

# Building Resilience

## Evidence-Based Practices to Start Today

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# Centering



# “Workshop”

Try on to see how they fit

Bridge the “knowing-doing gap” *[how?]*



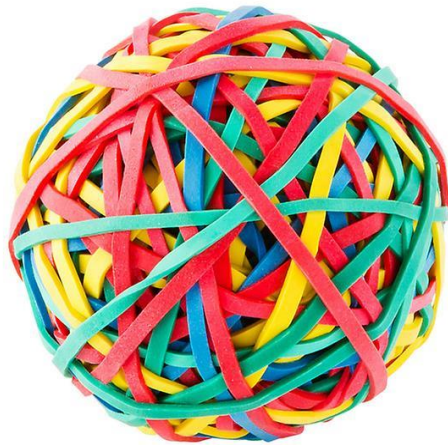
# The Quiz at the End

- ✓ What did you take away from today?  
(what seemed most valuable)
- ✓ What do you plan to do after this?



# Resilience

The capacity to navigate challenges and stressors, and rebound from adversity, ideally growing in the process



**What do you think  
affects your resilience?**



**HOW IS YOUR DAY GOING?**



# The “Big 4” Universal Human Needs

- \* **Contribution / Calling** (Purpose, Meaning)
- \* **Choice / Control** (*What* I do and *How* I do it)
- \* **Capability / Competence** (Learning, Pride)
- \* **Connection / Community** (Belonging, Respect)



# Values Clarification

- \* **What is most important to you in your life?**
- \* **Why did you choose your discipline or career?**
- \* ***Writing Exercise:* Stream-of-consciousness writing about what is important to you, why, and what role you play(ed) in sustaining it**



Human Nature = Notice the things that go wrong, the rest  
melts into the background

## Three Good Things

- \* **Three things that went well today** (can be small)
- \* **What was my role in creating each?**
  - When: Immediately before sleep
  - How Long: at least 7 consecutive days

# Assignment: Three Good Things

- \* **Three things that went well today** (can be small)
- \* **What was my role in creating each?**



## 3 Good Things (sort of) . . . a *Different Flavor* |

**Three things I like about myself, that make me a good \_\_\_\_.**  
*(teacher, friend, parent . . . depending on the primary  
role that day)*

*E.g., I am a good \_\_\_\_ because I [quality, skill, ability].*

**When: To start the day**

**Results: self-reported more engagement, perceived  
effectiveness, more energy**

# Using a Personal Strength in New Ways

## 1) Identify a personal strength

*For example . . .*

**Cognitive** (curiosity, creativity, wisdom)

**Emotional** (authenticity, bravery, persistence)

**Interpersonal** (kindness, love, social intelligence)

**Civic/Community** (fairness, leadership, teamwork)

**Transcendence** (appreciation, hope, humor, religiosity)

# Using a Personal Strength in New Ways

1) Identify a personal strength

**2) Find a new, different way to use that strength**

How Long: at least 7 consecutive days

*Resources:* <https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/via-survey/>

