

**MASS MENTAL HEALTH
EDUCATION
for
EVERYONE
(MMEE PROGRAM):**

**CLAIM INNER PEACE AND
JOY FOR LIFE**

[WWW.FINDINNERPEACE.CO]

Everyone is expected to benefit from this educational program. Please feel free to skip areas of the program you don't need. The program may be led or self-taught.

PROGRAM OUTLINE:

This program addresses the following topics and provides suggestions for dealing with each problem.

MODULE 1. EMOTIONAL STATES TO BRING UNDER CONTROL

1. Anger
2. Fear-Anxiety
3. Sadness-Depression
4. Shame
5. Worry

MODULE 2. TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING EMOTIONAL STATES

6. Mindfulness meditation exercises
 - One Minute Mindfulness Exercise
 - Three-stage breathing technique
7. Relaxation exercises
 - Brief Relaxation
 - Whole-Body Relaxation
 - Individual body parts
 - Create a mantra

MODULE 3. ACTIVITIES TO PROTECT A HAPPY LIFE

8. LIFE SHAPERS FOR CONTINUED HAPPINESS
 - Practice Acceptance
 - Challenge Negative Thoughts
 - Promote the development of resilience
9. MENTAL HEALTH LIFE SHAPERS
 - Stop repeating known wrong actions
 - Learn to attend primarily to positive life events
 - Treat others as you would like to be treated
 - Learn to be content
10. EXERCISE, FOOD, SLEEP:
 - Exercise
 - Food
 - Sleep

MODULE 4. DEVELOP RESILIENCE & LIVE WITH HAPPINESS EVERYDAY

11. DAILY ACTIVITIES FOR PRESERVING RESILIENCE:
 - *Do these everyday*
 - *Long-term principles for remaining happy*

12. PARTICIPANT NOTES/SUGGESTIONS

Participants are encouraged to take this entire program more than once

Welcome to the MASS MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE!

Mental health education is important because it provides information that helps people take charge of their thoughts, feelings and behavior in a way which ensures a happy life.

Most people think happiness and joy are found in the things we own or can own and the places we visit as well as in the people we know and associate with or whose circle we wish to join. Therefore people spend time, energy, thinking, planning and sometimes money on how to achieve these goals they consider necessary for happiness. Indeed we may be happy when we have certain possessions, have access to certain places and are surrounded by certain friends or acknowledged by important people. We also know however, that some of these avenues believed to bring happiness will not last for our lifetime. Many have observed or believe that money can bring people and property that are pleasing, so for them, finances provide a shortcut to happiness. But happiness is not out there, somewhere; it is inside us.

What most people do not recognize is that it is really our state of mind that allows everyone to be or not be happy. Our acquisitions cannot force our minds to make us happy. Rather, our thinking is the key to the happiness we seek and experience. Thoughts put us in a happy mood or can make us feel lousy regardless of our external circumstances. As such, the manufacturer of our happiness is in our heads and not in our wallets or produced by our popularity. By this reasoning, sadness, anger, shame, excitement, joy, curiosity, disgust and all the other emotions we feel, really originate in our heads not outside, in the words of others, in the objects we treasure or in the events that occur.

Indeed, our situation in life gives us the reason to think that a particular circumstance or event is good or bad for us. In other words, it is what we say to ourselves about what has happened or will happen that leads us to feel emotions, such as being sad, angry, happy, afraid, ashamed etc. So then to bring happy feelings it is the negative messages we often give ourselves, along with the bad moods or emotions they cause that we need to change and replace with opposite thoughts. Naturally, nobody wants unpleasant feelings. We want them gone and replaced with enjoyable emotions. Continuing to feel good (through positive emotions) in the absence of negative emotions, is really what happiness is.

Possessions and social standing make us happy only sometimes; but happy emotions and thoughts always make us happy. Moreover in any case, it is how we think about these things from the outside that produces our good feelings towards them. It is sometimes the case that the same objects and events that at one time delighted us, come to have a different effect on us because of new unpleasant thoughts we now have about them. So happy thoughts, along with the happy emotions they activate, are always responsible for the joy or lack thereof that we experience. It does seem therefore that learning to have happy thoughts is the surest way to be happy. Can we? Is it really possible to learn how to be happy?

The secret to keeping periods of good feeling longer or have them more frequently is in the knowledge of the process that produces them. As has been explained, basically we lose joy when other thoughts bring worry, anger, fear, sadness etc. So if we are able to clear away unwanted and unhealthy thinking, our happiness will have a chance to stay longer. It is important to recognize however, that the emotions, which our thoughts create are natural and God-given; and we need them all, though not to the same extent. Therefore the question now is: How can we keep those “bad” thoughts out, which we do not want all the time, so that the “good” ones will stay? That is: How do we control our emotional reactions, maintaining and strengthening the desired ones, so we will be happy most of the time, with or without money, material possessions or certain people? That’s what this program intends to teach.

Please Note:

1. Follow the content and instructions in each section even when you encounter similar or identical material in another Section.
2. Because some people have strong faith, ideas along these lines are offered, though due to the developer’s lack of knowledge of other faith systems only the Christian viewpoint is represented here. Your religious belief however should not hinder your getting legal help or therapy if you consider it necessary.

Not knowing the medical history of participants, it is prudent to advise those who have physical issues to consult with their healthcare professional about exercises, especially those which involve physical activity.

Module 1. Emotional States To Bring Under Control

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1. ANGER

Introduction

Anger creates widespread tension in the body, which disrupts the functioning of some vital organs. For example, even when suppressed, frequent anger tend to increase heart rate and blood pressure. This places undue strain on the heart muscles, putting the person at very high risk of coronary heart disease, which seems to advance faster in people with chronic anger issues. Anger causes shallow breathing, which over-stresses certain organs, including the brain, due to insufficient oxygen; and also burdens the digestive, circulatory and urinary-genital systems. Frequent headaches and sleep disruption sometimes occur along with recurring fatigue problems all of which tend to become chronic with chronic anger (that is feeling angry often and keeping it strong for an extended period). As a result a person with chronic anger frequently feels agitated, resulting in loss of inner peace at least while experiencing the angry feelings or when reminded of the provocation. An angry person always believes in being right when showing anger and as such it can get out of hand. Because of its harmful effects on the individual and its expression is threatening to others it needs to be controlled or kept in check, as it may lead to social or self-isolation. As with all emotional reactions our thoughts play a major role in maintaining or removing angry feelings. So to get rid of anger you need to dump the thoughts and feelings that are making you angry. It is best to do so right after the statement or action that made you angry.

Think of anything else. Other thoughts will produce their own emotional climate. It is also quite OK to review the provocation afterward - not just to return to the angering issues - but only in order to plan how you will avoid being upset or upsetting others in future.

Anger is usually aroused by a sense of justice denied. Even when it is justified it still needs to be kept in check. It is often difficult however, to know when to exercise warranted anger. According to Aristotle appropriate display of anger is not a simple matter. As he put it: "Anybody can become angry – that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way – that is not within everybody's power and is not easy."

How To Do Better

1. The first step in improving is to accept that you are angry and acknowledge the reason(s) why you have it. Denying to yourself that you are angry is unhealthy and will limit your motivation to do better.

2. Learn to remember 3 or 4 of these suggestions at a time, so you will be ready to "change the channel" from anger and instead say to yourself:
 - ✓ I'll pray for self-control, right now (Galatians 5:22)
 - ✓ I'll ignore that
 - ✓ That's not the issue
 - ✓ Let me change the topic; I'll say something clever or funny to them.
 - ✓ I won't stand here, listen to this or let it bother me
 - ✓ This is where I tune out
 - ✓ I'll take leadership and stop being the angry person right now. I'll act smart and show we need a solution, acceptance of the other or love, not war
 - ✓ I'm sure we both think we are right. So nothing but more conflict will result. I'll back off to calm myself
 - ✓ Nothing will improve this situation, so I'll smile for 5 seconds at a time to reduce my tension
 - ✓ I don't need to make myself feel awful. [Smile at this idea for 5 seconds]
 - ✓ If I continue being angry, I'll damage my heart
 - ✓ Somebody else who can help or fix the problem needs to know about this
 - ✓ Finding a solution, if you think there is one, is better than remaining angry

3. Perhaps, in day-to-day life, you need to take life less seriously
 - ✓ Try Laughter Yoga – many presentations on You Tube

- ✓ Listen to children laughing – many presentations on You Tube
- ✓ Watch animals playing – many presentations on You Tube

4. As a Christian believer or “seeker” let the Word of God teach and guide you. As the Lord says:

- ❖ “Everything in the Scriptures is God’s Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them the right way to live.” (2 Timothy 3:16)
- ❖ The passages below tell us that while being angry sometimes, is understandable God does not approve of quick, prolonged or uncontrolled displays of anger.

