to employing these tactics.

Overcoming Procrastination

Build in Reinforcement (Configure in Rewards to Make it Easier to Start)

1. **Self-Reward:** Reward yourself with something pleasant when you have finished any difficult or onerous task, or completed significant parts or segments of it.
2. **Wait For It:** Deprive yourself of desired activities or fun until you make a significant dent or effort toward the task.

Reframe the Task toward Accomplishment

3. **Stimulus Control:** Make changes in your environment to remove distractions, ensure privacy, become neater, and have important materials on hand; do not do this daily instead of the task.
4. **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Make a list of all the good things that will happen if you stop procrastinating on an important task, and review that list regularly. List all the negative results of your procrastination, and review that list each day before leaving work.
5. **“Remember Forgetting” Technique:** Whenever you remember a task you keep forgetting to do, *do it* – or at least some of it – *immediately*.
6. **Knockout Technique:** The harder and more unpleasant a task is, the more quickly it would better be done: so do it *immediately*, and get it over with.
7. **“Work First” Approach:** Identify the most difficult part of the task and do that first.

Break it Down into Manageable Units/Parts

8. **Small Sequential Steps:** Break down onerous tasks into smaller parts and do a small step by a specific deadline. Proceed with the next step; if you gain momentum, continue to the next parts.
9. **5-minute Plan:** Work in 5-minute segments on a task. Once you have finished 5 minutes, see if you can continue for another 5 minutes; see how many 5-minute segments you can do at one sitting/time.
10. **“Swiss Cheese” Method:** Do *anything at all* that is connected to the task you want to accomplish. Gradually eat large chunks or holes in the task until it becomes easier to do.

Identify 3 tasks that you have procrastinated on.

Then apply 2-3 of the *Overcoming Procrastination* strategies and monitor the results.

Tasks Where I Procrastinate	Strategies Attempted (Strategy #)	Results (How long took to do the task, or.... what happened to prevent completion)
A		
B		
C		

SKILL GUIDELINES:

Effective Time Management

Prioritize Goals

Is Each Goal **SMART**?

How **Important** and **Urgent** is the Goal?

Effective Time Management Tactics

- ___ **Break down tasks into 60-90-minute segments, add 15-20-minute break**
- ___ **Set a timer for every 25-30 minutes**
- ___ **OHIO (Only Handle It Once):** for tasks that take < 10 minutes
- ___ **Identify a work theme for certain days** of week
- ___ **Keep and use a notebook** to write down important ideas/thoughts
- ___ **Limit checking email, making calls** (2-3 times planned each day)
- ___ **Do the harder tasks early** in the day/your best work time
- ___ **Set a deadline** to complete the task
- ___ **Reward** yourself for completing a task
- ___ **Schedule a Healthy Routine** (exercise, family rituals, commuter activities, down time)
- ___ **All your items have a home** (so no hunting at the last minute)
- ___ **Mono-task Cognitive Jobs** (finish one before starting another)
- ___ **Eliminate Distractions** (limit media, keep friends only, 2-minute timer)
- ___ **Contend with Other Demands** (say “no” nicely, delegate, check shifting priorities with others)
- ___ **Counter Procrastination** (personify, short intervals to do, schedule “down time”)

10. Intellectual Well-Being: Meaningfulness

Learning Objectives (After completing this chapter, you will be able to):

1. Review your purpose at this point in your life
2. Identify your well-being over time in 5 spheres
2. Make a plan to enhance your well-being

Skills you will develop through this chapter:

- A. How to Monitor Your Well-Being Progress
- B. How to Recognize Where You Have Meaning in Your Life

In this chapter, we will examine what's meaningful to you. Many components of meaning and purpose have been described over centuries, so we will help you examine how these pertain to your life. Please complete the "My Meaning" questionnaire on the next page.



My Meaning

For each item, please circle the number that describes how you have felt *most days for the past month*.