<http://happynesshub.com/research-use-your-strengths/>

*When things don't go the way we'd like . . .*

# **Cognitive Therapy**

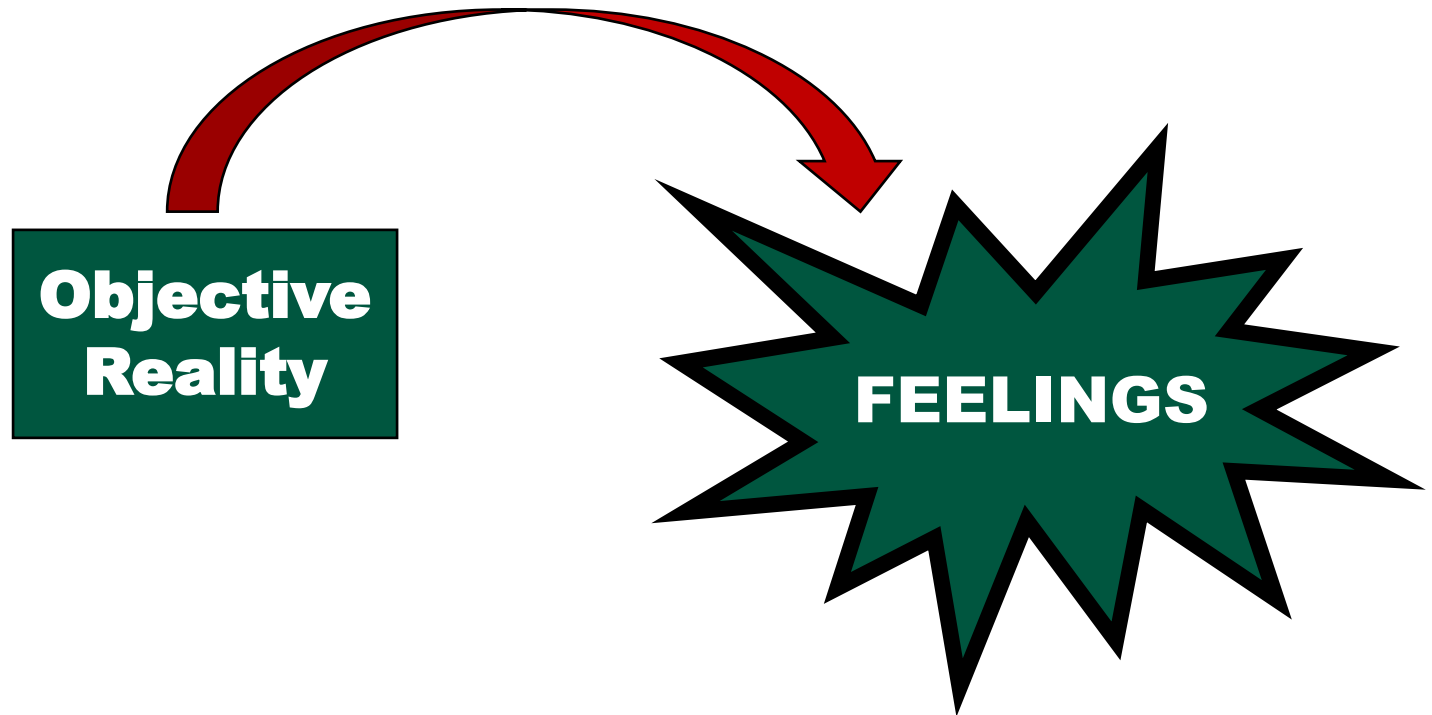
## **Rational-Emotive Therapy**



- In a group meeting Nicole says something about John and John leaves the meeting upset. What caused John's negative emotion?



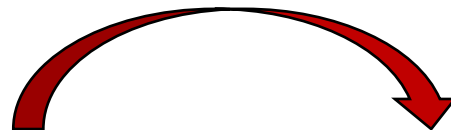
# Our Subjective Experience of Life





Physiological State  
Recent Experiences

**STORY**



**FEELINGS**

Underlying Beliefs  
& Assumptions

**Objective  
Reality**

# Cognitive Reframing/Restructuring

The “cognitive” part of cognitive-behavioral counseling (most prevalent approach; well-researched)

**ABC Model**: Adversity – *Belief(s)* – Consequence(s)  
(Facts)                      (Story)                      (Feelings)

# Cognitive Reframing/Restructuring

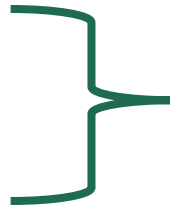
- ✓ **Make the beliefs/assumptions conscious**
- ✓ **Examine their *rationality***  
(truthfulness or usefulness)

***Requires repeated practice, writing over well-ingrained (automatic) cognitive pathways***

***Common set of underlying beliefs . . .***

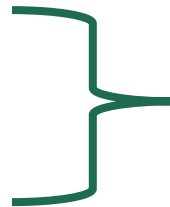
# *Examining truthfulness of underlying beliefs:*

“Must,” “Should,”  
“Have to”



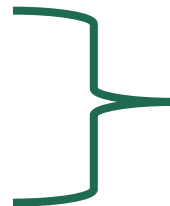
Says who?  
What will happen?

“Need,” “Have to”



For survival?