Jesus expressed anger at evil and sin not for something done to Him (John 2:14-15). That incident showed sinless anger or righteous indignation and was not an impulsive, out of control behaviour; also being the Son of God Jesus had the authority to act. He could not have misjudged or been mistaken! Moreover the guiding principle (Ephesians 4:26) still holds.

- ❖ Allow the following passages to guide your angry attitudes:
- ❖ If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day. Don’t give the Devil a chance. (Ephesians 4:26-27).
- ❖ My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires (James 1:19-20).
- ❖ Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking provocations (Proverbs 19:11).
- ❖ A fool gives full expression of his anger, but a wise man quietly holds it back (Proverbs 29:11).
- ❖ Control your temper, for anger labels you a fool (Ecclesiastes 7:9)
- ❖ A hot-tempered person starts fights; a cool-tempered person stops them (Proverbs 15:18).
- ❖ Stop being continually angry, totally give up rage and do not fume over things; it only causes trouble; for troublemakers will perish but those who wait for God’s help will get His promised reward (Psalm 37:8-9, paraphrase)
- ❖ We are told to avoid associating with an angry person so we are not influenced to start imitating them (Proverbs 22:24-25), especially when we are trying to bring our own anger problem under control.

Practice controlling yourself *as quickly as possible every time*, using the advice provided above. Being diligent in this practice will help reduce or eliminate your anger problem; otherwise, it will stay or get worse

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don't give up.

The non-Christian topics are explained in greater detail in: "TO YOUR HAPPINESS: A Self-Healing Guide to Peace of Mind"

If none of all these methods works for you despite your efforts to do them correctly it may be time to talk about the problem with a professional, including your Pastor.

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2. FEAR

Introduction

Fear reactions are responsible for:

- Being afraid
- Panic/Panic Attack
- Anxiety/Anxiety Disorders

2. Fear/Being afraid

- This refers to our normal reaction when something scares us (for example when we jump back just in time from a fast oncoming car; when confronted by an angry, threatening person against whom we stand no chance; or starting to go down a long and steep stairs you slip and your fast action to grab on to the rail prevented a nasty fall). The person settles back to their normal state soon after the experience

(ii) Panic/Panic Attack

- A thought comes forward that suddenly raises the feeling of fear to a much higher degree causing more rapid heartbeats, a feeling of losing your breath or losing control; the fear is unexpected and intense usually lasting from a few seconds to minutes but may be re-activated several times by the same or a similar thought, which often leads to a new fear of its reoccurrence (fear of fear)

(iii) Anxiety/Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety is a lingering nervousness and worry or tension, which may not be the result of a presently fearful event. It usually arises from a past experience of significant threat or trauma. Its level of seriousness depends on a person's personal experience, mental health history, upbringing and genetic makeup.
- Anxiety disorder is chronic anxiety of specific (for example, agoraphobia – fear of being in open spaces) or general situations (e. g. Generalized Anxiety Disorder – chronic anxiety comprised of exaggerated worry and tension, even when there is little or nothing to cause it; Social Anxiety Disorder – overwhelming

anxiety reaction and excessive self-consciousness in a specific or a variety of everyday social situations)

(iv) Personality Disorders (PD)

- Life-long chronic anxiety produces a PD that significantly affects many areas of functioning. Examples of anxiety PD include: Paranoid PD – excessive distrust, suspicion of betrayal or danger, extreme watchfulness; Safety-Oriented Personality Style (SOPS) – people’s pattern of behaving and thinking become fear-controlled and preoccupied with ensuring or maintaining safety and security. Constant worry during the course of this PD leads to memory problems, inconsistent, autocratic, easily offended behaviour and relationship problems.

(v) As a believer or “seeker”, consider the Bible’s teaching on fear-related behaviour:

- ❖ This very important verse on fear in the NT teaches: “There is no room in love for fear. Well-developed love chases away fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life requires learning to approach future unknowns with a loving attitude (rather than fearfully).” (1 John 4:18, paraphrased)
- ❖ Remember that God’s vast love covers us completely so there is no need to fear destructive forces. In the end God will win on our behalf (John 16:33).
- ❖ God has not created us for fear to dominate us and He has given us faith with which to overcome fear. God our Father has also planted His Spirit in us to protect us (2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15).
- ❖ Chronic fear distorts perception and therefore disrupts rationality, as it did to 10 men of the 12 who went to spy out the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 1: 27-28) and infected an entire nation. Fear can make many other issues one faces to look like threatening giants. Remember it was their groundless fear that caused the Israelites to wander in the desert for 40 years, on a journey they could have made in eleven days (Deuteronomy 1:2) as a result of which an entire adult generation died before they could enter the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 1:34-36; 38-39).
- ❖ I repeat, be strong and brave! Don’t be afraid and don’t panic, for I, the LORD your God, am with you everywhere. (Joshua 1:9)

How to do Better

3. Learn to relax your body right at the point you begin to feel threatened or as soon after as practical; and it is necessary to agree with yourself that you need to calm down:
 - ✓ Take a slow deep controlled breath and breathe out slowly. Do so 3 or 4 times. Wait 5 – 10 seconds and if still very uptight repeat the exercise.
 - ✓ Next: Apply Thought Replacement Therapy – deliberately swop the thought that’s bothering you with a different one, such as: by recalling the lyrics to a song, starting a discussion in your head like considering what it is about love or loving that is pleasant, trying to remember everything that happened the whole day on your birthday last year.

- ❖ As a believer, repeat: “I am a child of God”, “I won’t let Satan steal my peace”, “God loves me. He is protecting me right now”, “God’s peace is with me”, “This can’t harm me, Holy Spirit is my protection”, “Lord Jesus, I know you care, please help me”.
- ❖ Pray, call on God for help. As His Word says: I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. (Psalm 34:4)
- ❖ Claim God’s Promises of protection! What He has done for other believers He will do for you. So, to help overcome fearful moments write down 3 or 4 of these references (of God’s Promises) on a 3x5 card and put them in familiar spots to catch your eye during the course of the day. [In secular psychology this is called Thought Replacement Therapy]
 - Deut 31:6
 - Psalm 27:1
 - Psalm 118:6
 - Proverbs 3:25-26
 - Proverbs 29:25
 - Isaiah 41:10
- ❖ Here are other Scripture verses to help you become calm. Trust His word:
 - Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done” (Philippians 4:6-7).
 - Or recite any poems or memory verse(s) you have that will calm you.

C. Practice using self-distraction at other times as well, especially at bedtime

- ✓ Try saying: “A, B, C, D, 1, 2, 3, 4, E, F, G, H, 5, 6, 7, 8, I, J, K, L, 9, 10, 11, 12” and so on as long as you can, starting again when you get to Z. If you think you missed a letter or number, start again. Feel free to also substitute any number of letters and numbers in each set. Do this exercise 3 or 4 times in a row

D. You may also select and start counting any group of objects, such as:

- ✓ Slats of window or door blinds; items in a picture; books on a shelf; floor-boards; balusters or spindles of a railing; or a set of leaves on a houseplant or tree. You may count any assortment of objects. When you make a mistake, start again.

E. You must deliberately turn your attention from the problem to something else, unless you are just trying to make sense of it and not worry over it.

- ✓ Do not allow yourself to continue with a finger-pointing or criticizing attitude and thought(s)
- ✓ Do the counting and thought replacement exercises each time the worrisome thought(s) comes back and bothers you.

F. If you have difficulty relaxing at the point the threat or stressor is occurring, try practicing it at times when you’re not feeling threatened.

- ✓ Use the One Minute and 3-Stage Breathing mindfulness meditation exercises as follows:
 - One Minute mindfulness meditation exercise: This is a popular breathing exercise that will help to ease you into doing mindfulness activities. You may need to have a watch or clock within easy view.

