EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

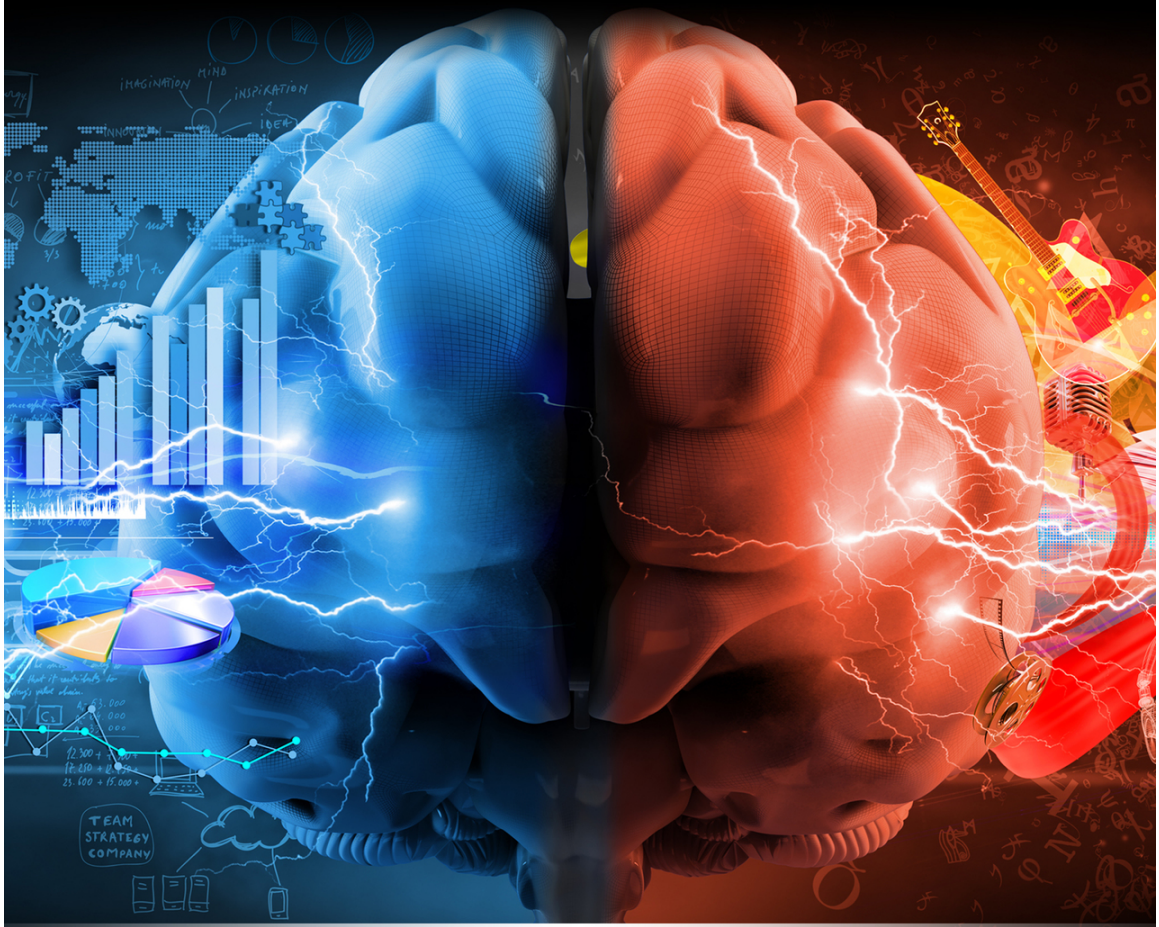
4 BOOKS IN 1:
COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY, MASTER YOUR EMOTIONS, REWIRE YOUR BRAIN, IMPROVE YOUR PEOPLE SKILLS



BRENT COLLINS & GREG WILLIAMS

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By Brent Collins & Greg Williams

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This book set includes :

Book 1) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy : Practical Guide To Permanent Freedom From Anxiety, Negative Thoughts, Anger, Panic, Low-Self Esteem and Improve Your Day Life

Book 2) Master Your Emotions : The Ultimate Practical Guide To Overcoming Anxiety, Negative Thinking, Emotional Stress, Better Manage Your Feelings and Improving Your Self-Esteem

Book 3) Rewire Your Brain : Change Your Habits To Stop Overthinking. Reduce Anxiety, Phobia & Stop Panic Attacks. Control and Improve Your Life with A Permanent Positive Thinking.

Book4) Improve Your People Skills : A Guidebook to Improve Your Social Skills, Win Friends, Unleash the Empath in You, Influence People and Raise Your Emotional Quotient

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COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY :

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PERMANENT FREEDOM FROM ANXIETY, NEGATIVE THOUGHTS, ANGER, PANIC, LOW-SELF ESTEEM AND IMPROVE YOUR DAY LIFE

By Brent Collins

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Chapter 1: What Is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy?

What crosses your mind every time you hear of the word mental illness? This has been a sensitive topic of discussion for a while. At times, we do not want to speak about it perhaps due to the chaos it brings in our lives. Statistics show that there is a rise in the number of people being diagnosed with mental illnesses daily. At the end of the day, the question we all ask is: is there a cure? Well, researchers are working day and night to establish a solution for this issue, and with their discoveries, we can say that there is hope at the end of the tunnel. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a reason to be hopeful.

We can begin by defining each word independently .

Cognitive: It comes from the word ‘cognition’, which refers to the mental process of obtaining understanding and knowledge experience, thoughts, and senses.

Behavioral: It comes from the word ‘behavior’, which refers to the range of actions and conduct of oneself in response to specific situations or stimuli.

Therapy: It refers to medical treatment for a health issue.

Put together, this is what Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy is:

- It is a type of therapy that aids in problem management by transforming one's thoughts and behavior.

- It involves improving mental health by modifying behavior, emotions, and thoughts.
- It is a psychotherapeutic treatment that aids patients in knowing their feelings and thoughts that affect their behavior.

Cognitive behavioral therapy focuses on our thoughts, emotions, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. You find that these aspects can affect one's mental health whenever there is a cognitive distortion. The concept behind this therapy is to improve the emotional regulation and to come up with strategies that can help in solving the problem. At first, CBT was designed to help people suffering from depression. However, it has been found effective in treating other mental illnesses such as anxiety. Cognitive behavioral therapy involves several treatments that are carried out to improve mental health based on strategies and techniques that have been proven to work. The therapist aims at looking at the problem presented, and then comes up with a solution for the issue at hand .

You find that depression and other mental illnesses are influenced by our thoughts, emotions, and behavior. When one is faced with a tragedy, they respond to it through emotions, feelings, and behavior. We can address this by evaluating various possible situations that can result in one being depressed. For instance, let us use the scenario where one gets out of a relationship they have been in for years. This is a person who has invested their time, energy, and resources in the relationship for years. Then one day, the other party decides to end things. It will take time to process the information depending on how one can handle situations. The possible emotions this person is likely to have are anger, regret, sadness, and self-pity. These emotions will influence their behavior, which affects those around them. They may treat others inappropriately which is not acceptable. This does not happen to all people but to those who are unable to manage their emotions .

Many people think that the inability to handle stress is a weakness, but it is not. In case you are struggling with such a situation, know that it is

reasonable and you can be helped, which is why we have treatments like cognitive behavioral therapy that can help in improving your mental health. The first and most significant step is identifying that there is a problem. Most people who are going through mental illnesses do not want to acknowledge that they are going through those challenges. They, at times, hide from the fact that they are facing something until the level gets too extreme. The truth of the matter is, you will be surprised by the number of people going through the same issue. This fact does not mean that it is good to live with it just because other people are. No, that is not the case. It is aimed at showing that it is something that happens, and instead, it is not something peculiar that should make you feel stigmatized. After identifying that you have a problem, the next step is to come up with a solution. In this case, it is a mental problem, so the best person to approach is a specialist in that field who will refer you to a therapist based on your issue .

In cognitive behavioral therapy, the first step will involve accessing the problem. In our case, it is a relationship problem. The therapist locates how this issue has affected your emotions and behavior. You carry out an intimate talk where you have to be transparent about the problems that you are facing. In such sessions, it is also good to be completely honest and not to leave out any necessary information. By doing so, you will ensure that the therapist is in a situation where they can quickly help. The next step is finding a solution to your problem. Now, here, they use the strategies and tactics that have proven to work in similar cases they have tackled before. You are probably wondering how effective this is. Well, while treating mental illnesses, we cannot say that all treatments are 100% effective. It mainly relies on the success of previous trials. If they have been proven to work in most scenarios, then we view them as valid. Mental illnesses are complex, and daily, research is being carried out to find solutions. We get to work with the discoveries provided as we continue to improve them and make the world a better place. In this case, cognitive behavioral therapy is one of those approved mental health treatments.

Chapter 2: Benefit From Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

There are numerous reasons why you should get a therapist that specializes in cognitive behavioral therapy. You do not have to seek help when the problem is major, but you should start when minor signs develop. Here is why you need a CBT.

1. **Identifying negative emotions and thoughts.** When faced by certain events, we may choose to react to them differently. Some are able to manage things well, and life flows as it used to be. Others are unable to handle the situation, and a change occurs within them. Did you know that you can actually have negative emotions and thought and not know about it? Well, it is actually possible. Change may occur as a gradual process, and you will not be conscious about it until it has already caused damage. You may get comments from people saying that you have changed and you do not agree with it since you do not feel like you have changed in any way. At times there is a need for a third party for you to acknowledge the change that is happening. Cognitive behavioral therapy can aid in solving this problem. The therapist will access the issue by asking you questions about yourself. It will also include questions on how you tackle various issues. The feed that you provide can really tell you a lot about who you are. Through these sessions, the can help you in identifying negative thoughts and emotions that you have, but you are not aware of.

2. **Anger management.** If you are struggling with anger issues, CBT can become effective in controlling anger. The first step will involve establishing the cause of the anger. What to triggers your temper? What makes you say things that you wouldn't be proud of if you were not angry? There is always a contributing factor to our behavior. With your therapist, you can discuss the events that

contributed to your anger. Afterward, the therapist can help you come up with ways you can manage your anger when such a situation occurs. Based on the evaluation, the therapist can also come up with attributes that you possess and affect the way you react towards issues. They could come up with conclusions like; you make impulsive decisions, or you are sensitive. All these discoveries are essential in coming up with a solution. If you make an impulsive judgment, the can advise you to always think before acting. They can also advise you to be calm while expressing your anger. This shows that you are civilized and willing to come up with a solution without conflict. In some cases, they may recommend that you work out to relieve your stress. There are numerous anger management solutions that you can get using cognitive behavioral therapy.

3. **Preventing addiction relapse.** Addiction relapses can be influenced by a number of reasons. You may have started out so well in abstaining from a substance you were addicted to, then one day something happens, and you go back to using it. This is a struggle among many people, and at times, they are unsure of how they can handle it. Well, I'm here to inform you that, when it occurs, it is not the end of the world. You do not have to hate yourself or have deep regrets about what you have done. Well, all is not lost, and there is still hope. With cognitive behavior therapy, you can find your way out of this situation. You get to discuss the events that led to you getting back to that situation. It involves discussing how that situation is affecting your life and what you can do to ensure that it is no longer a struggle you will have. Well, the cause cannot be solved, but it can be managed by identifying ways by which you can handle it. Eventually, you can avoid addiction and get better. The results may not occur immediately, but with time, you will get better.

4. **Coping with grief and loss.** Loss of a loved one is something that you wouldn't wish on anyone. It is a situation that results in grief, anger, and resentment. It hurts to lose someone that you would never have imagined that you would live without. In the moments you share together, you get to bond and establish common interest. Those two factors make you inseparable. Waking up to the news that they are no more is a bitter pill to swallow. You may find yourself in a situation whereby you are unable to cope well. This is normal and should not make you feel indifferent in any way. When faced with such a situation, it is good to seek CBT treatment. There is some sought of relief that one gets from speaking out. You are able to tell the therapist how you feel, and it eases the burden of keeping it to yourself. Based on the proven evidence from previous similar cases, they can help come up with a situation. They will help in managing your emotions as you cope with grief and loss.

5. **Overcoming trauma.** Psychological trauma is influenced by a distressing event. Stress can result from different things that a person finds hard to cope with. When the stress becomes unmanageable, it could result in trauma. The cause of stress can be a unique experience or a series of recurring factors that occur in weeks, months or years. Stress keeps building up when we are unable to share our struggles with those around us. The more we continue this, the more the problem gets out of hand. Well, you may not be able to share your problem with someone you know, but you can try seeking help from a stranger. At times we are afraid of what the other party may think about us, and for that reason, we can barely confide in them. If you are having such an issue, a therapist can really help. They not only avoid judging you, but they also provide a solution to the problem at hand. The therapist will offer proven strategies to stress management that can aid in solving the trauma. In case you are struggling with trauma, cognitive behavioral therapy, can really help in managing the situation.

6. **Managing chronic pain.** Chronic diseases influence the brain and result in a cycle of pain and stress. The more the pain persists, the more the brain has to come up with ways of managing the stress levels. When this occurs recurrently, it can have a negative impact on your mental health. Chronic pain should be handled as a matter of urgency so as to prevent worsening the situation. In this case, you will need to seek a treatment that improves your mental health as the disease is being treated. One of the recommended treatments is taking cognitive behavioral therapy. The therapist accesses the situation at hand. They evaluate how you handle the pain and stress that result from it. It also includes accessing the state which one is in when suffering from chronic diseases. The idea of this treatment is to make the pain manageable until the person is healed. Once one takes care of the brain and the central nervous system, it is possible to control the pain and prevent a repeat of the pain cycle. The therapist can also give prescriptions on the drugs that you can take to manage the chronic pain.

7. **Overcoming insomnia.** Lack of sleep can result from numerous factors. Most of these factors involve the mind and interfere with the mental state. Insomnia is self-diagnosed since you can easily identify it from lack of sleep. You may wake up too early or sleep too late. It can also be accompanied by depression, irritability, and anxiety. Insomnia is at times associated with day time sleepiness and tiredness. In some cases, it can affect your focus and memory. Insomnia does not just happen, but it is influenced by stress, poor sleeping habits, a lot of workloads, poor eating habits, drug and substance abuse, and mental conditions. When it occurs, not all hope is lost since there are treatments that can aid in curbing insomnia. CBT is one treatment that can help in such a situation. The therapist can access the situations that result in a lack of sleep. He or she can help in providing ways in which you can tackle these issues. By managing these issues, you can easily solve the insomnia issue. If you are struggling with insomnia, cognitive behavioral therapy can aid in solving this problem. Look for the

best CBT therapists around your area and have your problem solved.

8. **Resolving relationship issues.** Relationship issues are a major contributing factor to mental distress. Breakups can have a huge impact on our emotional wellbeing. When this persists, it could result in stress, anxiety, trauma, and depression. At times we are unable to handle the situation once it occurs. When this happens, it is not a sign of weakness but instead is a sign to show that you cared a lot about the other person and the idea of living without them is one that you cannot handle. Mostly, people tend to keep these matters to themselves until they cause damage. Well, this does not have to happen. In case you are going through a break-up, it is advisable to seek help from a therapist. The can help in establishing ways in which you can cope with the situation.

Relationship issues can be conflicts that cause disagreements and affect your mental wellness as couples. You find that some couples tend to ignore these factors until the pile-up and get to a situation of breaking up or having a divorce. Before it gets to this state, know that the case can be managed by having therapy sessions. Cognitive-behavioral therapy has proven to be really useful in helping such situations. The therapist accesses the problems that you are facing as a couple. He or she evaluates how you handle your issues. The therapist acts as a mediator between the two of you and helps in solving the conflicts that you may have. In the process, they can encourage the couple to talk about their minds. One can know the things that they do, that irritate the other party and provide their views. This helps in resolving the conflict that was a challenge for the couple. Before calling it to quit, consider taking CBT.

9. **It helps in changing one's way of thinking.** We are made by our thoughts. At times we have negative opinions that affect our

mental wellbeing. These opinions can be self-induced or influenced by what others think about us. Either way, we should refrain from negative views about ourselves. Negative thoughts have a terrible effect on our performance and general life outcome. Taking therapy can aid in changing the wrong views you have regarding yourself. The therapist draws to your attention the right attributes that you have. This brings you to a position of appreciating yourself and having different opinions regarding who you are. The therapist can also help you understand that other people's opinions do not matter as much as your opinion. It allows you to accept yourself the way you are and be proud of who you are. Your thinking changes and their effects can be seen from your outcome.

10.

Becoming rational. At times we allow the situations around us to affect our response negatively. When this occurs, we make rash decisions that we regret eventually. Some decisions are influenced by our emotions, beliefs, and attitudes. We fail to made considerations based on other parties' opinions and ideas. All that matters is what we think, and we do not care about what the other person thinks. This factor results in acting in an irrational manner that we end up regretting. Taking therapy can really transform these views. It allows you to realize that other people's opinions matter as much as yours does. This places you in a better position of making a sound judgment based on the problem at hand. CBTs have proven to be an effective therapy that helps us to become rational human beings who make the right decisions.

Chapter 3: Types of Cognitive Therapy

Based on the British Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Psychotherapies, CBT involves a series of therapies according to principles and concepts resulting in a change in human behavior and emotions. Different emotional disorders and mental illnesses require various treatments. Depending on the problems of the different clients, these are the therapies they can undergo;

- Psychodynamic and psychoanalysis therapy
- Behavior therapy
- Cognitive therapy
- Integrative or holistic therapy
- Humanistic therap y

All the above therapy sessions can be broken down or combined to help the patient based on the issue.

Behavior Therapy

The way we act and carry ourselves around other people tells a lot about who we are. A person's behavior entirely depends on the individual, but it is also influenced by external factors. There are things that happen around us that influence who we are. You find that some situations cause one to behave in a manner that is not acceptable. Some people are brought up in harmful environments that produce bad behavior. For instance, someone could be brought up in a place where there are drug addicts, thugs, and immoral practices. The things someone is exposed to as a child affect his general behavior. You may find that they end up doing the bad things that

they experienced in their neighborhood. At the same time, some behaviors are personal. However, in both cases, treatment can be found.

Behavioral therapy is among the first proven scientific therapies. It seeks to treat a mental disorder by accessing a person's behavior to aid in coming up with a possible solution. The techniques and strategies of behavior therapy are, at times, confused with behavior modification. Contrary to that belief, these are actually different approaches. Patients struggling with anxiety are advised to take behavior therapy to aid in managing the situation. It has proven to be effective in treating the disease. In behavior therapy, exposure is one of the treatment methods used. The individual is exposed to various factors to establish what triggers the behavior. By setting the cause, the therapist is at a better position of giving sound advice based on the problem identified. It is at times referred to as behavior activation due to its focus on improving people's behaviors, so they can be a better version of themselves .

Cognitive Therapy

Cognitive relates to cognition. Cognition refers to a mental action or process of obtaining knowledge and understanding through experiences and thoughts. This mainly relates to our way of thinking. In matters of mental health, our thoughts are primitive. We really need to look at the way we think and how we process the information given to us. The decisions we make in various instances are influenced by our thoughts. If we have negative thoughts, then there is a high likelihood of making an impaired judgment. The vice versa applies to positive thoughts. When you are thinking right and straight, the chances are that you will make a sound judgment. Our thinking ability has a significant impact on our life. At times we are faced with challenges, some of which are beyond our control. We need to be in the right state of mind, to be able to tackle such issues when they occur. If we are unable to, we can result in cognitive therapy .

This therapy was established by Aaron Beck, MD at the University of Pennsylvania. Initially, it used to be part of CBT, but currently, it is a type of therapy by itself. It focuses on how cognitive factors affect our mental wellness. How we think can tell a lot about who we are. You find that these thoughts are may entirely depend on us. However, there are some external factors that can affect the way we think. Cognitive therapy focuses on establishing factors contributing to the way we think, evidence-based on previous evaluation, hypothesis testing to develop the thoughts and prediction of the rational thoughts that one will have. All these factors make it possible to treat the problem induced by our thoughts. Cognitive therapy has proven to be useful in anxiety disorders and depressive disorders. In some cases, it can aid in eating disorders, personality disorders, marital discord, and phobias.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Our emotions and feelings influence our thoughts. Our way of thinking can, in turn, change our behavior. You find that when we have positive thoughts, we are likely to have good behavior. Alternatively, when we have negative thoughts, they are likely to influence our behavior negatively. Let's use the example of a person with poor parenting. The individual's emotions and feelings can be affected by how their parents treated them. Possibly they were brought up in a violent environment whereby they are continually mistreated. They could also be exposed to bad mannerisms that have a negative effect on their behavior. As this child develops, there is a high possibility of having bad emotions that influence their mental health. This is translated into how they behave and treat other people around them. Such a person can be helped by cognitive behavioral therapy.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy is perhaps the most recommended therapy. It has been tested and proven to be effective. It focuses on transforming a person's thoughts that influence their behavior. Alternatively, we can say that it aims at helping us manage our emotions, senses, and feelings so we can have good mannerisms. Albert Ellis established this concept of therapy.

Some people consider CBT as talk therapy. In this case, a therapist accesses your thoughts that influence your emotions and feelings. He or she identifies your triggers and comes up with ways in which you can manage the events. They also analyze how these factors influence your behavior. This analysis aids in helping the individual going through therapy. It ensures that at the end of the sessions, they are at a better place than they used to be.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Dialectical refers to the use of logic while expressing opinions and ideas. Conflict can involve two or more people. While resolving a dispute, we can listen to both parties and establish the solution through reasoned arguments. As you look at both parties, you will avoid being biased so as to make a fair judgment. While at it, you may discover that one party may have a valid argument that you can all agree upon since what he/she has to say makes a lot of sense which places him/her at a position of being right. On the other hand, the other party may have a baseless argument that holds no water. As the person deliberating the conflict, it would be logical to side with the party with a piece of substantial evidence. Well, some situations in life require our dialectical approach. In such circumstances, dialectical behavior therapy can help.

DBT was initially established by Marsha Linehan. As it was being developed, its primary purpose was to treat impulsive and suicidal symptoms and personality disorders. These are complex syndromes, which are, at times challenging to establish. In some instances, it has worked, while in some it has failed. Since its establishment, it has been used is solving personality disorders and other chronic problems. It used the concept of applying logic while solving tough situations that are beyond one's control. This means that an individual has to face the challenge and make peace with the fact that there is nothing that they can do to change things. This is a harsh approach, but it is recommended when the issue is beyond control. DBT aims at helping an individual to acquire skills like

interpersonal skills, distress tolerance, and emotional regulation. Asides from treating personality disorders, it can be used in treating eating disorders, depression, substance abuse, and anxiety.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

How do you resolve your issues as an individual? Do you confront them, or do you ignore the fact that you actually have problems in an attempt to suppress them? Well, unfortunately suppressing the emotions results in making the situation worse than it was at the beginning. You end up with depression, anxiety or trauma, yet these illnesses could have been avoided if you accepted the fact that you have a problem. We tend to forget that we are not unbreakable. The truth of the matter is, we are actually breakable. There are some situations that are beyond our control, and they can have a negative impact on our life. When such incidences occur, it's not time to assume that the bad emotions they cause will vanish suddenly. Instead, you should acknowledge that you need help since you cannot do it by yourself. This is why you need acceptance and commitment therapy.

The ACT is a third-generation CBT. It acknowledges the fact that some situations are better handled by recognizing that you cannot manage them by yourself. Your attempt to control your feelings and thoughts can fail. ACT employs the strategy of avoiding intimate experiences and accepting the outcome. It seeks to explore the problems that result from us thinking that we have total control over our feelings and thoughts. When this persists, it backfires on us and results in a series of regret. Instead of saying I wish I knew and staying in self-pity, it is advisable to go for an acceptance and commitment therapy. It relies on a declarative model of thinking through proven strategies that trigger the learning process. The treatment provides a mindfulness approach to the various challenges that we face and aids in accepting the outcome.

Functional Analytic Psychotherapy (FAP)

Functional analytic psychotherapy focuses on awareness, courage and loving acceptance. This allows one to analyze their situation and come up with sound judgment. In most cases, the challenges that we face can be solved individually though we find it hard to do so. At times you need an external source to affirm that what you are facing has a solution that you are aware of, but you did not act on. For instance, you could be having a conflict with a close friend. Instead of resolving the issue, you decide not to talk to each other. When this persists, you can lose your friendship. Instead of allowing things to take a wrong turn, this is a problem that you would have resolved immediately, it began. As close friends, you could have arranged a meeting aimed at settling the conflict. It would have involved establishing the cause and coming up with the solution. These are things you know, and you just need someone to remind you to focus on them .

FAP is an interpersonal form of therapy. It aids in facing challenging life issues with courage and care. While conducting functional analytic psychotherapy, the therapist places the patient in a situation of analyzing their self-awareness. In this instance, an individual evaluates their mannerism and how they tackle severe events. This allows them to look at their emotions and how those emotions influence who they are. This brings the individual to a position of self-awareness. As a result, this helps them in transforming their lives. They can identify the factors that hinder their growth and at the same time, discover what they should be doing to improve themselves. FAP therapy is effective in treating patients with anxiety. It allows them to establish the root cause of the problem and come up with a solution.

Compassion-informed Psychotherap y

How do you feel when someone compliments you for doing something well? Often we relate this act to a feeling of happiness and pride in our action. It feels good to be applauded. As human beings, we crave compassion. Compassion can be expressed in a number of ways. A mother can show kindness to their children by supporting them in their projects and

encouraging them to achieve their dreams. It is the little things that we offer others that count more than big things we aim at doing for them. At times you may want to appreciate someone, but just because you do not have money to buy them expensive gifts, you choose not to. Well, in as much as the costly things would have made a difference. It is good to establish small but meaningful things that show compassion.

Interestingly, this approach can be used in a therapy session. Compassion informed psychotherapy is an example of interpersonal therapy. It focuses on treating the patient by showing compassion. As a therapist, high emotional intelligence will matter more than high intelligence quotient. Socio-emotional intelligence will help in understanding the emotions of others as well as your own feelings. In this case, the therapist focuses on the feelings of others. He/ she might be required to be sympathetic to the client. This involves putting yourself in their shoes to know how it feels like to be in that situation. Afterward, you show compassion based on the issue at hand. These actions provide a safe space for the patient. It allows them to feel comfortable and know that they are appreciated. They even feel more comfortable to open up since the environment is conducive. This therapy can be used in treating depression and anxiety.

Mindful-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)

This therapy aims at transforming the reaction to our thoughts rather than the context of the views. In most cases, the problem is not our thoughts, but how we react to them. For instance, we can look at a scenario where one steps on your clean, sparkling white shoes. When that happens, you have a right to be angry. However, your reaction has to be controlled. If you are unable to control your emotions, you may be provoked to do something that you will regret. In such a situation, you may end up shouting at the person or behaving in a manner that is not appropriate. In as much as the other party may have wronged you, it is good to act like a person who places a lot of thoughts and considerations towards their actions. Before you do anything, think of its effect on the other person.

MBCT helps us in evaluating our thoughts. This is an essential element in decision making. It allows us to access our thoughts and establish how we react towards those thoughts. While carrying out this evaluation, we can know a lot about who we are as individuals. The type of judgment that one holds and the conclusions that they make based on different circumstances are essential in knowing who they are. This type of therapy opens us to a situation of self-awareness by analyzing our reaction towards our thoughts. Adverse reactions towards some of these thoughts can contribute to secondary emotions. In such cases, you may end up with depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses. To avoid these incidences from occurring, you can have MBCT. This therapy has a positive impact on our lives and helps us in making better and informed decisions.

Integrative Couple’s Behavior Therapy (1CBT)

When two people choose to settle together, there are moments of compassion, care, appreciation, and understanding. At times, people fail to agree, which results in conflict, anger, stress, intolerance, and disagreements. Some couples result in ending the relationship instead of trying to find a solution. The truth is you will never find a perfect person. People have a fault, and you also have your own challenges that may not be acceptable by the other person. It is by knowing this that we are able to work out our differences and live together. In a relationship, conflicts are bound to occur. Not every day you will understand, at times you may be intolerant to some behaviors that irritate you. It doesn't mean that they didn't affect you before; it could be influenced by external factors that you are unable to manage. As a couple, you need to start therapy to work out your issues .

ICBT focuses on conflict resolution, behavior change and acceptance of your partner's traits and sensitivities. In relationships, it is crucial for individuals to care about each other's feelings. Do not say things that upset the other person. It affects their self-esteem and has a negative impact on their general performance. At times some people attack others based on

their insecurities; this is very wrong. It does not matter what conflict you had. You should avoid bringing people down based on their insecurities. When you visit an ICBT therapist, they bridge the gap in communication. The major problem in conflicts is communication. Your inability to talk and come up with a solution on your own is what creates the need for a third party. The therapist helps in addressing the conversations you avoided to have. You are able to brainstorm and come up with a solution .

All the therapies discussed have proven to be effective in mental illnesses. The specialist can decide on the best treatment to use based on the problem accessed. Based on the issue at hand, you can establish the CBT that can best fit you. You can decide the best therapy based on your own preferences, previous treatments, background, and your strengths and weaknesses. The first step is identifying that there is a problem. Once you realize this, you are at a position of seeking help. This is when you go for therapy. There is no doubt that CBT is a useful mental health treatment.

Chapter 4: How to Start Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Wondering on how you can start having a CBT session? Well, below are some guidelines on how you can go about it. Probably you find yourself struggling with some issues that can be solved using CBT, and it is about time that you consider taking some sessions. Having gone through the benefits of cognitive-behavioral therapy, take a bold step to make your life better. Here are some of the factors that you will have to consider if you wish to go down that road.

1. How to prepare

Find a therapist

You can find a therapist through a referral, as a service offered by your employers or on your own. While acquiring a therapist through a referral, it can be through a trusted friend or source, a health insurance plan, or a doctor. In some companies, employers provide counseling services in an attempt to take care of the wellbeing of their employees. If you are in such a company, you can seize the opportunity and use it well. If at all, you are not comfortable using the services of the therapist recommendations provides, you can search for one that you can trust. You can use resources like the internet or go to the local or state psychological association.

Here are some of the factors that you should consider while looking for a psychotherapist.

1. Know the type of therapist you need

There are many types of psychotherapists. We have psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed social workers, and professional counselors. All these people have different tasks and obligations. They have specialized in specific fields and

can provide reliable advice based on what they have specialized in. You get to choose a therapist by establishing the problem that you are facing. In case you have never looked for a therapist before, you can go through the various psychotherapists and understand what each does. This will help you in getting the right person to help with your problem. Alternatively, you can use a doctor's help. You can schedule a consultation with a physician, get to tell them the challenges you are facing. By accessing your problem, they can recommend you the psychotherapist you need. The internet offers a platform where you can access everything, with a single click, you can get all the information you want.

2. Check the qualifications

Access the background and education, and you can find where they trained to be psychotherapists. A qualified psychotherapist needs to have met the state certification and licensing requirements. This qualification certifies that they are fit to operate the business that they do. It also guarantees that they are able to offer sound judgment and help the client in resolving their issues since they are skilled and qualified. While establishing that, it is also good to acknowledge the years of experience that the psychologist has had in offering such sessions. With more years of experience, the may have learned a lot along the way based on the various cases that they have handled. This makes it easy for them to solve similar issues. More years of experience can be an added bonus. However, this does not mean that those who are recently entering the field cannot do a good job. You can get a good therapist who is new in the area but qualified in terms of education. He or she may have great reviews and recommendations, which makes them qualified for the task.

3. How the therapist operates

Knowing how a therapist treats his/ her clients is a significant factor to consider. You can know this based on the reviews given by different clients. If the reports are positive and say a lot of good things about the therapist, then this can help you in coming to a conclusion. Therapy sessions happen to be sensitive sessions, where a therapist should treat their patient in a

manner that they will appreciate and feel comfortable in. It helps in easing the tension and allows the patient to share what they have to say freely. The therapist has to prove that they can be trusted by the patient with the information provided. You wouldn't want to engage in a private conversation with someone and have the information shared with a third party. You need someone who will keep their end of the bargain in protecting your trust.

The treatments work differently. You need a therapist who is genuine enough to tell you if the treatment that they are administering will be sufficient. They can do so by giving you an estimated number of people who have benefited from the treatment and those who failed to. Find out how they access the progress while carrying out the sessions. Are they good at follow up or do they wait till you show up in their offices? It is essential to put this into consideration. You require a therapist who is able to access your progress and come up with an alternative treatment in case the previous one failed to work. The other thing you need to look at is how they conduct themselves through the sessions. Ethics are essential for any practicing therapist. You need a therapist who is professional in their work and values what they do.

4. Know the cost

Having accessed the above factors, you are now at a position of choosing a suitable psychotherapist. You need to look for one you can afford and one that has met the requirements required. Working with a therapist is like investing in you. They are meant to make things better and can result in significant life transformations. At times you are required not to be very strict on the budget, but to look at the impact, the sessions have on your life. If you have health insurance, some cover a given number of therapy sessions in a year. You can utilize them.

5. What to expec t

Now that you already have a therapist, there are some expectations you will have towards your first therapy session. Typically, the first session is more like an introduction session. The therapist will ask questions about you. In this session, the therapist tries to create an atmosphere where you feel comfortable to speak about yourself freely. At the same time, they introduce you to who they are. They try their best to interact with you in the best way possible. The main aim is to obtain information about you and get to know what your primary concerns are. The therapist tries to access your situation by asking you about your emotional and physical state. After locating the problem, they can establish the best treatment to administer, which they can discuss with you. They can also access if you can benefit from other therapies.

In this session, you can also establish if the therapist is the best that you can find. You want to ensure that you get someone you can feel free to talk to. In the sessions to come, you will have some deep conversations. This creates the need to get someone who is friendly and one that you can trust. Observe the therapist's approach. If he or she uses an approach that you like, then you are likely to have a productive CBT session with them. On the contrary, if you do not like the way he or she handles things, you might consider getting a change of therapist. Evaluate the goal of the treatment and how the therapist will help you in achieving those goals. You might also need to consider the length of each session and the number of sessions you will need until you improve your mental health.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy procedure

Problem identification

The first step is identifying the problem you are facing. The therapist will use the first few sessions to access the troubling situations in your life, and this is perhaps the most critical part of a therapy session. Some of these issues could be grief, loss, divorce, or anger, among other problems resulting in mental disorder. This is also a challenging moment since you will be opening up to a stranger. If you have never attended therapy before,

this may be a struggle, but with the right therapist, you can easily express yourself.