“Always/Never,”  
100%, Absolute

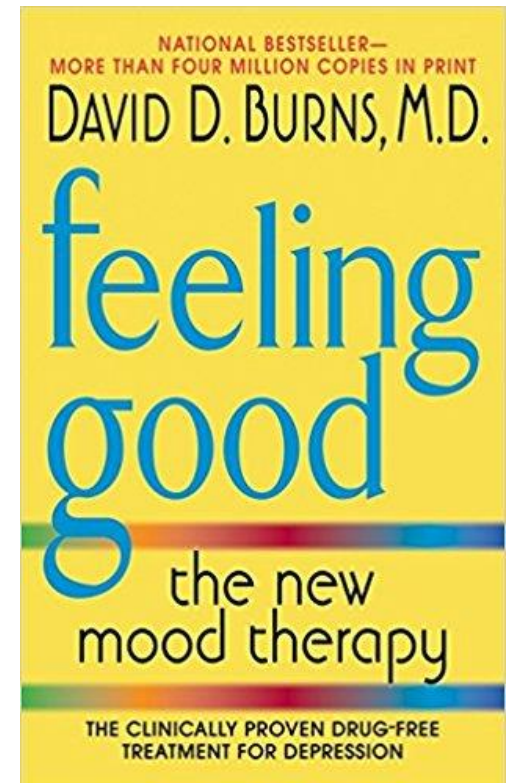
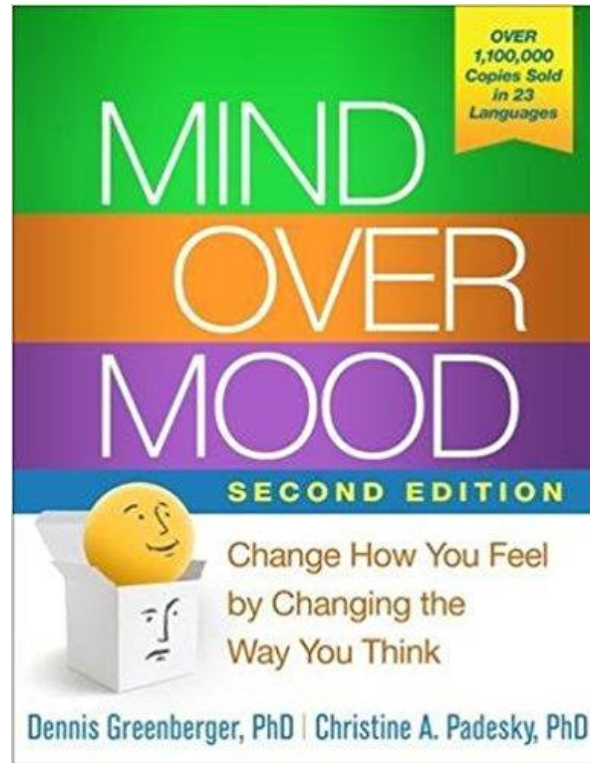
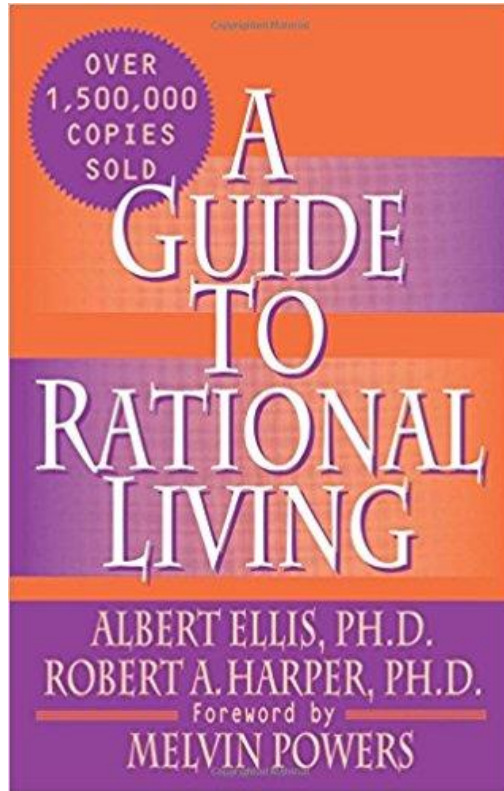


Really?  
Truthfully?

# Assignment

- 1) A scenario in which I become/became upset . . .**
- 2) To feel that upset, I must believe/assume that . . .**
- 3) I can see now how that belief/assumption isn't 100% "the absolute truth," or helpful, because . . .**
- 4) To be less upset in a similar situation I could . . .**

## Break-out Rooms



**Woebot app**  
**Youper app**

# Appraisal of an Adversity (“Explanatory Style”) |

- ✓ Degree of Control
- ✓ Breadth or Pervasiveness
- ✓ Duration

Resilience is related to a tendency to view adverse events as relatively controllable, isolated, and temporary.

*If that tendency doesn't come easily for you . . .*

# Shifting to Response-Oriented Focus

What features of the situation can I (potentially) improve?