Give your total attention to your breathing. Observe the in-breath and out-breath for one minute, while breathing normally. That’s all there is to it! The important thing is that your thoughts are to be focused only on your breathing. As other thoughts come up (which they will), you have to quickly bring your full attention back to the breathing exercise. About stray thoughts it will help to tell yourself; “This is not the time; I’ll think about that later”.

- ✓ Do the 3-Stage Breathing mindfulness meditation exercise:
 - 1) As you take many breaths, try to locate each breath’s position along the way in and out.
 - 2) Then say, “I am breathing in . . . I am breathing out” as the breathing occurs

- 3) Repeat the process until the unwanted thought is distant or discarded.
- ✓ Grouped Muscle Relaxation
 - Focus on a group of muscles in more than one body part. For example, you may place your awareness on and apply tension to both of your legs, your torso (including your stomach, back, and chest), then to your upper body (shoulders, arms, neck, and head), one group at a time, as you inhale. Each time, as you apply tension, count to four or five (or for four to five seconds), then as you exhale, you release the tension while counting to four or five (or for four to five seconds). Repeat the exercise 2 or 3 times. The order of the group of muscles you target is entirely up to you.
 - ✓ Practice keeping your shoulders relaxed and sloped down – not hunched up, just loose.
 - Push them as high up as they can go. Hold them up there to the count of 4 or 5 then drop them to the sloped position.
 - Do it again, breathing in as they go up; then breathe out when they come down.
 - Practice this posture often so you'll get used to it. Relaxed shoulders help to reduce body tension
 - ✓ It is best to set aside time to practice. 15 to 20 minutes of relaxation once or twice a day seems to work well.
 - ✓ When you are practicing make sure you're in a quiet place with your telephone, computer, radio and the television turned off.

Sometimes sufferers from anxiety experience nightmares. A nightmare can be an extremely troubling experience, after which some people are afraid to return to asleep. Caution: Put aside worried thoughts about how late it is, as your goal is to return to sleep. You are encouraged to try the following if you have nightmares regularly:

- When a bad one wakes you up wash or wipe off any perspiration the nightmare may have caused. Removing perspiration will make you feel better and will also help prevent involuntary shivering that may feel like a symptom of anxiety.
- Smooth out the bed covers if they became tangled during the nightmare, or change them if they are a little damp so that everything will feel fresh when you get back into bed.

- Remember that the nightmare, however frightening it was, is in the past; it is now composed only of your thoughts. Regardless of the origin of the night terror (whether mind, body or both), you can control it mentally— that is, by the use of your thoughts—and you can treat these thoughts using techniques such as Thought Replacement or a mindfulness meditation exercise, described below.
- Focus on the here and now only. That is, intentionally attend to whatever you are actually doing at the moment, deliberately describing to yourself in detail the order, stages, importance, effectiveness, and purpose of whatever action you are doing (and any other aspects of that activity), even if you’re sitting or lying down. By now, you are into Thought Replacement. You may broaden the direction or scope of your thinking into other areas, including starting another activity that you will find engaging.
- ✓ You may also do the exercise below (already described) to help bring you peace in preparing to return to sleep.
 - Three-stage breathing technique as follows:
 - 1) As you take many breaths, try to locate each breath’s position along the way in and out.
 - 2) Then say, “I am breathing in . . . I am breathing out.”
 - 3) Repeat the process until the unwanted thought is distant or discarded.

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don’t give up.

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3. SADNESS-DEPRESSION

Introduction

We all experience sadness or the “blues”, usually because of difficult life events producing feelings of loss, despair, grief, helplessness, disappointment and sorrow often involving a relationship breakup, job loss or joblessness, missing or grieving someone, being denied needed validation or failing in something.

Depression has more than one face and its symptoms may range from mild to severe. One form of Depression is part of a complex mood disorder in which sufferers experiences “lows” or “downs” and “highs” in their mood.

On the one hand the sufferer may feel “low”, with such symptoms as: being extremely lethargic, withdrawn, unhappy and hopeless; sleeping too little or too much, having little or no feeling of enjoyment, forgetting things a lot and eating too much or too little and often, having a sense of low self-esteem. These are all symptoms of a Depression for which there may be a known cause.

Two weeks of three or more of these feelings are enough to require professional attention. So don't wait any longer report them to your family physician.

On the other hand the symptoms may consist of “highs” such as: feeling fired up, unexplainably excited with accelerated thoughts, feeling highly energized and driven to engage in a variety of tasks; having a much reduced need for sleep and acting very irresponsibly. These feelings are not usual for the individual. These are manic symptoms and feeling this way (showing any combination of these symptoms along with any other “weird” feeling or strong thoughts) for about a week requires that the sufferer report to Emergency at a hospital.

Prescribed medication is usually needed to manage either type of this disorder.

The more common kind of Depression is usually caused by life events. This kind also may appear with mild, moderate or severe symptoms similar to the “low” mood described above. Depending on the level of severity, prescribed medication combined with psychological methods usually works well. Before a Depression becomes severe and requires the help of a therapist the sufferer can take steps to stop feeling depressed.

To Get Better

It is important to remember not to give in to the symptoms. Ensure you always daily practice the first two items [marked *]. Try to do 1 or 2 different items from the list of suggestion each day and then repeat the list:

- ✓ Every emotion must be allowed to be felt and accepted. This however does not mean encouraging or indulging in it, regardless of its consequences.
- ✓ *Fight or confront the depression by forcing yourself to do the opposite of what you feel unable or unmotivated to do. In other words make a special effort to act contrary to the feelings the depression is creating. For example if you do not feel like going out or socializing with others, then you make yourself go out and mix with people.
- ✓ *Stop feeling sorry for yourself. Self-pity only prolongs depression and keep reminding yourself of this. For example resist ideas such as: It’s a shame I have to feel this way; it’s difficult to go on like this; I’m helpless.
- ✓ Learn to express gratitude every day; find reasons to be grateful, whether to express it to someone else or to yourself.
- ✓ Learn to show forgiveness,
- ✓ Forgive yourself especially for unintentional wrongdoing
- ✓ Make every effort to become active especially when you are feeling sluggish or listless. (Don’t give in)
- ✓ Engage in exercise and physical activities [(e.g. playing sports, aerobics, walking, dancing, jogging or running); see Item 10 under “EXERCISE, FOOD, SLEEP”]
- ✓ Listen to lively music such as, marching bands, big bands, swing, jive, which tend to have a consistently fast rhythm

- ✓ Plan daily tasks or activities and keep to a routine. (See attached, “The Bickersteth Emotional Health Recovery Plan”)
 - ✓ Control your eating – eat more or less to achieve a healthy level
 - ✓ Plan and do something new at least once a week
 - ✓ Regardless of how you feel plan and do something fun at least once a week
 - ✓ Spend time with supportive friends/family; but be wise not to be influenced by those who are known enablers
 - ✓ Join a support group or a reading, drama or hobby group.
- ❖ As Christians we have additional resources:
- We should pray about our depression. Nehemiah brought every problem in his life to the Lord in prayer and it is amazing what he accomplished as a result. When he became depressed over the plight of Jerusalem and the temple following the Babylonian invasion he asked God for help and his wish was granted (Nehemiah 1: 4-11, 2:2-9). As a result he was able to spearhead the reconstruction project in Jerusalem, which removed the reason for his depression in the first place.
 - In the Book of 1 Samuel, Hannah was depressed because she was childless and: “In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly.” (1:10). After Eli the prophet (her “pastor”) encouraged her: “Oh, thank you, sir!” she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad.” (1:18). The story continues: “ . . . in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son” (1 Samuel 1:20).
 - Perhaps the reason for your depression is very different from those in the Bible accounts. Nonetheless you have the same access to the power of prayer, though as always we must recognize God’s sovereignty. He has the Big Picture! Staying in faith is the key to turning around your depression to joy, which St Paul endorses in this encouragement: “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13)
 - The writer of Psalm 43 reminded himself that faith in God is the solution to his depression: “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.” (Psalm 43:5)

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don't give up.

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If none of all these methods works for you despite your efforts to do them correctly it may be time to talk about the problem with a professional, including your Pastor.