Evaluating your emotions, thoughts, and beliefs concerning the problem

Having established the problem, the next step taken by the therapist is to know how you handle these problems. They will ask questions on how you handle specific incidences. Based on how you answer, they can tell a lot about your thoughts. They can identify your beliefs using the convictions that you hold. Your emotions are known by how you react to various topics that are raised in the therapy sessions. You can express anger, remorse, sadness, bitterness, happiness. All the emotions help the therapist in establishing the best treatment and approach .

Establishing negative thinking

Our thoughts play a significant role in our lives, and they really matter a lot. We are regularly advised to ensure we have a positive thought since the effect can be translated into our lives. In this case, the therapist needs to find out if you have negative thoughts that interfere with your wellbeing. When it comes to mental illnesses, our opinions matter a lot. We have to ensure that we take care of our way of thinking for us to improve our mental health. In this process, the therapist can identify patterns of thinking that cause your problem and how to treat it.

Transform your way of thinking

This is a challenging step for both parties. For a therapist to achieve this, they will have to understand you fully. Having this information allows them to know your weak spots and strengths. They quickly realize what to say to change your mind. You, on the other hand, have to be really convinced to

the point of transformation. Changing your thought is a significant reform. When you are able to switch from your negative thoughts to positive thinking, you can improve your mental health.

How to Get the Most out of CBT

1. Be honest

For the CBT sessions to be practical, you have to be honest. Tell your therapist everything they need to know for them to help you quickly. At times it may be challenging to open up to a stranger, especially at the beginning. The good thing is, this is a feeling that you can overcome, especially if you get a good therapist.

2. Be open to chang e

Part of the treatment may involve changing our way of doing certain things. Change is not something that everyone can come by. For some people, it might take longer than others. In a CBT session, you have to be open to change for the treatment to be effective.

3. Follow your treatment plan

It is essential to attend all therapy sessions. Each session is vital in ensuring that your health improves. Try as much as you can, not to miss any session provided. This also helps in making the process faster and effective. If you keep postponing, your treatment will be delayed.

4. Don’t expect instant results

At times we get into therapy sessions with too much expectation. We tend to think that the results are immediate and forget that it is a process. Once

you start CBT, trust the process. Do not be too hard on yourself. At the end of it all, it will have a positive impact on your life.

5. Talk to your therapist if the therapy is not effective

In some cases, the therapy sessions may not be practical. This can be caused by various factors. When this happens, feel free to share it with your therapist. It will save cost, and the therapist can come up with other treatments that work. If the situation is beyond their control, they can refer you to another therapist.

Chapter 5: How Does Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Improve Your Daily Life?

➢ Identifying our problems

In life, we are faced with various challenges. At times we may be going through something that we are not aware of. We only get to realize the problem after the damage has been done. By taking cognitive behavioral therapy, you can establish some of these problems. For instance, you may have recently developed a habit of quickly getting irritated. This is not something that happens overnight, and there has to be a cause. It is through identifying the reason that you will be able to solve that issue. The objective of your irritation could be the loss of a loved one, which results in grief, but you express it through anger. People around you may not be aware of what is happening in your life, so if you are easily irritated around them, it's hard for them to understand. Since they do not know what you are going through, it will be hard for them to accept such conduct. If you start CBT, you get to identify the cause of the issue and know how to solve it.

➢ Acceptance

Self-acceptance is something that most people struggle with. It becomes a struggle when we do not know much about ourselves, and we seek to define ourselves based on other people's opinions. At times we pay too much attention to what other people have to say about us. In the process, we forget that our opinion matters as much as other people's opinion. Therapies take us down the road of self-realization. We get to know ourselves better through the questions asked and how we respond to them. In the session, we discover the things that we can change and those that we cannot change. It brings us to the point of self-acceptance based on the evaluation made. You are able to identify the things that you can change and those that are beyond your control. If you are struggling with denial, CBT is the best therapy you can take. It brings you to the point of making peace with what you cannot change. Some facts are hard to live by, but unless we let them go, we cannot

progress in life. If you can accept and carry on with life, you will be better placed.

➢ Renewed mindset

CBT allows us to view our thoughts and how they influence the various decisions we make. You find that our thoughts have a significant impact on our lives. People who tend to have negative thoughts are unlikely to prosper in life. Those kinds of ideas tend to slow us down and affect our mental health. Some mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, and trauma can be as a result of our thoughts. At times we are faced with challenges, and we lack the means to tackle them. This, in turn, translates to negative thoughts that can be self-destructive. As a result, one ends up with depression or anxiety. With the help of CBT, this can be avoided. Therapists assist us in changing our way of thinking. The transformation does not come automatically, but gradually. It involves a series of steps and procedures to be followed. At the end of the therapy session, you can achieve the expected results. Having a changed mindset is essential in one's life. It allows you to think positively, which aids in your overall life outcome. There is a lot of change that can occur with a renewed mindset.

➢ Make goals that are achievable

We all have different goals and desires in life. Each day we make goals that are either short term or long term. Goals feel good when they are achieved, and we get to tick them as accomplished. As we set goals, we have inner desires that at the end of that duration, we will have achieved what we hope for. While setting goals, it is good to be realistic and not go overboard to things that are unattainable. What exactly do we mean by realistic goals? Well, this is relative depending on the person or situation involved. Some goals may appear unrealistic to you, but they make sense to another individual. While making goals, you need to carry out a personal evaluation to see what works for you and that which does not work for you. With the help of cognitive-behavioral therapy, this is achievable. You get to hold an open conversation with a therapist that allows them to know more about you. In these sessions, the therapist can discover your abilities and

potential. They can tell you a lot about who you are and what you can do. You can set some goals that are attainable after such sessions.

➢ Being rational

Cognitive-behavioral therapy allows an individual to differentiate between illogic thoughts and facts. Being logical is a trait that will help you in life. For instance, it is a highly required trait in conflict resolution. Conflicts involve two parties. Both parties may not be able to come to an agreement, creating the need for a third party. The mediator should be ration for him/her to handle the case appropriately. They will have to listen to both sides of the story and come up with a suitable solution. Each individual involved may have justifiable claims; however, the mediator will have to even the ground such that both opinions are considered. If one party has a substantial demand and the other party has a baseless claim, then it will be the obligation of the mediator to make the right judgment. It will involve making the one, who is in the wrong; understand why their claim is not substantial. The mediator has to do this by distinguishing the facts and irrational thoughts. CBT sessions can really help us to become rational, especially by evaluating our way of thinking.

➢ Being mindful of our behavior

Previously, we have discussed how our emotions and feelings influence our behavior. Well CBT can really help in improving our behavior. The therapist accesses the feelings and thoughts that we have. You find that when our thoughts are negative, they influence our behavior negatively. For instance, we can evaluate the situation where a person has been brought up in a strict upbringing. They could have been exposed to bad things such as drug and substance abuse, rape, prostitution, and violence. This kind of environment has a negative impact on a child. You find that this surrounding negatively influences their emotions. There is a high likelihood of them, resulting in the bad behaviors that they have been exposed to. Such people may be violent, difficult to understand. Therapy sessions can really help them in discovering themselves. It allows them to realize that their upbringing does not have to affect their current life. Adjusting to this may

take some time, but they will eventually manage. Such cases are a bit challenging to handle and getting the patient out of the negative views that they have regarding life will be a process. However, by the time they are done with their therapy sessions, they will change their thought and behavior.

➢ Being open-minded

Cognitive-behavioral therapy can help in being open-minded. It allows us to consider other people's views and perspectives. At times we share different views and opinions regarding a particular topic. It is human nature to do so. In some instances, we get consumed by our way of doing things, and we disregard entirely other people's opinions. That should not be the case; we should consider what the other party has to say concerning the topic under discussion. It is also important to note that we learn from others. This involves listening to their views and their way of doing things. You get to know why people think the way they think. It allows you to blend in their environment without feeling left out. By welcoming other people's opinions and views, got get to know them more, this can turn into a friendship bond. Be open to the fact that you are wrong sometimes and that you make mistakes. When you acknowledge this, it becomes easy to correct your errors and become a better person.

➢ Being understanding

At times we can be self-centered in a way that we only think about ourselves. When we do this, we fail to put others first, and all we care about is ourselves. By doing this, we show a negative side of who we are. It would be fantastic if we were able to place other people's needs ahead of our own needs. Taking CBT sessions can help us in putting other peoples' needs ahead of us. We get to understand that it is okay to have different desires in life and still coexist peacefully. When couples are able to embrace this, their relationship is strengthened. You find that most disagreements between them are as a result of a misunderstanding. They fail to understand each other's ways of thinking and collide in the process. In some severe cases, this could lead to a divorce. Couples going through such challenges

should seek a CBT before their situation worsens. This will help in saving their relationship by addressing the issue that they are struggling with. The therapist can help them in coming up with ways to solve such conflicts is they ever arise again in future. Cognitive-behavioral therapy is effective in helping us have understanding. This is an aspect that improves our lives.

➢ Self-control

Self-control is crucial in various aspects of our lives. This is an essential trait to have. Taking CBT can help in improving your self-control. The therapist can access your emotions and thoughts and how they affect your life. Your feelings can tell a lot about who you are. Based on this evaluation, you can discover if you have self-control or not. When the therapist finds that you lack self-control, they can suggest the right treatment. They can handle the issue based on some similar cases that they have had before. It will involve understanding you better in a way that they can offer sound advice. Self-control has a lot of advantages in our lives. It allows us to have discipline and ethical conduct. If you are a leader anywhere, this is a trait that you need. For instance, if you are an employer that treats your employees based on your moods, they are likely to underperform. You find that anytime you cross paths with them while angry, you shout at them or insult them. When you do this, you affect their self-esteem, and they are likely to perform poorly. It would be advisable for you to start CBT sessions that can improve your self-control.

➢ Facing our fears

In life, we encounter various challenges that we are unable to face. At times we decide to live by the obstacles instead of meeting them. No one promised that the road would be easy. This life comes with its ups and downs. If we are not careful, we may be blown away by the magnitude of events. CBT sessions have proven to be effective in facing our fears. You get to discuss your issues with your therapist. You find that you were afraid to tackle some of the problems that you face. When you open up to your therapist, it gets easier to confront them. It allows you to ease the burden of having to face your fears on your own. This move can have a positive

impact on your life. It also places you in a better position of facing your challenges and overcoming them. The downside of not confronting our fears is shown in the mental illnesses that people get. When you keep piling up things within yourself, they get to a saturation point. That is when they explode into a severe disease that requires medical attention. Before it gets to this point, take a CBT.

Chapter 6: Cognitive Disorders

Cognitive disorders are a type of mental illness. They are also referred to as neurocognitive disorders (NCD). When it occurs, it affects perception, memory, learning and decision making. Some examples of cognitive disorders are delirium, mild and significant cognitive disorders. When cognitive disorders occur, an individual experiences a decline in brain activities. The DSM-5 defines the six primary cognitive functions. These are; intricate attention, learning and memory, social cognition, language, perpetual-motor function, and executive function. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cognitive disorder among other neurocognitive disorders. The causes of the various cognitive disorders vary depending on the type of illness. You find that most cognitive diseases share similar symptoms because they all result from brain defects. Memory loss is the most shared symptom across cognitive disorders. There are various factors that can result in brain damage. Some of these causes will be discussed in the cognitive dysfunctions that we will study.

Delirium

It occurs in a short duration of time.

Some of the symptoms of delirium include;

- Confusion
- Hallucinations and illusions
- Excitement
- Lack of clear judgment
- Disorientation

- Unconsciousness
- Difficulties in processing new information
- Mood swings
- Unordinary behavior

Causes of delirium

- It can result after previous illnesses worsen
- It can also result from old age or poor nutrition

Mild and Major Neurocognitive Disorder

They mainly occur among the elderly

Symptoms

- Memory loss
- Impaired judgment
- Change in behavior
- Agitation
- Mood swings

Causes

- Neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s diseases, and Huntington’s disease

- Brain trauma
- Stroke
- Heart issues

These causes interfere with the general brain function, which results in neurocognitive disorders. Once the brain cells are damaged, it results in memory loss and other defects caused by damage to brain cells.

Some examples of cognitive disorders include;

- Alzheimer’s diseases
- Intellectual disability
- Down syndrome
- Dyslexia
- Amnesia
- Dementia
- Postoperative cognitive dysfunction
- Pseudo senility
- Mild cognitive impairment
- Learning problems in childhood cancer

Alzheimer’s Diseases

Alzheimer's disease is a neurological disorder that affects the memory, thinking, and behavior of an individual. When it occurs is results in the death of brain cells, which lead to cognitive decline and memory loss. Alzheimer's disease is a common type of dementia. In the beginning, its

symptoms are mild and become severe as the diseases progress. When in critical stages, memory loss gets severe, which makes it hard for victims to recall past and present events. It also interferes with the reasoning ability. This may create the need to give personal assistance to the individual suffering from the disease.

Symptoms of Alzheimer's disease

1. Memory loss

- When this occurs, the person will;
- Get lost in familiar places
- Lose personal belongings
- Ask questions repeatedly
- Hold repetitive conversations
- Forget appointments and events
- Difficulties in wording
- Forget common things

2. Impaired thinking and reasoning

- Poor judgment
- Bad decision-making ability
- Inability to undertake complex tasks
- It becomes difficult to manage finances

3. Impaired visual and spatial skills

- Lack of ability to use simple and standard tools
- The person is unable to identify familiar faces
- Inability to recognize common places

4. Impaired speech, writing, and reading

- Difficulties in speech and spelling
- Writing errors
- Speaking with a lot of hesitation
- Inability to think common words

5. Change in behavior and personality

- Lack of motivation to perform tasks
- Withdrawal
- Misconduct
- Lack of empathy
- Change in moods

Stages of Alzheimer's disease

It occurs in three stages

1. Preclinical; this is the initial stage where symptoms are yet to appear

2. Mild cognitive impairment; this happens when signs are now visible and mild

3. Dementia;

Diagnosis

There no test that can be used to detect the presence of Alzheimer's disease. It is the symptoms that are used to tell if a person has conditions or not.

Treatment

Currently, there is no cure for Alzheimer’s disease. The damaged brain cells cannot be reversed. We can only make it easier to live with the disease. This can be done through therapeutic interventions

Dementi a

Dementia is a general term to describe symptoms associated with memory loss. It occurs as a result of damage in brain cells. This, in turn, leads to impaired memory, thinking, and judgment. Some people refer to it as a neurocognitive disorder. It is not a disease but a disorder. Through treatment, the symptoms can be improved. However, the complications resulting in dementia cannot be cured. When it occurs, it interferes with a person's daily activities. In most cases, we relate it to memory loss. However, it is essential to note that memory loss is associated with other diseases.

Symptoms

We can classify the symptoms into cognitive and psychological changes .

Cognitive changes

Loss of memory

- The individual may forget familiar faces
- Misplace items
- Forget certain events
- Lack of the ability to recall familiar routes

Poor communication

- Inability to recall common words
- Speech impairment
- Inability to spell

Poor reasoning and problem-solving abilities

- Making poor judgment
- Poor decisions

Poor visual and spatial abilities

- Failure to recall common items

Inability to handle complex tasks

- One is unable to perform tasks that they easily performed

Poor planning and organization

- You find that the individual is confused most of the time
- Lacks proper planning
- Disorderly

Confusion and disorientation

- Memory loss leads to confusion
- Failure to know the turnout of events

Lack of coordination and motor functions

Psychological changes

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Hallucinations
- Agitations
- Personality changes
- Inappropriate behavior
- paranoia

Types of progressive dementia

- Alzheimer’s disease
- Lower body dementia
- Vascular dementia
- Front temporal dementia
- Mixed dementia
- Parkinson’s disease
- Traumatic brain injury

- Huntington’s diseas e

Dementia diseases that can be reversed

- Medication side effects
- Infections and immune disorders
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Metabolic problems
- Poisoning
- Subdural hematomas
- Brain tumors
- Anoxia

Factors exposing one to dementia

- Family history
- Age
- Down syndrome
- Depression
- Vitamin and nutritional deficiency
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Heavy alcohol
- Diet and exercise

Diagnosis

There is no specific test for dementia. A diagnosis can be found based on medical history and observing the signs and symptoms. It may be challenging to determine the disorder based on the symptoms since they can be misguiding

Treatmen t

The treatment of dementia depends on the cause. There is no tested treatment that can completely cure dementia. However, it can be managed.

Amnesia

Amnesia is a memory loss caused by a disease or brain damage. A person suffering from amnesia is unable to recall old memories and new memories. It can also be associated with confusion and lack of coordination. Depending on the type of damage caused, the memory can be fully or partially lost. We have two main types of amnesia, anterograde and retrograde amnesia. Retrograde amnesia refers to the inability to recover information obtained at a particular date. Anterograde refers to the inability to store information in the long term as opposed to short term. When it occurs, the individual acquires difficulties in obtaining new knowledge and retain the information for future purposes .

Types of amnesia

- Retrograde amnesia
- Anterograde amnesia

- Traumatic amnesia
- Transient global amnesia
- Hysterical amnesia
- Childhood amnesia
- Source amnesia
- Posthypnotic amnesia
- Prosopamnesia
- Blackout phenomena

Symptoms

- Inability to learn new things
- Disorientation and confusion
- Complete or partial loss of memory
- Failure to recall familiar routes
- Lack of coordination and in some cases tremor may occur
- Hallucinations
- Inability to recall past events

Cause of amnesia

- Dementia
- Damage to the hippocampus
- Anoxia

- Trauma or stress
- Use of alcohol
- Head injuries
- Electroconvulsive therapy

Diagnosing amnesia

Since memory loss is common in other cognitive diseases, this symptom may not help the doctor in identifying the particular conditions the patient is suffering from. The doctor will require the medical history of the patient. In some cases, the patient may not be in the right state to give an account. In such a situation, a family member can be present to help the patient in answering the questions appropriately.

Some of the questions asked include

- When did the memory loss begin?
- Can they remember past and present events?
- Are they using any medication?
- Do they consume alcohol?
- Is there a history of depression and seizures?
- Have they engaged in drug and substance abuse?
- Have they had other conditions resulting in memory loss?
- If there are family members diagnosed with a neurological condition?
- Based on the answers provided to the questions asked, the doctor can evaluate the patient's memory and judgment. They can also do a physical examination to assess balance, reflexes and sensory function

Treatment

The choice of treatment should help the patient in recovering their memory. This can be done through therapy. Digital equipment like smartphones can be used in reminding the patient about significant events. The physician can come up with learning strategies that can help the patient in recalling things .

Intellectual Disability

It can also be referred to as mental retardation or general learning disability. This is a mental disability characterized by limitation in adaptive functioning and intellectual functioning. Intellectual functioning refers to learning, reasoning and decision making. This type of disorder interferes with daily practical and social skills. It slows down the learning process. The person will learn eventually, but it will take more time than it took others to learn the same thing. Intellectual disability is detectable at a young age, and it mainly occurs among children below eighteen years. It occurs in different degrees, in some, it may be severe, and in others, it may be mild.

Symptoms of intellectual disability

In a child ;

The child may have difficulties in talking, or they may speak late

Taking time to roll, sit, crawl and walk

Difficulties in recalling things

Slow learning. For instance, they may take time to feed themselves

Failure to connect actions with consequences

Lack of the ability to make decisions and think in a logical manner

Difficulties in problem-solving

Behavioral problems, you may notice some patterns in explosive tantrums.

Other behavioral issues include;

- Dependency
- Low self-esteem
- Aggression
- Depression
- Inability to pay attention
- Stubbornness
- Withdrawal from social activities
- Attention seeking behavior
- Frustration
- Psychotic disorders
- Impulse judgment

Lack of curiosity, at a young age, children tend to be curious, and it is this aspect that allows them to learn. If your child lacks this, you should seek immediate treatment.

Low IQ, when IQ is tested and found to be less than 70, then the child has an intellectual disability .

Levels of intellectual disability

- ➢ Mild intellectual disability
- ➢ Moderate intellectual disability

- Severe intellectual disability
- Profound intellectual disability

Causes of intellectual disability

1. Mercury or lead poisoning
2. Brain injury
3. Dietary issues such as malnutrition
4. Chromosome abnormalities like Down syndrome
5. Trauma before and during birth
6. Inherited disorders
7. Severe cases of childhood diseases such a measle s

Diagnosis

You can diagnose intellectual disability based on observations and some standard tests

Treatment

Some of the treatment may include

- Behavior therapy
- Counseling
- Medication
- Occupation therapy

Down Syndrome

This is a genetic disorder. People who have Down syndrome are born with an extra chromosome. Your body needs the required number of chromosomes. When there is an excess, it disrupts the normal functioning of the body. The extra chromosome will affect your body physically and mentally. Down syndrome is more like a permanent condition that lasts for a lifetime. However, there are some treatments that can make diseases manageable and easy to deal with among individuals. This way, one is able to live well despite having the condition. Down syndrome is common in children born of mothers that are above 35 years of age.

Symptoms of Down syndrome

- Low muscle tone
- The child may have eyes that slant upwards
- Protruding tongue
- Short neck and small stature
- Deep creases across the center of palms
- Flat nasal bridge
- A big space between the first large toe and the second toe
- Slow development
- Health issues like;

-Leukemia

- Epilepsy
- Respiratory problems

- Thyroid conditions
- Hearing difficulties
- Alzheimer’s disease

Causes

- ➢ Trisomy 21
- ➢ Mosaic Down syndrome
- ➢ Translocation Down syndrom e

Risk Factors

Advancing maternal age

Older women have a high likelihood of giving birth to children with Down syndrome. This mainly occurs from the age of 35 going upwards. They tend to have older eggs which provide a massive risk in improper chromosome division. As a result, the child may have extra chromosomes, which result in Down syndrome.

Having given birth to a child with Down syndrome

If a parent has had a child with Down syndrome, they are at risk of getting another with a similar condition. If you intend to have another child, you can consult a genetic specialist, who can access if you can have another child without the Down syndrome disorder .

Carriers of genetic translocation for Down syndrome

This can be present in both men and women and can be passed to children.

Diagnosis

Screen testing

- Cell-free DNA
- Nuchal translucency testing
- Integrated screen
- Triple screen or quadruple screen
- Genetic ultrasound

Diagnostic tests

- Percutaneous umbilical blood sampling
- Amniocentesis
- Chorionic villus samplin g

Treatment

Currently, there is no cure for Down syndrome. The only thing that can be done is ensuring that the person who has Down syndrome can comfortably live with it. Some care and medications can be provided

Dyslexia

It is, at times referred to as a reading disorder. People who have dyslexia tend to have difficulties in reading. It leads to the inability to spell, speak, spell and read. Dyslexia can even occur in smart and hardworking kids. The major problem is learning and writing. It is more of a linguistic problem as opposed to a visual defect. The effects of dyslexia may differ among

different people. Dyslexia causes people to take a longer time to read and have difficulties in spelling, writing and speaking .

Symptoms of dyslexia

- The person may experience a hard time learning how to read

- Slow development among children

- Speech difficulties among children

- The person takes time to process data

- Lack of coordination

- The individual may interchange numbers and alphabets unknowingly

- Inability to spell correctly

- Poor concentration, you find that the individual quickly gets mentally exhausted and fails to pay attention

- Saying things that seem illogical or completely unconnected

- Extended hearing which may lead to heating things that were never mentioned or coming up with their own ideas

- Inability to put thought into words

- Difficulties in counting and doing general arithmetic

- Lack of organization

Causes of dyslexia

- Neuroanatomical causes

- Genetics

- Gene-environment interaction

Diagnosis

It is possible to conduct an early diagnosis as the child develops. This disorder can be traced when the child is still young. When diagnosed at this stage, it becomes easy to treat it in advanced stages. As a parent, you can start by evaluating your child's performance at school. You can consult with the teacher to know your child's progress in school work. A diagnosis test covers areas such as;

- Word recognition
- Background information
- Reading comprehension
- Intelligence
- Early development and family history
- Oral language skills
- Ability to read new words
- Understanding numbers and sequences
- Vocabulary knowledge
- Ability to read
- Fluency skill s

While carrying out the test, the examiner will have to exclude the symptoms that belong to other disorders

Treatment

Like we said earlier, when the diseases are discovered at an early stage, it becomes easy to treat it. Some of the treatments can include;

Psychological testing; this involves the use of ways that can get into the child's senses

Guidance and support; this consists of assisting the child in improving their condition

Postoperative Cognitive Dysfunction

Postoperative cognitive dysfunction occurs after surgery. It is a cognitive impairment that occurs after surgery. PCD affects memory and other cognitive functions. It can last for 1-12 months after surgery. In some severe cases, it can go on for years without seizing. This is especially common in primary operations. PCD can occur in patients with an already existing cognitive disorder or in old patients. People are yet to establish its leading cause since it is still unclear how it happens

Risk factors of Postoperative cognitive dysfunction

- After operations under general anesthesia or regional anesthesia
- In older patients who were exposed to high consumption of alcohol
- After major operations
- After heart operations
- In older patients
- It can occur among people with a history of stroke

- It can occur among patients with a preexisting medical dysfunction
- It is likely to occur among people with lower education levels

Causes

Inflammatory responses to surgery; this mainly occurs among older adults. After surgery, it is crucial for the doctor to come up with ways that prevent the occurrence of inflammation.

Inhalation anesthetics and intravenous anesthetics; this is likely to cause postoperative cognitive dysfunction when used in heart surgery.

Treatment

Currently, research is still underway to establish the best treatment for Postoperative cognitive dysfunction. Some drugs are being tested to see if they can be useful. However, patients struggling with Postoperative cognitive dysfunction can be treated with care to make the disease manageable. This disease mainly occurs among older people. They can be handled with care to ensure that they are able to manage to live with the defect for prolonged years. With time a cure will be found.

Chapter 7: Treatment of Cognitive Disorders

Most of the cognitive disorders affect the brain. One of the best ways to treat or manage cognitive disorders is by therapy. In the previous chapters, we have discussed the various types of CBTs. Asides CBT; there are other types of therapy. The therapist can decide of which treatment to administer depending on the problem of that particular patient. Most of the therapies being used have been tested and proven to be effective in treating different cognitive disorders that patients may have. Below are some of the benefits of therapy sessions.

Benefits of Therapy Sessions

1. **Its benefits are long-term.** The reason why most people prefer therapy is due to the fact that its effects are long-term. There are numerous benefits that arise from therapy sessions. People suffering from cognitive disorders are advantaged during these sessions since the therapist helps them in recovering from memory loss. With continuous sessions, they begin to recall things that they had a difficult time remembering. The therapist has to understand them fully, for them to be able to help the patient in recovering their memory. It may involve being tactical in using items or ways that enhance quick recovery.

2. **It helps in preventing chronic pain.** Some of the cognitive disorders can result in chronic pain when the disease persists. Therapy sessions have been tested and proven to be effective in managing chronic pain. The therapist can ask you questions that act as a distraction from the pain that you are experiencing. He or she can also engage you in some activities that distract you from experiencing the pain. When the pain persists, they can give you

some drug prescriptions or provide the drugs themselves if they have them.

3. **It helps evaluate one's thoughts and emotions.** When cognitive disorders occur, they may have a negative impact on our thoughts and emotions. The therapist can access the situation of the patient by asking questions. How the patient responds will tell a lot about what they think and feel. In cases where the patient is undergoing memory loss, they may have mixed up statements. You will find that what they are saying will, at some point, fail to make any sense. You may note some confusion or disorientation. These factors will allow the therapist to come up with the best treatment.

4. **It can help in treating depression.** Some of the cognitive disorders can result in depression. This occurs when the diseases persist and interfere with the general wellbeing of the patient. The good thing is, this can be treated through therapy. The therapist can identify the main problem of the patient by asking those questions about how they feel. Based on how they respond to the questions asked, the therapist can know more about the patient. This also allows them to be at a better position of administering the treatment after proper evaluation of the problem. After the treatment, the patient will be able to overcome depression.

5. **It helps the patient overcome compulsions.** Some people suffering from cognitive diseases tend to have abnormal behaviors. There are some things that they do that cause a lot of irritation to the people around them. Such behaviors can be avoided by taking therapy sessions. The therapist makes the patient aware of the things that they do, that cause irritation. He or she shows the individual, the effect his or her behavior has on other people. Then eventually, the therapist comes up with ways in which the patient

can overcome the unordinary behaviors for them to live well with other people.

6. **It can help in rewiring your brain.** Therapy sessions can have a positive impact on a patient's brain. This is very important for people struggling with cognitive disorders. The therapist is able to shift the patient's focus into particular topics. This opens up your mind and helps you to makes progress in that particular area. In some cases, it may cause the patients to be inspired and motivated to do better in life. When they get to that point, it becomes easy to treat the various cognitive diseases since the patients are receptive.

7. **You do not have to deal with your problems alone.** Attending therapy sessions makes it easy for people to cope with the struggles that they are facing. It makes one know that they do not have to face a particular issue alone. It gets easier when they share their issues with the therapist and eases the burden that comes from keeping things to yourself. The therapist can provide ways in which you can tackle your issues such that they will no longer cause harm or distress. If you want to make things easier and manageable, you might consider taking therapy sessions.

8. **You will have self-awareness.** Therapy sessions are essential in self-awareness. The therapist brings into your attention, things that you did not know about yourself. This is made possible by the various questions that they ask. The therapy session is like a road to self-discovery. There are some negative things that you may discover about yourself. Some of these things may hinder your wellbeing and pose some challenges with recovering from cognitive disorders. Once they are brought into your attention, it gets easier to cope with them and make a change in your life. Therapy sessions will help in self-awareness.

How CBT Treatments Are Carried Out

- **Lab tests.** Some blood tests can be done to identify physical problems that can affect memory. This can be done by checking the vitamin B-12 deficiency or underactive thyroid gland.

- **Mental status testing.** This can be done by asking the patient questions. The answers that they provide to the questions asked can tell a lot about the person. It can also aid in establishing the long term and short term problems the mental state can result in within an individual.

- **Brain imaging** . This is done by carrying out scans like CT or MRI. The scans can show the presence of bleeding, stroke and brain tumors.

- **Neurological exam.** The doctor can conduct a physical examination to evaluate the state of the individual.

Chapter 8: How to Win Against Fear

1. **Accept that you fear.** The first and major step in winning against anything is acknowledging that it is present. Evaluate yourself and look at the things that cause discomfort in your life. Many are times we shy away from confronting our fears. We do not want to acknowledge that we are struggling with something. We would rather assume that a problem is not present than to acknowledge that it is a struggle. Here is where we go wrong since it piles up and becomes a big issue eventually that we are unable to happen. Mental illnesses like depression, anxiety, and trauma do not happen suddenly. They take time and involve a series of events resulting in their occurrence. Before we get to the point of having serious mental illnesses, let us evaluate ourselves. We can begin by looking at the things that affect us individually and realize why they are an issue in our lives. The best way of fighting a problem comes in acknowledging its presence in our lives. That way, it becomes easy to find a solution.

2. **Have some me-time.** At times you will be required to have some me-time. It is difficult to think with a clouded mind. For you to establish the real cause of your fears, you need to have a serious self-evaluation. It allows you to realize the things that you struggle with. You will be surprised that some of the problems you have, you were not aware that they were issues in the first place. Take your time to look at your life. This allows you even to discover the series of events that result in your fear. With a keen mind, you will be surprised about how much you can discover about yourself. While having some me time, it is also important for you not to be so harsh on yourself. Take it easy for that process to be effective. You will get nothing out of being strict on yourself. In fact, you may even end up worsening the condition to a bad state that it was already on. In this process, you can even

write down the various fears you have and the strengths that you possess for your process to be easy.

3. **Think about the future.** Having identified your problem, you can now think broadly. Start by looking at the impact the problem will have on your life. That way, you can establish the magnitude of the issue. You start by evaluating the potential effect if the problem is not handled immediately. Previously I have stated the effect of piling up problems. Eventually, they could burst out into something huge that has a greater impact on your life. It is through the accumulation of a series of problems that you get to the point that you cannot recover from. Before it gets to this point, there are a lot of things that you can you. You could decide to get help from a qualified professional. This individual can help you in coming up with ways in which you can confront your fears. This process can also help you in identifying things that cause the problem and those that can be solved. It places you at a better place when it comes to solving the challenges that you are undergoing. Looking into your future can also create a lot of inner inspiration in your life and make it easier for you to confront your fears.

4. **Look at the possible outcomes.** Some of the fears that we have are not major. They are things that we can confront; we do not want to do so. While evaluating your fears, ask yourself what is the worst that can happen. Your response to this question will tell you a lot about your fear. You will be surprised to learn that some of the fears that you have are not as big as you assumed them to be. We tend to exaggerate some things that are small, but we make them big. This process is very crucial and beneficial if you are looking into transforming your life. At times we fail to progress because of the problems that hold us back. Imagine being affected by a certain fear, only to realize later on that it was something you would have avoided? This would result in a lot of

regrets that you wouldn't want to have. Instead of saying I wish I knew, now is the time to change that narrative. Take a bold step in evaluating your fear. Realize the ones that should be taken as a matter of concern, and leave aside those that shouldn't.

5. **Avoid panic.** While confronting your fears, you may be tempted to get in a state of panic. Some of your fears could have a huge impact on your life, which causes you to be in a state of panic. This is where you need to breathe in and out and remind yourself that things will get better, if not okay. If you have a history of panic attacks, it is important that you consult your therapist. Do not evaluate the fears on your own. This could result in an even bigger problem than you may be unable to solve. Before it gets into this point, there are so many things that you can do to avoid such incidences. Your therapist makes the situation manageable and easier to handle. He or she has to understand you well, for them to get to the point of offering their assistance. They get to know your strengths and weaknesses. In the process, they can use your strength to overcome your weaknesses. In this case, they use your strength to confront your fears. This is something that you may not be able to do on your own, hence the need for a third party.