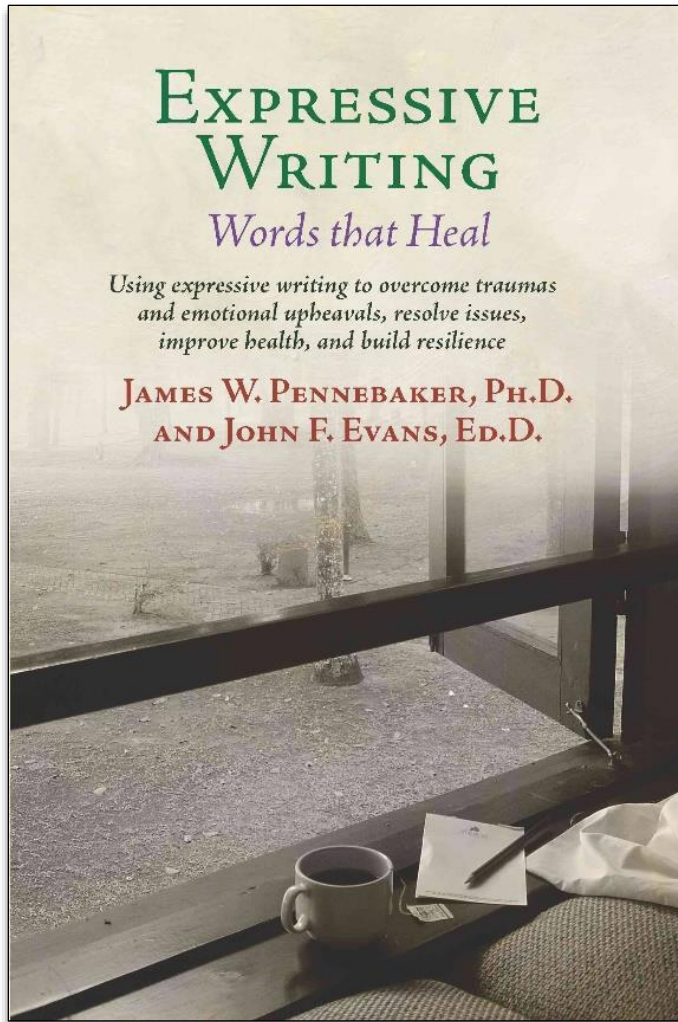
**Practice daily with small events?**

How can I contain the negatives and generate currently unseen positives?

**Write down answers?**

What can I do to begin addressing the problem now?





## The Power of Expressive Writing About Traumatic or Stressful Experiences

- ✓ Focus on thoughts and feelings about the event/situation
- ✓ Write nonstop, no editing or overthinking, stream of consciousness
- ✓ At least 20 minutes?

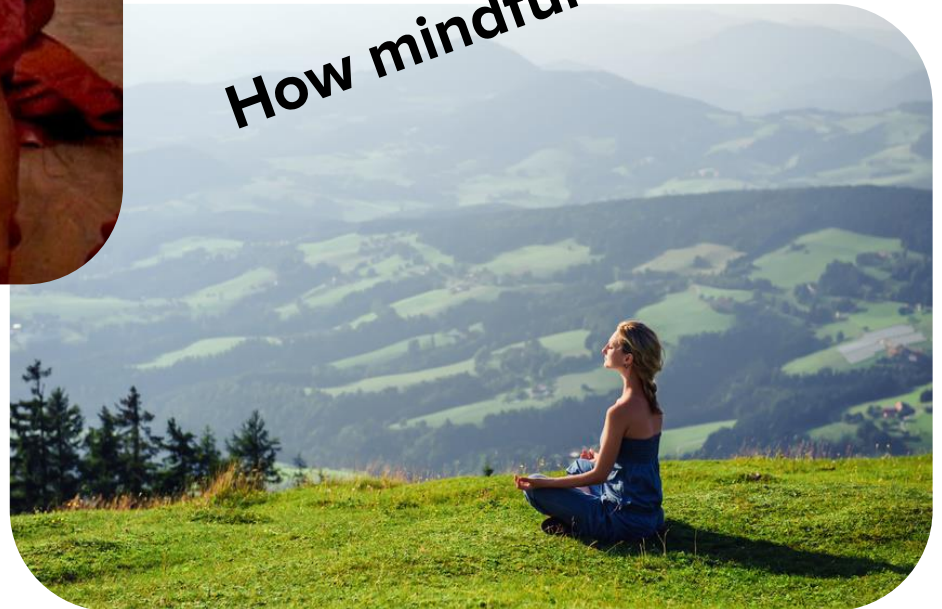
# Prosocial Behaviors

- ✓ Start the day with intention of performing a specific “nice” thing 3 times during the day
- ✓ *E.g.*, compliments, smiles, helpful task, “surcie” (virtual vs. in person)
- ✓ Track progress

# What images does “mindfulness practice” conjure?



How mindful are you?