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4. SHAME

Introduction

Like other emotions Shame may be temporary, event-related or long-term and self-based. It is a feeling of being inadequate, unworthy or flawed. Shame is different from guilt. It is important to recognize however, that although guilt is about admitting to doing something we know is wrong, it sometimes merges with and gets converted into Shame. That is, it then becomes a feeling that's not only about right or wrong but also about self-deficiency.

Shame is self-condemning and because of its self-negating quality the individual has difficulty facing their Shame or exposing it to others. Shame is self-perpetuating in the sense that every new or potential source of Shame triggers the memory of previous Shame experiences, which increases the pain of Shame, making these events more memorable and therefore in greater need of "concealment".

In response to Shame the individual might react with one or more of the following unhealthy options usually represented on a Compass of Shame

- Withdraw: Isolate themselves from others by hiding.
- Attack Self: mentally or physically, including self-harm
- Avoid: tendency to use denial or addiction to avoid feeling shame or may engage in thrills as distraction
- Attack Others: lash out verbally, blaming and turning the tables; physically assault or vandalize property

How to do better

4. As should all emotional prompts Shame must be allowed to be felt and accepted, even if only briefly.
- ✓ Acknowledge the source of your shame

- ✓ Accept that no-one including you can be perfect in every aspect of life all the time.
- ✓ Learn and nurture self-compassion and self-forgive yourself for past feelings, thoughts or actions – they are all natural.
- ✓ Learn the healing power of forgiveness of others
- ✓ Understand that you can reject the message of Shame from your thoughts and not allow yourself to be influenced by anyone else's suggestion you should be ashamed. This does not mean continue doing whatever wrongdoing caused your shame.
- ✓ Recognize that every option on the Compass of Shame is unhealthy and must be confronted and neutralized with the set of suggestions offered above
- ✓ Always be willing, as soon as you feel Shame, to change the way you look at its source doing so in a way to help you move forward rather than become stuck in demoralization or worse, in self-hate.

(iii) Shame may also be felt indirectly, with the individual only feeling very uncomfortable or angry and unable to identify why; and probably without a distinct feeling of Shame (for example listening to some one talking on TV or looking at a wall picture and experiencing an odd, uncomfortable feeling, although this may be due to a subconscious trauma).

- ✓ Since you don't understand your reaction it might be best to use Thought Replacement on the ideas produced by the "muffled" feelings.
- ✓ Always remember this quote: "When we change the way we look at things, the things we look at change."

(iv) Sometimes Shame arises from our inability to separate what we do from who we are or from what's happened to us.

- ✓ Learn to accept who you are. What you do is a choice based on circumstances; these can and do change.
- ✓ Recognize it is impossible to make things "unhappen"; so your only healing choice is to learn to adapt, since rejecting this is a deliberate willingness to remain miserable. This is not a rational choice!
- ✓ Accept that bad things happen to both good and bad people; and good things also happen to both bad and good people

(v) You must strongly resist the unhealthy responses you are using against Shame. With respect to:

- ✓ Withdrawal – Stop isolating yourself.
Make a written plan each day of social situations in which you will participate
- ✓ Attack Self – Use Thought Replacement on the self-critical descriptions that Shame brings to your mind.
- ✓ Here are some ideas for Thought Replacement:
 - Recall the events of your happiest day before the age of 12 and between ages 12 and 17. Compare them. Which was happier? Do the same for any two five-year age periods up until 5 years before your current age.
 - How many kinds of love do you know? Who are all the people with whom you have shared each kind (skipping any that may involve your present feelings of Shame)?
 - Can you come up with reasons why you need to practise love, regardless of whether you're in love or not?
 - Which of these activities is your strongest? Helping people who are not your friends; thinking about actual problems and solutions; or being a role model. Remind yourself of the times you have been most involved in each of these.
 - Think of a movie you watched some time ago, and try to recall it in sequence and in detail. You may do one or the other.
 - Recall the events of your happiest day before the age of 12 and between ages 12 and 17. Compare them. Which was happier? Do the same for any two five-year age periods up until 5 years before your current age.
- ✓ Avoiding Shame by Using Denial – That is, refusing to accept something you know is true and that requires you seek help. It is not healthy to hang on to a pattern of denying what you know is false.
 - Recognize that this behaviour will not change the reality of what you are avoiding to face, regardless of whether you force yourself to believe the opposite or not.
 - As a first step decide where or how you will disclose the truth: a safe or sympathetic situation or person, which can be a friend, therapist or Pastor. Accept and share the amount of courage and pain it takes to disclose what you have been denying

- [Optional] Gradually increase the places and people to hear your disclosure, to the extent you feel comfortable to do so.
- ✓ Avoiding Shame by Using Addiction – This person in effect is denying the shame by adding another shame, which may need separate work. An obvious test is to quit for an extended period of time. Being unwilling or unable to do this test is proof of addiction
 - For an addiction you practice daily, quit for at least two weeks or if the amount or number is the issue, do or consume half of the usual for at least two weeks
 - If you do it after a period of time (e.g. binge eating, promiscuity or drinking) abstain for at least double the usual amount of time in between each addiction activity
 - Treating an addiction often requires a coach or support group, especially when you have not succeeded doing it on your own before
- ✓ Avoiding Shame by Distraction – Seeking and engaging in thrills is a distraction trick that can be hazardous to body and mind and it will not remove Shame. Also, the practice of always giving more than required or unwilling to say “No” may be distracting you from the Shame but it will never be enough to shield you from the Shame of feeling unworthy. Engaging in this activity is tiresome and often unrewarding in itself. Being a distraction, logically you will at least sometimes come back to focus on real life where the Shame problem is, really.
 - You need to develop the discipline of focusing on the task at hand, which is to deal with the source of the Shame.
 - Refrain from offering or volunteering whenever it does not feel right, always reminding yourself that the need you wish to fulfill cannot be yours in any way. Otherwise you must decline the opportunity.
- ✓ Attack others to cover up Shame – People use various types of this mean method because it is powerful or empowering (e.g. turning the tables on others, blaming, shaming or assaulting others, and vandalizing property).
 - Because this approach causes harm to others using it only adds to your sense of being defective and makes you more ashamed of yourself
- ❖ If you are a Christian, the first step in recovering from Shame is to turn to God through prayer and Scripture to affirm your

dependence on Him. Read about how God treats people who come to Him in shame (Luke 15:11-24).

Other ideas for Christians to remember:

- “I am a child of God”, “I won’t let Satan steal my peace”, “God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son for me”, “God’s peace is in me”, “Holy Spirit knows I am worthy”, “Lord Jesus, I know you care, help me get rid of these punishing thoughts”.
 - Reminding yourself you are a child of God should also remind you that others are as well, whether they know it or not. So they are entitled to your love as you are to theirs.
 - Admit your error in using the Attack Others approach and repent of any of these actions. God is very willing to forgive you
 - The real problem is your feeling of Shame. Pray earnestly and ask others to pray for your freedom from Shame and the God who freed Peter from his jail cell (Acts 12:6-7) will also release you from your shackles of Shame. You don’t have to describe to your prayer supporters why you feel ashamed, just that you do for something. We all know Satan is prowling around seeking to devour God’s children (1 Peter 5:8).
- ❖ King David, a woman caught in the act of adultery and another with a haemorrhaging problem all had a shame they wanted hidden. God did not reject or abandon them. Because shame makes us feel like hiding what caused it or hiding ourselves, what better place to do so than with Jesus?
- ❖ Do not allow anything steal your self-esteem or joy. Recognize Shame is a weapon the devil uses to attack the peace God has given you. Allow God’s Word to help remove your sense of shame:
- Psalm 25:2 – O Lord my God, I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.
 - Psalm 34:5 tells us: Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.
 - Isaiah 50:7 – “Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.”
 - Isaiah 50:9 – It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me. Who will condemn me?

- Romans 5:3-5 - ... We gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. And endurance builds character, which gives us a hope that will never cause us to feel shame. All of this happens because God has given us the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with his love.
- The Sovereign Lord says in Isaiah 54:4: “Fear not; you will no longer live in shame. Don’t be afraid; there is no more disgrace for you. You will no longer remember the shame of your youth and the sorrows of widowhood.”

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don’t give up.