6. **Talk about your fears.** There is a certain relief that comes in talking. You get to ease your burdens, and at times you learn that you do not have to fight alone. There are so many battles in life that we choose to confront ourselves, and we end up failing terribly. They say, a problem half shared is a problem half solved. Take a bold step and share your struggles with someone. You never know who can come up and help you in solving your issues. You may be surprised that the other party was or is facing that same problem. If they faced it before, they could be having a conclusion by now. They can tell you how they confronted their fears and managed to overcome them. If you had not shared with

them, there is no way that you would have known that they can help you. Take a bold step in making a difference in your life. Whenever you want to change, you will have to embrace it. It's about time you share your fears for you to get help in handling them. Consulting a professional is better as opposed to confiding in a friend you do not completely trust.

7. **Avoid trying to be perfect.** In life, we are bound to make many mistakes. It is difficult and close to impossible for one to live a perfect life. You need to know that making mistakes is part of the living process. Some mistakes are inevitable, and there is nothing much we can do to confront them. As an individual, you have to come into terms with such difficult truths regarding your life. This prevents you from putting yourself under unnecessary pressure in your life, which can result in something major. At times you need to be reminded that you do not have some superpowers that allow you to be perfect in everything. You will make a lot of mistakes, and you have to be okay with that discovery. For you to even get better at what you do, you will have to live with the fact that there are some things that you lack control of. This allows you to focus on what you are doing at that moment, and it makes the process easier to handle. Do not be so focus on being picture perfect and forget to live the moment.

8. **Be positive.** The impact of a positive mind is so huge that you might wonder why you are not positive at the moment. For you to be successful in life, you need to have a positive approach towards everything that you do. While evaluating your fears, do not let them overwhelm you. Some of the fears that you may have may appear to be major and unmanageable. This could place you in a point of uncertainty about a lot of things. When such incidences occur, be soft on yourself and confront the issue with a lot of ease. It may appear difficult to do so, but it will be worth your while. Visualize that things will get better with every passing

day. This gives you hope and makes you look forward to having better days of self-fulfillment. This approach can also create a lot of inspiration and motivation in your life. It allows you to have a lot of positivity, which is essential in making you a better person in life. Do not let your fears be the reason for your insecurity. You can always go above them and make yourself a better person.

9. **Reward yourself.** At times we tend to put ourselves under so much pressure that we forget the things that matter. How do you feel when someone compliments you? It often feels so good and places you in a position of feeling better about yourself. At times take some time to give yourself some credit for what you do. Be your biggest fan and appreciate yourself when you do something good. Even before other people acknowledge your efforts, be the first one to reward yourself for the good work that you do. It does not matter how little the success may be, as long as it's a win, it should be something worth celebrating. If you desire to take bigger strides in the future, you can start by appreciating the small steps that you take. This allows you to feel motivated and inspired into doing bigger things in life. It is also important for you to believe in yourself way before other people do. Even if other people do not believe that you are capable of doing something, you should have an inner belief that reminds you, and you can conquer. Keep reminding yourself about your abilities; this makes you stronger and places you in a position of success.

10. **Trust the process.** Before conquering your fears, there are some steps that you will have to take. You may not be able to transform overnight. This is something that you have to come into terms with. It may take some time before you overcome your fears.

However, you have to trust that process if you are looking into having a successful outcome. It is essential for you to come into terms with the fact that good things take time. They don't just occur overnight, and it is through a series of events that we can make a change in our lives. This stage may appear to be difficult and place one in a situation of uncertainty. If you feel that way, know that it is a normal feeling to have and trust that you will be able to overcome it. Even when you feel that what you are going through is so difficult for you to handle, remind yourself that it gets better and easier as times moves on. You will eventually progress to where you ought to be. The trick is never giving up and never second-guessing your abilities in life.

Chapter 9: Tips to Avoid Negative Thoughts

1. **Challenge negative thoughts.** One of the best ways to confront negative thoughts is to confront them. Take some time to evaluate the kind of thoughts that you have. Find out why you bear such thoughts and look for a way to confront them. It becomes difficult to confront something that you are not aware of. The only way to eliminate it is by being aware that it already exists. That way, it places you to a position of awareness on how you can avoid that particular matter. We are who we tell ourselves we are. If you are used to telling yourself negative things about who you are, then high chances are you will end up being what you claim. When this happens, you will go through a lot of life challenges, and you may not make any progress in life. Take some time to evaluate what you tell yourself. Be careful in ensuring that your thoughts are pure so you can live a good life. Identifying these negative thoughts can help in knowing where they come from. This way, you can avoid the things leading to negative thoughts.

2. **Stay around positive people.** The type of company that you keep can tell a lot about who you are. What they say impacts your life either positively or negatively. Take a close evaluation of the people that surround you. Analyze their views concerning life and how they tackle challenging situations in their life. By doing this, you will know a lot about the kind of thoughts that they have. Positive people tend to have a lot of enthusiasm for facing life. Anytime they are faced with an obstacle, and they are optimistic that they will manage and come out of the situation successfully. The truth is, life is not an easy road; it had bumpy areas, some corners, and some potholes. These obstacles will be present, but that does not mean that you will be unable to work your way through them. In life, there is always a way out. You need to be positive and trust that you will conquer your fear. If the people around you are positive, life gets easier to handle. You get to the

point of self-realization that opens you up to your strengths and allows you to be a better person in life.

3. **Avoid having many expectations.** At times we tend to have many expectations in life. You desire to have a successful life at a certain age or to achieve some goals at a certain age. Well, it is good to have these goals, ambitions, and dreams. However, avoid having many expectations. At times things do not turn out as we expected them to. We are at times faced with challenges and unable to comprehend why things are not aligning as we would expect them to. When things fail to work, we end up having negative thoughts, and we are unable to comprehend why we are going through what we are going through. The best way to go about life is to avoid having too many expectations and take things slow. Take some time to understand that things may not go as you had planned them. Some issues may come up and hinder us from getting to some points as fast as we would have expected. With a little perseverance, we will eventually break the barriers, and we have to trust the process and be as strong as we face each day. It is also good to appreciate what you have before you get what you want.

4. **Have a changed mindset.** Your mindset is everything. If you tune it into negative thoughts, then that is all you will think about. If you tune it into positive thinking, you will be optimistic. Constantly, we are reminded of the impact our mindset has on our lives. Every time we are being urged to have a transformed mindset if we want better things in life. Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why? Why would your mindset matter so much in your life and get to the point of determining your outcome? Well, what you think about yourself sets the pace in determining what kind of life, you are likely to have. One of the keys to having a changed mindset is being positive and telling yourself good things about you. Be your biggest source of motivation. Cheer yourself daily for you to live a better and transformed life. Your mindset will also determine if you will be able to achieve your goals or not. With a renewed mindset, it is easier to achieve those goals and live

a better life. It also influences your production and allows good performance in various aspects of life.

5. **Change your attitude.** Be intentional about your attitude. Your character is essential in shaping your future. You will find it hard to make it in life if you are always having a negative attitude towards life. Take some time to be positive about how you approach life. At times you may be doing things as they should be done, then all over sudden someone decides to upset you. If you allow them to get into your life, it will pose as a life challenge. It is vital to be open to the fact that you will face challenges in life. Not everything will come to you as easy as you had expected it to. You will, at times, face some challenges, and you have to know how you will overcome them on your own. Be very deliberate on the type of attitude that you have. Take some time to think and have a generally positive attitude towards life. Some challenges will be present, but you have to come up with ways in which you can confront them. If you approach life with a positive and intentional attitude, you are likely to succeed.

6. **Focus on the good.** Negative thoughts come about when we are always focusing on the bad situations. Take some time to look at the possible good outcomes in every situation. Avoid looking at the bad sides of things, and be positive that it will get better. Most of the time, we focus on the negative sides of things so much that we forget to be positive. This, in turn, results in negative thinking, which instead of allowing us to progress, it causes is to retrogress. If you desire to make a change in your life, you might have to consider changing your views on life. Stay open to the idea that things will get better as you progress. If you have set some goals that you would like to achieve, you will have to be optimistic about them and believe that they are achievable. Take your time to focus on the good in every situation. This is a good trait to have, especially at the workplace. It creates a good influence on your performance, and it can make you one of the best employees that the company has. You will be surprised when you get promotions, just because you chose to look at the good in every situation.

7. **Do not allow fear to drag you down.** Fear of the unknown can be dangerous in a person's life. It places us in a situation of uncertainty. You are at a position whereby you are unsure of the direction your life is taking. This is a challenge that we face in our everyday life. Possibly you applied for a job, and you are not sure if you will get it. You might have applied to get into your dream university, and you are uncertain if you will make it or if you will have to settle for a choice that you didn't want. These are everyday expectations that we tend to be uncertain about. All we can do is hope that things will work out in our favor and that we will get what we expect. This is a challenging phase to be in, and it often results in a lot of doubt. These doubts cause us to have negative thoughts that drag us down. While in that state of fear of the unknown, you create a lot of pressure within yourself, which can be manifested in the form of illnesses such as stress.

8. **Be grateful for what you have.** We focus on what we do not have and end up forgetting what we already have. It is good to be thankful for the little things that we have. I appreciate the fact that it took a lot of effort to get to where you are currently. It is through that appreciation that you will be able to grow and create a lot of impact on other people's life. There is always something to be happy about. When we focus on such things, it allows us to have positive thoughts and become better and stronger people than we were before. Using this approach towards life can help in ensuring that you have a transformed mindset. You can start appreciating yourself by rewarding yourself for the efforts that you make. You could go for a holiday tour or get yourself something good that you have always desired. Life can, at times, be challenging to the point of not recognizing the efforts that we make. You could have a journal where you write your small wins. By doing this, you are able to have a point of reference to reward yourself easily.

9. **Affirmations.** You will not know the power of daily affirmations until you try it out. Each morning you wake up; have something good to say about yourself. Make this a daily routine and see how much your life will change. Develop this habit and take an

evaluation at the end of the year and see how much you will have achieved, out of those daily convictions. Affirmations allow us to have a positive attitude towards life. They make it possible to achieve our goals and to live a happy life. This is usually the desire of almost every human. You wish to have a happy and fulfilling life. This is a good ambition to have, and you should see to it that you achieve the desires of your heart. Each morning, have something good to tell yourself. Regardless of how difficult or challenging your life may appear, there is always something to be happy about. These affirmations can also work in relationships. Find something positive to tell your partner on a daily basis. Remind them that you love them and that you will always be there for them. Such reminders make your love to become stronger, and you are wired to do great things together.

10.

Have some boundaries. Boundaries can also be enforced in our thought process. At times we tend to go overboard and have some destructive thoughts that can easily bring us down. If you are constantly used to having negative thoughts, it may take some time before you can change that mode of thinking. You may be so used to it that you forget that there are positive thoughts. Taking this kind of approach in life is destructive, and you may end up being in distress since your life is not progressing as it ought to. Breaking from such thoughts may be difficult, but you will have to give it a try. Set some boundaries around that which you should think about and that which you shouldn't. If you find it hard to refrain from negative thoughts, get a distraction. It could be informed of work out or anything that prevents your mind from the negative thoughts. You can look at what you love doing and decide to dedicate much of your time and energy into accomplishing that particular thing. For instance, you could be a workaholic; you can bury yourself in loads of work to avoid destructive thoughts.

Chapter 10: Phases of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can be a beneficial tool in treating mental disorders like depression, PTSD, eating disorder, phobias and sleep disorders, among others. It is essential to clarify that not everyone benefitting from CBT is mentally ill since it is just a tool that can help anyone literally learn how to manage stressful life situations better.

Essentially, what these disorders do is cause a continuous negative feedback loop (thought -> emotion -> behavior) that pretty much affects the way we think, feel and behave. This cycle only requires proper intervention to break it, and without the intervention, some beliefs and fears may go on dominating our minds and threaten to dictate our lives .

Generally, people are wired to pay close attention to when our fears come to fruition. So, when the relatively poor outcomes and other adverse occurrences happen, even it is purely by chance, they usually have adverse effects on the way we think by reinforcing anxious thought patterns. Fortunately for everyone, though, the development of CBT has provided therapists and psychologists with a means to interrupt this toxic thought cycle and restore healthy and positive thought patterns.

In your quest to get absolute control over your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, things are bound to get a little bumpy before they get better, and with that said, these are some of the phases that you should come across during your CBT sessions.

CBT Phase One: Assessment and Engagement Phase

The initial phase of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is designated to provide assessment and engagement between the client and therapist. This phase usually includes developing a problem list, as well as establishing shared

goals between the patient and the therapist. In a perfect CBT model, the initial stage is typically done with the third session.

Ideally, in the very first session, you should expect to spend some time with your therapist getting to know each other. Your therapist will probably oriental to CBT, and it should be like some explanation from a website, but since people are different don't expect it to be the exact same. Your therapist will probably ask some questions about your condition so that you are so that he can make an assessment of the treatment that you need to be specific about the things that affect you most. By the end of the very first session, you should feel like your therapist is on your side and you should feel positive about working with them.

Generally, by the end of the third session, your therapist usually has a treatment plan in mind that enables them to estimate roughly how my how many sessions you might need for treatment. Understand that there is no such thing as a fixed pattern in CBT sales the plan may change because you improved unexpectedly quickly or because some new issue emerged and you may need to spend some extra time addressing it. Sharing with the therapist a recent situation related to a problem in the list in terms of the event, feeling, behavior, and the response would be a step in the right direction. The shared experience will be of this format: What happened – how you made sense of it – how it made you feel – how you responded.

Also in this phase, your ability to calm yourself down will be tested, and as such, CBT sessions will often involve the development of healthy coping habits so you can naturally calm yourself down when you need to. This is a very vital part of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy since the therapy will need you to be challenging your set beliefs and automatic patterns of thought continually which consequently may require you to calm yourself down in the event of increased anxiety naturally. This ultimately helps rewire your system and mode of thinking to a more positive and realistic state.

Among the most effective self-calming technique known today, is breathing exercises, or controlled breathing to be more specific. Furthermore, since

you do not require any special equipment to perform this scoping exercise, it can be used anywhere and in just about any situation.

Anxiety usually causes hyperventilation and in that light, a more efficient way to calm yourself down with breathing, in the event of an anxiety or panic attack, is inhaling for a ten count, then holding for a ten count, and then exhaling for a ten count. Hold for three to five seconds, then repeat until you can feel the anxiety subside. After your therapist has introduced this technique to you, you might want to practice it under controlled conditions and master it .

CBT Phase Two: Understanding Your Thoughts

Sometimes, the way we think is a result of how we learned to think in the past. So in this stage, your therapist may spend some time with you understanding the events of your past. CBT, however, does not Focus on the past, and the only reason to appreciate your history is if it helps you understand your current thought process. Your psychologist may have to explore whether the ways you think really are reasonable, and you may have to discuss the evidence together or try some experiments to figure out the most sensible way to think about things. Additionally, in between the therapy sessions, you may have to perform activities that are related to this work like, for example, you may have to keep a record of your daily thoughts.

The stage is not very clearly defined so you can't tell quickly where it begins or end. However, you may spend some time understanding the thought processes in each of your therapy sessions, and by the time you've had a few sessions of CBT, you may realize you are starting to understand your own thought processes and seeing how you eat your thought processes related to the symptoms that you're trying to address. You should also begin to find ways to take control of your thoughts so that you can control your symptoms.

Generally, approaching any particular problem or challenge with a negative mindset actually ends up becoming more of a self-fulfilling prophecy, and nine times out of ten the negative mindset contributes to the situation ending in an adverse outcome. It’s probably why the second phase of CBT also teaches one to be more mindful of their automatic thought patterns and feeling.

During trying times, negative and emotion-filled thoughts frequently invade our subconscious, and as such, we usually are not always aware of them. Hence the reason why it is referred to as automatic thoughts. As a matter of fact, such ideas are seldom realistic or helpful. The only thing that they do is unsettle us and exacerbate our anxiety, which consequently can cause it to induce full-blown panic attacks. Moreover, if a negative outcome does happen to occur, even if its absolutely by chance, it reinforces our worries and further augments the unhealthy thought patterns and feelings.

Identifying and recognizing that swell of anxiety and negative thoughts is the key to overcoming our difficulties since it helps us to avoid making the situation worse, inadvertently. When we address our current state of mind, we are able to challenge the present negativity by turning towards positive thought patterns. To be able to do this, however, we must first achieve complete mindfulness.

Accomplishing this, however, is no easy feat, and it damn sure is not for the weak at heart...you can take that to the bank. It may require weeks of you jotting down every thought and feeling in a journal, observing your self-talk, your beliefs about yourself, and your interpretation of situations. Before you even ask, Yes...you might need to be writing all this down.

Once you have done all this and your therapist most likely encourages you to be questioning whether your perception of a situation is based on actual facts or just an inaccurate understanding of what is happening, you will start to realize that it is not all red and black. This step might be difficult since

you may be having long-standing ways of thinking about yourself and your life. But with time and practice, positive thinking will be more of a habit, and it will not need much effort. Reshape harmful and inaccurate thinking? Check!

CBT Phase Three: Working With Behaviour

The third phase of CBT mainly entails learning to understand how you are thoughts and your behavior influence each other with the purpose to identify the vulnerability factors associated with the onset of their difficulties to prevent a recurrence. Sometimes the things you think influence your behavior. Therefore, in this stage of therapy, you will try to establish patterns of thought and action that help you to manage your symptoms.

This phase also focuses on identifying and exposing yourself to your personal triggers. These may include scents, sights, locations, noises and experiences that may ignite your mental health symptoms, anxiety added. With help from your therapist, you might need to make a list of specific triggers, and with their assistance, you will collaboratively create a guide for exposing yourself to the triggers. Continual exposure to these triggers allows you to confront and address the thoughts and feelings that arise, and if need be, calm yourself using the breathing exercises mentioned in phase one .

Also, in between therapy sessions, you usually perform activities that are related to these newly acquired patterns. Like for example, you might practice interacting with people in new ways. Or you might practice handling specific situations so that you gain control of what happens

Another vital piece of this process is stripping anxiety attacks of their power over you. This is mostly done by sitting through the anxiety and

waiting for the feeling to cool down. You may have to record your anxiety rate on a scale of 1 to 100 before having to expose yourself to the trigger, and you will have to sit through the experience until your anxiety or other symptoms of distress start to fade. Over time you will realize that your anxiety ratings after the exposure exercises steadily decreases. By the end of this phase, you will find that most of the triggers that you had on your list will not have you getting anxious like they did before .

This third phase is usually the most robust phase of them all, but you must pass through if you want CBT to work on you. Sure, it might need you to probe into the darkest of places...places you would generally try to avoid, but it is necessary. Once it is done with, the hard part of cognitive therapy is done with and by the time you are approaching the end of your CBT treatment, you should be able to apply what you have learned in real-life situations between therapy sessions.

CBT Phase Four: The Consolidation Phase

The fourth phase of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy basically involves summarising all the work done in the other stages and consolidating the gains made and the goals achieved. It also entails comprehension of the process by which the changes occurred, and it will be mostly covered across the final two or three sessions of the therapy or in the additional booster sessions .

This will generally involve the development of a plan designated to prevent relapsing and maintenance of the progress you made throughout the therapy. This includes a summary of useful strategies, a copy of relevant formulations, and plans for monitoring and action. Also included in this phase is a method for termination where, as the therapy progresses, the patient takes more and more responsibility for the content of the sessions and so by the end of the treatment the patient is feeling empowered to continue working on themselves independently.

Chapter 11: Keeping Your Results of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

1. **Good psychotherapist.** For your CBT sessions to be effective, you need to get yourself a good therapist. In the previous chapter, I have discussed some of the qualities that you can expect from a good therapist. This is perhaps the most crucial step in having effective CBT sessions. The type of therapist that you chose will tell you a lot about the possible expected outcome after the sessions. If you manage to get a good therapist, then they are likely to administer good CBT sessions that can be effective for the long term. While choosing your therapist, ensure that you choose one with more qualifications and good reviews. You may come across some therapists that do some follow up into ensuring that you get better. Such therapists are the best as they help their patients to have an effective CBT session that results in some positive outcomes. At times one may be tempted to do contrary to what is expected of them. However, when they have someone who follows up., it gets easier.

2. **Attend all your CBT sessions.** Every session assigned matters, and it is essential in your treatment process. Make it your daily obligation to attend all the CBT sessions that have been set for you. The therapist determines the number of sessions that you require depending on your condition. If you have a challenging condition, then there is a high likelihood of having many CBT sessions prepared for you. The vice versa applies to less challenging situations. Then the therapist will set aside a few and necessary sessions. You find that each session set has its importance and some goals to be achieved at the end. If you fail to attend them, you delay your progress and interfere with your schedule. Anytime you choose to take cognitive behavioral therapy sessions, be prepared to attend all the sessions. By doing

this, you will be increasing your chances of getting better; this will make the treatment effective for you. You could be suffering from depression. This is a sad mental illness that requires immediate attention. If you desire to get better, you will have to attend your therapy sessions faithfully. Failure to do so could result in further complications.

3. **Have a good rapport with your therapist.** To get the most out of your therapy sessions, you will need to have a good relationship with your therapist. Learn to view your therapist as a friend as opposed to viewing them as strangers. A good relationship between the two of you helps in setting the mood and making it easy to hold conversations. The therapists need to know you well for them to help you effectively. A good relationship makes them aware of the right questions to ask you. You find that these questions offer some leads on your weaknesses and your strongholds. When they have answers to these aspects of your life, it becomes easy for them to help you in the best way possible. A good rapport will also help them to know you better. They become aware of what to say to you and what to avoid saying to you. This kind of awareness is significant since it aids in maintaining the friendship. Both parties can refrain from conversations that can cause harm to the other party involved. It also helps in creating strong bonds that can allow you to go back to the same therapist later in life. If you are looking into keeping results from a CBT session, this is a factor that you might need to consider.

4. **Be open with your therapist.** Therapy sessions should be a safe space where one is able to express themselves fully. Take these sessions with a lot of seriousness so that the results from the therapy sessions can be long term. When having sessions with your therapist, try as much as you can to say everything that you are struggling with. They cannot be able to help you if they cannot completely understand you. Some issues may seem hard to share,

but it is essential to share them for you to get the help that you need. The good thing about sharing information with a therapist is that they are not people we interact with on a daily basis. This factor should enable you to easily open up to them since there should be nothing holding you back. A good relationship with your therapist can make this easy. Try as much as you can to build a good relationship with your therapist from the beginning. This will have a positive impact on your CBT sessions.

5. **Take responsibility for your behavior.** How people behave entirely depends on them. In as much as some external factors can trigger us into wrong behavior, the final call entirely depends on us. The truth is not every situation around us will motivate us into a positive attitude. You are bound to encounter some bad things that have the potential to eradicate your mood. Make it your obligation not to let things easily get under your skin. If you allow it, you will have a lot of battles to face. You will need to come into an understanding that there are some battles you can fight, and there are those that you will have to part with. You need to make peace with this factor for you to live a happy and fulfilling life. In CBT sessions, you are taught some anger management techniques. These lessons are essential in life and help in determining your overall outcome in life. Take note of the information obtained in these sessions to ensure that you use them to maintain good behavior. It is also good to avoid blaming others and take responsibility for your behavior.

6. **Do more research on the topics discussed in the therapy** . Asides from the 60 minutes you may spend with your therapist, make it your obligation to do further research on what you have learned. It is good to note that learning never stops. It goes on and on. Each day there is something new to be learnt. The beauty of a new day is that it is different from the previous day. New opportunities may arise, and it is your obligation to make the most

out of the arising opportunities. Life is a series of progressive learning. Identify something new every day and use it to your best potential. The therapy sessions may be good, and you could have the best therapist around. However, it is important to note that they may not have answers to everything. You might need to go an extra mile to reinforce the information that you have already acquired. Leaning should be a fulltime job. The more you learn, the better you get. If you are looking into becoming a better version of yourself, you will need to put more effort into learning so that you can have constant daily improvements. For you to sustain results from CBT, you will have to do further research.

7. **Use therapy sessions for self-realization.** Take advantage of the therapy sessions as a moment to know more about you. Evaluate the patterns and themes that seem to be consistent in your life. You can make the CBT sessions, a path for self-discovery. Be open to knowing yourself more. The therapist will draw you into question that can tell a lot about who you are. Instead of avoiding answering this question, embrace them positively and allow them to change your life. Be completely honest while answering the questions asked. Remember that lying to the therapist is like lying to you. If you continue following this pattern, then you are likely to waste your time and money in CBT sessions. If you want the sessions to be effective, be completely honest with your therapist so that they can help you in the best way possible. When you open up, there are some traits you will find out about you. Some are good, and you are encouraged to pursue them. On the other hand, some are negative, and you ought to avoid them. Self-realization will make it possible to maintain the CBT results.

8. **Embrace growth.** The whole point of having CBT sessions is to ensure that you are better than you used to be, before taking them. It is only fair that after spending your resources in the session, that you ensure it was worth your while. We some things appear

difficult, yet they are effortless to handle. While taking a CBT session, it is important to view them as life-transforming opportunities. Give your best in each session and ensure that it changes your life. For this to happen, you will need to have a positive approach to your life. Be inspired to make a difference, and this will keep you focused on getting the most out of each CBT session that you will have. At times, we get into things without any expectations; as a result, we are not focused on giving our best to ensure that we maximize every opportunity provided. You need to view your therapy sessions as important life transformative opportunities. This factor allows you to give your best shot into ensuring that you are a better version of yourself. Embracing growth will also assist in ensuring that you are able to sustain the results obtained from each therapy session.

9. **Set goals.** As you take a CBT session, set some goals. They could be long-term or short-term. These goals ensure that you are focused and that you do not divert in any way to do that which hinders the achievement of the set goals. While setting those goals to ensure that they are realistic and you can easily achieve them. You can write your goals in a journal that you can refer to daily. Evaluate how far you have accomplished and look at the milestones you need to take for you to accomplish that which you have not achieved. These factors keep you focused on your goals. For instance, if you were previously suffering from depression, you could track your progress within the CBT sessions. Look at the milestones you have managed to make. See how effective the therapy sessions have been in ensuring that you make progress in your treatment. When you have goals, it becomes easier to handle CBT sessions. The best thing is that these goals ensure that your CBT sessions are effective and that you make progress in your life. If you require lasting results after CBT sessions, you might need to consider setting goals.

10.

Make the most out of every bad situation. Life is composed of a series of challenges. Something bad may come up at any particular time. We need to be open to this factor and learn to embrace difficult situations. Life may not be as smooth as we would expect it to be. It comes with a series of battles that we will have to fight. We need to be well prepared if we want to make the most out of life. CBT sessions allow us to be aware of the struggles that we are likely to encounter. The good thing is that it also brings us to a position of a better understanding of self. You can develop traits that are essential in your life growth and well-being. It also brings you to a position of understanding things that you can change and those that you cannot change. You accept that which is within your control as you leave aside the situations that you cannot change. Having this ability allows you to be positive in life, and it reflects in your overall performance. For you to sustain the results of CBT, you will have to abide by the lessons taught in the session. This will include making the most of every bad situation.

Chapter 12: Frequently Asked Questions on Cognitive Therapy

1. **What is cognitive-behavioral therapy?**

This is perhaps the most asked question among all the questions people ask. People want to know what it means to get a better understanding of what it entails, and also to establish if it could have an impact on their life. Cognitive-behavioral therapy is a type of treatment. There are different types of therapy, depending on the problem one has. The methods of administering therapy have been tested and proven to be effective. They are delivered based on how effective they were in previous case studies. Cognitive-behavioral therapy, which is sometimes referred to as CBT, is essential in our lives. It allows us to take a close look at our emotions and thoughts since they influence our behavior. This is good therapy for anyone looking for some personal development. The therapist opens us to how the feelings, thoughts, and senses we have, affect our mannerisms. Based on the evaluation, we identify the measures to take to improve ourselves.

2. **What occurs in a CBT session?**

Now that you already know what it entails, you may be curious about what happens in a CBT session. Well, like any therapy session, it is aimed at making the patient better than they were before attending the meeting. It works under the concept of realizing the problem and them coming up with possible solutions for the challenge. For the therapist to effectively help the patient, they will need to know more about them. This will involve asking them some personal questions about them. How the patient responds to the questions posed will form the basis of that therapy session. The therapist will know the magnitude of the issue by evaluating the responses of the patient. Through problem identification, the therapist will know the best treatment to administer. This determines the number of CBT sessions one is likely to have and how to go about them. All through the meetings, the therapist will be

working out ways in which they can help the patient to improve. The patient will have to be willing to get help for the sessions to be practical. By the end of the meeting, it is expected that one is better that they started.

3. **How frequent are the CBT sessions?**

Well, the sessions entirely depend on the therapist evaluation during the first session. The first day of therapy acts like an introduction session, where the therapist and the patient get to know each other. There are several things that the therapist can note during this first sitting. They can tell a lot about your personality. In this session, the will also know the struggles that you are going through. It allows them to establish the reason why you have opted for a CBT session. Having identified your issue, they can know of the best treatments to administer. The duration of treatment will entirely depend on the kind of challenge you are going through. Some problems may appear complicated, and hence, they will require more time while administering the treatment. On the other hand, some problems are quite manageable, and therefore it takes a shorter time. The therapist can schedule meeting on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Your personality can influence the frequency of your CBT sessions. If you are readily receptive to treatment, then you may not require as many sessions as one who is not.

4. **How long will the therapy last?**

This question closely relates to the previous issue that we have just tackled. As stated earlier, the duration of treatment will depend on the situation the patient may be in. Some conditions are adverse, and the therapist finds the need to administer longer sessions to the patient. This ensures that their meetings are productive and worthwhile. Other patients may be struggling with a less stressful condition that they can manage. Such people are likely to have fewer sessions and still get the help that they needed. In some severe cases, the therapist may note that the patient is not making progress. This may mean that there is a problem with the approach or the therapist did not accurately examine the issue. When this occurs, it will lead to an extension in the duration

of time to administer the treatment. Based on how receptive the patient is, the procedure may take longer or shorter than expected. In some cases, the patient may have their therapy sessions shortened. This occurs when the patient is receptive to the treatment administered. The therapist may have found them with a huge problem, but they improve faster than expected.

5. **Who performs a CBT?**

You might be wondering which professionals have been given the obligation to perform a CBT. Is it just any doctor you come across? Well, CBT is a type of therapy, and it is administered by psychotherapists. We have different types of psychotherapists, and they include; professional counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and clinical social workers. All these professionals can perform therapy and leave the patient better than they found them. The type of therapist that one should have depends on the challenge that one is undergoing. Some problems are enormous and require special treatment. Others are not as bad, and hence, they are easy to treat. While selecting the best therapist for yourself, it is crucial to put a lot of factors into consideration. In the previous chapters, I have discussed some of the things you should look at while selecting a good therapist for yourself. Their level of qualification should be an essential factor to consider. You can look at the reviews they get from past clients to establish how effective they are. For your therapy sessions to be practical, you will require an excellent and efficient therapist that can help you get better.

6. **How much does CBT cost?**

You might have come across the numerous benefits of CBT, and you decide that you need to start some sessions. Now that you know how to get the therapist and what to consider, the next step will be accessing the cost. The cost varies depending on the service provider. Some therapists tend to charge more than others. The difference in price can be contributed to a number of factors. Some of these factors are the quality of the session, the level of experience and the number of years the therapist has been practicing. All these factors determine if your

therapist charges less or more. The quality of the therapy sessions can be determined by the reviews the clients give. You find that some therapists are really resourceful and help the client to have incredible therapy sessions. This makes the patient recommend them to their friends and as a result, boost their credibility. Such therapists are likely to charge more since they know that their therapy sessions are practical and benefit the client. On the other hand, there are some that are starting out in the career and may charge less for their services. Depending on your budget, you can select the best therapist for you.

7. **Can insurance cover CBT?**

You might be having an insurance cover, and you are wondering if it can cover your therapy sessions. Well, insurance covers vary depending on the service provider. There are some covers that are lenient and beneficial to the client. This mainly occurs in insurance companies that place their clients' needs above themselves. Such companies tend to care about the welfare of their client, and they are not just in business to make money, but for a more meaningful and purposeful goal. On the contrary, some insurance companies are only after making profits and exploiting their clients. They tend to have inadequate policies that do not benefit the client in any way. While selecting a good insurance cover, these are the factors to put into consideration. You find that some health insurance plans cover therapy sessions for a specific duration in a year. You can take advantage of such meetings to take CBT treatment. Some companies have a therapist who can help the employees in tackling challenging life situations. If you are in such companies, you can use that opportunity wisely and get some therapy sessions.

8. **Is CBT an effective treatment?**

The numerous benefits of CBT can clearly tell you that it is an effective treatment. Some of these benefits have been discussed in previous chapters. This is a therapy that has been tested and proven by the various researchers. It has been tested on some people, and the positive results have proven that it works. Over the years, more research has

been carried out to show to modify and improve this treatment. As a result, there has been an emergence of different types of CBT. Some have been proven to be effective and are currently being used by therapists to treat their patients. The methods used entirely depend on the problem the patient has. In the previous chapters, we have discussed the different types of CBT. We have also provided an illustration of each and where it applies to be used. In some, we have provided a history of how they were formed. All this information is present in this book. I think that by reading this book, you have learned a lot about CBT. Most importantly, you realize the impact it could have on your life and the benefits of the treatment.

9. **Can CBT help in character development?**

Well, there is no doubt that CBT can help you achieve this. If you are struggling with character development, this is the therapy that you should be seeking. Cognitive-behavioral therapy operates under the basis of character development. It takes a close look at our thoughts, feelings, and emotions. This evaluation allows the therapist to know the kind of thoughts and feelings an individual has and identify what contributes to those emotions and thoughts. After carrying out that analysis, the next step is to determine how those emotions and beliefs influence an individual's behavior. Negative feelings and thoughts are likely to lead to bad behavior. The vice versa also applies. Once the therapist discovers that your emotions and thoughts are negatively affecting your mannerisms, they can come up with ways in which they can change this. They can provide you with some guidelines that you can follow to help in overcoming negative thoughts. Some of these steps have been provided in the previous chapters in this book. If you carefully follow them, you can easily change your way of thinking, and your emotions, this can, in turn, have a positive influence on your mannerism.