0 <i>Almost Never</i> (<i><few times/month</i>)	1 <i>Occasionally</i> (<i>1-2 days/wk</i>)	2 <i>Often</i> (<i>3-5 days/wk</i>)	3 <i>Almost always</i> (<i>6-7 days/wk</i>)
1. I understand my life's meaning.			0 1 2 3
2. I feel like I know my life's purpose.			0 1 2 3
3. To find my purpose, I try to be open and respond to opportunities that present themselves.			0 1 2 3
4. I am not inclined to search for something to make my life feel significant.			0 1 2 3
5. I have something to live for, and appreciate the joy and goal of living.			0 1 2 3
6. When I look at the story of my life so far, I am pleased with how things have turned out.			0 1 2 3
7. I am satisfied with the achievements in my life.			0 1 2 3
8. I manage my daily responsibilities well.			0 1 2 3
9. The daily demands of my life do not get me down.			0 1 2 3
10. I am able to arrange my life in a way that is satisfying to me.			0 1 2 3
11. Others describe me as a giving person, generous with my time to help or support them.			0 1 2 3
12. Over my life, I have had many warm, trusting relationships with others.			0 1 2 3
13. I stand up for my opinions, even when they are different from those of others.			0 1 2 3
14. I am not swayed by others even when they push their ideas or positions on me.			0 1 2 3
15. My daily activities seem useful and worthwhile to me.			0 1 2 3
16. While others might, I do not wander aimlessly through life.			0 1 2 3
17. I enjoy making plans for my future and working toward them now to reach them.			0 1 2 3
18. Life continues to be primarily a process of learning, change, and growth.			0 1 2 3
19. I think it is helpful to travel and have new experiences that change me and how I view the world.			0 1 2 3
20. I enjoy being in situations that require me to continue to change from familiar ways of doing things to use/learn new tools and approaches.			0 1 2 3

TOTAL SCORE: _____

This score reflects many facets of meaning in one's life. Generally, higher total scores are associated with feeling one's life has meaning and purpose, and that obstacles don't get in the way too much, that others contribute to one's meaning, and that one feels in control of one's own life and destiny

The item numbers below describe what each item measures:

- 1, 3 = Presence of meaning (I feel meaning now in my present life.)
- 2, 4 = Search for meaning (I bloom where I'm planted and don't feel like I'm waiting or seeking to find my purpose.)
- 5 = Ikigai (a Japanese concept associated with feeling and enjoying one's purpose)
- 6, 7 = Self-Acceptance (I accept my strengths/limitations and make the most of those and am proud of my achievements.)
- 8, 9, 10 = Environmental Mastery (I do not let common obstacles derail my purpose or plans.)
- 11, 12 = Positive Relations with Others (Others contribute to my meaning...and I contribute to theirs.)
- 13, 14 = Autonomy (I feel confident I am doing what is right for me, and can defend my purpose to others.)
- 15, 16, 17 = Purpose in Life (I am fulfilling my purpose in life right now.)
- 18, 19, 20 = Personal Growth (I am flexible and continue to grow and change to follow my purpose in a changing world.)

(adapted from the (a) Meaning in Life Questionnaire from Steger, M. F., Frazier, P., Oishi, S., & Kaler, M. (2006). The Meaning in Life Questionnaire: Assessing the presence of and search for meaning in life. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 53, 80-93, (b) Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69 (4), 719-727.)



Name: _____

Date: _____

My Spirituality

For each item, please circle the number that describes how you have feel about each item.

	0 <i>Not at All</i>	1 <i>A Little</i>	2 <i>Moderately</i>	3 <i>Very Much So</i>
1. Certain aspects of life are non-ordinary, and worthy of reverence or awe.	0	1	2	3
2. I feel a presence beyond or outside myself that guides or comforts me.	0	1	2	3
3. I feel connected to others even whom I don't know; it would be very difficult to kill strangers in a war situation.	0	1	2	3
4. Harming anyone or anything is also harming myself.	0	1	2	3
5. I commune with nature, go to church, or do something at least weekly to remind myself of more significant things than work or daily concerns.	0	1	2	3
6. I take time each week to rest my mind and body and take myself out of my regular activities.	0	1	2	3
7. I look inward, meditate, and/or reflect to refine my meaning/purpose.	0	1	2	3
8. I do rituals or traditions that have special meaning to me.	0	1	2	3
9. I read/study religious or spiritual texts.	0	1	2	3
10. I am inspired by spiritual/religions traditions, practices, or readings.	0	1	2	3
11. I have transcendent moments where I feel a deeper connection to the universe.	0	1	2	3
12. I employ spiritual practices in my daily life.	0	1	2	3
13. Spiritual activities are valuable to me.	0	1	2	3
14. I regularly engage with others who share my spiritual practices or values.	0	1	2	3

Total Score: _____

My Spirituality – p. 2

This score reflects various components of spirituality in one's life. Generally, higher total scores are associated with increased interest and participation in spiritual activities, and in powers or forces beyond oneself.

The item numbers below describe what each item measures:

- 1 = Some things are indeed **Sacred**.
- 2 = I feel a **Presence** beyond what I can see or hear.
- 3, 4 = I feel **Interconnection** with other things/people, even if I don't know them personally.
- 5, 6 = I take time to **Rest** my mind/body each week and engage with some more spiritual entities.
- 7 = **Introspection** is a part of my life.
- 8, 9, 10 = **Traditions** are a part of my life.
- 11 = I experience **Transcendence**.
- 12 = Spiritual **Practices** are a regular part of my life.
- 13 = I **Value** spirituality.
- 14 = My **Social** life includes shared spiritual interests.