The non-Christian topics are explained in greater detail in: “TO YOUR HAPPINESS: A Self-Healing Guide to Peace of Mind”

If none of all these methods works for you despite your efforts to do them correctly it may be time to talk about the problem with a professional, including your Pastor.

Not knowing the medical history of participants, it is prudent to advise those who have physical issues to consult with their healthcare professional about the exercises, especially those, which involve physical activity.

5. WORRY

Worry and Fear go together. When we are afraid a bad thing will happen we continue to think about its frightful possibilities and their equally unbearable consequences. This is how we worry. Worry is unnecessary because it is not a fact that the 'bad thing' we worry about will happen. The possible or likely ways this made-up 'bad thing' will happen, which makes the bad occurrence even bigger, is also made-up and unreal. On top of these already unnerving, made-up thoughts, the worried person adds other scary ideas of how stressful the consequence of all of this will be. Worrying creates an unending cycle of repeating and recycling unwanted thoughts. Did you notice that this entire paragraph about worry describes how fear can cause our minds to make-up or imagine possibilities? Moreover worrying all or most of the time indicates you probably have an anxiety personality disorder (SOPS) described earlier under FEAR. Worry does not produce any solutions; it only takes away our peace of mind. It is never useful. So, if you worry a lot and it has taken control of your thinking, you need to be released.

- ❖ Christians need to discover or remember that Jesus tells us not to let worry tear us apart. He gave us this advice after instructing us that worshipping God and wealth can never work. He said: "No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and be enslaved to riches." (Matthew 6: 24)

Jesus knows that we worship God and money because we do not trust that God alone can or will provide all our needs. Because obtaining money is not always guaranteed, we worry unnecessarily, blind to the fact that God can meet all our needs. This blindness does not allow us to recognize that trusting money unconditionally is incompatible with relying on God. We appreciate Jesus' caution about worry all the more from understanding the meaning of worry in the passage below.

In the Greek, the word used for “worry” (*merimnáō*) may mean, “I am anxious about, I am distracted;” and “I am pulled in opposite (or different) directions”, which implies being under (irrational) stress. To release us from this self-harming lifestyle, Jesus took time to tell us important truths about why not to worry. In the next long passage (Matthew 6:25-34), He said:

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your everyday life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in with all his wealth was dressed like one of these. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Each day has enough trouble with which to contend.”

Some people think worrying is OK because they believe it shows that you care. But if it will never solve the problem you care about, what’s its value? Robbing a person of inner peace is never worthwhile. So let’s work on reducing or eliminating worry.

To do better

- ✓ Whenever you catch yourself worrying, say to yourself, “Stop!” Immediately use any of the exercises suggested for Fear.

- ❖ To help the Christian further, learn addition:
Psalm 50:15
Psalm 55:22

1 Peter 5:7

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don't give up.

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Module 2. Techniques For Improving Emotional States

Not knowing the medical history of participants, it is prudent to advise those who have physical issues to consult with their healthcare professional about exercises, especially those which involve physical activity.

6. MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Mindfulness Meditation exercises are proven to help remove unwanted thoughts or feelings we experience. Their helpful success is based in the nature of this technique, which is to fully attend to the activity in the present moment (by ignoring or deferring all distractions), with the goal of examining, discovering and internally responding to the essential aspects of the meditation activity.

✓ One Minute Mindfulness Exercise

- This is a popular breathing exercise that will help to ease you into doing mindfulness activities. You may need to have a watch or clock within easy view.
- After you get the hang of it, you can do this exercise in any non-harming posture or safe place; but for the first few times, do it while sitting.
- Give your total attention to your breathing. Observe the in-breath and out-breath for one minute, as you breathe normally. That's all there is to it! The important thing is that your thoughts are to be focused only on your breathing. As other thoughts come up (which they will), you have to quickly bring your full attention back to the breathing exercise. It will help to tell yourself; "This is not the time; I'll think about that later".
- Practice this exercise several times in the day, and add more observation time as you become more used to doing it.

✓ Three-stage breathing technique:

You may find it helpful to place your hand(s) on your stomach in order to focus on the breath's journeys in and out.

- 1) As you take many breaths normally, try to locate each breath's position along the way in and out. It usually helps to slow down the pace of breathing to help in following the movement of the breaths.
 - 2) Then say, "I am breathing in . . . I am breathing out."
 - 3) Repeat the process until the unwanted thought is distant or discarded.
- ✓ Walking Mindfulness
 - Select a private place where you can take a few steps without being disturbed or feeling self-conscious while doing this exercise.
 - As you stand to begin to walk, notice where each foot makes contact with your footwear, the floor, or ground. Pay attention to any sensations from your feet and where you feel them: on the toes, sole, heel, arch, or sides of each foot?
 - Walk very slowly, paying close attention (back and forth) to the sensations in each of these parts as you go.
 - After much practice to get familiar with the exercise, consider trying it in another location where you can take more steps. Later, you can safely include it any time in many other selected places.
 - ✓ Awareness of Surroundings Mindfulness Exercise
 - With your eyes closed or open, listen for all the sounds you can detect. You may also pick one sound at a time and identify its characteristics. If you are indoors and need more variety, go outside where you can hear more sounds.
 - With your eyes closed or open, try to identify all the smells you can and then try to select one smell. Linger a bit, giving yourself time to be certain of it. If you are indoors and cannot smell anything in particular, go outside to do this exercise.
 - Look at everything around you, naming (or giving a name to) each thing you look at and describing its characteristics.

For Christians:

The Bible expects believers to mindfully meditate on God's Word for the same reasons and goals as non-Christian mindfulness meditation, that is, control of attention. The result will always be a closer relationship with God. Here are some passages:

- ❖ For achieving success in life
 - Keep this Book of the Law [Scripture] always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful (Joshua 1:8)
- ❖ For peace of mind from God
 - And now, my friends, keep your minds on whatever is true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and proper. Don't ever stop thinking about what is truly worthwhile and worthy of praise. (Philippians 4:8)
- ❖ For the person who desires a life of true happiness
 - [The one] whose delight is in the Teachings of the Lord, and who meditates on it day and night (Psalm 1:2)
- ❖ For meditation commitment
 - May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer (Psalm 19:14)
 - I will carefully study (meditate on) your teachings and follow your footsteps (Psalm 119:15)
 - I lie awake at night, thinking of your promises (Psalm 119:148)

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don't give up.

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If none of all these methods works for you despite your efforts to do them correctly it may be time to talk about the problem with a professional, including your Pastor.

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7. RELAXATION EXERCISES

Remember that for this or any other physical exercise, you are encouraged to consult with your healthcare professional about any adverse effect, though unlikely, the exercise could cause. Relaxation exercises also are effective for reducing or briefly eliminating stressful thoughts and feelings. The goal of the following exercises is to produce a rested mind within a rested or relaxed body. A restless mind is not at peace. Relaxation is known to calm the mind.

- ✓ Brief Relaxation
 - Take a series of three or four deep breaths and exhale slowly. Then breathe normally, unless a deep inhalation occurs automatically. After that, repeat the following statement twice: “I release this (or, all my) suffering.” Do this exercise a couple of times. Do this exercise a few times a day as you wish.
- ✓ Whole Body Tension
 - As suggested by the heading, focus on your whole body. Start with a full-body scan and then stiffen the entire body (the best you can) as you inhale deeply to the count of four or five (or for four to five seconds), while holding the tension. Then release the tension as you exhale to the count of four or five (or for four to five seconds)
 - Repeat this total-body muscle relaxation from three to five times, in a row as you are able or as time allows.
- ✓ Progressive Relaxation of Individual Body Parts
 - In this version, start from a foot or leg, and progress to your head, one body part at a time. For example, start on your right foot. As you focus on it, try to stiffen or tense that foot as you inhale deeply to the count of four or five (or for four to five seconds). Next, do the same with your left foot. If you

are not able to do one foot by itself, start with the whole leg. Then progress to the right thigh, followed by the left thigh, the buttocks, the stomach area, the back, each hand or arm, each shoulder, the chest, the neck, the face, the ears, and finally the scalp.