10. **Can CBT treat anxiety and depression?**

Recently, there is a rise in the number of people affected by depression and anxiety. Life can be challenging, and you may find yourself in some situations that you never expected. You may not have the right tools and abilities to tackle the various challenges that you may be struggling with. When that happens, you may end up with a lot of pressure that you are unable to handle. Eventually, it could translate into a severe problem. When this occurs, you will be diagnosed with mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety. CBT has been used in patients struggling with depression and anxiety. In the majority of the cases, it has been proven to be effective. If you are struggling with anxiety or depression, it is about time you seek a CBT specialist who can help you in solving your issues. CBT focuses on establishing the cause of the problem. After identifying the cause, effective treatment is agreed upon. The sessions will be interactive, and you will tell the therapist more about yourself. This will help them know you more and come up with the best treatment to use on you. It is without a doubt that CBT is effective.

Conclusion

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, also known as CBT, is a short-term therapy technique that helps people to discover new ways to behave by basically changing their thought patterns. It works based on how we think and interprets circumstances that ultimately dictate how we feel and behave. As seen in the book, evidence has mounted that CBT can be useful in many situations especially in stress reduction, depression, PTSD, anxiety disorders, dealing with grief, coping with complicated relationships, and many other everyday life issues. This type of therapy aims to single out disturbing thoughts, assess whether they are a precise depiction of reality, and employ strategies to challenge and overcome them if they are not.

Since CBT entails more of a problem-solving approach with specific focus and goals, rather than probing into childhood wounds to figure out root causes synonymous with most psychoanalysis therapies, you will find that it is more suitable for people with particular problems and specific aspects of their lives they want to act on, and less ideal for those only feeling unfulfilled with no troubling symptoms. It is important to note, however, that while CBT may not cure your condition or make the unpleasant circumstance go away, what it does is give you the power to cope with the situation as it is in a healthy way and to feel better about yourself and your life.

Risk-wise, there is little risk involved in getting CBT. However, at times, you may feel emotionally uncomfortable since the therapy may require you to explore or revisit some unpleasant emotions, experiences, or feelings. In a challenging session, you might get angry, cry, get upset, and even be physically drained, but in the end, you will be better off for it. Other times, it may be required of you to confront situations you would usually avoid like, for example, flying if you have flight phobia or going up high places if you have acrophobia. While this may cause temporary stress and anxiety, it is all done for the greater good, of course. Working with a skilled therapist,

however, will help alleviate the risks, and the coping skills that you learn will also help you manage and conquer negative thoughts and fears.

In addition to that, unlike other forms of therapy, CBT is a collaborative therapy, meaning for it to be as effective as it should be, the client and therapist both have to put in the work. The individual must be an active participant; otherwise, it is all pointless. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is also time-limited (often a course ranging from 5 to 25 one-on-one sessions), hence, an individual knows when the course will end, and if it is one right, the person eventually becomes their own counselor.

While it is easy for most people to write off most of these disorders due to lack of experience or lack of encounters, you are fully equipped with the necessary information you need to overcome them. The secret is to identify, challenge, and then change the negative way of thinking. It is a good thing that you came across this book since it will transform your life in ways you never imagined.

MASTER YOUR EMOTIONS

THE ULTIMATE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO OVERCOMING ANXIETY, NEGATIVE THINKING, EMOTIONAL STRESS, BETTER MANAGE YOUR FEELINGS AND IMPROVE YOUR SELF-ESTEEM

By Brent Collins

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Introduction

Emotions are an integral part of how we behave and think. They are a part of our everyday life, and they influence any decision that we make, both big and small. For you to understand the emotions, you need to know where it comes from and why it causes you to behave the way you do daily.

Emotions can be short-lived, or they can take all day. The intensity depends on what you do and how you do it.

We are looking at whether emotions have a role in your life and how you need to handle them, and whether you can manage them.

Emotions motivate you to take action, and this will make you make decisions as well.

When you become emotionally intelligent, you get the capacity to make better decisions regarding what you experience. Too many emotions pass by unnoticed, but there are those that you have to handle .

Emotions come in two forms – positive and negative. A positive feeling will spur you to think positive thoughts, and an adverse action might not encourage you to do the same.

Emotions are important because they help you to avoid danger and to survive. You have to learn to identify the emotions before you can make a step to manage them. All these are covered in this book, so, happy reading.

Chapter 1: Understanding Emotions

Emotions are central to our lives. They define anything and everything that we do. They represent our actions and at times, the long-lasting decisions that we make.

Emotions explain what we do and when we do it. When we are faced with challenges in life, we can handle them because our emotions rule us.



Emotions also affect the way we relate to other people. If a friend approaches you and then tells you a tragic story, they expect you to react in a particular manner. If you respond oppositely, they will see you be rude and not concerned.

Reacting in the wrong way when you are faced with an issue is seen as offensive. If you respond with glee at a seemingly unimportant point, you will make people question your stability and level of maturity .

Babies are still developing their emotions, and are allowed to shriek with pleasure or rant on because they are kids. As an adult, you are required to reign in your emotions at all times.

Defining Emotions

Emotions are aspects of the core consciousness system. They are the components of your system that will coordinate the way you behave in the world. Emotions are tasked with preparing you and energizing the ensuing action that you make.

Imagine you are on the road and you spot the neighbor that you hate. The first reaction will be for you to freeze when you see the person, then the

next step would be to find a way to avoid the person that is coming ahead. When you are sure that you have avoided the person, your fear will diminish, and you will get back to your original state. Emotions are activated when we perceive that there is a change that relates to their existing environment.

You need to understand that there are differences between individuals in the way they show their emotions. People have both negative and positive emotion systems. However, some will have emotions systems that are easily triggered, more sensitive while others will give more intense responses to stimuli. Others are difficult to soothe after an emotional storm.

Due to this, we have come up with a few things about emotions and why they need to be understood by humans. Here are a few conclusions:

· Emotions make a central part of our core consciousness. Without emotions, we are like a ship lost at sea.

· Emotions give you information regarding one's core needs and goals.

· We have two broad types of emotions – negative and positive. Negative emotions tell you to avoid something while positive emotions signal you to approach something.

· Emotions prepare you to act.

· People that are placed in the same environment will have different reactions to issues .

Myths About Emotions

Given that emotions are part of our everyday life, many people have come up with false believes about these emotions. Let us look at the common ones and why they are false:

1. You Need to Feel A Certain way in Every Situation

This is false. Emotions can't be right or wrong. Emotions are only there to provide information about a particular situation. Different people feel differently depending on the underlying condition. This is because everyone has a different belief about something. They have different beliefs about others, themselves, and how the world operates.

For instance, at a funeral, most of the people will feel sad, but the intensity of the sadness will vary from one person to the next, depending on how close the person was to the deceased.

2. When You Let People See Your Emotions, You Show Your Weakness

This is a huge myth that is usually unjustified. When you show your emotions, it doesn't mean that you are weak or you have a flawed mind. In essence, everyone experiences emotions, and they need to be shown to the world. When you experience a negative emotion, you are just showing the world that you are normal.

3. Emotions Will Grow in Intensity If You Don't Act on Them

Another wrong assumption. Emotions don't grow in intensity forever. Instead, they will reach a peak and then subside unless you keep on fueling them.

4. Negative Emotions Are Destructive

This is another false myth that you need to be aware of. Remember it isn't the emotion that is bad but the resulting behavior from the emotion. For instance, some emotions lead to alcohol abuse, self-mutilation, risk-taking behavior, and compulsive shopping.

5. All Emotions Happen for No Reason

This is false. The truth is that every emotion happens due to a trigger. Emotions arise because they are a result of the perception we have about an event or a situation .

6. It Is Impossible to Tolerate a Painful Emotion

This is untrue; people can learn to tolerate an unpleasant emotion when they practice. If you don't learn to tolerate emotions, you will resort to negative behavior such as drug abuse and alcoholism. People that fail to handle painful emotions end up with further pain and problems.

7. Some Emotions Are Useless

This isn't true. Every emotion provides information about the person, which means that they aren't useless. They tell the person what we like and what

we don’t like. They also help us to communicate with other people well, and they help us to prepare for action the right way.

8. If Other People Don’t Appreciate How I Feel, Then I Am Wrong

This is a false myth. People will only see the behavior or any action that you do, but they won’t be able to know what you are feeling. The person is the best judge of their emotions .

9. Painful Emotions Are Best Ignored

This is another myth that you need to be wary of. Painful emotions are important because they form lessons that you need to learn about. When you ignore them, you are ignoring the vital lessons that you need to learn.

10. Negative Emotions Make Me a Bad Person

When you experience negative emotions, you will feel bad about a situation, but this doesn’t make you a wrong person at all. Negative emotions shouldn’t describe you at all; instead, they give you a way of knowing how to react to situations.

The Need for Emotions

Do you think you need emotions? Well, emotions are there for a reason; otherwise, they wouldn’t be a part of us. There are various reasons why we need emotions in the first place.

They Motivate Us to Take Action

Emotions make us take action in various situations. They assist us in organizing our behaviors, and then they set us in motion so that we can accomplish our goals. For instance, if you are trying to cross a street and then you see a vehicle run a red light and come in your direction, you will sense danger. You also become anxious and then run out of the way. On the other hand, if you see a person of the opposite sex, and then you see them as a potential partner, you will be motivated to talk to them.

They Help Us Communicate with People

Emotions help us to communicate with other people using both body language and words. For example, when you are mad at a person, you will most likely address them in a high-pitched voice. On the other hand, when

someone is insane, you will realize by the way they talk to you. A person that comes at you with open arms and a smile on the face tells you that they are welcoming you. You will perceive that you can talk to them and understand each other.

On the other hand, if a person comes to you with a stern look on their face, you will know right away that they aren’t happy with you .

They Tell Us Our Likes and Dislikes

Emotions tell us what we like and what we don’t like. They will give us information on people we meet our hobbies, interests, food and how we like being treated.

They Broaden Our Thinking

When you have emotions, you will be able to expand your attention. For instance, when you are annoyed, you will focus your attention on the origin of your frustration and the object of your issues. Negative emotions will make you look for a way to overcome them. They will allow you to learn more about yourself and give you the chance to organize your future reactions to the same.



Contrast your reaction to what happens when you are excited about a situation. Your mind gets to open up, and you will experience a free flow of ideas. You will experience a free flow of ideas and high levels of intellectual possibility.

You Enjoy Better Problem Solving

When you have a problem that needs you to handle it, you will be able to come up with possible solutions to the issue. Think of emotions as a way that allows you to activate your thought processes. When you activate the thought process, you get the capacity to move towards a solution. Emotions make it possible for you to undertake effective problem-solving capability. You will be able to get answers to the many challenges that come to you in life.

Emotions Protect Your Life

You already know that when you react to your emotions, your body will also respond. Getting upset will raise your blood levels of blood sugar, and

can precipitate a heart attack. Do you know that when you have positive emotions, you reduce your blood pressure and the risk of heart disease?

Studies have shown that positive emotions will act as an essential defense against the effects of stress. It also shows that positive emotions will have a direct impact on your health through various other pathways.

Positive emotions are directly correlated to a better immune system functioning that will influence the ability to fight diseases; this leads to reduced absenteeism at work.

Emotions Build Better Interpersonal Relationships

Positive emotions are tied to better interpersonal relationships. Well, we all know that good relationships come from positive emotional connections. But studies have also shown that when you experience positive emotions, you improve social interactions.

We know that when you are happy, you become more approachable, and people will like you more than when you are sad.

Due to this, you need to balance your emotions at all times.

Reasons Why You Need to Balance your Emotions

As a human being, you will experience both negative and positive emotions. You need to strike a balance between the two emotions so that you live a fulfilling life. Here are the various reasons why you need to have these two emotions in check in the first place.

To Stay in Control

You need to balance your emotions so that you stay in control of your actions and yourself. It is through the sense of control that you can accomplish more in your life. When you accomplish more, you have a chance to give more to the world .

Enjoy Self Respect

When you balance your emotions, you contribute to your self-respect and self-esteem. You will feel capable of handling important tasks and challenges more easily. You will also be emotionally balanced and calm, as

well. When you have self-respect, you will be a great addition to any organization, and your responses will be mature at all times.

You Become More Confident

When you have control over your emotions, you will be able to stay calm and composed in all situations. You will be able to respond more positively to issues because you will have the strength to handle challenges. When you can channel your emotions to a positive route, you will be able to do more positive things. Confidence is the product of emotional control, and is, therefore, needs you to give it more attention.

Build Your Social Skills

A person that can balance their emotions can elicit a positive response from people around them. People will associate with you if you have a pleasant behavior compared to when you are always unpleasant. Remember that your emotions also predict your destiny at all times. People will rally around you if you have good conduct, are emotionally in control, and you have positive behavior.

Integrity

Balancing your emotions makes you very disciplined. Remember that emotions cannot be forced; instead, they come involuntarily to you. You might put up a façade of emotions once, but you won’t do it the whole of your life. When you get to control yourself, you will be able to form a foundation that will build a great character for you. When you display positive emotions for longer, you will create a positive environment around you. Your positive personality will stand for honesty in your personal and social conduct.

Emotions and Habits

All your emotions if practiced regularly, will grow and become habits. If you always cultivate positive emotions, they will become positive emotions. On the other hand, if you keep on cultivating negative emotions, then they will grow into negative habits. When you have a negative state of mind, you will chase away every person that comes your way. Additionally, if you

have a positive state of mind, you will attract everyone that comes into contact with you.

Practice Makes Perfect

It might be difficult for you, but you have to reduce negative emotions and build on the positive ones. For you to grow, you need to understand the differences between the various emotions – the positive and the negative ones and learn how to balance them. Training and practice will help you develop a good heart that will help you act productively.

Being happy isn’t an overnight process. You have to develop this practice over time. Make sure you apply effort and determination so that you can devote your time to knowing about your emotions and making them work for you .

Negative Emotions Shouldn’t Take You Down

In life, you will experience both negative and positive emotions in equal measure. When you experience negative emotions, you need to find a way to get back to your positive state faster. With time, you will learn to cancel out any negative emotions the right way and then replace them with positive emotions.

Chapter 2: What Makes Emotions so Powerful?

Your thoughts and emotions are tightly connected, and they can be experienced together. Let us look at the connection between the two.

What Are Thoughts?

Thoughts refer to mental cognitions – these are opinions, ideas, and beliefs that we have about ourselves as well as the world around us. These include any perspective that we bring to any situation that we experience. Thoughts can be negative, positive, or neutral, depending on the situation.

When you repeat a thought over and over again, it becomes an attitude.

Your thoughts are shaped by the environment, life experiences, genetics, and intellect, but in the real sense, they are under the control of your conscious mind. When you become aware of your thoughts, you can decide to change them the way you want .

The Thinking Process

Thinking is that process that allows you to create a logical series of connections between various pieces of information. Most times, thoughts just come automatically; however, there are times when it comes from your conscience. When you think you may do it because you wish to make a decision or to solve an issue. It allows you to connect and then integrate experiences into your understanding and then learn to perceive how things are.



The simplest thoughts are all about learning about facts and then recalling them, while the advanced thinking skills are all about synthesis, analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving .

Various steps are part of the thinking cycle. These processes include:

Knowledge

This is the first step towards thinking. You need to have a clear vision of the problem so that you know what is required to solve the problem. This step enables you to identify the problem that needs to be handled and how you need to handle it. You need to ask questions so that you get a deeper understanding of the issue.

In many instances, there is no problem; therefore, you don’t have to move forward with the other steps in the thought process. When you put your mind on something, you will need to ask additional questions about the issue so that you can know more about it. At this stage, you need to understand what the problem is and why you need to solve the issue.

Comprehending the Issue

For each problem that arises, you need to take time and understand the situation and other facts that are aligned with the issue. Knowledge is all about collecting the facts that relate to the issue at hand and then using

research methods relating to the problem at hand. Look at the problem, the data available, and the deadline that you need to solve the issue.

Application & Analysis

The application continues the previous step, and you need to understand the various facts and resources which are required to handle the issue by linking the resources and information. Here, you need to determine the best way forward.

Once you have all the information that you need, you can now make the right decision. Thinking involves everything with knowing what happens in your life.

Taking Action

Once you think about what you have idealized, the next step is for you to take action. This represents the final aspect of any thought. You have to make a decision depending on the thought and how you perceive everything .

Talking About Your Emotions

We have all heard the old saying that a problem shared is a problem solved halfway. This phrase is there for a reason. Talking about how we feel is the first way to express our emotions. Talking about our emotions doesn’t come easily, but it is the first step to taking control of your life and your well-being.

Why Is It Hard to Talk About Emotions?

Various reasons will make people fail to express their emotions. Many times, it is because of the worry we have about upsetting people that we care about or causing a lot of concern. Other times it is all about the fear of being judged that prevents people from expressing their emotions openly.

Additionally, we might be unable to articulate the issues that we are struggling with, and at times, it is a combination of all these aspects that make it hard for us to express emotions.

This is why many people keep their emotions bottled up within themselves at all times .

What Happens When You Don’t Express Emotions?

Choosing to hide your emotions might look like a solution in the short term, but it can end up having a lot of consequences in the long term to your physical and mental health.

Having something that is going round and round your head and making you anxious might make you fail to be fully present with the people that you meet and interact it.

How Negative Talk Can Affect Your Emotions

At times, your good day might end up bad just because of someone else’s bad words. It might be a face to face exchange or a phone call that will throw you out of your current lively mood. It might be from your boss or even your mother – the list is endless. All you need to know is that it can affect the way you run your day, and it might even shut down the day.

Other people’s talk can affect the way you behave, but this only shows that we are human and we are empathetic. However, the struggle comes when words from other people start getting to you and affect you negatively. When this happens, you need to find a way not to let the words get to you, because while it is a good idea to relate to other people and listen to them out, you also need to look at your well-being and your life first.

We are influenced both negatively and positively by the talk from other people, especially those that are around us. The people that affect our emotions most are our friends, co-workers, and romantic partners.

However, studies show that the talk from other people ends up affecting our emotions when we put the control of our emotions in their hands. We allow them to make us feel in a certain way. The truth is that negative or positive talk shouldn’t affect you in a certain way; let us look at how you can avoid the emotions that come with talk.

However, you shouldn’t let negative talk have control over you – the way you feel needs to depend wholesomely on you. Let us look at the various

way that you can handle talk from other people, regardless of how it comes across – negative or positive .

1. Consider Your Reaction

For you to understand other people's emotions too well, you need to understand how you usually deal with your emotions in the first place.

When you feel that a person's talk is affecting your emotions, you need to try and reduce the impact that the talk has on you. You can do this by coming up with rules and meanings for your own emotions. Remember that when you sit and listen, it becomes a determinant of your decisions.

Make sure you come up with rules that will assist you in managing your emotions rather than those that will make other people's moods to take over your life.

2. Check-In with Yourself

A good, deep breathe always makes things better – it puts so much into focus and allows you to reflect on what is happening. If you are under the notion that someone else's talk is affecting the way you think and talk, then you need to take a moment and compose yourself .

Talk to your inner self and realize that you are an individual and that even though you empathize with other people, it is not good to take up their issues.

When you breathe, you come back to reality, and any talk that would have affected you will be taken into consideration, and you will let all rules take effect. When you are faced with any kind of talk, try as much as you can to remain in the present moment – the reality. Check how you are reacting to the talk before you can do anything else. The aim of this is to try and increase awareness of reactions.

3. Know That Their Stress Isn't Your stress

If you wish to learn how to keep your emotions away from other people's talk, then you need to realize that people will just feel that way – it is the way they feel. You need to know that their pain or stress isn't your stress or pain.

When a family member is experiencing something tough, you need to listen to them, but don't take it that you have to be part of the issue. However, you also don't have to shut them out at all. You can listen to them and offer any support they need, but don't take up their pain.

4. Know That Your Emotions Affect Other People as Well

When you have an issue that is bugging you, remember that it is not only you that will get affected but other people as well. You need to realize that anyone can influence the way others around them feel as well.

When you react negatively to talk from someone else, your emotions usually become a force around you that might influence the people that are around you. So, don't let the negative talk about affecting you, instead, try to control it.

5. Look At Your Reaction

Do you know that you can choose to react in a certain way depending on the emotions that you experience? When you are faced with negative talk, you need to come up with a solution to react in a certain way or not. Make sure you come up with a way to get involved so that you decrease the negative emotions altogether .

It is all about knowing how to keep a healthy distance then thinking of a solution before you let your emotions get the best of you.

6. Anticipate Their Mood

Talk that affects you the most comes from the people that are close to you, such as friends, partners, or family members. Because you know these people so much, you are most likely able to observe the signs that they might be in a foul mood and they have a chance to tell you something nasty.

If you realize what the other person is feeling in advance, you can have the chance to put your emotions in check when talking to them.

7. Take a Break from the Situation

It is usually good to know that you can get yourself out of a situation when you feel like it. For instance, you can let the other person know that you are not available to listen to them right now, that you have better things to do.

Setting boundaries with your loved ones or colleagues is a good way to provide all the support you need without trying to push them away. You will be able to handle the talk then be able to manage your emotions the right way.

If you are faced with negative talk, try and leave the room, listen to a song, or take a walk.

Music and Emotions

Music is a phenomenon that transcends all borders regardless of race, culture, and nationality. Music has been used as a tool that arouses your emotions and feelings to great lengths. The way your brain perceives music is what makes these words and lyrics stand out and make your emotions tilt.

Your brain usually perceives music in such a way that it imposes a certain order and structure to the sequence of sounds that come out. For you to appreciate music, you need to be able to process its underlying structure.

Skilled composers have the uncanny ability to manipulate emotion in a song in such a way that they know what the audience expects from them, and will control how and when the expectations are met. The manipulation of the emotion is what elicits the way you feel and react .

Music as Therapy

Through the manipulation of your emotions, you can be able to handle various aspects of therapy. Music is used to achieve various goals, such as enhancing memory, relieving stress, and alleviating pain. Studies had shown that people that listened to music before, during, and after surgery experienced less pain and recovery was faster than people that sat through the pain without any music.

Music as a Moods Booster

When you listen to music, you get to boost your low moods as well. Music touches you and everyone else around you in different ways. You can appreciate this by listening to music or playing it.

Reminiscing

Music can evoke very powerful emotional reactions – both thrills and chills in the listener. The best thing is that the emotional reaction is universal. One of the ways that music evokes these powerful reactions is through reminiscing .

When you listen to music that plays so much through a significant phase of your life, such as when dating your current spouse might bring a lot of nostalgic emotional experience.

The real feeling isn't in the music at all but what the music reminds us about. You might feel various emotions when you listen to music that reminds you of something – it might be sad, or it might be a positive feeling.

Synchronize Your Movements to the Beats

As a human being, you can synchronize your body movements to external stimuli that are rhythmical. Rhythm usually has a powerful effect on your movement, and because your auditory system has connections to the motor system in your brain, it will make you want to move in tune with the music.

This is why your emotions tell you that you need to tap along to the music.

When you detect fast sounds, you will be inclined to dance faster, and when you listen to slow, relaxing music, you will enjoy feelings of anxious moments .

Expressing of Feelings

Music works as a kind of language for your emotions, with the different patterns and components representing different messages. We have seen people dedicate songs to their loved ones or use dirges to show what they feel. People that have an issue presenting their feelings in the form of words will, at times, feel comfortable expressing the emotions via music.

Music also can mimic some emotions that you might be experiencing. For instance, a slow tempo to the music will convey some sadness or a relaxing mode. This is connected to the sadness that we might expect from individuals.

Emotional Contagion

You have all felt it at one time – the feeling you get when you watch a music video that is attached to a song. For instance, when the music is sad, you will find yourself crying along to the song. This is why you will find a lot of facial expressions in music videos. When you hear and then see the visual representation of a sad situation in the song, you will experience a state of sadness as well.

Anticipation

The thing that makes music so emotionally powerful is the expectation that we create in the person. Studies show that anticipating something is an essential element in evoking the reward system then provoking pleasure in music.

Unexpected changes in the music will provoke a sense of heightened emotion in the person. The changes in the tempo make a person to anticipate some events that might or might not happen.

Admiration

Music often makes people feel like crying because of the sense of admiration that it evokes. The feeling is so deep that it makes you feel a sense of awe for the person that made the music.

Environmental Impact on Emotions

Did you know that your surroundings can affect the way you feel as well as your emotions? The surrounding isn't all about the people that are around you, but rather also the ambiance that surrounds your life. If you are surrounded by positivity, then you will be happier, if instead you are surrounded by negativity, you will find it hard to live your life.

It is therefore upon you to create that perfect environment whether in your home or at the office so that you can be happier, thrive, be more focused as well as relaxed.

It is a clear fact that the environment you set will affect your productivity, mood, as well as your creativity.

Beautiful Surroundings

Have you felt depressed in a certain space? Do you find it hard to sleep in the home at times? Does a certain color make you happy, while another one makes you sad? Well, all these happen for a reason. The reason is that your emotions react to certain aspects of your surroundings. These include your taste, cultural influences, and personal taste.

You are drawn to certain styles just not by choice; rather, the choice is influenced by various aspects. We spend a lot of time on our living and working environments, so we need to make sure they work for us. The ways our surroundings look make it possible for us to react emotionally to them.

Your surrounding affects your performance and mood. When you learn how the surroundings affect you, then you can work things to your advantage. So, the key to learning about the various skills to create the best environment lies in the understanding of the starting point.

People change their emotions when they make some simple changes to their environment.

The opposite is also true if your environment is not beautiful, then you will find that you get stressed all through.

Chapter 3: Recognizing and Managing Your Emotions

Before you can learn to manage emotions, you need to understand them. You need to know why some emotions are strong, while others are weak. While emotions are an integral part of every person's wellbeing. Whether you are experiencing a good laugh over something or you are feeling frustrated when you are stuck in traffic, you need to know that the highs and lows that you experience will affect your wellbeing ultimately.

You need to be able to regulate the emotions and even change the way you feel so that you don't affect the people around you negatively. For instance, if you react negatively to something that someone has said crudely, you will attract unwanted attention and even risk your life while at it.

So, how do you get to manage your emotions in the right way? Let us look at a few pointers to this fact :

Tune Into Your Feelings

This might seem simple but is very complicated. The most influential as well as the most critical skill of mastering your emotions is to be willing to tune into the emotion.

For many people, they fail to notice the moment until it is gone. Many times, we find ourselves disconnecting from our emotions in such a way that we don't make things work for us. For you to effectively manage your emotions, you need to notice when the emotions happen. Make sure you can pay attention to your feelings the right way before you can move ahead.

Rewind

When you tune into your emotions, you need to take a few steps backward. Ask yourself how you got to the situation that might have contributed to those feelings and then go after them,

Once you understand where the emotions are coming from, you will be able to manage them the right way. When you take notice of your emotions, you

will be able to look for the various triggers that may have taken you into the feelings in the first place.

Gain the Right Perspective

Once you understand your feelings, the next thing is to step out of the zone and then gain a better perspective. Consider what might happen if you continue in the same vein. What will happen if you stay on the same route that you are following?

Will, the consequences of your actions, affect you solely, or will they affect other people as well? You need to take time and consider whatever matters most to you at that moment. When you gain the right perspective and understand the feelings when you return to your present moment will make it easier for you to move ahead.

Become Self Aware

You cannot manage your emotions when you aren't aware of yourself. You need to tune in and then gain a broader perspective of your emotions. You need to take things deeper and zoom into the moment. Although everyone experiences emotions, the unique experience is subjective in all ways. When you become self-aware, you will be able to understand yourself and come up with the best coping skills.

Listen to the Voices in Your Head

What do you hear? Do you hear anything in your head or your mind? If you can listen to whatever it is, then be able to enumerate it. Give it a name and a volume. Listening to the different voices within your inner self will help you assess the connections between thoughts and feelings.

When we are in social situations, especially conflicts, we often make our narrative louder than that from others.

Change What You Can

You need to cut down on the triggers of the emotion, and you will find that you experience emotions less frequently. This can include cutting down on

stress at work, changing negative thought patterns that you experience, and learning how to practice better communication .

Finding an Outlet

When you make changes in your life, you can cut down on any negative emotions that you experience. When you find an outlet, you also eliminate any stress triggers that you might have. When you make changes in your life to reduce the frustration, you will be able to find healthy outlets that will deal with the emotions.

There are various outlets that you can use to release the negativity. These include:

- Regular exercise gives you an emotional lift as well as the right outlet for your negativity.
- Meditation will help you to find much needed inner peace that you can work with. This will make your emotions less overwhelming.
- Find various opportunities to have a lot of fun and get more laughter into your life so that you relieve stress and change the perspective of your emotions.

You don’t have to stick to these outlets; you can create your own so that you find something that works best for you .

Experience the Emotions, but Don’t Get Stuck in Them

Managing emotions doesn’t mean that you suppress them. What you need to do in such a case is to try and experience the emotion and then let it go. Don’t put your mind or your feelings to it because then it will destroy you.

How to Change Emotions

Emotions form an essential part of human beings, and it is critical that everyone understands how to handle them. Most individuals do not like them, especially the negative emotions that may cause things such as anger, pain, sadness, and the like. Because everyone tries to avoid unpleasant

feelings, it is common for people to try to suppress negative feelings, yet this is not advisable. They see such emotions as problems that need to be resolved. However, emotions occur naturally, and it is impossible to suppress them.

The ultimate solution to managing unpleasant feelings lies in learning how to manage one's emotions. Doing this enables you to handle and manage your moods and feelings with success. The process involves accepting a person's emotional state and managing each emotion as it arises.

Since emotions occur in the present, it is also essential that you handle them in the present by dealing with the cause of such emotions. Once in a while, you will experience feelings that are on a dangerous extreme. These can either be negative or positive. With some right strategies, you can adjust such emotions to a moderate level, thus negating any adverse effects that would arise.

Negative emotions, in particular, may quickly get out of control as soon as they are triggered. They may also grow to a level that clouds your decision and thinking patterns. They may also occur too frequently when not managed. So, you need to avoid them by mastering even those ill emotions that arise from some harsh circumstances.

Every person experience emotion in one way or another. Some of the emotions are easy to deal with, while some require some extra effort to manage them. For every emotion, you must be equipped with the right skills to be able to handle it. It is also essential that you do not suppress or ignore any feelings since any unaddressed emotions may become worse as time goes by. As a result, you may develop some unpleasant habits as a way of coping with suppressed emotions.

There are several ways through which you can control your mood, feelings, and emotions. Let us check out some of them.

Label Each Emotion

I f you would like to manage your emotions effectively, you must first start by acknowledging their existence as well as any effects they are causing on you. For instance, you need to establish whether you are feeling disappointed, nervous, excited, or afraid. Note that some emotions may occur as a result of another hidden passion. For instance, a feeling of anger

may be due to an action that left you vulnerable or wasted. Dig deep to understand what is exactly happening inside you. Give a label to every emotion that you experience. This is because some people experience multiple emotions simultaneously.

These may need to be handled individually, thus the need to identify each of them. When you understand every underlying feeling at a particular moment, you will quickly determine how these emotions may impact your thoughts and decisions. This way, you can efficiently work towards regulating any actions that may result from these emotions.

Adjust Your Way of Thinking

Most emotions always affect a person's thought pattern. For instance, if you are anxious about something and the person causing the anxiety calls, you may start thinking that something negative is going to take place. If you are enthusiastic about someone and the person contacts you, you will only develop positive thoughts about what the person is going to say to you.

Once you have identified and labeled your emotions, filter your thoughts to ensure that you develop a more positive view of the present circumstances. For example, if you are at work, feeling anxious and your boss calls you, avoid thinking about negative things like getting some warning letter or being fired. Instead, keep assuring yourself that there is something positive that will come out of the interaction .

One easy way to do this is by taking the time to reflect on the current problem. Ask yourself what another person would do if he or she were faced with the same challenge. This will help control your thoughts by changing the function of your brain.

Engage in Suitable Activities

Each time you are faced with a challenge that is causing you to have a foul mood, do not continue to engage in things that make the situation worse. Instead, get some activities that can help uplift your spirit and participate in them. Do something that makes you happy like listening to music, taking a walk, meditating, and visiting a friend. Most individuals use vigorous activities such as martial arts and boxing, to control their emotions.

Avoid Instant Reaction

When it comes to negative emotions, you shouldn't react immediately. This is because when you are angry, or in fear, you will always end up doing or saying regrettable things. To achieve this, always take a deep breath and relax when faced with a tough situation. Continue doing this for as long as you feel overwhelmed by the emotion, or until you feel that your heart rate has gone back to normal.

Seek Guidance

Most people find the solution to their feelings by expressing themselves to others. By doing this, you can release your negative emotions to others in a way that is healthy and acceptable. Share your feelings with people you trust so that they can advise you accordingly. Recount the occurrences that triggered the emotion and hear what others have to say. This will launch a new perspective on the whole issue, and you can use this insight to manage your thoughts and reactions.

Broaden Your Perspective

Every situation always has a bigger picture that you can focus on. Understand that everything happens with a reason. This will help you to see the purpose of any situation instead of focusing on the negative aspects involved. For some circumstances, you may not understand the meaning at the time of occurrence, but as days go by, you may start seeing the reason why things happened as they did.

Practice Forgiveness

Some emotions can be triggered by the people around you. Some may be close relations like family members or friends. You can even cause negative emotions by yourself. It is essential that when this happens, you get to forgive the person that triggered the emotion. When you hold a grudge against others, the negative emotion will keep surfacing each time you see the person. Forgiveness detaches you from the negative emotion and gives you peace even when others wrong you.

Forgiveness also helps you control any actions that would have resulted from the emotion. For instance, if someone wrongs you and you do not forgive the person, you may stay angry at the person for days, weeks, and

even years. Constantly getting reminded of other people's misdeeds is what results in repeated wrong actions .

Always Anticipate a Negative Emotion

It will be a lie for you to believe that life will always be pleasant all through. And that you can live a life that is free of pain. Some people seem to be happy all the time. However, this does not mean that they do not experience any negative feelings. It only means that such people have learned to manage their emotions more effectively. Therefore, always expect some negative feelings to arise as you go about with your day to day activities.

Be Flexible

When it comes to emotions, it is almost impossible to control how and when they occur. You need to remain open to these as they occur. Allow them to occur at any time and anywhere. Only seek ways to balance them so that you do not mess in your actions.

View any negative feelings as an opportunity to improve on yourself. These may be feelings such as fear, anger, jealousy, and anger. Focus on the positive aspect of such feelings, take them as your areas that need development .