## *I frequently . . .*

- **walk into a room and forget why, or arrive at a destination and realize I don't remember the process of getting there.**
- **realize that I'm not following what a speaker is saying.**
- **get to the end of my day and don't recall most of what happened.**
- **find myself easily distracted by what is happening around me, or by my own thoughts.**

## Why Practice Mindfulness?

- ✓ **Improved Concentration and Memory**
- ✓ **Decreased Stress Response**  
(and thus improved mental & physical health)
- ✓ **Improved Interpersonal Relationships**

**It's not all about me . . . *but* . . .**



**Stumbled into  
practicing  
mindfulness  
circa 2004**

Your Attention



**“Top Down” Attention**

**“Bottom Up” Attention**

# Multitasking?





## Mindfulness is . . .

“. . .the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experiences moment by moment.”

(Kabat-Zinn, 2003)

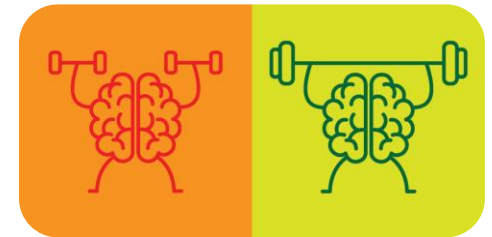
**Intention . . . Attention . . . Attitude**



# Practicing Mindfulness

## **Metaphor: Working/Building a Muscle**

(that controls the spotlight)



**Focusing on one thing at a time, *versus*:**

- **Multiple Activities**
- **Activity + Inner Monologue**



# Closing the Knowledge-Practice Gap

## *7 Free Apps for Guided Meditation Practice*

- **Insight Timer** – in addition to a timer, a trove of guided meditations, talks, and music -- organized according to how much time you have
- **Calm** – tips and guided meditations for various purposes, including brief “sleep stories”
- **Stop, Breathe, & Think** – basic tutorial on practicing mindfulness, as well as numerous free guided meditations
- **Let’s Meditate** – 30 free guided meditations
- **bNirvana** – free guided meditations ranging from 5-30 minutes
- **Aware** – free 7-day course to get you started, then numerous free guided meditations and breathing exercises, tips, and reminders
- **Simple Habit Meditation** – 50+ free meditations

# The Importance of Quality Sleep



[Journal Information](#)

[Journal TOC](#)

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## PsycARTICLES: Journal Article

### Overnight therapy? The role of sleep in emotional brain processing.

**Walker, Matthew P., van der Helm, Els**

Psychological Bulletin, Vol 135(5), Sep 2009, 731-748

Cognitive neuroscience continues to build meaningful connections between affective behavior and human brain function. Within the biological sciences, a similar renaissance has taken place, focusing on the role of sleep in various neurocognitive processes and, most recently, on the interaction between sleep and emotional regulation. This review surveys an array of diverse findings across basic and clinical research domains, resulting in a convergent view of sleep-dependent emotional brain processing. On the basis of the unique neurobiology of sleep, the authors outline a model describing the overnight modulation of affective neural systems and the (re)processing of recent emotional experiences, both of which appear to redress the appropriate next-day reactivity of limbic and associated autonomic networks. Furthermore, a rapid eye movement (REM) sleep hypothesis of emotional-memory processing is proposed, the implications of which may provide brain-based insights into the association between sleep abnormalities and the initiation and maintenance of mood disturbances. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2016 APA, all rights reserved)

# The “Big 4” Universal Human Needs

- \* **Contribution / Calling**
- \* **Choice / Control**
- \* **Capability / Competence**
- \* **Connection / Community**

- ✓ **Values Clarification**
- ✓ **Three Good Things**
- ✓ **Three Ways I’m Good**
- ✓ **Using a Personal Strength**
- ✓ **in New Ways**
- ✓ **Cognitive Restructuring**
- ✓ **Appraisal of Adversity**
- ✓ **Writing About Stressful Events**
- ✓ **Prosocial Behaviors**
- ✓ **Mindfulness Practice**



# The Quiz at the End

- ✓ What did you take away from this workshop? (what seemed most valuable)
- ✓ What do you plan to do after this?



# Closing the Knowledge-Practice Gap

- ✓ **Social/Public Declarations:** *Teach it, preach it*
- ✓ **Implementation Intentions:** “When X, I’ll do Y.”
- ✓ **Situational Inducement** – Alter the surroundings
- ✓ **Monitoring/Documenting Your Behavior**
- ✓ **Schedule Review of Progress,** *power of the calendar*



*Questions? Concerns? Realizations?*



**UAB** THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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***Thank you!***

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