- Do not be disappointed if you cannot isolate only the muscles you choose (for example, only one foot or the ears). You will likely become more precise as you practise over a period of time.
 - The next stage of this version is to progress downwards from the scalp to the right (or left) foot, each time applying tension and counting to four or five (or for four to five seconds) while focusing on each targeted body part and inhaling deeply. Exhale as you release the tension.
- ✓ Create a Mantra
- This is a sentence or phrase you repeat to yourself many times daily to strengthen the positive change you are developing. For example, “I am open and accepting of life’s experiences” or “I trust that everything is happening for the best.”
- ❖ Although Christians may use the same methods as non-Christians to achieve mental peace believers also have access to and the assurance of divine teaching about our mental condition. For example:
- Though they stumble, they will never fall, because the LORD supports them with His hand. (Psalm 37:24).
 - He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:29-31)
 - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid (John 14:27)
 - Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you. (2 Thessalonians 3:16)

- I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. (Psalm 27:13-14)
- The Lord said, "I will go with you and give you peace" (Psalm 33:14)
- Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous be shaken (Psalm 5:22)
- Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)
- You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on You, because they trust in You. (Isaiah 26:3)
- I know that Your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and Your house will be my home as long as I live.
- In the Name of the Lord, I will be successful today. I can do anything through Christ

Practice, practice, practice and keep on practicing. Don't give up.

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Module 3. Activities To Protect A Happy Life

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8. LIFE SHAPERS FOR CONTINUED HAPPINESS

1. Practice accepting the things you cannot change. This includes a wide range of events from small irritants like the “naughty” things children do because they are children to the “pointless”, aggravating, routine expectations at the workplace and the driver who cuts in on you. Learning to accept everything you cannot change makes it easier for you to approach the “problem” they present with unbiased thinking, resulting in calmer or more peaceful state of mind. [The quotation marks mean there is a different point of view]
 - ✓ Explain to yourself what you are feeling and why, about anything you do not accept
 - ✓ Observe yourself in this negative mood, as if you are an outsider, for at least 30 seconds. Then tell yourself how you want to feel; act it out for at least 30 seconds. Do not allow yourself to return to your former emotional state. Prevent yourself by thinking other pleasant thoughts
 - ✓ Here’s a self-empowering statement or prayer to repeat to guide your behaviour every time you face a challenge: “[God,] grant me serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.”
 - ✓ This quote by Maya Angelou offers a similar solution: “If you don’t like something, change it. If you can’t change it, change your attitude.”
 - ✓ With the knowledge that no circumstance lasts forever, you may be willing to accept an unwanted and unchanging situation “for now” – a period you will set. When you do so, look for what you can learn from the experience to help you deal with it later.

2. Challenge the subconsciously constructed negative automatic thoughts or habitual narratives that constantly play in your head, causing or maintaining stress. When they arise, ask yourself the following types of questions about the situation causing them:
 - 1) Is the situation really unchangeable? Why must I believe it is so?
 - 2) Is there another way to think about this?
 - 3) What is the worst thing that could happen, and would that really be awful indefinitely?
 - 4) What results do I expect from my present way of thinking about the matter? Are they socially acceptable?

3. Learn to promote the development of resilience (recovering quickly) by mostly focusing on, or making a habit of allowing in, thoughts that are useful and appropriate for healing, They are called: Will-help-me-do-better-thoughts. With these you will be able to withstand increased emotional stress and restore your peace of mind faster, protecting it from serious damage

How to do better

- ✓ Always/frequently use Will-help-me-do-better-thoughts
- ✓ Practice ways and ideas with which to express gratitude every day.
- ✓ Show kindness, even once a week, as a gift to others (not to enhance self-pride or status), with positive feelings being a natural outcome
- ✓ Use your relationship with spiritual, human and animal friends to boost your good feelings
- ✓ Spend time among plants, including house plants, green spaces and forested areas

Lack of patience reduces resilience and joy in life. Impatience is the inability or unwillingness to stop yourself from being overeager for something you expect, that is, not being able to wait. For example, impatient people drive faster than the posted speed limit because they can't wait to get to the next place, task, experience etc. They tend to act as if most things are taking too long before they can . . . (e.g. hear the next song, see the next show on TV, reach a destination, hear the punch line, end of the story or get all the information). Their excitement, desire to feel satisfied, that is, their gratification comes

from getting to the next possible enjoyment; and the faster the better; but not to cause fear. Slowness in obtaining this positive experience causes frustration, which soon becomes anger. Impatience also prevents the person from connecting meaningfully with the present – a quality that is required to be happy – and may lead to making wrong conclusions or decisions. Sometimes one person's state of impatience adversely affects others. Therefore it is important to learn how to wait, in order to cure impatience.

- ✓ While waiting for something that's "taking too long", learn to take a deep breath then slow down your breathing, relax tense muscles and clenched fists. Resist fidgeting with fingers, tapping the feet, swinging arms, swaying or moving restlessly. Keep practicing till you stop any of these and similar actions altogether.
 - ✓ Practice driving at or below the speed limit till you can do so without frustration. Slow down as soon as you catch yourself exceeding the limits.
 - ✓ When waiting at a crosswalk always resist being the first to react to a "Walk" sign or to passing everyone in front of you on the street.
 - ✓ Clock the amount of time you spend eating a meal and increase the duration till you take as much time as everybody around or if alone, increase by one minute each time till you can take, say, about one-and-a-half times longer than your initial time.
 - ✓ If you have children and/or a spouse who takes "too much time" clock each activity that frustrates you and just before you yell or express your frustration add 2 more minutes of waiting. Each time subsequently add two more minutes till you can wait for approximately one-and-a-half times longer than your initial 'breaking point'.
 - ✓ To fill in waiting time, practice a Mindfulness Meditation exercise that is appropriate for the situation, such as:
 - One Minute Mindfulness Exercise
 - Three-stage breathing technique
- ❖ The Bible offers many passages that help the believer maintain or improve their ability to adapt to or bounce back from hardship and other emotional disruptions. For example:
- Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance (resilience) has a

chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing (James 1:2-4)

- Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12)
- Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. (1 Corinthians 16:13)
- That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10)
- By your patient endurance you will protect your soul." (Luke 21:19)
- Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! The Sovereign Lord is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights. (Habakkuk 3:17-19)
- We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. They are the ones (that is, Christians) God has chosen for His purpose (Romans 8:28).
- Because we know this, we can respond to life's problems like St Paul did: We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)
- Remember that your capability to be resilient rests on your relationship with God, Who says: Pray to Me when you are in trouble! I will deliver you, and you will honour Me! (Psalm 50:15) He also assures us: For I know the plans I have for you—this is the Lord's declaration—plans for your welfare, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).
- Placing his faith in God, Paul confidently states: I can do all things through Him Who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13). This is example we need to follow

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9. ADDITIONAL HABITS FOR MAINTAINING SOUND MENTAL HEALTH

These are ideas one needs to always keep in view to help maintain ongoing, agreeable emotional state. It is best to make at least one goal for each one. Achieving a goal requires you have a plan (best if written) of how you will go about obtaining the results that constitute the goal.

- ✓ Make a definite effort to change a behaviour you do that you know or suspect is wrong, uncalled for, or inappropriate. A strong need to repeat a known wrong action or to resist doing something that is obviously right is your ego misleading you. Following through only adds more troubling feelings like guilt, for example.
- ✓ Learn to place your attention on the positive side of life events (to achieve this you may sometimes need to spin or reframe the event or situation). Here's where managing your perception will yield great benefit when you apply this principle: When you change the way you look at things the things you look at change. Do not forget to also look for the silver lining always.
- ✓ Treat others as you would like to be treated. Do not use such occasions (doing what's right) to manipulate others to get something for yourself. Doing that is a harmful ego game that may damage wellbeing and relationships.
- ✓ Perhaps the biggest obstacle to happiness is lack of contentment. The person who always wants more will never be happy. The more frequently a person thinks about getting things the more those thoughts will mould that person into a creature of acquisition, which will create the urge to go after more followed by dissatisfaction, leading to wanting more and so goes the vicious cycle of unhappiness.
- ❖ God's Word teaches that we are to follow Paul's example and train ourselves to conquer this weakness (Philippians 4:11-13). In the Book of 1 Timothy Paul explains the Christian virtues of

contentment, which makes us understand that craving money is a cause of the variety of problems (“all kinds of evil”) humans face. (4:6-10). It appears God gave us these verses to cure us of greed and lack of contentment. Jesus taught: “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions” (Luke 12:15) and God’s Word also promises: “God will take care of all your needs with the wonderful blessings that come from Christ Jesus!” (Philippians 4:19). James however warns against wanting benefits from God for self-indulgence, which is a major contributor to our evil and prideful thoughts and actions (James 4:1-3). As such we are encouraged to learn the discipline of contentment and humility. To do so:

- Practise gratitude, to help you focus on what you have rather than on what you lack
- Shift attention from needing and depending on acquisitions to giving and sharing; from desiring the perceived better life of others to accepting your life. Material and social success do not improve life, they only adorn it
- Submit your life to the Lord and accept His sovereign choices for you: He is in charge, not you.
- Stay in faith so that fear-based scenarios like “What if” will not derail your progress towards achieving a life of humble contentment or efforts in practicing it

10. EXERCISE, FOOD, SLEEP:

Next after the Will-help-me-get-better-thoughts we need to use habitually, Exercise, Food and Sleep are the three most important ingredients for maintaining and improving mental health. We need however, to be equally diligent in acquiring their specific benefits.