Do Not Neglect Any Feelings

Learn how to tolerate any unpleasant sensations. Do not avoid or ignore them. Instead, keep reflecting on the experience and any changes occurring in your body as a result of such feelings. Keep reminding yourself that millions of people around the globe face the same kind of feelings.

As you do this, ensure that you do not play any blame games towards others. Blaming other people for your negative emotions can hinder them from genuinely interacting with you. Since the emotion has already occurred, it makes no sense to label those who are right or wrong. This is always common when a close associate has triggered the emotion. Most people do this as a way of making them feel better, but this strategy never works. Instead, it kills relationships.

Generally, managing emotions is not an easy affair. Sometimes, some feelings may get out of control however much you try. However, the more

you practice how to regulate your emotions, the more stable you become when it comes to handling them. With time, you will build your confidence around people and adverse circumstances, since it will be easy for you to overcome most of the challenges that you encounter.

Changing Your Emotions

In some way, emotions always affect a person's thoughts, actions, and moods. They help you to make decisions about what happens in your world. They make you move towards those events, people, and things that excite you, and away from the things that make you feel bad.

Every person is capable of experiencing a wide array of feelings, attitudes, and emotions. There are primary emotions and secondary emotions. People always appreciate positive emotions like joy, happiness, affection, and love. However, they always seek to change the negative ones like anxiety, sadness, depression, and the like. The more intense a negative emotion becomes, the more willing a person is when it comes to changing it. Several ways have been used previously to change moods and emotions that you can apply to your day to day life.

One of these techniques is the use of cognitive restructuring. This technique helps individuals to change their thoughts as a way of improving their emotions and mood. It involves the act of suppressing negative thoughts. The procedure works through changing the underlying cause of negative emotion.

When applied to situations regularly, it minimizes the frequency of occurrence for negative moods and prevents those moods that are already existing from becoming worse. For this technique to work, you need to have logical and rational thinking skills. You can't get a solution when you are still emotional about a specific occurrence.

Where this technique is not applicable, you can involve other methods to ensure that you get positive results. Most of the encounters that people go through are often stored in the brain, and once you reflect on an encounter, the mind accesses it and replays the actions the same way they occurred. If you keep remembering a negative occurrence, you may end up replaying certain negative feelings since these have also been registered in your brain.

One great attribute of the brain is that it can only recall those occurrences that a person wants to remember. For instance, if you are agitated, the memory may replay every incident or event that agitated you previously, and this may increase the intensity of your anger. The more you think about these occurrences, the angrier you will become. If someone calls you and apologizes or tells you something positive, the brain may start replaying the good experiences you have had in the past. Doing this will help you overcome the negative feeling that you previously had.

Other ways that you can employ when seeking to change your emotions include:

· ***Taking Action –*** for instance moving away from the person, event or environment causing the negative emotion.

· ***Create a Starting Point –*** switch to something that makes you think positively. For instance, if you are sad, you can listen to uplifting music.

· ***Ignore Negative Triggers –*** once you identify the situations causing you to become moody, you can find ways of avoiding them in the future .

Ways That Emotionally Intelligent People Handle Conflict

When you are in the midst of a conflict, you find it hard to think straight. If you have the habit of finding it hard to deal with issues, you might end up blowing it out of proportion. This is why you need to communicate effectively during the conflict and then pay close attention to the emotions of the people that you conflict with. The way you respond to the conflict will dictate how you handle issues that come your way.

Emotionally intelligent people can manage their emotions effectively when faced with an issue. They can identify and interpret emotions the right way for themselves as well as others. They look within themselves, label the emotions and then act in such a way that they resolve the issue amicably have the capacity of being emotionally intelligent.

The good thing is that anyone can be emotionally intelligent when they feel like it. You can train to be emotionally intelligent, which means it is a trait that you can adopt with time .

Here are ways that an emotionally intelligent person handles conflict:

They Handle Issues Head-On

Many people opt to follow their emotions and will give someone the silent treatment to show them that they are mad at them. In many cases, this doesn't work at all; what you need to do instead is to handle the issue head-on. Don't avoid the issue because you feel you will upset the other person; instead, learn how to handle the difficult issues.

They Know How to Listen

When you refuse to see another person's side of the story makes the conflict deeper – it doesn't resolve it in any way. You need to learn to listen to people so that you make them validated. Some people will fuel the conflict because they feel that you don't hear them out.

When you are emotionally intelligent, you will realize that at times, being on the right is all about taking the time to listen to the other person rather than being the one to talk all the time .

They Read Body Language

Body language is vital when it comes to reading what someone is trying to say to you. When you look around you, you will be able to realize that people use body language in different ways. They use facial expressions, gestures, and a host of other body languages to make sure that the other person gets what they are saying.

When talking to a person, you need to be careful about what they are saying and what the body language communicates. If you see a disparity in the words and the body language, you need to think twice about what the person's intention is. In a conflict situation, you ought to know exactly what the person means; otherwise, you might end up getting mad for nothing.

They Plan Ahead

It is vital to place yourself in the mindset of the person you conflict with, especially when certain situations come up.

Planning is ideal when you decide to break some information to people. If something comes up that will make a person mad or annoyed at you, then

you need to consider in advance how the person might react before you break the news. Place yourself in the person's situation before you pass the information along.

They Empathize

Empathizing is all about putting yourself in the other person's shoes when a situation arises. It is hard to do it, but it is the only way to articulate a point based on how you anticipate that the other person will feel.

When you empathize with other people, you will be able to handle issues quicker, and you will appreciate the perspective of the other person at all times.

They Take Breaks

When it reaches a point where the conversation or engagement is going south, emotionally intelligent people tend to look for an out. This can be a break in the engagement or even a pause. They come back when the emotions have gone down, and they can engage with each other more civilly .

At times taking a break from the conversation is the best option for you. It allows for the flight or fight response to become lower and creates enough space for better communication.

They Understand Their Emotions

Emotions play a huge role in conflict resolution, which is why it is hard for you to express yourself when you are feeling a certain way.

When something happens to you, you must look at the reactions that the issue has created and then relate to it. If it is a reaction that you can relate to, then you will find the best way to handle it.

If you don't look at the emotion and interpret it, you will find yourself under control of the emotion, and it will get the best of you. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't get emotional when faced with a situation, but you need to pay attention to the emotion and find out how you are reacting.

They Are Flexible

When you are faced with a situation or an altercation with someone else, whether at home or work, you need to have some sense of flexibility. Make sure you give the other person a chance to explain themselves because you don’t know what is going on with them or how their past experiences might make them react to the current events.

When you are flexible to your reactions, you will be able to avoid impulsive and rigid remarks that won’t give the other person a chance to react.

Flexibility tells you that you can understand what is happening then respond the right way.

They Look at Logic

Your complaints might be valid and authentic, but it is good to take a step back and then pay attention to logic in an objective manner.

Some people are so engaged emotionally that they will let all manner of reasoning to fly out the window.

When you are emotionally intelligent, you will be able to listen to your internal feelings, then incorporate logic to make sure you reach better decisions .

Handling conflicts might take a lot of practice, but when you put in a lot of through the better, the dispute gets resolved.

Chapter 4: How Emotions Guide People

Emotions govern human beings in uncountable ways. However, most people fail to realize the extent to which emotions govern their behavior and thoughts. Individuals seeking to understand themselves, or to identify their areas of development, must get to the place of exploring the impact of emotions in their lives.

This chapter focuses on the role played by emotions in individuals as well as in their relationships with others. Generally, an emotion can be subdivided into three parts:

- The subjective part which explains the way a person experiences emotion
- The psychological part that seeks to define how individuals respond or react to each emotion
- The expressive segment that describes the way people behave after experiencing a particular emotion

These three components work together to determine the role emotions play in your life and how you respond to the feeling. Some emotions only last for seconds, while others may endure for weeks or months. So, how do emotions guide human beings?

1. Emotions Motivate You to Act

Emotions trigger action in human beings. For example, if a student is anticipating a tough exam, he may develop some anxiety that will cause him to study extra hard. The fear of failure causes this anxiety. In this case, fear and anxiety are the emotions that triggered studying as an action. Another example is when you are experiencing a negative feeling of emotion. You may decide to engage in certain activities as a way of finding fulfillment, satisfaction, and happiness. You may also take some necessary actions that will keep you off unpleasant circumstances such as loneliness, pain, or sadness.

2. They Keep You out of Danger

Emotions help you to survive some dangerous situations. They also help animals to reproduce. For instance, if you experience fear as an emotion, you will likely run away from the cause of anxiety. If it were something harmful, then you would be safe from getting injured or hurt. Individuals who are angry often tend to attack or confront the source of anger. A feeling of love and positive affection leads people to reproduce, and this increases the chances of survival.

Your emotions can also ensure that you stay safe at all times. For instance, if you came across a snake or any other hissing animal, you will immediately back off and take action to avoid getting bitten.

3. They Govern Decisions

Emotions always impact your choices in one way or the other. This ranges from the most straightforward decisions like the food you should eat too complicated ones like choosing a spouse. Individuals with an impaired sense of emotional wellbeing often find it challenging to make certain decisions. For each decision that you make, there is a role that emotions play.

These decisions also affect the way other people perceive and understand. As you continue to communicate or interact with those around you, they will get to tell your feelings from the way you communicate and through your body language. You may decide to go the extra mile by clearly stating how you feel. This information helps others to know which action to take or how best to react towards you.

Emotions, therefore, make it possible for others to interpret and respond to your feelings accordingly. This facilitates better, healthier relationships between you and your family, friends, even colleagues. When you understand your emotional status, it becomes easy for you to act and communicate accurately in different social setups.

4. They Provoke Swift Action

Emotions may sometimes replace the need for conscious awareness when it comes to matters that need quick responses. Emotions can serve as processing systems that trigger reactions without any form of thinking. For instance, actions such as giving birth, seduction, and death are associated

mostly with high levels of emotions. These occur rapidly without any form of cognition .

You would not be able to decide to flee from danger or know when to defend yourself if emotions were not involved. For example, when you take something spoilt like milk or bad food, it is the emotion that arises from such actions that make you spit the food out before ingesting it. This is a response that occurs automatically to enhance human survival.

This swift action is also what determines behavior. This is because emotions generate systems like memory, inference, attention, and perception, which give rise to behavioral patterns.

When an emotion is triggered, it activates some of these systems while deactivating some. This causes coordination or adjustment in behavior as an individual tries to adapt to an environment or action. A good example is when an individual develops a feeling of fear. The body automatically closes some systems like the digestive system, resulting in a dry mouth. At this particular time, you may also suffer from reduced blood flow, increased heart palpitations, or visual impairments. These occur as you seek to flee from the item that triggered fear .

Something you must take note of, however, is that not all emotions always trigger action directly. Some only prepare you for action depending on the context of the emotion and the resultant consequences.

5. Emotions Govern Thought Patterns

As stated in the previous chapter, there is a direct correlation between emotions and human memory. Every memory that is stored in the brain has a set of emotions tied to it. These are the emotions that you felt when the memory occurred. Therefore, emotions always act as a connection between the things processed in the brain. This concept explains why it is easier to recall any happy moments you have experienced in the past each time you are so glad.

Any time you become sad, you tend to remember other tragic encounters you have had in the past as well. From this, you get to understand that emotions play a vital role in dictating the kind of beliefs, values, and attitudes that a person develops towards people and the world.

Thoughts triggered by emotions may be harmful or positive depending on what caused the emotion and how prepared an individual is to counter the emotions as they occur. Generally, most individuals find it difficult to think correctly when overwhelmed by certain emotions. This is why most people avoid making serious decisions when overly excited or overly angered.

6. They Affect the Future

Besides influencing immediate behavior, emotions also determine someone's future actions. A person who has learned how to manage his emotions will seek to attain more satisfaction or success in the future. This kind of person will work extra hard to ensure that negative emotions occur at a minimum in the future and that some nasty feelings experienced in the past get avoided completely. This brings us to the conclusion that emotions also serve as a foundation for good behaviors in the future.

People express their emotions differently. Some do it verbally while others do it nonverbally by using body language, tonal variation, and different postures. This happens as a person interacts with other people. It is essential that you know how to judge the emotions of others based not only on their words but through their body expressions.

Emotions are fundamental when it comes to social interactions. They often carry information about a person's intentions and feelings. You can, therefore, use them to resolve social issues and build better relationships.

Emotions and Defensiveness

Defensiveness is the state of protection and defense. In other words, it is always being ready to defend oneself against any form of criticism or attack. To some people, the act of being defensive is emotionally triggered. It entails shielding oneself from certain negative feelings. It may also mean getting protective when you have hurt the opinions of others.

Individuals use defensiveness as a way of avoiding some negative situations they have caused. It is termed as an emotional act because it does not involve a lot of thinking. Some people get to defend themselves without being aware of what they are doing. A defensive person always tries to explain how whatever has happened is not his fault. Such a person rarely

takes responsibility for his mistakes and dissociates himself from any unpleasant occurrence he was directly involved in.

Defensiveness occurs when a person has perceived negative consequences or some threats from the environment. In most cases, defensiveness turns into a cycle. One person may act defensive, then another, and another, with each of them raising their defense each time. Unfortunately, this kills most relationships since defensive people always fail to thrive in assignments that involve a group of people. No one ever looks forward to working with a defensive person.

Some people's defensiveness stems from their past – that is from a collection of personality, mental, and emotional behaviors developed as the person continues to grow. According to Jack Gibbs, a communications expert, defensive responses often arise from six behavioral competencies. These are:

- ***Dogmatism –*** the state of thinking you are right and the other party is wrong
- ***Zero Accountability –*** always blaming others and making excuses for ill behavior
- ***Manipulation –*** the act of controlling others using certain actions
- ***Information Guarding –*** when you feel like you have been exempted from accessing some vital information, it is evident that you will act defensively
- ***Feeling Superior –*** when you behave like you are superior to others in terms of position, knowledge or power, other people will start acting defensively
- ***Criticism –*** if your focus is always on getting people in their wrongdoing, you will make them start acting defensively

Controlling or dealing with a defensive person is not an easy assignment. Because defensiveness is an emotional state, it is always hard to get a person out of this behavior. Sometimes, this can be an in-born thing that is rooted in someone's behavior. This leaves minimal chances of change. There are a few strategies that you can use to help a defensive person:

- ***Restructuring the Behavior –*** the first step in assisting a person get out of the defensive behavior should entail identifying this behavior and labeling it instead of labeling the person. When this is done, try to understand what could be causing such behavior and deal with the source. For instance, an employee might become defensive if he feels that he is underperforming and may lose his work in the near future. Most defensive people are always frustrated in one aspect or the other. Failure to address the main cause of defensive behavior will not resolve the issue.
- ***Minimize the Dangers Involved –*** if the person's defensiveness is as a result of any looming risk or uncertainty, seek to eliminate the cause of this uncertainty. Remember to remain friendly with the person as you try to understand more about how to offer the necessary assistance. To avoid raising more concerns, keep your tone in moderation, and do not respond to the person in a defensive way.
- ***Cultivate Emotional Intelligence and Self-Awareness –*** emotional intelligence involves the understanding of self and others. Seek to improve the person through mentorship, training, and counseling. As you take the person through these sessions, try to identify the causes of defensiveness and work around eliminating or minimizing them. Understand the person better and advise him on how to regulate his character and how to work with others.
- ***Ask Questions –*** when dealing with a defensive person, it is vital that you understand how to give them feedback. Most defensive people will always react negatively when given negative feedback. Therefore, instead of providing such feedback directly, replace it into helpful questions. Even when offering assistance, ensure that you do this in a way that does not threaten the person.
- ***Be Open –*** as you engage a defensive person or defensive people, give room for them to express themselves openly. If you make others feel caged into making right or wrong choices, they will feel threatened by your behavior and may end up acting defensive. Unless things must be done in a

particular way, give room for others to come up with other techniques and ideas to complete some tasks. Let them approach some circumstances with an open mind and do not impose your way of doing things on them.

- ***Equity* –** treat others equally instead of taking sides. Be mindful of their emotional needs and make sure that anything they value is completed with the effectiveness and accuracy that it deserves.

When defensiveness is not dealt with accordingly, it leads to broken relationships and creates an environment that is not conducive for people to work in. the ultimate goal of identifying any defensive behavior and destroying it is to create a peaceful atmosphere that is governed by honesty and trust.

Emotions and Stress

Stress is an emotional act that causes physical and mental issues. It is often characterized by:

- Depression – a generally low mood
- Anxiety – a sense of being overwhelmed by fear and sadness
- Irritability – intense anger
- Issues with concentration and memory
- Addictive behaviors
- Unpredictable mood swings

Emotional stress can have detrimental effects when not managed in good time. It is often caused by things such as conflicts, financial crisis, and broken relationships. It often results in some strong responses that may affect a person's emotional capacity. Emotional stress is often characterized by a feeling of hopelessness and defeat. The good news is that there are several ways that you can use to fix emotionally stressful circumstances over time. Some of these are:

- ***Mind Relaxation* –** emotionally stressed people always experience mental as well as physical pain. The physical pain may manifest as stomach pain, headaches, chest pains, and

many others. Although most people try to ignore such feelings, you should practice mindfulness to detect where exactly the pain is coming from as a way of dealing with it.

- ***Get Busy –*** idleness does not help much when it comes to stressful moments. It is believed that if you do not find a way of expressing your emotions freely, they will show up in some different avenues. That is why individuals who try to hide their feelings or emotions end up developing certain mental and physical problems. However, if there is no other way to let your emotions out, find a distractive activity, and engage in it as a way of releasing the feeling more healthily.
- ***Reflect –*** if your mind does not relieve you from stress, you can try stepping aside from your schedules to analyze the situation you are faced with in detail. You may replay the events and circumstances that may have caused you stress and journal anything that you find out so that you can analyze these and find a solution. Also, when reflecting, you can talk to some people as you seek to resolve the issue better.

During this time, you may as well engage in meditation, which has been known to relieve a variety of stressful situations. Meditation helps you to re-channel your thoughts towards positive occurrences while minimizing the negative ones .

Emotional Worry

Everyone gets worried once in a while. Worry is good because it triggers you to complete assignments or make some basic plans. However, there is some level of anxiety that goes beyond the norm – one that occurs continuously. Some people cannot perform their duties well on a daily basis because they keep worrying all the time. Such people always shield this feeling from others for fear of being misquoted. Sharing and communicating how you feel is very important if you are the type of person that keeps worrying all the time.

Emotion-triggered worry is very difficult to deal with. Individuals faced with this always need constant assurance from those around them, although

such people also need to seek professional assistance in case this feeling becomes more intense over the days.

One way of dealing with this kind of worry is learning how to control it so that it does not affect your daily activities. Worry is a secondary emotion that arises from other emotions. When left unattended, it can grow into anxiety and can eventually become an anxiety disorder. Some of the characteristics of this disorder include:

- Getting very worried about the smallest concerns and finding it challenging to overcome the worries
- Restlessness and difficulty to remain calm
- Poor concentration
- Always worrying that you are worried
- Difficulty in making decisions during uncertain times

Intense worry may also result in physical problems such as irritability, muscle ache, insomnia, nausea, and headaches. To overcome worry, you must first identify the other emotions associated with this feeling and deal with what is causing those emotions to occur.

Emotions and Procrastination

Procrastination is one of the resultant problems of not managing one's emotions. Most people see it as a problem with time management, yet it is a problem with emotions. It involves delaying task completion despite knowing the consequences of such delay .

Procrastination is an unhealthy behavior since it ruins one's goals and leaves you frustrated. It is an emotion-based strategy that seeks to suppress negative emotions but whose effects are quite detrimental. It often occurs in the subconscious mind and may be viewed as the opposite of anxiety.

Procrastinators often avoid completing some assignments with the belief that doing the task will not make them feel good. However, most procrastinators often end up depressed since it is very difficult for them to achieve success. It focuses on the pleasure of the moment and forgets about the future consequences of neglecting responsibility.

The best way to overcome procrastination is by controlling one's emotions. You can achieve this by starting to force yourself into finishing assignments and not postponing what you can do now to a later time. This applies to both simple as well as complicated assignments.

The goal is to break down tasks into manageable portions that are easy to complete. This way, most of the work will be simplified, and you can complete them with ease and enthusiasm.

Chapter 5: Setting Goals and Managing Your Mindset as A Way of Overcoming Addiction

Individuals who engage in addictive activities always find it challenging to get over them. These difficulties are well known, yet some addicts still believe that quitting such behaviors is an easy task.

Generally, there are two types of addiction – substance addiction and non-substance addiction. Substance addiction comprises things like drug and alcohol abuse. Non-substance or behavioral addiction is commonly referred to entail things like gambling, exercise, excessive eating, and shopping. Behavioral addiction is somewhat challenging to stop as substance addiction. Although an individual can engage in the above activities without them being addictive, there is a level where one cannot survive without these activities.

That is when it is termed as an addiction. Some behavioral habits are healthy, while others are not. However, most of them are always emotionally triggered and thus, must be controlled.

The first step towards overcoming addiction involves deciding to change. For you to get out of a behavior or activity that is addictive, you must first see the need for change. Once you know this need, you then make up your mind to pursue this change as a goal.

You may decide to quit the addiction entirely or partially. For instance, you may decide to reduce the amount of time spent on activities such as gambling. It is crucial to have a clear goal laid out before you start pursuing the change that you want to achieve. Another example is when you have an eating disorder. You may set a goal that will help you to stop eating some unhealthy foods and concentrate on a more nutritious diet.

The decision to change is a process that can last for some time. It always comprises a stage where an individual keep contemplating what exactly needs to change and what needs to be involved in the change. All this revolves around setting goals .

Setting Goals for Your Recovery

Goals are useful because they help you plan your recovery process with ease. It is good that you set realistic goals that are easy to achieve than doing complicated ones with requiring a lot of time, effort, and resources to attain. Consulting a professional is essential at this point because you will receive more insight into your condition and what to expect during the recovery process. Besides your personal goals, a professional may also set some goals for you and follow up to ensure that you work towards achieving them.

While setting goals, you must be able to tell the difference with dreams. Dreams are those things you would love to get or own in the future. One significant difference between dreams and goals is that dreams do not have a timeline; that is, there is no specific period or strategy for achieving them. A goal, on the other hand, is measurable when it comes to time. It is something you must complete within a stipulated time frame, and you must work towards achieving it.

Overcoming addiction is always a personal affair. Other people can only assist. There is no generalized approach that applies to all. Everyone needs to set unique yet custom goals for recovery. Each program always differs from one person to another. Let us take a quick look at some of the benefits of setting goals when it comes to overcoming addiction:

- ***Goals help you identify the critical things in your life .*** When setting them, you will be able to reflect on some of the things that are meaningful to you. This will help you spend time more wisely
- ***Goals trigger positive thoughts.*** When setting goals, all your attention shifts to whatever you are doing and whatever you wish to accomplish. This means that if you set a goal to stop doing something, you will start thinking about being free from the addiction even before this happens in reality.
- ***Goals change your mindset.*** As you seek to change some things about your life, you will start thinking about yourself positively. This is never the case with addicts since they always see themselves as failures. For example, if you set a goal to start doing healthy exercise, you will begin seeing yourself esteem improve as you continue to achieve this goal.

- ***Goals help you fashion a better future.*** Goals are always foundations for the future. You may not be able to change the negative behaviors and things you have done in the past; however, much you try. But as you start the recovery process from any addiction, you will easily accept this past, then work towards achieving a better future. With excellent goals in place, it is easy for you to achieve the kind of future you want to see. It is like starting on a new page.

How to Set Goals

Just like any other goal setting exercise, if you wish to set goals that are helpful to you, you must ensure that they are SMART. SMART stands for:

Specific – clearly outlining what you need to accomplish and the timeframe

Measurable – you should be able to measure the goal in terms of the steps required to achieve it. For example, if you wish to change your diet, something like eating a more balanced diet is not a measurable goal. But a statement like eat more salad, fruits, and vegetables two times a day makes it a measurable goal.

Achievable – you set a goal that you can accomplish. For example, you cannot say you will meet with your counselor daily if you are employed and would thus not find time for these meetings. How often you attend these meetings should depend on the time available.

Relevant – the goal should concentrate on helping you overcome your addiction and nothing else. If your goals do not play any meaningful roles in helping you achieve this, then they become useless.

Time-bound – every goal should have a deadline or date of completion. You do not want to have a goal that goes on and on without an end. You can come up with short-term goals that span days or weeks. You may also have long-term goals on your list; these can span months or even years.

To start, list some of the things you want to change about yourself. For each of these items, indicate the time duration against it. Specify whether they are to be short term or long term. Narrow down this list by getting specific about each item. For instance, if you want to improve on your personal

relationships, list precisely the things that you wish to change. These will be helpful as you set your goals.

Once you have clear goals in mind, write them down on a piece of paper so that you can track the completion status. Make this official by involving another person who will follow you up for accountability purposes. As soon as you do this, divide each goal into achievable steps. These steps can be completed on an hourly, daily, or weekly basis depending on the amount of time available to achieve the goal.

The next step will involve identifying those things that may hinder you from getting your goals done. Obstacles always exist in every process. It is upon you to find ways to avoid or eliminate any obstacles involved in your recovery process. For example, if you want to overcome the habit of overeating, a barrier that would apply in this case would be if you are exposed to food all the time .

With the obstacles dealt with, you can then devise a schedule for each goal. Decide the exact time that you will be working on every goal. If you are seeking to exercise more, for example, you can set aside at least one hour of your time on a daily basis to accomplish this. From the schedule, start engaging in the actions listed in your goals. Always leave some allowance for flexibility and adjustment. Some urgent issues may arise during the time committed to your recovery program. If you do not provide for some flexibility, it may become difficult to remain on track. You can separate negotiable goals from non-negotiable ones then balance your schedule accordingly.

Some medium-range goals may also need time adjustments in case you reach the deadline before accomplishing them. For instance, if your goals were to overcome emotional eating or gambling and by the end of the set timeframe you have not made enough progress, you can freely push the deadline ahead as you continue working on this goal.

Preparation to Overcome

When you are done setting goals, you will need to make certain preparations to facilitate the change. For example, you will need to get rid of the items, environments, and setups that trigger the addiction. Like a person who is addicted to sex may need to get rid of any porn materials. A

person who is prone to overeating may need to stop stocking on certain types of food. For addictive social behaviors, it may be vital that you rid yourself of addictive companies and associations.

Also, on preparation, you may need to get a few family members and friends to support you without having to judge you. Inform those people you have been engaging in harmful behaviors with

Your desire to change. This way, they will know when to involve you in their activities, and when not to.

Overcoming addiction is often a different kind of experience for each person. Some people go through this with less struggle, while others find the process frustrating and quite painful. Others even fail in the attempt to overcome, but if this happens to you, make sure that you keep trying and do not give up. In case personal efforts fail to work, you may seek either psychological or medical treatment depending on the kind of treatment you wish to overcome. You can try out things like cognitive behavior therapy which has proven to be effective in helping those with all manner of addictions.

For both behavioral and substance addictions, you may witness some withdrawal symptoms. Substance addiction is mostly accompanied by adverse physiological effects that can be very uncomfortable. It is therefore advisable to seek help from professionals on the right method to use both for dealing with the addiction, and overcoming the side effects. The good thing is that most of the symptoms do fade within days or weeks of recovery.

The Mindset

Overcoming addiction generally revolves around the shifting of one's mindset. You must develop a growth mindset that will act as a foundation for the desired change. Some people fail to overcome their addictions because of having a fixed mindset. This kind of mindset believes that change is not possible. People with this kind of mentality always think that they deserve a nasty kind of life because of the mistakes they did in the past .

A growth mindset, on the other hand, believes that there is potential for positive change. A person with this kind of mindset is always open to

change and learning. If you have a growth mindset, it will be easy for you to admit and learn from your past mistakes as a way of improving your future. Only a person with a growth mindset can be able to endure the many challenges that accompany the overcoming process. This mindset removes the victim mentality and replaces it with some sense of responsibility on the part of the addict. You will take the recovery process a day at a time until you are able to attain maximum sobriety.

For you to develop this kind of mindset, you will need to do a few things, including:

- *Reflecting on your previous kind of life*
- *Set short-term yet achievable goals*
- *Identify a mentor or role model with the kind of mindset you wish to have*

Doing this will help you to remain positive during the entire recovery process.

Chapter 6: Meditation

Meditation is a technique for relaxation and self-awareness. It is an exercise that plays several crucial roles in the lives of those who engage in it. Several forms of meditation have been defined by several health experts, spiritual leaders, and educators for many purposes.

Meditation improves both the physical and emotional wellbeing of a person. By definition, it refers to the act of stilling the mind and reflecting on the true essence of self in a conscious manner. It involves focusing attention on a particular subject as a way of increasing awareness.

Meditation has been in existence for several decades and is practiced by thousands of cultures around the world. It is available in almost all religions, and nowadays people practice it for medical reasons as well.

Types of Meditation

Meditation is available in several different types. Today, we look at some of the most common ones.

Concentrative Meditatio n

This is a kind of meditation where you drive your attention to a single object or point. You switch your concentration off anything else that is going on so that you gain maximum experience of whatever your attention is focusing on. This can be your breath, a set of beads, staring at a flame, or repeating a given word. In most cases, concentrative meditation becomes difficult because it is not easy to focus at one point for a long time. Beginners are advised to start with a few minutes and keep building on their meditation time as they master the technique.

Metta Meditation

This is also referred to as loving-kindness meditation. It concentrates on generating a positive attitude and affection towards things, people, and sources of stress. You can achieve this kind of reflection by opening your mind to emotions of love and kindness towards others. In the process of meditation, you are required to send messages of loving-kindness to others as many times as is possible or until the stressful feeling is over. This kind

of meditation seeks to build love and compassion towards oneself and also towards others. It is commonly used by people who are frustrated, angered, and those in conflict with others. Its primary purpose is to create positive emotions that suppress feelings of anxiety and depression.

Transcendental Meditation

This is one of the spiritual meditations that entails slow breathing while sitting down. It aims to bring you to the point that is above the normal state. When engaging in this form of meditation, you should concentrate on repeating a set of words depending on the complexity of your challenge. You are given a chance to select the kind of words you use.

Mindful Meditation

This meditation technique teaches you to concentrate on the present while shielding any memories about your past or future. It makes you more aware of your current surroundings without having to worry about what will happen next. One advantage of this kind of meditation is that you can do it anywhere, at any time. It is also one technique that is involved in most of the other forms of meditation. Most people engage in mindful meditation because it helps improve focus and memory. It also helps overcome negative feelings and lessens the impact of any reactions one has towards negative emotions. Physically, it has been found to lower pressure in individuals suffering from high BP.

Progressive Relaxation

This is also known as body scan meditation. It is a form of meditation that checks the body for tension so as to release it. During a body scan session, a relaxation expert works on your entire body, starting with the feet upwards. This happens as you tighten and relax your muscles while visualizing any changes in your body.

Body scan meditation's ultimate goal is to improve your overall feeling, thus causing you to stay calm. It also relieves the body from some types of pain through relaxing muscles. As the muscles relax, most people always end up asleep .

Breath-Related Meditation

This involves mindful breathing where you are required to breathe in deep, but slowly while concentrating on each breath that you make. The aim is to focus on breathing alone, and this shuts the mind entirely on other things.

Yoga

Kundalini yoga is a very popular type of meditation that combines mantras, breathing, and specific body movements. You need a teacher for this kind of meditation although once you master it, you can do it by yourself in the comfort of your home. Yoga is mostly used in reducing body aches and improving a person's mental capability.

Zazen Meditation

Fondly known as Zen meditation. This is a kind of meditation practiced by the Buddhist religion. It entails certain calculated moves and body postures. Mostly, Zen meditation is taught in class. This form of meditation aims to assume a particular position while breathing deeply and reflecting on a person's thoughts. It is correlated with mindful meditation, although it somewhat involves a lot of practice and patience.

Benefits of Meditation

Meditation has several benefits for the body and mind. Generally, individuals who practice at least one form of meditation are always happier, calmer, and less stressed. Here are some of the common advantages of engaging in the meditation practice:

Meditation Relieves Stress

Most individuals try out meditation as a form of stress reliever. A good percentage of those who engage in meditation always report significantly low levels of physical and mental stress. Stress often results from high levels of the cortisol hormone which cusses cytokines, a chemical that causes inflammation of the brain. As a result, sleep patterns get disrupted, and the victim starts experiencing fatigue and many other physical symptoms. One form of meditation – that is mindful meditation counters the effects of cytokines in the body, thus alleviating some of the major symptoms of stress. Studies show that meditation also minimizes the signs of health conditions associated with stress, such as fibromyalgia and irritable bowel syndrome.

Lowers Blood Pressure

Meditating also results in moderate heart palpitations. When the blood pressure is high, the heart overworks as it seeks to pump more blood into the system. This can cause it to malfunction. Increased pressure may also cause arteries to shrink, resulting in illnesses such as stroke and heart attack. You can avoid all these by doing meditation. Research shows that people who engage in mantra-related meditation always experience lower blood pressure by a good percentage. Most types of meditation possess this benefit since they all work by relaxing some nerves located around and within the heart.

Improves Emotional Wellbeing

Meditation can also result in more improved self-esteem and self-image. These two aspects translate to a higher level of emotional intelligence. Research shows that mindful meditation lowers cases of depression and improves the general mood of many participants. Individuals who practice meditation always remain optimistic about life most of the time. This explains the sudden drop in depression levels.

Creates More Self-Awareness

Meditation styles that focus on reflection assist you in becoming more aware of yourself and what goes on around you. When you understand yourself more, it becomes easy for you to grow in some areas that need to be developed. As you identify yourself, it also becomes easy for you to relate with others. You also get to identify some negative behaviors that you may be having. Eliminating such practices from your thought pattern helps in building your personality. This means that others will trust you more since you will become more confident and honest.

Engaging in meditation also reduces the chances of feeling lonely. It also builds the mind, thus improving your problem solving and creativity skills. Understanding of self creates an avenue for many other positive interactions and discoveries .

Lowers Anxiety Levels

When stress levels drop, anxiety levels drop as well. Practicing meditation leads to reduced symptoms of anxiety-related disorders. If you are a person

that suffers from panic attacks or social anxiety, engaging in meditation can help you remain calm, thus reducing the intensity with which these conditions occur. The more you practice meditation, the more you can stay less anxious for long. One major mode of meditation associated with reduced anxiety is yoga. By doing this, you will be able to withstand harsh environments without panicking.