Each of these facets of spirituality represents something different, and each person uniquely finds the components relevant and valuable to them. As a result, the "Total Score" is less important than the congruity of various of these facets with the person one aspires to be in daily life.

This scale is not specific to any religion, and indeed religiosity (adherence to passed on values, adherence to specific tenets or moral principles, deference to religious leaders, declarations of faith or allegiance to practices, etc.) represent something different than spirituality.

(SPIRITT facets derived from Aftergood D (2019). SPIRITT: What does "spirituality" mean? *Current Psychiatry* 18:50-51.)

Spirituality and Well-Being

Spirituality has shown positive impacts on well-being. The specific practices appear less important than several positive benefits of spirituality. First, those who embrace spirituality describe less vulnerability to psychopathologies such as depression and anxiety. Second, those higher on spirituality report higher levels of meaning, also associated positive well-being and diminished vulnerability to adverse health outcomes, both physical and psychological. Third, multiple positive "defenses," such as altruism and sublimation are more embedded in most spiritual practices, enhancing one's reactions to adversity. Thinking "beyond oneself" is associated with greater life satisfaction and less vulnerability to adverse life experiences. Similarly, spiritual practices are often associated with positive coping mechanisms, such as creating and relying on social support, and also on "reframing" events to accept and embrace adversities (e.g., "this bad event has occurred to me, but there may be some higher purpose in my experiencing of this such that I will become a stronger or better person.").



“Begin with the end in mind....and live your hours accordingly.”

Now let's examine how your meaning and purpose influence your daily life. While we may identify a life purpose, we reveal what matters most to us by how we spend our hours. We may say that what matters most to us is being a great friend yet spend most of our waking hours engaged in work tasks such that we actually neglect our friends and social life. We all have moments when we have to do tasks that we would prefer not to have to spend time doing (e.g., take our car in to get the oil changed, go grocery shopping, write checks to pay bills, even socializing for some of us can be a low preference for how we allocate our time), so our goal is to build in the tasks that do matter to us on a frequent basis (daily/weekly) and become more efficient about completing those tasks that we value less but that compete for our time (“Can I set up most of these bills on Autopay?” “Can I have the students grade each other's papers for this assignment so that I don't have to spend an extra hour tonight doing it?”). We'll examine how you do spend your hours, and then how to build in those parts of life that most matter to you.

Let's begin by looking back at some of the items from the Well-being Wheel you did the first week when you began. We're going to take this in a different order, because that may help you manage your time more efficiently.

For the “Hours of My Life” activity below, consider a typical week in your life (not a week when you're traveling, enjoying the holidays, managing the flu, etc.). Consider during that week how valuable each of the activities described is to you. Turn to the next page to do this activity.

The Hours Of My Life

Please read each item below then circle how much you agree with each statement. We'll do the blanks later.

0=Not at All

1=A little

2=Moderately

3=Very Much

1. I get restful sleep for a similar interval most nights.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
2. I am proud of what I eat and its nutritional value.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
3. I look forward every day to some recreational physical activity.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
4. I try to move about so I'm not sedentary/sitting for >1hr at a time.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
5. Music and/or artistic activities are an enjoyable, regular part of my life.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
6. I enjoy my work and what it requires of me.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
7. I stay focused and present when I do a task.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
8. I manage my time well and complete most tasks on time.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
9. I continue to grow and flourish in my job.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
10. I am proud of my career.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
11. I like to stimulate my mind by reading, listening, or watching.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
12. I like to explore my interests more deeply or to get better at skills.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
13. I seek or think of better ways to do things.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
14. I journal, write, or use pictures/videos of my life story.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
15. I rely on deeply held principles or spiritual values to guide my life.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
16. I am able to engage and enjoy others, including those unlike me.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
17. I regularly seek input from good friends, even if they're not close by.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
18. I am aware of what annoys me and what I do that bothers others.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
19. I am able to set and respect my own and others' boundaries.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
20. I am able to resolve conflicts in most areas of my life.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
21. I value all the different emotions I feel.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
22. I feel calm/serene most of the time.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
23. I can stay with and tolerate my painful emotions and learn from them	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
24. I can manage my emotions and stay on task and work when necessary.	0	1	2	3	_____	_____
25. I enjoy living in the present and worry little about the past or future	0	1	2	3	_____	_____



Now write in the blank next to each item how many hours you (actually) allocate to doing that activity each day. You should end up with a total of about 24 hours when you add these all up. Some items may be 0 since you do not seek to do or experience them, while others may be much larger.