- ✓ Exercise: Choose 1 or 2 activities below that are appropriate for you to do once or twice a week. For more information about equipment and adaptation please go to (or copy & paste on to your browser):

https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/resources/activities-index?gclid=CjwKCAjwxrzoBRBBEiwAbtX1n8SwuM3G-bnCASQP9d2MxKLFDNPkrk4nB4HxICbV3hdqAwqv67dPsxoCXHoQAvD_BwE

Aquafit	Basketball
Badminton	Downhill Skiing
Boxing	Fitness Activities
Canoeing	Five-pin Bowling
Dancing	Gardening
Dog Walking & Agility	Housework
Folk/Cultural Dancing	Kayaking
Golf	Obstacle Course
Hiking	Pickleball
Hockey	Running
Ladder Toss	Soccer
Mini Putting	Soccer
Pilates	Tai Chi
Swimming	Tennis
Weightlifting	Volleyball
Yoga	Walking

- ✓ Food: Get acquainted with and learn about Healthy Eating Basics presented by the Heart & Stroke Foundation on their website (copy & paste on to your browser):
<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/healthy-eating/healthy-eating-basics>
- ✓ Sleep is important not only for its physical health benefits but especially for helping to balance and improve one's mental health. Learn about how quality sleep contributes to your emotional wellbeing and how you can get it, as presented on the US government's National Institute of Health website (copy and paste on to your browser):
<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/sleep-deprivation-and-deficiency>

Keeping to your chosen plans consistently is the key to achieving success in this Section. Don't let up.

After practicing Module 3 consistently for 3 weeks you may complete the BEWS assessment below. 80% or higher is satisfactory. Lower than that suggests weakness in one or more areas. Identify those areas on the Scale and do more practise in the appropriate section of this Program

The non-Christian topics are explained in greater detail in: "TO YOUR HAPPINESS: A Self-Healing Guide to Peace of Mind"

If none of all these methods works for you despite your efforts to do them correctly it may be time to talk about the problem with a professional, including your Pastor.

Module 4. Develop Resilience & Live with Happiness Everyday

Not knowing the medical history of participants, it is prudent to advise those who have physical issues to consult with their healthcare professional about exercises, especially those which involve physical activity.

11. ACTIVITIES FOR PRESERVING RESILIENCE AND BRINGING LASTING HAPPINESS

Quote: YOU ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE TO LET UNHAPPINESS TAKE OVER OR TO TRAIN YOURSELF FOR REACHABLE PEACE AND JOY.

A person who never wants to be happy or feel joy has a biological and/or psychological condition causing that unnatural reaction. Equally so, a strong sense of happiness does not naturally occur 24/7. We are wired for a variety of emotional responses, which emerge automatically, initially, when we have no control over each one. Shortly after this instinctive stage however, within a matter of seconds, the person has a chance to take over control of whatever emotional state they are in.

Therefore pushing away a bad feeling or negative emotion is something of which we are capable. Whenever we attempt and succeed in doing so it is almost always because we want to feel good instead. We are also wired to prefer joy and happiness to any negative emotion. It isn't very difficult to feel happy or joyful, once you have told yourself you really want to feel good.

Below are some techniques or ways of developing skills that help us have control over our feelings of happiness and joy in particular. It is important to recognize that the information in previous Sections of this program, ideally, is intended as a logical transition to the current Section. Control over feelings created by the negative emotions results in mental peace that promotes joyful or happy feelings from positive emotional states.

Do these everyday:

1. **Visualization** – Regardless of how you’re feeling or what’s going on in your life, as you fall asleep and first thing, upon waking each morning, think of or visualize at least one thing for which you are grateful or happy. Think of or visualize this one thing (or more, if you like) up to 3 or 4 times during the day.
2. **Laughter** – Listen to a recording or video (for example, on YouTube) of babies or adults or both laughing, for at least 10 minutes every day. Imitate their laughter
3. **Bring about your own joy:**
 - ✓ Gifts tend to produce a sense of happiness; so, making or buying yourself a gift is a way to cheer yourself up. Perhaps more so, giving a gift also tends to cause feelings of joy. Give one whenever you want to feel good – regardless of the receiving response.
 - ✓ For some people life is brightened by having their surroundings clean and organized; so taking action to see that your physical environment is liveable for you (without an uncontrollable urge to do so) is a definite step towards being happy.
 - ✓ Reduce the chances of becoming involved in emotionally hazardous situations, while at the same time consciously seeking, accepting, and nurturing positive experiences, including seeking people who will lift your spirits; but withdrawing from those who bring you down.
 - ✓ Perform random acts of kindness. This is a form of gift-giving.
 - ✓ Spend time in forested areas with tall trees or in green places because research shows they provide not only psychologically beneficial effects but also boost our immune system and promote better sleep. One study reports that even a 40-minute stay is enough to produce health benefits.
 - ✓ Interacting with pets is also reported to bring joy
- ❖ Times of joy and a life of joy come more consistently and powerfully from a relationship with God and Christ channelled by Holy Spirit. This relationship is not spotty or superficial but committed and meaningful. In addition to going to Him in prayer for keeping our happiness and joy in our life we need to read Scripture to hear His Word.
 - Psalms 118:24
Today is God’s creation; let us rejoice and be glad!
 - Psalm 126:3
The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.”

- Romans 15:13
I [Paul] pray that God, Who gives hope, will bless you with complete happiness and peace because of your faith. And may the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with hope.
- 1 Peter 1:8-9
You have never seen Jesus, and you don't see him now. But still you love him and have faith in him, and no words can express how glad and happy you are, because you are receiving the salvation of your souls, which is the purpose of your faith in him.
- Psalm 29:11
The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses His people with well-being.
- Proverbs 10:28
The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing.
- Number 6: 25–26
May the Lord look with favour on you and grant you well-being.
- Romans 15:13
I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Nehemiah 8:10
Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.
- James 1:2-3
Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.
- Psalm 30:5
He gets angry once in a while, but across a lifetime there is only love. The nights of crying your eyes out give way to days of laughter
- Romans 14:17

God's kingdom isn't about eating and drinking. It is about pleasing God, about living in peace, and about true happiness. All this comes from the Holy Spirit.

Long-term principles for remaining happy

4. **Learn to let go of (*stop hanging on to*) hurt, disappointment, worry, spite, guilt etc. If solving a particular problem will make things better, plan how you will solve it. Otherwise accept what you cannot change about the situation and start from there to reach for better.** So, after a bad experience or difficult event take time to answer the following:

- What *exactly* am I feeling right now and what is *definitely* making me feel this way?
- How many other things can I come up with that are still OK in my life?
- Why am I seeing them as less important to change how I'm feeling right now? So I'll go over those OK things right now as I am doing my next activity
- Is it truly *impossible* to stop hanging on to the problem or can I *at least try* to let other things in? I'll try by using Thought Replacement. [By this method you'll be able to change how you are feeling]

The thought replacement technique has three stages:

Stage 1 - Accept the reality of the problem, that is, it cannot "unhappen" but consider what you can do about it to change the result or its effect. If you have no solution then begin trying to adjust to it

Stage 2 - When you see yourself beginning to accept, you may need to help along these attempts by considering the following about the hurtful situation so it will be easier to accept:

- 1) There must be another way to think about it.
- 2) I cannot expect my mood to improve if I continue with my present way of thinking about this matter.