Improves Concentration

If you have a problem with concentration, try out meditation. There are types of meditation that help increase your attention span. You will concentrate on tasks, events, and objects longer. You will also remember assignment and task details better than a person who has not been into a meditation session. Meditation seems to have some power that reverses absent-mindedness, worry, and poor focus. You may start with short spans and keep building on these as time goes by .

Related to this is the aspect of memory loss. Older people can also practice meditation as a way of improving their thinking and memorization abilities. Meditation exercises that use mantra and repetitive words always help boost your thought pattern. You will be able to perform some memory tasks that have been impossible in the past, and you will do this in a quicker way. Meditation can also reverse memory problems in individuals suffering from conditions such as dementia.

Creates Feelings of Kindness

There is a special type of meditation that focuses on generating feelings of sympathy towards others. Metta meditation triggers thoughts of kindness for oneself and others. This helps you to show affection easily and also to forgive faster when wronged by others. It promotes compassionate activities and ensures that people maintain positive feelings towards everyone, including enemies. This also results in reduced disagreements and conflicts among people living together because of the increased ability to manage anger .

Helps Fight Addictions

Meditation provides you with the mental stamina you need to overcome certain addictions. It helps you to develop certain levels of discipline, such

as self-control that can help you rise above some nasty behaviors. Each session redirects your thoughts, focus, and control to things that can help you stop or minimize any addictive characters.

For instance, a study carried out on some alcoholics indicated that those who practiced meditation stood a better chance of managing their cravings than those who did not. This also applies to those with eating disorders. It is indicated that people who practice mindful meditation witness a significant improvement in their emotional eating habits.

Better Sleep

Since meditation relaxes the brain, engaging in it reduces the occurrence of insomnia by 50 percent. It helps you to fall asleep faster and also to remain asleep for more extended periods. This is due to the fact that people who meditate are always capable of redirecting any racing thoughts that arise during sleep time. The relaxation of body muscles also results in better, undisturbed sleep since there are nobody aches that can cause you to wake up in the middle of the night.

Relieves Pain

Meditation is used in most hospital facilities as an alternative to pain medication. Pain is always connected to the brain in some way. Practicing mindful meditation can eliminate any painful stimulus in the mind, thus controlling any body aches. It also lowers a person's sensitivity to body pain, whether mild or chronic. Individuals suffering from a terminal illness are often encouraged to use meditation as a way of managing chronic pain. Although both meditators and non-meditators get to experience the same source of pain, those who meditate always possess a better capability to cope with this pain.

One great advantage of the many forms of meditation discussed above is that you can do them anywhere. You do not need any special tools, equipment or environment to do it. Sessions can last from minutes to several hours. In most cases, people get to choose the type of meditation based on what they are seeking to achieve from it. When it comes to this exercise, consistency is key. In case you do not know where to start from, you can always enroll in a class where various forms of meditating are taught.

The Meditation Process

Meditation is a straightforward activity that takes place using various procedures. However, the most fundamental process is as indicated below:

1. Lie down or sit comfortably. You may sit on a comfortable chair or lie on a bed. There are also unique kinds of meditation cushions and chairs that you can invest in
2. Close both eyes
3. Start breathing naturally – either faster or slower depending on the type of meditation
4. Concentrate on how the body responds as you breathe. Significant parts of the body to focus on are the chest, belly, and rib cage.
5. If your mind begins to wander, redirect it back to the breathing.

This is only a basic form of meditation. You can do this several times each day and maintain it for a specific period. Other more advanced techniques will involve activities like repeating words, maintaining specific body posture, and the like. Before you start meditating, you will first need to identify a particular time and place that is suitable for you. Studies show that meditation is more effective when you do it as a routine. This means that you should practice it at the same place and time each day. Once this is done, you can then set the amount of time you need for each session. If you are a beginner, you can start with small-time periods like three minutes for each session. The time you set must be one that is achievable so that you do not struggle with your sessions.

You must also ensure that you get a comfortable place to sit or lie on. When seated, you must always remember to keep your back straight. Do not cross your legs and arms.

Another thing you need to establish before starting your meditation is whether you need your sessions to be unguided or guided. Guided sessions are those led by an expert. This can be face to face kind of sessions, or you

can use audio or video recording. These are commonly used by learners with little or no knowledge about meditation. Unguided meditation is for experienced meditators who do not need to be instructed. Some meditation techniques are best suited for beginners, while some are more complex and ideal for expert meditators. Ensure that you understand what each type entails before you get started.

As you start, let go of any form of expectation. Just sit or lie down and remain calm. Do not fight your thoughts but be sure to maintain focus on the main object of meditation. The more you meditate, the more relaxed your mind becomes. Breathe normally, unless the method of meditation demands that you do otherwise.

While most people close their eyes during meditation, you can choose to keep them open so long as you remain focused on the session. Besides the many things you need to know to get started, here are some tips you can employ in your sessions to ensure success:

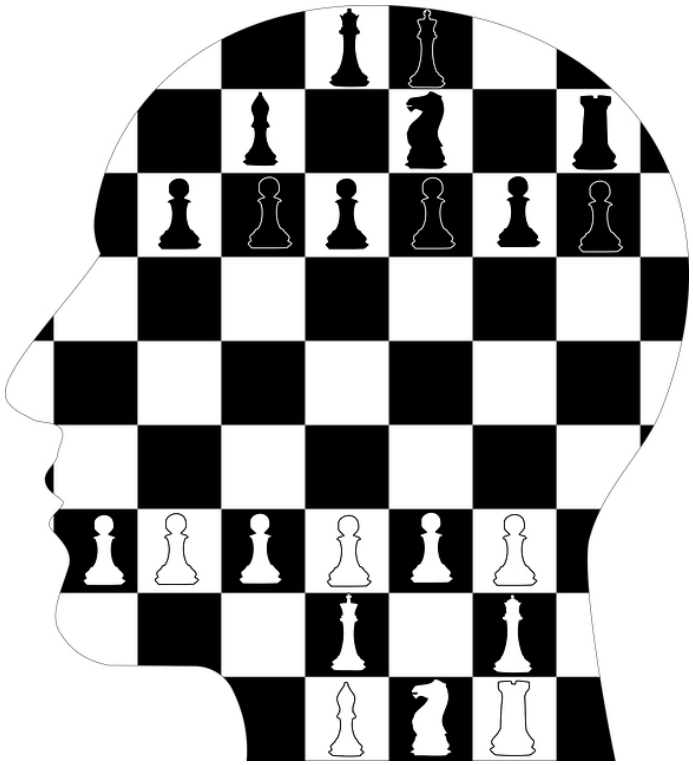
- ***Start with Short Sessions*** **-** The recommended duration is two minutes a day, for a period of one week. Then keep increasing by two minutes each time.
- ***Start in the Morning*** **-** Doing your meditation sessions every morning helps a lot because you may get too engaged during the day. You may also forget about the session entirely and concentrate on other things. Set reminders for your ideal time
- ***Check How Your Body Feels*** **-** Always check how you feel before, during, and after the session. Start with your feet, check how this feels and slowly move upwards to your ankles, belly, chest, up to your head.
- **Monitor Your Breath** - Count your breath as you inhale and exhale. This will help you to concentrate more
- ***Avoid Wandering*** - Control your mind. If you do not, it will keep wandering, and you may lose focus. Any time this happens, relax and bring your thoughts back to the breathing. However, do not force your mind to clear since this will happen automatically as you continue with the session.

- ***Focus on What is Right*** - Do not worry about any mistake that arises since everyone faces them. Understand that there has never been a perfect way of meditating and ignore anything that you do wrong.
- ***Allow Feelings to Grow*** - As you meditate, some feelings will also arise, and you may want to connect with them. This is fine. Just seek to understand what made the feelings to occur but do not suppress them.
- ***Focus on One Spot*** - Keep your eyes glued in one place. Monitor the light, energy, and sound in the room. You can spend one day concentrating on the noise alone, then another day on the music and so forth.
- ***Get Guidance*** - If you get stuck during a meditating session, feel free to ask for assistance. You can even get some friends or family members and do the meditation as a team. Alternatively, you may also identify a community of meditators and become a member.

It is always advisable that you eliminate any distractions that may hinder you from focusing on the subject of the session. For instance, you may need to switch off your phone or put it on silent mode. Remember, meditation is meant to make you relax. Therefore, it is vital that you do not strain during the sessions since you do not need to work too hard for you to achieve the benefits listed above. All you need to do is to make it a daily practice and ensure each session is as comfortable as possible. You may start with the basic forms of meditation and keep advancing as time goes. Even if things do not go as planned, avoid being judgmental. Instead, learn from every mistake and seek to improve next time. Allow yourself to have fun, enjoy each session as you observe your body's response.

Chapter 7: How to Keep Your Mind in Peak Performance

You have seen them or you have been one of the people that wake up each day and run a few miles to keep their bodies fit. While at it, we try to make sure that we have our bodies working at their peak at all times. Question is why don't we invest the same amount of time and care on our minds?



When you met with friends or family, they will tell you how they have paid for a gym membership the whole year long, but no one will tell you that they have invested in mind training. Maybe we just think that reading a few pages of a book on a daily basis is enough – but studies show that when you vary your mental ability you are preparing for success.

Training Your Mind Can Turn Your Life Around

Your conscious mind is what makes you aware of yourself as a being that can think and learn. In spite of us having a high level of emotional awareness, very few people can achieve the level of consciousness that we desire.

So, how important is it to develop your mind? The human mind has a high potential for power, and for you to make use of the mind the best way is to train it to become the best. You need to be aware of what the mind goes through when you learn and think.it might seem strange but you don’t have to use anything extra to make the mind grow – all you need is the mental ability you have at the moment. With the right approach, you can get to train the mind and improve memory so that you can accelerate learning .

Brain Training Exercises: What You Need to Look For

When you sign up for brain training exercises, you need to make sure they are specific to your needs. Let us look at the characteristics that you need to focus on when choosing an exercise.

It Needs to Be Personalized

Every person has a unique mindset, and each mindset requires a specific set of training to make it work best. You need to undergo personalized training that suits your needs.

Studies show that when you begin the exercises, you need to be challenged and not overwhelmed by what you do. You can only achieve the best when it comes to brain exercises if you choose exercises that are designed for you.

Be Specific for Your Goals

The brain exercises that you do need to be specific to the goals that you have. Different people use their brains for different brain functions, and this is why you need to understand what you are after in terms of brain function.

When you get the right brain exercises, you will become fit in no time at all.

Should Motivate You

Just with anything in life, you need to practice whatever you do so that you become better. This is why using brain exercises isn’t a onetime thing – you need to make sure that you do it daily for several minutes at a time.

When you desire to make use of the various exercises, make sure that you find a way to stay motivated. You can work with other friends to train their brains so that you find out who gets the highest score. Brain training is all about all ages, meaning anyone can join in the fun – and you can even make it competitive so that it is more enticing.

Should Be Challenging

Studies show that if the task doesn't increase your difficulty, the brain becomes bored and it starts to make the process automatic. After a while, the brain won't be challenged anymore and you won't benefit.

The more challenging the exercise is, the better the brain will restructure itself and get ready for a bigger challenge. This isn't something that you have to do on a daily basis like driving the car that becomes a routine, but the brain always needs a new challenge so that it can stay fit at all times.

The games that you plan need to increase in intensity with the passage of time, and this will make it work at peak performance always.

Why Should Your Brain Be Fit?

Now that you know how to choose the best exercise to make your brain work better, we need to look at how brain fitness can help you in the long run.

You Think Faster

In whatever you do, you always wish that you can be quicker at it. When you age, your brain cells start reacting slower; this is why you need to find a way to make the brain function faster .

Most of the brain exercises that you come across are designed to make sure that they improve your brain health and make your brain think faster. Studies show that using brain training exercises will speed up the process of data processing by up to 130 percent. This means that the 70-year-old will achieve the data processing capabilities of a 30-year-old if they undertake the tests.

Better Memory

You will be able to concentrate on class and memories faces and places better. You will also know more details of the stories that you wish to share

with a friend. Having a strong memory will make you stay sharp and focused and confident in everything that you do.

However, you need to choose the right exercise to help you remember more. Most of the exercises that you will choose will improve your auditory memory, so you will remember a lot that you will hear including names, instructions, and conversations.

Other exercises will improve your visual memory, so you will be able to remember more of the things that you see including visual details, text, and faces. So, if you are after building your memory, you need to use a combination of exercises that will make your memory better.

Being Able to Attempt New Things

You will be surprised that the exercises that you undertake will help you to try out new things that you have never thought of before. When you engage the important chemicals in the brain, you will be able to speed up the thinking process and this will make your focus sharper and awaken the curiosity to motivate people to make things work for you.

When you heighten your curiosity, you will be able to seize life by the horns, and you will be able to try out other things.

Finding the Right Words

Do you know the feeling you always get when you have just the right words to say? At times you find that your brain has the challenge of coming up with the right words that will make things easy in a conversation, but this doesn’t happen. You might have said the phrase or word more than a hundred times before, but you just can’t bring it out .

When you use exercises that will give you fluency and better auditory processing, you will be able to find words a bit more easily, which in turn makes you more confident in the conversation.

Better Vision

For you to have a clearer vision, you need to have a better mind as well. Many people think that in order for them to see better, they need to eat specific foods. Well, it works, but you need to know that better image recognitions and processing of visual signals needs you to have a good

brain. The eyes just take in visual information, but at the end of the day, the brain is the one that processes the information for you.

When you undertake mental exercises, you will be able to take in more visual details than before. You will be able to react better to what you see more quickly. With a sharper memory and mental capacity, you are better placed to interpret images better and faster .

Faster Reactions

The speed at which you react to something depends on how the brain registers it. The faster the brain registers the images that you receive in your brain, the sooner you can move to retrieve it. The faster you see something darting in front of you, the faster you can react to it, whether you are walking or driving. So, when you train your mind, you make it easier to process visual as well as auditory signals. So, training your brain makes it super-fast, so that you can react to issues faster than ever.

It Builds Confidence

When you age, the brain tends to become slow a bit. You will have all the wisdom that you need, but you will start feeling less sharp than before. This can affect your self-confidence to a huge extent. When your brain is sharper and faster, it will give you the self-assurance skills that you need to be more confident in all that you do.

It becomes a good thing to run your issues with a sharper brain than when you are slow at thinking. You will be able to make decisions faster and you will take things to a whole new level in your life.

The mental exercises are proven to make your brain sharper than before, which makes you more confident in your daily life. It also inspires you to look for newer experiences.

1. Improves Your Mood

Do you know that you will associate better things with a sharer brain – improved focus, memory, and sharpness? However, a better mood might not be the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of making a step-in life.

Brain exercises stimulate the brain to produce chemicals that make you feel alert, rewarded and also upbeat. You will enjoy self-confidence which comes through sharper focus, faster thinking and better memory. This will result in a more positive mood for you. The result is that you end up feeling good.

2. ***You Get Things Done***

Everyone has a lot of things to do, from running errands and making dinner, to paying off bills. The list is endless, but they can overwhelm you if your brain is slow. When you have a faster brain, you will have time to free up everything so that you have fun while at it. When you use brain exercises, you will make things more efficient – you will be on top of things and be more effective and have minimum errors.

3. ***Follow Conversations Better***

It takes a lot of practice to follow conversations, especially when you are in a noisy place. As you grow older, you will have to keep up with a person that talks fast, or catch up with a mumbling person. You will also find it hard to understand a colleague with an accent.

For you to handle all these, you need to have sharper listening skills. For you to listen, the brain has to be able to interpret what other people are saying. This way you will have easier and more fulfilling interactions.

You might think that for you to listen better you need to have better ears but this isn't the case. Instead, you need to work on your brain fitness. The brain has to pick the auditory signals from the ears and then interpret them fast for you to know what the other person is talking about.

After you hit 30 years, the auditory processing power of the brain gradually starts to slow down, and then it makes it harder for you to understand sounds. This is true when someone is speaking too fast or is in a noisy environment.

Brain Exercises That You Can try

Now to the practical part – you need to have a few exercises that will help make your brain fit. Most of these exercises can be done anywhere and by any person of any age. Let us look at a few of these exercises:

Switching Hands

When you use your normal hand, you will find that you don’t put any effort into what you do, which is why it is good to try and switch hands. If you are right-handed, then try using your left hand to do most of the things that you do each day such as using the mouse, eating and brushing your teeth.

The need to change your dominant hand means that you have to increase the brain's focus in order to do things right. It will be challenging at first which will give your brain a good workout.

Eating With Chopsticks

This isn't easy at all, and those people that have mastered the art of using chopsticks will tell you this for a fact. Many people are used to eating with a fork and a spoon, then using chopsticks will be a challenge. When you eat with chopsticks, you will have to eat mindfully, which forces your brain to think better and focus.



If you have been used to eat using chopsticks, then try using the other hands so that you can force yourself to think.

Perform Your Chores With Eyes Closed

Have you ever tried to get your way around in darkness? Not a pretty thing, right? Well, when you need to exercise your brain, try and perform tasks with your eyes closed. This will make sure that you force the brain to use other neural pathways to think. However, you need to try and avoid doing something that might endanger you or any other people when the eyes are closed.

Read Books Aloud

You can take turns reading books out loud with your kids or a partner. If this isn't working for you, look for good audiobooks and then listen to them in turns. When you listen to words out loud or you read them aloud, you evoke a different part of your imagination at any given point in time .

Studies show that there are different parts of the brain that come alive when the same word is read, heard or spoken.

Try New Routes

If you are a fan of using the same route year in year out, then this is the time that you can take on new routes. When you use the same route each day, you automatically detect the route which in turn doesn't stimulate your thinking. When you decide to take an alternative route, you get to activate the hippocampus and the cortex. Try driving a different route each day so that you can stimulate the brain and make it work harder to get you to your destination.

Try New Things

You can do things that you have never done before in your life. If you live your life in the fast lane, you can slow down and try something new that you haven't down in a while. You can as well travel to a new place that you have never been to before, because new sights and sounds stimulate you to think better .

Mind Games to Train Your Mind

From handheld games to puzzles, young and old people alike have been looking for ways to improve how their brain functions. Here are a few games that you can use to keep your mind young.

Sudoku

This is a number placement game that requires you to use your memory. You have to look ahead and try to follow a trail of consequences. You have to plan ahead, which means you get to improve your memory.



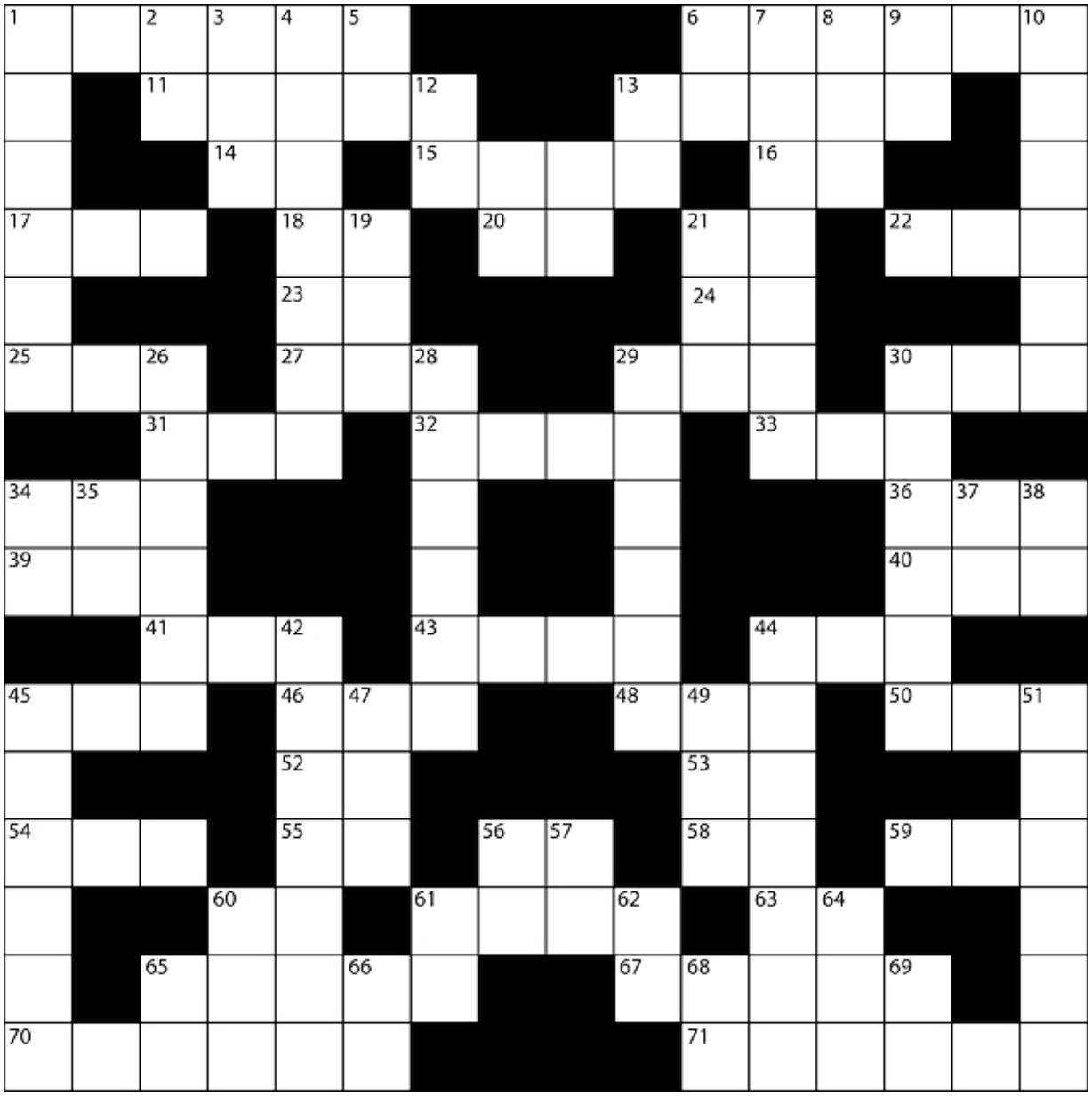
You can play Sudoku online or on paper. The game is available in varying levels of intensity .

Luminosity

This is a mind training website that allows you to sign up for a free account. You get to play a set of games per day that help you grow your mind power. You will find yourself challenging the brain and becoming better as the days go by.

Crossword Puzzles

Crosswords represent the classic brain trainer, and they try to access your verbal language as well as the memory that you have. You can use offline as well as online versions of the crossword puzzle.



The best way to do this is to get a newspaper or go for a book of the puzzles. Puzzles allow you to think, which makes your brain to look for the best solution to the puzzle. You can get crossword puzzles that are suitable for your interests or skill levels .

How to Make Time in Your Busy Schedule

Many people think that the small transitions that we make from one activity to another are just a waste of time – they aren’t. When you have more time

on your hands you get to enjoy a relaxed body and a healthy mind. Let us look at the top ways to make time for yourself.

Plan Your Day Well

For you to enjoy the day and have some more time to yourself, you need to know your sleeping pattern and then come up with the right plan. Create the best schedule that will give you maximum access to your plan the whole day.

Listen

You can listen to your favorite music or to a podcast. With so little time for you to do anything meaningful, try to put in some music to what you are doing. This will help you to decompress .

Delegate

If you have people working under you and they know what they are supposed to do, then delegate some of the tasks that you do on a daily basis. Remember you don’t have to do everything all the time – find some time to delegate the work. This means that you have to surround yourself with only the right people at all times. Hire people with the sense that they will have things working even when you aren’t around. When you have the right people, you won’t feel as if you are missing out on something and you will get enough time for yourself.

Chapter 8: Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand other people's thoughts, conditions, feelings, and point of view rather than from your own. Empathy facilitates the behaviors that come from within rather than ones that are being forced.

There are different ways you can be empathetic towards someone, and this varies from one person to another. The good thing is that you can use various activities to boost your capacity for empathetic understanding.

Why You Need To Be More Empathetic

Health Benefits

When you re empathetic, you have the capacity to reduce stress in your life. When you empathize with other people, you create close bonds that will help you cope better with stressful situations.

Those that haven't learned to be empathetic end up suffering from second-hand stress, or they have to deal with negative emotions that have been picked up from other people.

When you are compassionate, you end up being happier, and you lower the chance of becoming depressed. You will be in better shape, and you have a stronger immune system, which makes you lead a happier life.

Improves Your Communication Skills

Empathy involves you putting yourself in another person's shoes. You will learn how a person feels and thinks, and doing this improves the way you communicate with other people. When you learn to see things from another person's perspective, you will relate it better to your situation.

When you are empathetic, you will get to limit any misunderstandings that arise because you can easily interpret what the person means or says when they communicate.

When you empathize, you get to interpret body language better than someone that doesn't empathize. You get to pay more attention to the people around you, and you identify and pick up the various body language

cues. By putting these cues into your perspective, you recognize what the person is saying, and you get to respond the best way.

Better Working Environment

If every worker brought a little empathy to the workplace, then everything would be suitable for everyone. With a lot of stressful situations happening at work and lack of communication not making it better, it becomes hard for people to handle issues when they aren't empathetic.

When everyone is empathetic, the whole team will be able to come up with conclusions that will benefit the company.

Empathy promotes teamwork in the workplace. Teams that are respectful and concerned about other people will most likely trust and value the input of every person that is involved. Additionally, any team member that is not comfortable speaking up will now feel like their voices are being heard and understood.

Challenges will be handled faster and in the right way. When they arise, other people will be able to recognize the point of view of each team member and get a solution faster than before.

Having employees that are emphatic will create a healthy network at the workplace. Top-level managers will treat their workers with empathy, and lower-level employees will be able to respect their bosses, and they will work extra harder to achieve the needs of the organization.

Better Relationships

All human beings are wired to be part of meaningful relationships. So, anything that will help you form close bonds is a welcome idea for many people, especially those close to you. This is why everyone is born with a level of empathy. The better we can become empathetic towards other people, the stronger we develop social skills and connect to other people.

The need for empathy goes beyond personal relationships, and it is the glue that holds communities together. When the people in a community are looking out for one another, they are better placed to handle the issues that arise and help the community to move forward.

While a huge percentage of people are born with the innate ability to be empathetic, it is not too late to grow this skill. The more you see things from another person's [perspective, the bigger the capacity to be empathetic over time.

One of the ways to become more empathetic is not being judgmental to other people.

Tips to Be Less Judgmental

We are all different in one way or another, and this is what makes us unique as human beings. You might want someone to do something in a certain way, but since they have grown up knowing that things are done differently, they won't do it the way you expect them to. This is why it is too easy to come up with a judgment about other people when instead, you need to be humble. We see things or a situation in a different way than the way we are supposed to see it, and then we make conclusions about the situation.

You never know what story is behind someone, and you can never know what the person is going through at that time to make them behave in a certain way. Either way, you end up making judgments depending on your perspective.

It is hard to drop this attitude, especially when we haven't worked on or character traits that make judging others a walk in the park. Let us look at things that we can do to make ourselves less judgmental.

Be Mindful

You need to be able to catch your thoughts before they make a slave of you. Make sure you analyze your thoughts before they make it hard for you to see the person in front of you the way you need to see them.

Learn to handle negative thoughts about other people the same way you handle irrelevant thoughts – by pushing them out of your system. Instead, replace the negative thoughts with positive affirmations to try and make things better between you and the person in front of you.

Think Before You Speak or Act

Before you speak or do anything that you will regret later, pause, and think. Analyze the situation and consider your upcoming reaction, whether it is for

the good of both of you or only just you.

When you catch the thoughts, try and avoid them becoming actions or words that will hurt the other person. Remember how you will feel when someone told you the same words and act on them.

Always Think the Best of People

You need to look for what is good in someone. Life has made it such that everyone has something to offer, however little it is. Even that neighbor that drives you crazy has a redeeming quality, and when you choose to see them for that, you will change the way you look at that person.

Don’t Make It personal

When a person says something that you don’t agree with or that you don’t like, you don’t need to take it personally – let it go. Remember they are just expressing their opinion or living their life in their own way, don’t make everything to be just about you .

Find a Connection

When you get a chance to meet new people, try and look for that connection – that small thing that makes you alike. Many people have this thing about people whereby they look at the negative side and then avoid the positives. When you are working with someone, or you meet them for the first time, try and find out what they have that makes the two of you compatible.

At the end of the day, the things that make the other person alike to you is the one that will make things work in your favor.

While at it, just know that connecting with someone is better when you have their needs at heart.

Understand Your Fears

When you judge someone, it usually comes from the fear that you have about them. When you get to acknowledge the fears, you will address them, and then you will be free from them. For instance, a lot of judgment comes from the fact that you fear that the person is better than you on one aspect or another. When you overcome this fear, you will get to a point where you don’t have to fear the person anymore .

Become Involved

You need to be involved in initiatives that are happening in the neighborhood. When you get involved, you will be able to see what is going on in the life of people, and it will give you an idea of what people go through in daily life. When you understand what is happening, you will be able to let go of some of the things that you have thought about people before.

Stop Judging Yourself

It is easier handling other people if you stop judging yourself. Being judgmental is all about seeing issues from another person's perspective, but when you get yourself in a situation where it is hard to consider other people's feelings, then it becomes tough.

We all make mistakes at one point in our lives, and when we do; it is hard on us because we shall have fallen short of our expectations. No person becomes the best they are by beating themselves up all the time. When you fail, try and admit the mistake then move ahead .

Now that we have seen the best ways to reduce our judgmental mentality let us look at why we need to be less judgmental.

Reasons Why We Need to Stop Judging Others

If you have ever been judged before, you know that it is hurtful being judged. At times, you get judged without any reason at all. Let us look at the reasons why we need to stop being judgmental of other people.

Judging Others Usually Reflects the Judgment You Place on Yourself

When you get to think about it, the sort of judgment that you place on other people often reflects what you dislike about yourself. It is usually a reflection of your insecurities.

If you are able to see flaws in other people clearly, then it is most likely that these flaws are the ones that you experience in your own life .

You Won't Be Able to Appreciate Others

When you are busy struggling to judge others regarding their flaws, you will not be able to appreciate them at all. Has it ever occurred to you that the person you judge so negatively has a positive aspect to them that might make your life easier? When you decide not to engage them or when you judge them negatively, you might fail to appreciate the positive side of the person.

Additionally, you might be busy making a lot of assumptions about the person without trying to understand their situation at all.

It Prevents You from Growth

Every time you judge someone, you forget about what they are going through, and you focus more on what they are. You tend to forget that they might react in a certain way due to the pain they are undergoing.

When you are always self-absorbed and judgmental, you get to block your growth spiritually, and you stop evolving.

You Become Unhapp y

When you become judgmental, you have an element of dissatisfaction with the way things work, and you will always try to make things the way you need them to be. When you stop being judgmental and you see things the way they need to be, then you will appreciate people and things for what they are. You will start living in the present moment, and you will get to enjoy your life and become happy.

Everyone Is Different

You need to understand that people are different. This is the only thing that is common among many people. If you don’t like something or it is not what you believe in, then it doesn’t mean that other people should like it as well. For instance, if you don’t like hiking, it doesn’t mean that the person that doesn’t hike needs to be your enemy.

People have the freedom to choose what they want; this is why you need to stop thinking that everyone is the same and then judge them based on your needs to get acceptance from others .

Treat Others the Way You Wants to Be Treated

When you do something, you need to understand what it means if someone would do the same thing to you. If you feel offended when someone tells you something, then it is in good faith to think that the other person will feel offended as well.

Even in the bible, it is said that you need to do to others the way you want others to do to you, and this should be a cardinal rule in your life. So, before you judge someone, you need to place yourself in their shoes. This is why we talked about empathy in the previous section.

It feels terrible when we get judged, but most often, we do this to other people without thinking twice about it. Since you are so good at judging people, then you need to understand that it is not as easy as it is.

How to Connect With People

At times, connecting with other people doesn't come as naturally as you might want it to. This is why you find some people having many friends surrounding them while others have none at all. All this comes from the way you connect to other people. If you do it the right way, it works for you, and if you don't do it the right way, it won't work for you.

Let us look at the secrets of connecting with others.

Understand What Someone is Saying

When you listen to a person, try to understand what they are saying and look for the meaning from the context that they are talking from. Don't try to look for any other meaning, try and relate it to what the person is trying to bring about.

Many people think that they can decipher more than what the person is saying and tend to put in different perspectives. You have had a friend that will try to finish your sentences even before you start them, or they start their own sentences the moment you finish yours.

This is usually normal for many people, but when you do it to a friend, it might seem rude.

So, next time you are listening to someone, try to understand them in the same context that they are talking in. Don't try to place a lot of meanings on

what they are saying depending on what you know, rather understand the words they talk using the meaning they are trying to communicate.

We all know that things flow more easily when your opinion matches the other person's opinion. Usually, when you are in tune with another person, you will find that things flow more easily and you enjoy the conversation better. Due to this, you find that people usually look for others with the same opinion, and this makes it hard for them to listen to other people with divergent opinions.

Let the Speaker Shine

Whatever the performance is, let the speaker be the one to shine, and not you. Whether it is something that you know more than the other person, you need to let them have their time. Respect their time and then wait for your time as well.

Instead of being critical, try and listen keenly to what they have to say. Remember that whatever the person says is all about the value you attach to it. Try to put some value to what the person has during that time, and don't let your own belief ruin it for them .

Remove the Barrier of Distraction

For many people, distraction is what makes them fail to connect to other people. Distraction prevents you from understanding the person you are talking to, and it gives rise to a huge barrier to effective connection. When someone else is trying to connect with you, try, and focus. Don't let your brain wander to other issues that aren't pertinent at the time.

Distractions range from what the other person is wearing to the book in your hands, which in turn prevents you from listening to the speaker. However, the most common destination for you when you are listening to someone is going to your thoughts. You end up trying to find a way to know what you want to say that is better than what the other person is saying.

At times, you feel like you want to interject and give the person a piece of your mind so that you look more knowledgeable, but this shouldn't be the case.

Instead of making it hard for the person to deliver what they want to do, you need to try and make it easy for them. Don't plan to respond even

before then the person has finished because this will be rude.

Instead, forget what you know about the subject and what you wish to say. Instead, listen and get something more out of the conversation.