After you have done this, fill in the 2nd blank: How many hours a day do you want to be doing this activity rather than what you are actually doing? You may have different activities than those listed here, so please add those in, and see if they fit under the physical, occupational, intellectual, social, or emotional domains. This should help you see where you are putting most of your energies, and to see if you are actually spending a reasonable amount of your time do what you want to be doing.

You may also feel that your hours do not approach 24 hours per day. In such a case, consider where you are spending hours currently in your life that perhaps don't fit into any of the well-being or good activities described above (or that you have listed). You may have some activities (e.g., playing video games) that provide reinforcement for hard work, or stimulation, improve your hand-eye coordination, etc., yet you may be spending more time doing those than you like. This can also be true for substance usage, which you may enjoy for brief intervals but now notice cut into other preferred activities you would rather be doing more. You may wish to consider whether you want to change your daily schedule in some ways to spend more time doing what you believe to be most important, and what steps you'll need to take to bring that about. Specifically, you may want to schedule times to be grateful, exercise, eat better, engage meaningfully with others, and cut down on other activities that interfere with what most matters to you during your lifetime.

This is an activity to be repeated often, perhaps 2-3 times per year. We all too easily find ourselves using coping mechanisms to deal with stress that are not consistent with our values. Indeed, these competing activities may become patterns (e.g., using substances too much, changing jobs or friends frequently) that take on a life of their own, dominate our lives, and relegate the important things to the periphery of our lives (and we don't use the sadness or anger we feel as a gauge that we're not doing or being what we wish to be).

Intellectual Pursuits

Opportunities abound for expanding horizons and *stimulating* thought. Most of these are easier to integrate into the hours of one's day with a small amount of preparatory effort. To consider in these activities is how you may cultivate meaning in your own life. The creation of art, music, videos/films, writings, even journaling can help chronicle the course of one's life, and what has been gleaned. "Art" remains timeless, and experiences as a teacher captured by others remain valuable even generations later. Sometimes "meaning" is harder to recognize, initially, than the accomplishment of a goal, but the process of attaining a goal is almost always more valuable (and useful to others) than reaching the goal itself.

Reading

Reading books is often cited, but less frequently practiced. Perhaps the easiest way to increase thought-provoking reading experiences is to (1) identify books that sound appealing, (2) purchasing some of these books (actual books or on devices), and (3) having a book always available. While standing in lines, "waiting" to do tasks, in an airport, while waiting for meetings, reading can become part of one's daily regular routine (Pasricha N (April 4, 2017). How to increase the number of books you read. **The Star**).

Movies

Lists abound of "greatest" movies and documentaries, so if films/movies are stimulating, reviewing lists that are of interest and appeal to you can be an excellent way to experience stimulating thoughts in a more intense experience (visually, audally, etc.).

Music

As described earlier, both listening to and playing music can enhance mood and creativity. In addition, the emergence of music software that allows one to create tracks, or to use loops, makes constructing songs increasingly possible for everyone, even those not musically trained or proficient.

Social Pursuits

Identifying and finding others with similar interests or who pique our own, can yield substantial rewards. Again, the process of finding those like-minded or positive influencing others is often more important than the actual identification of those close friends. What attracts us to others tells us much about who we are, what we seek, and what is comfortable for each of us (sometimes good, and sometimes not so much). Deriving and providing pleasure to others forges bonds valuable in recognizing one's growth over time.



SKILL GUIDELINES:

Making Meaning In One's Life

1) *What really matters to me?*

- **Physical:** My Preferences about *Nutrition, Sleep, Exercise/Activity*
- **Occupational:** Work, Career Growth, Impacts on Others/the World, Leaving the Legacy I Want
- **Intellectual:** Stimulation, Growth, Exploring Diverse Interests/Talents, My Place in the Cosmos, Spirituality, Mindfulness (Being Present in the Moment), Flowing (Losing Myself In Positive Activities)
- **Social:** Engaging with Others; Being a Good Friend; Having Good Friends; Creating Community; Sharing Interests
- **Emotional:** Experiencing events deeply; Pursuing Positive Emotions (Serenity, Hope, Awe, Love, Joy, Inspiration, Gratefulness); Valuing and Learning from Survive Emotions (Fear, Regret, Envy, Shame, Guilt, Anger, Sadness); Managing Moods and Emotions Amidst Diverse Circumstances (Still working effectively, Regrouping when Distressed)

2) *How do I want to spend my hours?*

- Where do I want to spend more hours each day?

3) *Where am I spending the hours of my day?*

- What Activities Are Taking Too Many of my Hours?
- Which Daily Activities Do I Need to Shorten, Do More Efficiently or Decrease to Make More Hours Available for What Matters More?

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