Stage 3 - Apply the thought replacement technique: focus on other thoughts with intention.

5. Be willing to accept a **higher power** - Since we all started life with a "higher power" namely, parent or other caregiver, we continue to need someone for guidance (for example, to provide examples of things to learn), sustenance (e.g. food and necessities

of life) and protection (e.g. from environmental discomfort).

Therefore we need a higher power we can trust!

6. When your desire is to avoid something, state the opposite as a goal. As a rule do not express a need as “I don’t want...” Instead **state the alternative(s) you are missing**. Your mind knows only how to include; it does not know how to exclude. Telling it you do not want something does not tell it what to include instead. You can never achieve something that is unknown!
 7. In shaping your life, be aware of the following: (i) Life remains simpler and happier when you refrain from pleasing or protecting your **ego or false self**. You need to restrain yourself from yielding to a false image of yourself or having unrealistic expectations. (ii) Stress may come into your life from being overwhelmed by the **negativity of others**. You may be able to change those circumstances by returning a positive attitude to them. If this method is ineffective you may consider the need to withdraw at least temporarily away from this source of stress. Since in certain situations it may not be practical to do this, you may choose, as a last resort, to confront the person(s) about the limiting effects of their behaviour on you. You may be wise to consider unwanted results of this approach and if necessary to obtain support from others before, during or after standing up to the person(s). (iii) Our own mind sometimes produces **self-defeating messages**, which cause our unhappiness. These negative thoughts or self-talk are to be resisted and replaced and must not be allowed to take over!
 8. Build new or retain existing healthy **social relationships**, including friendships.
 9. Listen to enjoyable **music**, watch entertaining **videos** as often as you can
 10. Always look for the **silver lining instead of continuing to feeling bad**
 11. You need **humour, laughter and play** in your life
 12. Seek credible sources to **learn more** about mental health and healthy living in general
- ❖ Christians, take to heart this famous trio you may have heard of, namely: **faith, hope and love**. They are necessary for a happy life!
- (i) Faith – Chapter 11 in the Book of Hebrews opens with the ultimate definition of faith: To have faith is to have confidence in what one hopes for although one has no

proof. We need faith to understand anything about God including our knowledge of God and about our existence and that of the universe; and without it “we cannot please God”. When we hold on to godly faith unswervingly we can expect to be rewarded. The chapter also has a long list of people who have pleased the Lord in different ways because of their faith. It is remarkable that God accepts the faith of a prostitute named Rahab. God’s Word therefore says every believer’s faith in Him will be rewarded, without judgment. In fact we should use faith to guide us when it comes to our Christian life and not rely on how things look (2 Corinthians 5:7). Faith is the foundation of Christian life.

In a more general sense faith is a spiritual (non-material) force that gives us emotional strength against forces threatening our life . . . In other words it guarantees protection from worry because it eliminates fear of the unknown. Faith therefore is the opposite of worry and fear. But faith can be misguided. Faith is about being guided by the convincing qualities of the source of faith – the Lord. We need the power of God-guided faith, long-term, to be happy!

- (ii) Hope – To hope is to expect better, to anticipate success, to look forward to achieving goals; it is to look for reasons to keep going with something. Hope without any reasons is faith, so the two are closely related. Because hope is motivated by reasons however, these need to direct action aimed at achieving the hoped-for goal. For example a farmer who hopes for a great harvest does not laze around doing nothing about it; and students who hope for good grades do not spend all of their time socializing or sleeping. Accordingly, the best kind of hope is action-supported hoping. Hope contributes to happiness because in the face of everything it is positive persuasion guaranteeing a chance to make your life better. Hope is about placing your thoughts and action on the reasons for your positive expectations.
- (iii) Love – According to the famous psychologist, Abraham Maslow, in the development of our emotional awareness, once our physiological needs followed by our safety needs have been fulfilled invariably, the need to belong

and loved emerges. Of course, Maslow's observation, which simply indicates a sequence of basic need fulfillment is not the whole story of human love. The very nature of God is Love, Who breathed His Spirit into us. The Apostle John explains the divine connection as follows: "Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." (1 John 4:7-8) Paul says that since through faith we allow Christ to inhabit us, we will be "rooted and grounded in love" (Ephesians 3:17); and John emphasizes in several places in his Letter that love is other-directed. For example, he states: "Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister." (1 John 3:10) So although love is divinely instinctual, we must allow it out towards to others.

After practicing Module 4 consistently for 3 weeks you may complete the BEWS assessment below and then practice for 3 more weeks to ensure the learning is long-lasting. An average score of 80% or higher each time is satisfactory. Lower than that suggests weakness in one or more areas. Identify those areas on the Scale and do more practise in the appropriate section of this Program

The Bickersteth Emotional Wellness Scale (BEWS)

Today's Date: _____

Please complete this Scale at the end or close to the end of your day. As you look back *on the whole day* put a bracket around ONE number that best describes how you feel about each item:

1. How serious or persistent were your angry feelings
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

2. On the whole how scared or anxious did you feel facing life or your problems
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

3. How ashamed are you about your life?
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

4. How much are you disgusted with yourself or your problems?
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

5. Do you have feelings of distress or sadness?
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

6. How much do you feel upbeat or excited?
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

7. Are you having fun or enjoyment?
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

8. How confident are you in yourself?
A lot: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very little

REVIEW

Use the following to assess your emotional wellness progress on the MEE Program for Everyone.

ITEM SCORE

1 - 2 = Keep up the good work!
[80 - 100%]

3 - 5 = More practise on this topic will be helpful
[60 - 70%]

6 - 8 = More skill learning and practice is indicated
[30 - 50%]

9 - 10 = Needs much more skill learning and practice on this topic
[10- 20%]

AVERAGE SCALE SCORE

Find your total score **on all 8 items** and divide it by 8.

For the average score:

1 - 2 = Keep up the good work!
[80 - 100%]

3 - 5 = More practise on this topic will be helpful
[60 - 70%]

6 - 8 = More skill learning and practice is indicated
[30 - 50%]

9 - 10 = Needs much more skill learning and practice on this topic
[10- 20%]

The Bickersteth Emotional Health Recovery Plan

Name: _____

Date: _____

My Pledge for This Week

Things I am grateful for this week:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The opposite of my most unwanted thoughts/mental images that I want to keep:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Goals to achieve this week (small or big):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Go to these places to improve my mood:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Other ideas for improving my mood:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do the three-stage breathing technique

1. As you take many breaths, try to locate each breath's position along the way in and out.
2. Then say, "I am breathing in... I am breathing out."
3. Repeat the process until the unwanted thought is distant or discarded.

Repeat 1 and 2. Then say, one at a time, the thoughts you want to keep.

List the most worrying problems to look up and learn about regarding my situation or my reaction to it.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do these activities to improve my mood:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write out the things I wish to always remember:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

13. PARTICIPANT NOTES/SUGGESTIONS

Module 1. Emotional States To Bring Under Control-2

1. Anger-2
2. Fear-Anxiety-2
3. Sadness-Depression-2
4. Shame-2
5. Worry-2

Module 2. Techniques To Improve And Keep Happy Emotional States-2

6. Mindfulness meditation exercises-2
 - One Minute Mindfulness Exercise-2
 - Three-stage breathing technique-2
7. Relaxation exercises-2
 - Brief Relaxation-2
 - Whole-Body Relaxation-2

- Individual body parts-2

Module 3. Activities To Protect A Happy Life-2

8. LIFE SHAPERS FOR CONTINUED HAPPINESS-2

- Practice Acceptance-2
- Challenge Negative Thoughts-2
- Promote the development of resilience-2

9. Mental health Life Shapers-2

- Stop repeating known wrong actions-2
- Learn to attend primarily to positive life events-2
- Treat others as you would like to be treated-2
- Learn to be content-2

10. Exercise, Food, Sleep:-2

- Exercise-2
- Food-2

- Sleep-2

Module 4. Develop Resilience & Live With Happiness Everyday-2

11. Daily Activities for Preserving Resilience:-2

- *Do these everyday:-2*
- *Long-term principles for remaining happy-2*

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