How to Ask Questions

One of the best ways to connect with someone is to ask questions that explore. Asking questions will prompt the other person to respond, and it might make it easy for them to know that they are appreciated.

Here are top tips to help you ask questions that explore.

Plan the Questions

Now that you are meeting with someone, it is good to try and outline any information goals as well as come up with a sequence of questions that will help you to relate to them in a better way. Once you understand what to ask and at what point in time, you need to put the plan in effect .

When planning the questions, you need to understand your purpose in the conversation. The questions you ask need to help you get more facts or opinions. If you are looking for information, then make sure you ask questions that will give you the info without seeming rude or out of topic.

Invite the Respondent to Talk

Whether on a date or any meeting, try and use the questions that will open the conversation rather than those that will make the conversation stop. When you use open-ended questions, you will be able to gather so much info that will help you make inferences.

Use Good Language

If you wish to relate to the person better, then try and speak a language that is common between the two of you. Use words and phrases that the listener will agree to and understands.

Conclusion

You need to understand that the only reason that you do anything is to make yourself feel better.

Right from making money, losing weight to buying a new cloth, you do all these things because you are looking forward to what it will give you – the emotion that you will end up with when you achieve it. For instance, you believe that when you lose weight, you will become more confident in all you do. You also feel that you will be able to attract someone else in your life, which will make you happy. When you make more money, you will be satisfied!

Various factors determine how you feel, and we have looked at them in the book. However, they fall under the following three categories.

Your Physiology

Before you can experience any emotion, it is preceded by the feelings in your body. These feelings can be triggered by thoughts and a talk from another person. If you desire to feel energetic about something, then start talking fast, or moving in a more rapid way, which translates into the physiology of ben passionate.

It also goes if you need to feel stronger – you will adopt a wide stance and then breathe fully.

Just the way you adopt stances to make you feel confident, you can also feel depressed using your body posture. You only have to slump over and then breathe shallowly, speak slowly, and then your body will adapt to the way you want it to feel.

You need to know that what you feel and the trigger determines any emotion that you adapt.

The Focus

The next thing which will determine your emotions is what you get to focus on. This is why we have talked about listening to the book. If you wish to change the way you feel about something or someone, then you need to try

and focus on what they say or what they do. Any distractions and you will lose out on the main points.

For you to get precisely what the person means, you need to try and ask questions, questions help you to understand what is going on in the other person's mind, and it also allows you to get more information from the person.

You don’t just ask any question that comes to your mind – you need to be able to ask the right questions. The questions need to inspire the person to open up more rather than make them feel intimidated.

The questions you ask need to be open-ended – ones that will direct the person towards where you want them to go. Don’t opt for questions that will make the person feel too bad about them.

Your Language

You need to understand the verbal and nonverbal cues of every person. People use a combination of verbal and gestures to make sure they communicate what they feel. If you base your decision on what a person is talking using their words, you will end up finding that you don’t understand each other.

Remember that the words that come out of someone’s mouth might not match what they mean when they gesture or when they use signals. This is why you need to be keen so that you match a person’s body language to their words as well as the context.

Body language also changes depending on the environment. A positive environment will affect someone’s emotions, and they will react to it the right way. On the other hand, the opposite is true; a negative environment makes it hard for someone to come up with the right way to react.

Two Types of Emotions

You need to realize that there are two types of emotions – negative and positive. When you react to a positive situation, you will experience positive emotions, and when you react to a negative situation, you end up experiencing negative emotions.

Negative emotions include sadness, while positive emotions include happiness. Either way, you need to learn how to balance the two kinds of emotions so that you make them work for your case.

Handling positive emotions is easy because they have a positive ending; the hardest emotions to handle are negative emotions. Here are the various ways that people handle negative emotions:

- ***Avoidance***

  This is simple – you avoid the emotion totally, or you avoid any situation that can lead to negative emotion. This is usually done from experience, whereby you had a situation before that ended up giving you negative emotions.

  People avoid some situations because they lead to failure or rejection.

- ***Denial***

  Here, you pretend as if nothing has happened so that you avoid the negative emotion. You might disassociate yourself from the negative emotion by saying various phrases that will help you avoid such emotions. The only downside with this tactic is that when you ignore the message that you have come up with, the emotion intensifies until you have to pay attention to it.

- ***Competition***

  This is when the negative emotion becomes part of your identity, and you try to be unique. You will find the negative experience as the best way to tell others that they have never experienced anything like it. When someone tells you their story, you come up with a retort trying to tell them how your experience was worse than theirs.

- ***Learning and then Using***

Some people find a way to learn from the negative emotion, and then they use the information to make things better for themselves.

How to Master Your Emotions

This is the main aim of this book – to help you master your emotions the right way. Here are a few ways to do it.

1. Identify Your Emotions

This is the first step to master your emotions – label them. Know whether you are feeling negative or positive emotion and how intense it is. Give a size to the emotion so that you can be able to handle it the right way.

2. Appreciate the Emotions

Before you do anything else, you need to be able to acknowledge the emotions. Does it support you, or does it make you more annoyed? You need to know that the emotions are working in your favor and you need always to appreciate them. When you learn to appreciate the emotions, they will serve you better.

3. Be Curious About the Message

Every emotion comes with a message that it is trying to tell you. If the emotion is trying to tell you to do something, then you need to understand where to follow it up or to do something totally different. When you are curious, you will be able to master your emotions and then solve the issue then prevent any other issue from happening in the future.

4. Be confident

The best way you can handle an emotion is to be confident that you can manage it the right way. If this is an emotion that you have experienced before, then you need to remember a time that you felt a similar emotion. Then you will realize that you handled it before and you can handle it again the right way.

If you do the same things, you will get the same results; on the other hand, if you decide to handle it differently, you might end up with a different result .

When you handle the emotion, make sure you have the capacity not only to handle it today but, in the future, as well.

REWIRE YOUR BRAIN

CHANGE YOUR HABITS TO STOP OVERTHINKING. REDUCE ANXIETY, PHOBIA & STOP PANIC ATTACKS. CONTROL AND IMPROVE YOUR LIFE WITH A PERMANENT POSITIVE

By Brent Collins

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Introduction

Have you succumbed to overthinking, a panic or anxiety attack? Have you found yourself suddenly feeling anxious and thinking about what could go wrong? Or overthinking about what someone said? Or the feeling of panic suddenly creeping up on you? Have you experienced sweaty palms, your heart racing, rapid pulse, and the sensation of feeling like you are getting choked?

These emotional traps can make or break a person's day. In a day, when you overthink, this leads to anxiety attacks as well as panic attacks because the scenario that you've imagined in your head is too great or too extreme until you cannot overcome it and you start to get worried that you cannot control it.

Why Does Overthinking Happen?

All of us overthink sometimes but for some people, they go through this more often and it can severely impact their day. Some of these people who overthink could also have anxiety disorders.

According to Dr. Catherine Pittman, a clinical psychologist, and professor at Saint Mary's College Psychology department says that people who have levels of overthinking are because of pathological reasons. She goes on to say that the average person does overthink and that overthinking is rooted in the feeling of uncertainty. Dr. Pittman who is the author of 'Rewire Your Anxious Brain: How to use Neuroscience of Fear to end Anxiety, Panic and Worry' says that the uncertainty stems from our feeling of being vulnerable about what is to come, the unknown future and the fact that we keep trying to solve the problems in our head.

To scientists, there is no clear reason as to why the process of overthinking happens. However, they do agree that overthinking engages the same parts of the brain that triggers fear as well as anxiety. According to Pittman, the cerebral cortex in the human brain is the center of all thinking and it is a logical part of the brain that is related to memories. It also helps us think about and also anticipates things.

But the danger lies when you start obsessing about something and it triggers the amygdala's attention. Amygdala's attention is the brain's emotional system and through research, scientists have found it to include fear and yes, anxiety. When we experience fear, anxiety or panic, the amygdala is the reason why our heart pounds, our muscles tense up and it makes us feel uneasy.

The more you worry about something, the more you train your brain to overthink and eventually, the more you activate the amygdala. It is a vicious cycle, no doubt and you end up putting yourself at risk of getting anxiety disorders.

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a natural human response to stress. It is a feeling of fear or nervousness about what may or may not happen. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines anxiety as "an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure." Some people feel anxious about major events like examinations, childbirth or going for interviews.

Likewise, anxiety can also arise from common issues like financial problems, health issues or work stress. It is also not uncommon to fear things like getting an injection, taking an airplane or encountering a wild animal. Although different people are triggered by different causes of anxiety, everyone will experience anxiety sometime in their lives.

Stress, fear, and anxieties are common if they are termed as feelings, but they are not considered as anxiety disorders. If feelings of severe anxiety exceed six months and impede on your daily routine, you could potentially be suffering from an anxiety disorder.

There are three main groups that classify anxiety-related disorders they are as follows - 1. Anxiety disorders; 2. OCD other disorders, and 3. Trauma induced disorders. In an anxiety-related disorder, your worry or distress lingers and continues to intensify over time and disrupts your daily activities and relationships.

One of the ways to determine whether you are suffering from an anxiety disorder is to know what causes and evaluating the severity of the symptoms. For example, someone with an anxiety disorder will respond as if they are in real danger when in reality, they are not.

It can be difficult to determine whether your anxiety is linked to a disorder, which is why it is wise to refer to licensed professionals, like psychologists or psychiatrists to make the diagnosis if the need arises.

What are Panic Attacks?

Panic attacks are a type of anxiety disorder. Researchers have not found the specific causes of panic disorders those they do say it is a combination of environmental and biological factors. These factors can by stressful life events, a traumatic childhood, family history, drug, and alcohol abuse as well as environmental factors.

According to Dr. Barbara Rothbaum, a psychiatry director and professor at the Trauma and Anxiety Recovery Program at the Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, and people can feel anxious for a variety of reasons from work or family-related issues, making an important decision, waiting for an important decision as well as taking a big exam.

Someone who suffers from panic attacks reacts to even moderate pressures with an exaggerated physical reaction. It is a full-blown adrenaline, fight-or-flight response that takes place and it can severely hamper a person’s daily activities and also, their overall quality of life.

In the next few chapters, we will look into the triggers of anxiety, identifying anxiety, why it happens as well as understanding panic and stress responses.

But above all, this book is going to help you. By reading the chapters in this book, you will gain an understanding of how you can work towards helping yourself to overcome your fears, your anxiety as well as your overthinking.

This book is going to help you not only understand why these mental issues happen but how you can do simple, daily things to help overcome your triggers, your stress responses as well as identify what could be causing them.

Not only that, but you will also explore meditation and how it can help you calm yourself and be more relaxed.

Do take note that this book is a start to a self-help way of overcoming anxiety, panic and overthinking. While self-help is great because taking that first step to identify a problem you have and wanting to do something about it is great if you ever feel like you do need more help and guidance, speaking to a therapist or a counselor is the best way forward.

Chapter 1: Introducing the Anxious Brain

1.1 Anxiety in the Brain

According to the NIMH, more than 40 million people throughout the US from age 18 and above are hindered by disorders related to anxiety. This population only covered those who are diagnosed. There are still thousands if not millions who have not been diagnosed. If you have or know someone who has anxiety, do not dismiss it as something trivial just to manage a part of your life easily. Even if you do not suffer from anxiety or anxiety-related issues, you still need to deal with problems in the best possible way and learn to cope with trauma or crises. Anxiety is part of our lives the same way other emotions such as happiness, stress, and sadness are but ultimately, we need to understand it in order to know how to cope with it and keep it from consuming our minds and leading towards unhealthy habits.

Anxiety should not be confused with fear. Fear is an immediate reaction to events or stimuli that is especially threatening. On the other hand, anxiety is less intense and it is a more prolonged response related to anxiety-causing triggers. For example, you may feel anxious about sleeping alone and in the dark on a camping trip but you may experience fear when you hear noises and howling. Also, people tend to feel anxiety creep up on them without knowing why. The brain, on a regular basis, manages our anxiety and our fear without interfering with our daily life functions. If there is a threat coming on, our brain helps us make sense of it and it either amplifies or quells the fear and anxiety.

Unfortunately, it is not the case for some people, anxiety can be intense and it can be a big blocker to an otherwise normal day. As anxiety becomes a problem, our brain functions differently. such as failing to function or setting irrational behaviors. The more common this takes place, the more likely a medical professional, psychologist or therapist will diagnose it as an anxiety disorder and like other disorders such as panic or social anxiety.

Scientists theorize that the amygdala, the walnut-sized brain area served as the center for fear and anxiety. For people with anxiety disorders, their amygdala is in hyperactive mode hence, causing fear and anxiety. However, we know now that anxiety is a result of a cocktail of factors and brain regions. Our brain does not derive anxiety from one specific space rather it is a combination of things. To understand anxiety, let us talk about what happens when it is triggered, how it affects us and what we can do.

1.2 How the Brain Creates Anxiety

The way researchers look into explaining our brains on anxiety is by looking at the brain in two parts- the emotional part of the brain and the cognitive part of the brain. In the frontal lobe, where thoughts and sensations come together is where the cognitive brain is. The amygdala is nestled deep within the brain is where the emotional control center is.

Looking at the brain in two parts means when we feel anxiety, the emotional part of our brain is more magnified rather than the cognitive or the rational part of our brain, thus gaining control of our consciousness.

The area in the frontal lobe also called the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex or dACC, exaggerates the signs that are emanated from the amygdala. Scientists test this theory by showing anxious patients images of fearful faces and when they do, the dACC and amygdala are shown to ramp up their lights and produce palpable anxiety. People who do not have anxiety show very little or no response at all.

On a different part of the frontal lobe, which is the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, on the other hand, dampens the signals sent by the amygdala. Patients who have differences in this region of the brain are a lot more likely to experience anxiety.

Don’t be despaired though. Research is still on-going to make things more clearly defined where anxiety is concerned and to pinpoint the factors and causes of anxiety and which parts of the brain light up when we experience

these emotions. At present patients with anxiety have a host of ways to help them deal with this disorder from drug therapies to behavioral therapy.

1.3 We Are Our Own Worst Enemy

While stress is easily understood, anxiety, on the other hand, needs a little bit more effort and knowledge. When do we know if we are feeling anxious and actually suffering from anxiety? According to clinical psychologist Jeffrey DeGroat, Ph.D., as well as Roger S. Gil, MAMFT there are a few psychological reasons for anxiety. There are reasons which are related to neurology as we discussed above, and there is also psychoanalytic reasoning as well.

According to Dr. DeGroat, the psychoanalytic aspect looks into the battle between our egos our ID as well as our superego. He goes on to explain that anxiety is our serves as a danger signal to a person’s ego or superego.

No matter which theory (the psychoanalytic or neurological) you subscribe to, these instincts become unhealthy when it is constantly switched ON. However, when anxiety creeps in, it keeps us on guard on the edge the majority of the time and this is not healthy. Persistent anxiety is not healthy.

Both Dr. Gil and Dr. DeGroat agree that this is an issue that most people do not even recognize as a problem, especially if they have been living so long with it; it becomes a part of their personal norm.

Dr. Gil goes on to explain that whether anxiety is a genetic reason or an environmental reason, the problem arises when both the body and brain are wired to constantly be on guard. Whenever this person experiences an undesirable situation or emotion, whether it is doubt, frustration or even fear- it could trigger anxiety.

One of the first steps to recognize anxiety is to identify the red flags such as rapid heartbeat, sweaty palms, racing mind, pessimistic view of a situation. For some people though, anxiety is brought on by a situation. Feeling anxious about meeting someone new or trying out a new experience or even feeling nervous about speaking in public is normal.

Regardless of whether it is situational or general anxiety, there are plenty of ways to deal with and lessen the impact of anxiety. Help is available and that begins with recognizing the effects of anxiety, then learning the right ways to cope. By reading this book, you are already one step ahead in the recovery or coping process. Now that we know what anxiety is, in this chapter, we will explore the effects of anxiety on our life as well as on our bodies. Knowing the effects of it will help us to stay motivated to ensure our anxiety stays within a normal range.

It is only human nature to feel anxiety from time to time which is why we cannot eradicate it entirely from our system. A healthy range of anxiety at times helps us to be more alert, a little bit more cautious and just a little bit warier. We may feel a little anxious before heading for a job interview or giving a speech- it is just our body's way of preparing you to face an intense situation. But chronic anxiety, on the other hand, can interfere with our life and derail us from experiencing things normally. Anxiety also has consequences for our health.

The Effects of Anxiety & Stress on the Body

Intense anxiety can make us feel nauseous or even lightheaded and excessive, persistent anxiety can have devastating effects on our mental and physical health. Here is how extreme anxiety and stress affects the body:

1- The Central Nervous System: Long term anxiety causes our brains to release stress hormones regularly as a coping mechanism. While this happens, the body then starts getting headaches and dizziness very often and then it also leads to depression. When a person starts feeling stressed and anxious, the nervous system is flooded with chemicals and hormones namely adrenaline and cortisol that are designed to respond to this threat. While this is helpful when you are actually going through a highly stressful

event, long term exposure to stress hormones can be very harmful. Long term exposure to cortisol can also lead to weight gain.

2- Cardiovascular system: When we experience an anxiety attack, our heart starts to rapidly beat, thus increase the heart rate and also start to experience heart palpitations and eventually chest pain. Somethings people experiencing anxiety attacks think they are experiencing heart attacks which is why if you already have heart disease, having anxiety complicates this problem and further increases the risk of coronary problems.

3- Excretory and digestive systems: If you thought heart problems were the worst, try experiencing digestive and excretory issues. Anxiety disorders also affect our digestive system, causing us to have stomach aches, diarrhea, nausea and loss of appetite. We end up suffering weight loss but also have a hard time going to the toilet. Anxiety can also bring about IBS, irritable bowel syndrome and even bowel infection, due to the constant or lack thereof of bowel movements. IBS also causes diarrhea, vomiting as well as constipation.

4- Immune system: When we experience anxiety, our body's pulse rate and breathing rate also go into overdrive to enable our brains to get more oxygen. This helps us to respond effectively to any intensive situation. When this happens, our immune system gets a quick boost and then when the stress passes, our body functions normally again at the right rate.

Repeatedly feeling anxious and stressed over and over again means that the body is on overdrive constantly and it never gets the chance to return to normal functioning. Because of this, our immune system will start eroding and it makes us more vulnerable to viral infections, diseases and we get ill very often too. Regular vaccines will not work so much now when you frequently experience anxiety.

5- Respiratory system: We also experience shallow breathing when anxiety sets in and if you already have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, then you are at a greater risk of anxiety-related complications. Anxiety may also worsen asthma symptoms.

6- Other physical effects

- headaches
- muscle tension
- insomnia
- depression
- social isolation

The Effects of Anxiety &Stress on our Daily Life

Whatever that affects our bodies will eventually affect the way we live our lives. Things will change because we also need to alter the way we live to cope with the bodily changes that are happening to us. When it comes to our life, stress and anxiety change are in different ways. Here are some of it:

1- Behavior stress symptoms: Stress and anxiety can cause you to behave differently than you normally would and the thing is, you normally wouldn't notice it because it seems like normal conditions that other people go through as well. When we have anxiety and stress, we tend to overdo the things that are actually a normal habit.

Here are some common behavioral changes that could occur:

- Increased anger
- Abuse substances such as tobacco, drugs or alcohol, often as crutches to deal with stress
- Overeating or undereating
- Less and less social interactions
- More arguments
- Less exercise
- Isolating Yourself from Others
- Sleeping too little or too Much
- Demotivated
- Loss of sense of humor

2- Mood stress symptoms: Your mood is as important as your body as well as your behavior. When we are stressed, we feel angry and or sad. But when

you always feel stressed, your anger and sadness are constant and it will eventually erode your relationships with the people around you. For people with anxiety problems, stress is an extreme trigger and it is a vicious cycle of experiencing frustration. Mood behavioral changes can be like below:

- Depression
- Moodiness
- Irritability
- Fatalistic Thinking
- Panic
- Cynicism
- Anxiety
- Feeling Overwhelmed
- Frustration

3- Cognitive stress symptoms: When our body and mood are affected, it also affects how we think. We become less and less creative, and this also makes us less of a team player. For people going through stress and anxiety, they become fidgety and have problems concentrating on the tasks at hand and become disoriented. Over a long period of time, our cognitive skills become affected and even our judgment is affected, making it harder to make decisions to help improve ourselves. Here are other things that they may go through:

Cognitive

- Memory Problems
- Poor Judgement
- Inability to Concentrate
- ‘Brain Fog’
- Indecision
- Starting many tasks but achieving little
- Self-doubt

Chapter 2: Taking Control of Your Thoughts

2.1 Panic Attacks and Stress Response

As humans, we have this response called the “Fight or Flight” response, a physiological reaction to whatever our body considers life-threatening or dangerous.

This response is also referred to as acute stress response and it shares the same reactions or feelings such as shaking anxiety and fear that occurs when our body is preparing for a possible emergency. The alternative to the “Fight or Flight” response is the body’s relaxation response. This is known as the recovery period is the body’s way of normalizing its functions. This happens between 20 to 60 minutes after the perceived threat disappears.

Why Do We Have the “Fight or Flight” Response?

Our “Fight or Flight” response is a result of stress, and this is something that stemmed from the survival mode from our early ancestors who lived in dangerous times. For example, prehistoric cavemen were in constant danger of animals. One minute they might be lighting a fire and the next minute, there’s a stampede coming their way full of mammoths. The human design then kicks in and we have a full surge of energy and strength to quickly respond to the threat by removing ourselves from danger and increasing our chances of survival.

“Fight or Flight” Response with Panic Disorder

To some researchers, this old stress reaction is a continuation associated with modern-day panic disorders and this can be something like being afraid of large or small spaces or being in situations that are dark or no easy escape route.

What Happens When the Response Is Triggered?

Numerous physiological changes have been identified by researchers that happen when the “Fight or Flight” response takes place. When this happens, our bodies are triggered to prepare for the muscular activity that is required to fight or flee the danger.

Some of the changes that take place during this process include:

- An Increased heart rate
- Rapid breathing
- Dilation of blood vessels to the muscles
- Constriction of blood vessels to some parts of our body
- Dilation of pupils
- Tunnel vision
- Auditory exclusion
- Sweating

These changes occur instantly and if you were experiencing a life-threatening event, you would expect to feel of these physical occurrences happening to your body. However, if you suddenly feel like this when you’re quietly having dinner or even grocery shopping, this is something to be looked into. In our modern time's stress is more due to psychosocial reasons but if you do get physical stress occurring all the time, then it could be detrimental.

Having Fear When There Is No Danger

When a person experiences a panic attack, the body’s system is triggered without the presence of any visible signs of danger. It is the lack of or the absence of danger that greatly magnifies fear.

If there is no danger but a person begins to sweat, breathing and heart rate becomes rapid, we lose sight or sense of hearing, a person begins to fear the symptoms and even believe that they are life-threatening. Your body is telling you to get ready physically and that you are in grave danger but what about the psychological aspects for dangers that you cannot see?

Experiencing these thoughts does not get you out of danger- they only strengthen and reinforce your association with fear and it is not based on the actual threat.

2.2 The Benefits of Relaxation

Relaxation can be anything but it is a state where you feel at peace and calm and you are able to manage your day-to-day life. It can be difficult to relax when you have a busy life but practicing it even in small ways can help you manage anxiety and stress.

Improving Mental Health with Relaxation

Stress and other mental health symptoms such as schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety are reduced when we relax and do plenty of relaxation habits and techniques throughout the day. Apart from that, we also experience many other benefits that are not immediately seen which are:

- Lowering blood pressure
- Lowered breathing rate
- Lowered heart rate
- Mood improvements and better concentration
- Less anger and frustration
- Confidence boost
- Ability to rationally solve problems

Types of Relaxation Techniques

There are various kinds of relaxation techniques that you can try to manage stress and anxiety. Doctors, health practitioners, health care professionals as well as psychotherapists offer different methods based on the patient’s needs and their line of knowledge.

You can also administer relaxation techniques on your own to refocus your attention on calming and increasing awareness of your body. It doesn’t matter what kind of technique you choose so long as you feel comfortable doing it and you practice it regularly to reap its benefits.

Usually, relaxation techniques prescribed by therapists and doctors usually fall into these categories:

Types of relaxation techniques include:

- **Autogenic relaxation-** this means something that comes from inside you. Using this relaxation technique requires the use of your visual imagery as well as your bodily awareness **.** With this technique, you repeat affirmations and words that help you reduce muscle tension as well as help you relax. You can imagine a peaceful setting and then focus your mind and relax your breathing. Meditation is one such technique that uses autogenic relaxation.
- **Progressive muscle relaxation-** this relaxation technique requires you to focus on slowly tensing each group of muscles. Through this technique, it helps you be more focused on the difference between relaxation and muscle tensions. You begin by tensing and relaxing the muscles in your toes and then systematically work your way up to the neck and finally to the head. You can also begin from your head to the toes, tensing your muscles for 5 seconds and then relax for 30 seconds. Through this way, you can become more aware of physical sensations.
- **Visualization**- This technique requires some form of mental visualization that is a journey towards a calming, peaceful and serene space or situation. You may need to incorporate as many senses as you can when relaxing with visualization and this could be the sense of smell, touch, and sound. If your relaxing space is on a beach, then you need to visualize the water, the ocean, the waves, and the sand. You would be required to sit or lie down comfortably in a quiet spot in order to visualize with no interruption, with your eyes closed and concentrate fully on your breathing.

Other relaxation techniques may include:

- Hydrotherapy
- Aromatherapy
- Deep breathing
- Massage
- Yoga
- Biofeedback
- Music and art therapy
- Meditation
- Tai chi

Remember that relaxation takes practice. As you incorporate more and more relaxation techniques, you will learn to become more aware of the physical sensations related to stress as well as your muscle tension. When you are aware of what stress responses feel like, you can make a conscious effort to practice techniques of relaxation that can bring you back to a relaxed mode especially if you feel stress or panic symptoms creeping up. This will help you from allowing your stress reactions from spiraling out of control.

Relaxation Takes Time and Patience

As with any skill, you learn, developing proper relaxation techniques require practice, time and patience. You need to be patient with yourself and do not let this effort become another stressor. If one type of technique does not work for you, don’t worry- try something else but never resort to unhealthy habits. Instead, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider for more options.

Some people with more serious psychological issues or history of trauma and abuse may experience some emotional discomfort when they go through relaxation techniques and if you do experience this, stop whatever you are doing and talk to your doctor.

2.3 Understanding Triggers of Your Anxiety

Identify Triggers

- A large part of the prevention of anxiety is having an awareness of what causes it. Learning to identify your anxious thoughts when they come up can help you control and reduce them quickly. Awareness of your anxiety can help you identify the trigger and it can help you understand how it affects your feelings and behaviors. Once you understand the source of your fears or worries, you will have a clearer idea of how to relieve it.

- Triggers are sometimes very clear. It could be a big presentation coming up, a major examination, or waiting on a result of something you have wanted for a long time. Once you know what triggers anxiety in you, you will be able to take steps to cope and help reduce the level of anxiety before it escalates.
    - For instance, if you are able to identify that your trigger for anxiety is exhaustion from juggling work and parenting, you can come up with a schedule to set aside time for each in advance. Be reasonable with yourself and set a realistic schedule that you can stick to. Through this, you would be able to spend time on both according to your priority.
    - If you know that your common stressor is the result of procrastination, you can start with pacing yourself and sticking to a plan that helps you reduce the bottleneck at the last minute.
    - Having a journal to record your moods, thoughts and predetermined stressors may also help you better identify triggers. You may be able to stop lingering in futile thoughts that could increase your anxiety.
    - Always remember that you need to first take care of yourself before you are able to take care of others. Set aside some leisure time for yourself to relax your mind so that you are able to reduce the number of anxiety triggers.

2.4 Teaching Your Mind to Stop Overthinking

We all overthink sometimes especially when we want something to go right or we put in a lot of effort into it and we want to make it work out. Or even when we are getting ready for a vacation and we overthink about the security of our home or if we packed all the things we need. It happens. However, overthinking may be something you want to train your brain to reduce or stop doing if it starts disrupting life for you.

If all your overthinking leads towards an increase in anxiety or being pessimistic about everything, then it might cause you to stop the things you are doing simply because you think it would fail. Or if your overthinking prevents you from getting things done because you are too hung up on the negative aspects to focus and come up with a solution.

For chronic worriers, overthinking can cause negative consequences. It can also prevent us from enjoying the moment and instead, keep us fixated on future uncertainties that make us anxious and worried when we lack control.

Now let’s look into the ways we can all train our brains to stop overthinking and look at the more positive aspects or even try to rationalize things so our reactions do not go out of control. We shall look into research conducted by a team of researchers from the University of California, Santa Barbara. They showed images of the colors of the kaleidoscope to study participant’s reactions and looked into their ability to remember if they had seen any of these images before.

Participants who gave their best guess did better than those who spent time trying to remember the colors and patterns. In other words, the over thinkers did less well than those who did not focus their attention on remembering the details.

The team of researchers concluded that paying attention can sometimes be a distraction and also affect performance outcomes. Paying more attention to

details hurt a person’s ability to remember what they had seen.

So with that in mind, let’s look at how we can train our brains to stop overthinking.

- **Train your brain to see the big picture**

The research conducted by the team from the University of California shows that when it comes to recalling especially recalling complex images, a broad overview approach is better. In order to train your brain to process information using this method, you need to imagine taking all the various details at once, the same way your brain looks at a photo and all the different pieces of details at once. This is called under thinking and you can practice it by looking at picture books, opening random pages and looking at an image for 5 seconds. Next, close the book and try to recall everything you saw without spending too much time trying to remember. You will be surprised at how much you can recall because the short amount of time prevents your brain from overthinking. Repeat this exercise often till you feel confident in your brain’s ability to process information rapidly.

- **Train your brain to be comfortable with uncertainty**

Things are not always going to work out the way you want it to. There will be things that you will know and can know and there are things that you may never know or come across. When it comes to overthinking, people who do this have somehow trained their brains to focus on the unknown instead of the known. They look into uncertainties and try to solve something they do not know. Some questions can be answered but for overthinkers, they tend to dwell on those that they cannot answer. To train your brain not to do this is to either seek answers from the source of the questions that you are overthinking or keep telling your brain that it is okay not to know the answer at all.

- **Train your brain on how to think**

This kind of thinking is called meta-thinking where we think about how to think and to do this, it requires some form of self- observation. If you are reading this chapter and you already have concerns about your overthinking, you are already aware of your own negative self-thinking and pessimistic thought patterns. People who experience issues about overthinking usually have negative thoughts about themselves and this is all because of their own personal thoughts and not of others. Allowing your negative thoughts to take precedence but rejecting them as being an element of what we identify as ‘self’ is one such way of helping overthinkers.

In the Journal of Behavior Therapy, researchers found that MBCT or mindfulness-based cognitive therapy has helped people feel less negative emotions and more self-compassion about their overthinking. People who have undergone MBCT have experienced less stress related to their thoughts.

- **Find something you can control**

If you find yourself overthinking because you feel like you need to gain control over something that is happening to you, focus your thoughts on a concrete action step that you can immediately take to gain some sense of control and composure. It can be as simple as writing down an issue that allows your brain to stop trying to remember the issue. It could even be making a phone call to someone you trust to help you refocus and rationalize your situation so you know what to do. It can even be putting your headphones to block out the noise so you can concentrate on an action step to take.

2.5 Exercise and Tips to Calm your Anxiet y

Treatments for Anxiety

While it is hard to determine whether your anxiety is a medical problem or just a bad experience, treating anxiety early is always easier than when it gets worse over time.

You should get a medical opinion if:

- Your anxiety is hampering in your daily life. This includes your work, school or social life
- You feel the need to use substances such as alcohol or drugs to manage your anxiety
- Your fear or worry feels out of your control
- You are having suicidal thoughts
- You have the tendency to self-harm
- You strongly feel that your anxiety is caused by a serious mental health condition

Next, if you have decided that you need help, please see your general practitioner. He or she can assist in determining whether your anxiety is related to a health problem, or whether it is due to a common stressor. Once it is clear, they will be able to draw out the right treatment plan to help you deal with your anxiety.

If your fear or worry is not the outcome of a serious health condition, you may be referred to a mental health specialist; either a psychiatrist or a psychologist, depending on the seriousness of your condition. A psychiatrist is a licensed medical practitioner who is qualified to diagnose and treat mental health conditions with or without prescribed medications. A psychologist is a mental health professional who can diagnose and treat mental health conditions, but solely through counseling without medication.

It is vital to get treatment from a mental health provider that you are comfortable with and that you trust. Ask your doctor to refer you to a few and take the time to meet them. It is not unusual for it to take a few meetings with each to find the one that is suitable for you. A psychological evaluation will help your mental health provider to diagnose an anxiety disorder. This could look like a therapy session of one-on-one with your mental health provider asking you questions regarding your feelings and behaviors. They may also match your behaviors or symptoms to the criteria

for anxiety disorders listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) to establish a diagnosis.

Prevention and Coping with Normal Anxiety

Experiencing anxiety with normal daily stressors and worries can sometimes be difficult to manage. Knowing relief strategies and steps can help alleviate normal anxiety experienced in everyday life to a more manageable level.

Identify Triggers

- A large part of the prevention of anxiety is having an awareness of what causes it. Learning to identify your anxious thoughts when they come up can help you control and reduce them quickly. Awareness of your anxiety can help you identify the trigger and it can help you understand how it affects your feelings and behaviors. Once you understand the source of your fears or worries, you will have a clearer idea of how to relieve it.
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- Having a journal to record your moods, thoughts and predetermined stressors may also help you better identify

triggers. You may be able to stop lingering in futile thoughts that could increase your anxiety.

- Always remember that you need to first take care of yourself before you are able to take care of others. Set aside some leisure time for yourself to relax your mind so that you are able to reduce the number of anxiety triggers.

Take Care of your Body

- Exercise has been proven to reduce stress hormones that affect mood. Incorporating exercise can help lessen anxiety when it is triggered. The act of exercising can also help you disengage from unhelpful thoughts.
- Some foods are found to be helpful in reducing anxiety. Foods with high omega 3 fatty acids and probiotics like salmon, walnuts, yogurt, and flaxseed can help curb anxiety. On the other hand, foods that contain high amounts of fat, sugar, salt, and caffeine can lead to prolonged anxiety symptoms. Therefore, maintaining a healthy diet is fundamental in preventing anxiety.
- The lack of sleep can also be a trigger for anxiety. However, anxiety could also be the cause of sleeplessness. This vicious cycle can be managed by taking some time to wind down before bed with calming activities or meditation. Instead of worrying about the next day or what you are afraid of forgetting, try penning things down and putting your thoughts at ease.

Have a Support System

- Research shows that those who have a strong support system consisting of close friends or family are able to fight mental health issues better than those who are isolated. Having someone you can talk to and let out your worries could help prevent anxiety from overwhelming you. Find someone you can trust to be a listening ear and give you constructive feedback on your thoughts. Sometimes having a second

opinion helps in scaling down the enormity of the problems perceived.

- Sometimes scheduling time alone is not as effective as scheduling time with the company. If you feel like it is more helpful to you, set aside time with friends or family instead of being alone with your own thoughts.
- Therapy services such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) have also helped with the prevention of anxiety from escalating to a diagnosable disorder. Having a professional aid to help curb anxiety could be a good prevention strategy.

Learn Relaxation Strategies

- Take deep breaths. Deep breathing, have been shown to slow heart rate, lower blood pressure and reduce stress.
- A directed mental visualization called guided imagery can lead to instant relaxation. Guided imagery involves imagining a place or thing that can evoke calmness and let your mind to zone in on the positive and relaxing thoughts.

Bottom line

Mindfulness is a state of awareness of the present. Mindfulness practice, meditation, and yoga allows you to be aware of your surroundings and helps you be in control over how you experience situations and how you react. Feeling like you are losing control and overwhelmed is a common symptom of anxiety. In the next few chapters, we will explore more on meditation specifically to target anxiety.

Chapter 3: Identify Your Anxiety- Amygdala or Cortex?

3.1 Understanding Two Pathways Anxiety, Cortex, and Amygdala

Anxiety is an emotional response that is complex and very similar to fear. What we feel when we are actually in trouble is what we call – Fear. But we are anxious when we are not in real danger. All humans experience anxiety and fear at varying degrees. There are events that can cause us to feel fear, such as seeing a train coming towards us or when we are stuck somewhere with no way out.

Anxiety comes forth when we end up worrying about the presentation we have to give in the next few minutes or the safety of a loved one who's living far away from home. It is quite common to feel anxious, especially when we are under stress but the real problem begins when this anxiety permeates our lives and causes havoc. In the event this happens, we need to seek out a solution to handle our anxiety and gain our sense of control. If you feel like this, then you need to understand anxiety and learn how to deal with it.

Anxiety and Ways it Limits Life

You would be surprised as to how anxiety can limit a person's life. If you have never thought about it, here are some ways that people experience anxiety and it limits their capacity to live fully:

- Tina is constantly plagued by worries that haunt her waking moments, often questioning herself at every decision
- Jewan finds it difficult to sleep, often feeling sleepy at work which is a reason he has received several warning letters
- Deborah finds it hard to wake up and face the day, arriving to work late

- Alexis finds it hard to leave home, making him choose university options based on distance from home instead of the quality of education
- Cammy is afraid of speaking to a crowd, hurting her chances of a promotion
- Alan spends hours completing a series of tasks before finally leaving his child with a sitter
- Emilia constantly has nightmares and makes it hard for her to sleep
- The plumber is always anxious about encountering spiders that he reduces his hourly wages, making it hard for him to support his family
- Abel is always reluctant to go to school and talk to her teachers which threatens her growth and learning

Yes, anxiety can give someone the inability to do even basic activities. However, the individuals above can relinquish that control and be able to fully control their life if and when they realize that they need to work on the solution and be sure of themselves and their ability. This idea is possible thanks to the research on how our brain works and the structures that create anxiety.

Foundations of Fear

Research has been constant when it comes to the neurological connections of anxiety, the structures of the brain that detects threats as well as identifying the protective responses.

This research (Dias et al. 2013) has revealed important findings:

The brain has two fairly distinct pathways that can produce or induce anxiety - One path begins large, gray and convoluted parts of the brain which is directly related to our thoughts and perceptions which is the Cerebral Cortex. The second path is from the two, small, almond-shaped structures that can be found on either side of our brain – which is the amygdalas

The amygdala triggers ancient known fight-or-flight responses which have been cascaded down from the earliest humans on earth and have been virtually unchanged - Both these pathways plan a crucial role in anxiety although some anxiety types are more associated with the cortex, the rest comes directly from the amygdala. In the psychotherapy study for anxiety, attention has been focused typically on the cortex pathway. Usually, therapeutic approaches are used that involve changing thoughts as well as CBT.

Recent research and studies, however, are more focused on studying the role of the amygdala in order to better understand anxiety as to how it can be controlled. However, cognitive tools cannot be used to control amygdala-generated anxiety. You may have tried CBT in the part and it may have been unsuccessful. Researchers have found that when working with anxiety, it is useful to understand the dynamics of anxiety before looking into treatment possibilities.

Understanding the Cortex and the Amygdala

Most of us are familiar with the functions of the cortex which is the topmost region of the brain. The cortex is our thinking part and it is considered the portion that makes us human simply because it enables us to differentiate right from wrong, create language enables us to reason as well as logically think.

The Cortex

When it comes to treating anxiety that stems from the cortex, there are various ways and it usually focuses on cognitions which is the term used for what we call ‘thinking’. The thoughts that derive from the cortex may be the reason for anxiety or they could also be the effect of decreasing or increasing anxiety. Changing the way we think can help us prevent our cognitive processes from contributing or initiating to anxiety.

The Amygdala

Treatments for anxiety, until recently, were not likely to focus on the amygdala pathway. The amygdala while small is actually comprised of thousands of cell circuits that are dedicated to different purposes. These circuits focus on bonding, love, sexual behaviors, aggression, anger as well as fear. The amygdala's role is to attach any emotional significance to objects or situations and form an emotional memory to it. These emotional and emotional memories are both negative and positive ones.

Emotional Processing

The amygdala's emotional processing has deep and considerable effects on our behavior. In therapy sessions, both patient and therapist need to look into the ways in which the amygdala plays a pivotal role in where anxiety is produced. While the cortex can contribute and initiate anxiety, the amygdala, on the other hand, is needed to trigger the responses associated with anxiety. This is why a more in-depth approach is needed when addressing anxiety as it requires dealing with both the amygdala and the cortex pathways of the brain. Therapists usually include sessions that endeavor to understand the different ways these pathways work together and separately as well as in conjunction with each other. When a patient understands how each of these pathways creates or triggers anxiety, therapists can then teach them how to interrupt it, how to combat it or even inhibit anxiety based on what they have learned about your brain. Therapists will also take into account strategies that you can use to change the pathways of the amygdala as well as strategies to alter the cortex pathways to help you lead an anxiety-free life.

3.2 Controlling the Cortex and Amygdala

So what do researchers know about the brain, the cortex and the amygdala based on 30 years of research, studies, and experiments? Firstly, the processing circuit of the emotional brain often overlaps with the circuitry of the rational and thinking part of the brain. Secondly, all of us human beings have our own unique emotional profile just like how we have fingerprints unique to ourselves. Thirdly, our emotional style is a direct result of our brain activity and it is a combination of the early years of development as

well as the genes we inherited from our mother and father as well as the experiences we have accumulated over time .

While our emotional circuitry is influenced by our genes as well as our experiences, that does not mean it cannot be changed or altered. With some exercises and consistency, you can adjust the neural connections of the brain's emotional responses. Here are some ways that you can tame, control or balance your cortex as well as your amygdala. These methods have been developed by Dr. Richard Davidson who discussed his findings in his book, The Emotional Life of Your Brain .

- **Challenge the Accuracy of Your Thoughts**

Resilience and how much we have of it will show you how easily you get up and move forward after a major setback or if you will cower and breakdown in misery. Different people take different ways and amounts of time to recover and it also depends on what setbacks they are recovering from. However, if the recovery impedes the way you function daily, then you would need to do something about it.

Generally, people who have a faster recovery period have a stronger activation on their left prefrontal cortex as well as a strong connection with their amygdala. If you are slow to recover, the opposite happens. Positive feelings are the responsibility of the left prefrontal cortex and it helps to inhibit negative emotions that are generated by other structures such as the amygdala. The amygdala as we all know is responsible for fear and preparing our responses for emergencies. It is also responsible for fear conditioning. When it comes to fear and anxiety disorders, a hyperactive amygdala is a reason.

If you feel like you are slow to recover from setbacks, then you may have to increase the activity from your prefrontal cortex. For this to happen, you can start doing simple exercises such as mindfulness breathing. This helps you to strengthen the connection between the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex. Dr. Davidson says when we challenge the accuracy of your thoughts, the cognitive appraisal helps reframe the causes of the distress.

- **Keep your mind from creating false conclusions**

Self-Awareness refers to how aware you are with your own emotions and body signals. Some people, despite the signs their bodies are showing, deny even experiencing stress and anxiety. It is not about denying it all throughout, it is only because they are oblivious to what is happening and confuse these signs with something else. People who are on the extremely positive side of self-awareness have greater activation in the insula whereas people with a decreased activation of insula have low levels of self-awareness.

On the other hand, having a high level of self-awareness could also cause the panic disorder. Dr. Davidson calls it ‘cognitive reframing’ where you learn to readjust your body’s internal cues in a more positive way instead of looking at them as a threat or danger. The idea here is to ensure that your mind is not wandering away to create false conclusions based on whatever you feel.

Dr. Davidson goes on to explain that altering the way we think so that we do not get entangled in an endless loop of doom.

- **Train your brain that the future you imagine will come**

If you maintain a high level of energy during troubling times, it could be that you are in a positive extreme. An individual with a high positive outlook has high activity in their prefrontal cortex which processes the senses of rewards. On the other hand, if you are on the negative side of your outlook, you showcase a low activity as well as weaker connections with your prefrontal cortex.

In order to be more positive, you need to support your prefrontal cortex through a series of planning. For instance, if you need to finish a project, but you’re sleepy. You need to combat this by planning ahead. So plan ahead on how you can combat this temptation. If you finish your work, you can reward yourself with uninterrupted and worry-free sleep but if you give in to sleep, you need to cram in all that amount of work in a short amount of time. Finishing your tasks and rewarding yourself later trains your brain to

believe and work towards your imagined future and that it will eventually arrive.

- **Train your brain to support the different emotional styles**

By being more aware of your emotional style, you can create an environment that supports this. Being aware of your emotional style, you can accept what ticks you off and what turns you on and you can also make the changes in your lifestyle and the things you do daily to support these emotional styles.

Bottom Line

At the end of the day, you have the power to change your life and take control of your emotions. Nobody else can. Training your brain in ways to support your emotional styles and the way you think can shift your way of life and the dimension of the way you think and lead you towards a more positive outlook and also towards your goals and your imagined life.

Chapter 4: Why Addiction Increases your Anxiety

4.1 Types of Addictions

In the journey towards anxiety recovery, there are different kinds of treatment administered to a patient. Some of these treatments are drug-related. Therapists and doctors usually give patients medication such as Zoloft, Tofranil, Valium, and Xanax to help lessen symptoms of anxiety or panic disorders.

Although patients with anxiety disorders do not necessarily develop substance disorders, research has shown that there is a strong possibility between the two. An estimated 18 percent of Americans have developed substance use disorders because of anxiety or they end up getting anxiety because of substance use disorder. When this happens, it can be profoundly hard for doctors and health care providers to diagnose the cause of anxiety in their patients when there is a substance use disorder all because it is hard to tell the difference between symptoms of intoxication and the symptoms of anxiety.

When it comes to anxiety, there are several types such as generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder as well as obsessive-compulsive disorder. Different people with different types of disorders experience anxiety in various forms. One thing in common is that they all feel worried and fear without the visibility of clear danger.

People who have a physical or mental illness also have a tendency of suffering from anxiety and this makes the diagnosis as well as a treatment even more difficult. There could be other problems that need to be treated first before treatment for anxiety can begin. Substance abuse then adds another complicated variable to the treatment equation. People who have anxiety and also have some form of substance use disorder should seek immediate and professional treatment.

So what are the types of addiction?

It is hard to pinpoint addiction based on anxiety or caused by anxiety. However, the most well-known addiction that many people go through is related to alcohol as well as drugs. The most common drug addictions are:

- nicotine, found in tobacco
- THC, found in marijuana
- opioid (narcotics), or pain relievers
- cocaine

4.2 How Addiction is Created in the Brain

When a person is addicted to substances and behaviors, it creates a pleasurable yet short ‘high’ that is both psychological as well as physical. If you have an anxiety disorder, there is typically more use of certain drugs administered to you that you get high on more frequently to achieve that sense of high or to achieve a sense of relief from your symptoms. Over time, the addiction becomes difficult to stop.

The Brain

Some people who take on anxiety medication never approach it again while others tend to be addicted to it because the need to lead a more normal life is obsessive and they procure these medications in various, often illegal ways. This addiction is partially due to the brain’s frontal lobes which allows a person to delay or lessen the symptoms of reward or gratification. When there is an addiction, the frontal lobe malfunctions and gratification is achieved immediately.

Apart from the frontal lobe, there are other areas of the brain that play a role in addiction. The nucleus acumens as well as the anterior cingulate cortex which causes pleasurable sensations is responsible for increasing a person’s response when they are exposed to addictive substances.

Chemical imbalances in the brain, as well as mental disorders such as bipolar and schizophrenia, are also other possible causes of addiction. These disorders can bring about coping strategies that are highly dependent on addiction.

Addiction Is the Result of Neuroplasticity

Neuroplasticity is the ability of your brain to change its physical structure and function based on life experiences, thoughts, emotions as well as repetitive behaviors. What we do on a daily basis whether good or bad gets wired into our system and the structure of our brain because of this neuroplasticity ability.

Neuroplasticity is the foundation of all learning and it also creates an amazingly resilient brain. It creates the ability for people to recover from traumatic experiences such as injuries as well as birth abnormalities. It also gives humans the ability to improve neurological deficits and reverse behavioral patterns.

The very same elements that make the brain strong are the same characteristics that make it vulnerable as well which is why researchers pinpoint neuroplasticity as the cause of addictions becoming ingrained in our brain as well as the reason why our brain loses valuable skills as we age and also the reason why we get some brain illnesses.

The time when the Brain’s Reward System goes awry

Our brain is a highly skilled reward detector. A brain that is addicted has learned to prioritize and seek reward ahead of anything else. The brain also has a pretty primitive reward system that operates on a subconscious level and it operates on a subconscious level that was originally meant to push humans to seek out opportunities to extend their survival capacity. In today’s world, however, we are all overwhelmed with many opportunities to survive from shopping to junk food, sex, drugs, and electronic gadgets.

Our addiction and cravings depend on an intricate interplay of the chemicals in our brain but dopamine, the feel-good neurotransmitter is at the center of all of them. Dopamine is considered a chemical messenger that transports signals across synapses and it is the chemical that pushes forth reward-seeking and motivating behavior. Dopamine also affects the processes that govern movement and plays an extremely important role in Parkinson's disease.

Dopamine also plays a crucial role in addiction as it heightens salience, which is the pull of a stimulus. When you attempt something pleasurable the first time, dopamine rewards come in after the event or activity. At subsequent experiences, dopamines are released much earlier until seeing a trigger or even just thinking about it causes the anticipatory dopamine surge.

4.3 Rewiring Your Brain to Overcome Addiction

- **Addiction Treatments**

Recovery from any kind of addiction does need extreme changes in feelings, thoughts as well as behaviors. You can adopt new behavioral patterns and thoughts as well as recruit neutral networks that encourage new connections as well as communication pathways that can change the brain's thinking prowess over time. Not one treatment works for everyone- each individual requires either two or more treatments and when it comes to addiction treatments, treatments focused on encouraging neuroplasticity have been proven to be successful.

- **Contemplative Practices**

According to the American Journal of Psychiatry, studies have shown the connection between mindfulness and meditation with successful rehabilitation of addiction. Constant practice of meditation and mindfulness can alter the brain. With this in mind, practicing mental health tools that

teach an individual to put time and distance between their impulses and themselves is extremely beneficial. This pause between action and urge encourage neuroplasticity as well as new behaviors. There is also a more prevalent kind of meditation that helps in overcoming addiction and this is called urge surfing.

- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

The theory behind CBT is to think about the situations that could affect the way we behave and the way we feel. When we are faced with an adverse situation, it is natural to experience negative emotions, and these feelings may lead to negative behavioral reactions. CBT looks at the way an individual distinguishes a scenario and how this perception has more to do with their personal reactions rather than the extent of the scenario itself.CBT aims to help people change or alter their own destructive thinking and behavior that would hopefully lead to an improvement in their mood and daily functioning. CBT involves plenty of problems -solving and it borrows many psychotherapeutic techniques from acceptance and commitment therapy and dialectical behavior therapy, compassion-focused therapy, Gestalt therapy, mindfulness and motivational interviewing.

- **TMS Therapy**

TMS is called **Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation** (TMS) and it is an FDA approved therapy specifically for treatment-resistant depression and it has shown good results for treating addiction. This stimulation is non-invasive and an outpatient procedure where the cells of the brain are stimulated with magnetic pulses and it is given via electromagnetic coil. During a TMS session fluctuating magnetic fields are projective via the skull into a patient’s prefrontal cortex. Don’t worry, this is not a scary procedure as mentioned before, it is non-invasive. The magnetic fields that are projected will stimulate the cells in the brain and it helps to alter neuronal activity as well as blood flow.

Chapter 5: Best Mindset to Permanent Change your Mind

5.1 Where to Start?

Willpower. Heard of it? Merriam Webster dictionary defines willpower as energetic determination. Willpower is what helps us get out of bed in the morning and go to work, even though that is not a place most of us want to be. Nobody wants to spend 8 hours of their day cooped up in a cubicle doing a job they're not passionate about, but they do it anyway because they know that they have to and they don't have a choice.

Will Power- A Closer Look

Scientifically, there is a specific part of our brain called the prefrontal cortex that controls our decision making, our ability to plan for the future and make choices that benefit us in the long run. This part of the brain is located in the front of the skull behind the eyes. Studies have mapped the brains of those with weak and strong will power and have seen actual differences inactivity of this area of the brain. This little section of the brain could be thought of as the 'willpower muscle.' And it operates in much the same way that your other muscles do: if you do not use it you lose it! The good news is that, like a muscle, it can be rebuilt, retrained and strengthened.

Training the Willpower Muscle –Start Small and Build

If willpower is essentially a muscle, the only way to get more of it is to train over time. As we take small steps to go against our natural inclinations, we can slowly build up our willpower. If you struggle with writing academic papers, you could start small. Practice writing a page at a time, despite your feelings. Then two pages, then three.

If you struggle with making healthy food choices you could, by sheer force of will, eat one healthy meal a day, and work your way up to two, then three. You get the idea. As you train your willpower on these smaller tasks, it will become strong enough to tackle bigger and more complex challenges. If you aren't sure where to be building up your willpower muscle, or if you realize that you have a naturally weak willpower, a good

place to start is by taking up a sport or going to the gym. The mind/body connection is a powerful one and training them together can have a synergistic effect. If you begin at the gym by walking a half-mile, then a mile, then jogging a little while, then running a 5 k, you will see progress in your physical strength as well as the strength of your willpower.

Remember the adage, 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.' Think of tasks that you struggle with regularly and break them down into smaller chunks. Practice flexing your willpower muscles by achieving one small chunk of a task. As we discussed in previous chapters, motivation will often follow these small steps to action and help carry you along.

Willpower: A Limited Resource

Willpower is beginning to look like the ultimate solution to our procrastination problem. It is something you can train up, unlike your emotions you can control it, and so there is no downside, right? Think about this scenario:

In the morning, your alarm clock goes off. Your brain says "Just 5 more minutes of sleep." Exerting your willpower, you counter with, "I MUST get up and go to work. I WILL do it." You begrudgingly get out of bed and go to eat breakfast, where you are faced with a choice. Pastry or oatmeal? Again, you will yourself to make a healthy choice. "I NEED to eat better. I promised myself I would. Don't even think about it that chocolate donut!" You eat the oatmeal, resenting each bite. In the first ten minutes of your day, you have already engaged in two battles of the will. It's going to be a long day.

Just imagining this scenario is enough to make one wary. There is a reason why. It takes a great deal of energy to go against our natural inclinations and exercise the power of our will. In the last decade or so, scientists started studying willpower and the idea that willpower is a limited resource. Scientist exploring this idea refers to it as willpower depletion.

One such study conducted by psychologist Roy Baumeister in 1996 tested the concept of willpower through what was called the Chocolate-and-Radish Experience. In this experiment, Baumeister enticed a group of test subjects with the scent of freshly baked cookies. They were then led into a

room with a plate of cookies and a bowl of radishes. Some test subjects were asked to eat the radishes while others were allowed to eat cookies. Afterward, both groups were then given a complex geometry problem to solve.

The group that ate radishes gave up on the math problem twice as fast as the group that ate cookies. The scientists behind this experiment concluded that the subjects who ate radishes depleted their reserves of willpower in resisting the cookie aroma. When they attempted the math problem, they simply had less willpower left that the group who got to eat cookies. The big problem with wanting to use willpower to win the procrastination battle is that if you're going to spend your life fighting against your procrastination tendencies, just like in a real battle, it is only a matter of time before you tire out and fatigue. Because of this, very few people manage to successfully overcome procrastination through sheer willpower alone.

5.2 Tips for Effective Goal Setting

Goal setting is really different for different people. But most goals fall into two major categories. The first are goals that we have a 95% chance of accomplishing, simply because we've done it before. The second category is the goals where there is a 95% chance of not knowing if we will accomplish them, simply because we've never done it before, but we would like to anyway.

There is numerous advice on how to do goal-setting right. So in this chapter, we will explore not so much about how to set goals, but more on how to accomplish these goals. Our minds and our subconscious are set up to help us achieve goals that we sincerely believe are achievable. Here are some tricks that can help you in goal setting and goal getting:

- **Be A Dreamer, but Stay Motivated**

Goals are materialized because each and every one of us is a dreamer. But in order to accomplish your goals, you need to do something about them and that takes self-discipline and motivation.

Your first trick is really a mind trick. Have a burning desire and a reason to achieve it. The path to achieving goals is filled with boredom, procrastination, anxiety, excuses, and difficulty. There will be so many times that you will try to talk yourself out of this goal. But to keep going, always remember the reason and the desire of why you wanted to attain this goal because this helps you stay on track.

- **Break it down**

Break down your goals into mini-goals. Your brain probably knows you can't achieve enormous goals in an unrealistic timeline. So when you create your goals, give it a 24-hour cycle. Essentially, create mini-goals. For example, if your goal is to eat healthily- don't tell yourself 'Ok! I'm going on a 30-day gluten-free diet today!' No, it doesn't work that way. Instead of saying 30 days, tell yourself you will go for a 3-day gluten-free diet and move up from there. Your mini goals must be reasonable, sustainable and attainable within your 24 hour time period.

- **Do Something Every day**

The more you work on your habits and create a routine, the closer you are to achieving your goals. You would naturally take some time off but if you do not take the first 7 days or first 30 days of your working on your goal, you will never create the momentum you need to drive you till you reach your desired target. The first 30 days of a goal is crucial- it not only shows people you are serious, but it also boosts your morale and drives to keep you going and sustain your goals well beyond your target.

- **Learn to adapt and adjust**

As you go on daily achieving your mini goals and working towards your bigger goals, be flexible. Be willing to adapt to changes along the way. Make your mini-goals slightly difficult if you deem them easy. Or if they become too taxing, then make them easier. The main thing is to remember that if it is too difficult, you might end up quitting. If it's' too easy, then you are pushing yourself. Find a middle ground that is decent for advancement each day. For example, if you have set your mini-goals to do 30 pushups daily, by the time you are 2 weeks in your training, you might feel that you

can do more. So challenge yourself and bring up the daily goal of doing 40 pushups daily.

- **Looking back for feedback, looking forward to rewarding**

Feedback and reward are essential parts of goal-setting and goal-getting. On your journey to goal-getting, be bold to request feedback from the people around, especially from the ones you look up to. Give yourself a little reward once a week or daily for accomplishing your goals. Rewarding yourself can be as simple as putting a gold star on your calendar on the days you accomplished your goals, so something more elaborate like dinner on Saturday night. This reward giving is positive reinforcement. These little things are good enough to tell your brain that you are doing something right.

- **Schedule Slop Time**

Slop time is when you do not need to focus on our goal. It is the time that you can allow yourself to cheat on it or not do it at all. We are humans and we are bound to do it anyway, so you might as well allow yourself that space to be normal humans. Allowing slop time is crucial because it prevents us from feeling dejected or get bored. Temporarily ignoring a goal for a short period of time (like during the weekend) is great to refocus your energy and do things better when you start the next week fresh. Just remember not to over-do it and don’t make this a habit. Slop times are good if it is done once or twice a month.

- **Sticking to the small, boring stuff**

Doing things on a routine can get you bored. That is an undeniable fact. Achieving goals isn’t about celebrating each time you complete a milestone. It’s about sticking to the daily, small stuff no matter how boring it gets. Get the fundamentals right then make it slightly difficult the next day so you are constantly challenging yourself. Keep doing it again and again till it becomes a habit. When it becomes a habit, you’ll realize that you look forward to doing it and it doesn’t take that much effort as it used to.

5.3 Rewiring Your Brain to Overcome Addiction

You can only know when to say no when you know when to say yes. In other words, you need to know what you want in order to know what you don't want to do. For this, you must be self-aware. There is a great strategy to achieve this self-awareness: the happiness formula.

When you bear the burden of your duties, it can be very difficult to act, because nobody likes feeling obliged to do something that he has not chosen to do. The Formula of Happiness was created to remove this weight: when the duties become not only choices but the best choices that can be made in that situation and at that time, to taking becomes the best solution.

Mind Over Matter – Is It Possible to Change Our Mindset?

Not only is it entirely possible, but more importantly, it is very doable. How many times in your life have you found yourself face to face with a challenge, only to feel like you want to give up so badly because it just felt too difficult to overcome at that time? Admittedly, giving up can often appear like the most tempting choice – sometimes the only choice –when you're faced with obstacles where you feel like you simply do not have the strength within you to overcome it.

There are two types of mindsets in this one – the growth and the fixed. If you're someone who has a growth mindset, you will find that personal development is at the core of your focus. If you have a fixed mindset, on the other hand, you'll find yourself seeking validation instead. This very simple distinction between the two mindsets is what separates successful individuals from the ones who constantly find life a struggle to accomplish even the simplest of tasks.

Individuals with a growth mindset are the ones who have achieved monumental success in their lives. The ones that we look up to and aspire to be, the ones who are successes in the industries that they command. More importantly, they are the ones who did not let procrastination stand in their way and hold them back. This is the one thing that sets them apart, and it was having the right mindset. That's all it took for them set themselves apart.

Individuals who have a fixed mindset will find themselves very often not excelling at much because they constantly find themselves either procrastinating or making excuses not to do something. They are subconsciously afraid of failure, and thus, they avoid challenges because they don't want to risk being disappointed. Although they want to achieve goals and ambitions, they lack the desire, the drive to do so, and find it much easier to procrastinate instead.

Cultivating the Right Mindset Starts Now

Mindsets are essentially the beliefs that you have about yourself and what qualities you possess. Some examples of this could be your intelligence, your personality, your strengths, and your talents. The difference in backgrounds, life experiences, beliefs and situations all contribute to the kind of mindset that you have right now. Think about your own mindset for a minute, what does yours say about you right now? What do you want your mindset to be moving forward?

The reason why some people appear to have the mindset that propels them towards success is that they have cultivated it. If you want to overcome procrastination, this is where you begin, right here. Your perception will ultimately become your reality, and if you believe it is possible to make a change for the better, your life will eventually be better. The battle to win over the mind begins at this moment, are you ready to take on the challenge?

The Happiness Formula

The happiness formula is a simple but very effective tool to always make informed choices.

It is a sequence of questions to ask yourself before taking action:

- Write down a task you must do. For example, I MUST write this 20-page report for my boss.
- Turn the "I MUST" statement into a question that starts with "I WANT." For example: "Do I want to write this 20-page report for my boss?"
- If the answer is YES, DO IT!

- If the answer is NO to ask yourself: “Am I willing to pay the consequences of leaving this task undone?” (For example, you could be scolded by the boss, or could be fired)
- If the answer is “YES, I’m not willing to pay the consequences," then DON’T DO IT. You have decided that the consequences are less serious than the action.
- If the answer is “NO”, then DO IT, you have decided that the consequences of not acting are worse than the action.

You may ask yourself. How is this different than willing myself to complete a task? The answer is self-awareness. You became aware of your own procrastinating thought patterns and you confronted them. Instead of going into an energy-consuming battle were you forced yourself to do something despite not wanting to do it, you changed your emotions and therefore changed your will. You took control not only of the situation but of your own mind. This is a powerful accomplishment.

The Fence

To strengthen the ability to say NO, people need to be aware of their own thoughts and the mechanisms that lead them to procrastinate. To make everything easier, it is useful to recognize the typical words we use when we are procrastinating: “not yet…”, “I don’t fe el like it…”, “wait...”, “you can do it later…”, with the emotions that accompany them.

The first thing to do is to activate an internal "radar" to recognize when you start having thoughts of procrastination. Just focus the radar on the words we have already seen: "still 5 minutes", "I do it another time" etc. Observing your thoughts, you will learn to recognize the words you use to procrastinate.

The second is to learn to observe one's thoughts in a calm and neutral way, without judging them or reacting emotionally. Many thoughts are automatic, therefore out of our control. No need to fight them or oppose them. It is enough to let them pass without saying anything. You can start with lower mail situations and become familiar with your thought patterns and learn how to deal with them when they are not useful to you.

When you have learned to choose your thoughts, you will be able to build your mental enclosure. Within the enclosure, there are the conscious choices you've decided to follow. Outside there are temptations, thoughts of procrastination, friends who tell us what we want to hear, etc. And the fence is formed by the word NO, which defends like a wall, against misleading temptations and thoughts. You decide what thoughts you are going to let go through the fence.

How to Build Stronger Self-Discipline

How is it that those incredible individuals we often hear about (or sometimes know personally) manage to achieve so much in their life? How do they have the discipline to wake up earlier than everyone else each morning, stick to a strict, nutritious health and fitness regimen and even have time to read several chapters of an inspirational book or listen to a podcast? All before someone else on the opposite end of the spectrum, has even mustered the energy to get out of bed this morning?

How do you start building this kind of self-discipline too? The discipline that is going to take your life to the next phase of success, the way you should have done so long ago if not for procrastination? By following these techniques below :

What Do You Want to Change?

Procrastinators often have several habits in their life that they want (and need) to change. Otherwise, they wouldn’t be struggling with procrastination, to begin with. This is what you need to do right now. Make a list of all the habits that you think are causing you to feel lazy, unmotivated, uninspired and procrastinate, and then next to those qualities, make a list of suggestions on how you would go about changing them. Focus on one habit at a time and start working on changing that. Once you’re done, move onto the next habit and slowly work your way through the list. Look to other self-disciplined individuals as an example and see which habits you could start to emulate.

- **See Your Failures as Lessons Instead**

Failures along the way are an inevitable part of success. Like a rite of passage. It is something that you must go through to make success and

victory that much sweeter and more meaningful. Think of the failures you encounter along the way as lessons that are going to make you stronger, build your resolve and make you a more determined person. What doesn't bring you down, only makes you stronger at the end, and with each triumph, your self-discipline strengthens and grows.

- **Saying No to Temptation**

This is probably going to be the most challenging phase for a lot of people. If temptations were so easy to resist, self-discipline wouldn't be such a struggle to accomplish. Here's where the power of no comes in again. Each time you say no to something that is going to tempt you to procrastinate, your self-discipline grows stronger. Each time you don't give in to your desire, you walk away a little bit stronger and a little more disciplined. So keep at it and keep the momentum going, this is how you're going to build your resolve over time.

- **Avoid Last-Minute Decisions**

Leaving decisions to the very last second can often result in you making the wrong choices. Which is why you need to now start making it a point to decide on things the moment you know that there is a decision to be made. Putting off and procrastination the decision isn't going to make it go away, it is just going to delay the inevitable. Learning to make decisions as you go trains you to have better self-discipline along the way too. Like deciding not to be distracted by your phone for the next hour until you get a task done.

Or deciding ahead of time you are going to finish this assignment today no matter what and commit to doing it. Deciding on how many emails you're going to respond to today. Deciding on how many tasks on your to-do list you're going to complete today. All these little decisions along the way help make you a more efficient, productive person down the road with better control and self-discipline in your life. It minimizes the chaos and hectic-ness that comes with last-minute decisions too.

- **Self-Discipline is Part of Being an Adult**

Nobody said being an adult was easy. We have to do things we don't always necessarily like, but you know what? We survive. Adults don't wait around for people to tell them what to do and what not to do. The beauty of being an adult is that we have a mind of our own, we take our lives into our own hands and we make choices and decisions for ourselves. As adults, self-discipline is the driving force that keeps us going, pushing us through those uncomfortable moments in life. Remember waking up each morning and going to work scenario? That's part of being an adult. To train your self-discipline and build its strength, you need to push yourself to do the uncomfortable things you would rather not do instead of waiting for someone else to force you to do it. Taking that proactive step, that initiative to do it on your own is how you build your self-discipline over time.

- **Setting Smaller Goals**

This is the key to start building a better mindset for yourself. Not only is this a great way to start cultivating a positive mindset, but it is also great for helping you overcome procrastination. When we set big goals and we fail to accomplish them, they can be a big emotional hit for many. Feeling discouraged, we lose the drive to keep on fighting and moving forward. Eventually, it becomes easier to procrastinate because we simply don't feel like facing another possible failure yet again.

You need to set small goals with smaller, more doable steps to accomplish these goals. This is a much better strategy because each time a goal gets smashed, seeing your goal materialize before you will fuel your belief that you can do this. It will make you want to do more, and eventually, your mind starts to believe you are capable of anything. When that happens, procrastination fades away and becomes a problem of the past.

Chapter 6: the Key for Inner Peace: Meditation

6.1 What Is Meditation?

Don’t like the idea of sitting in silence and breathing for half an hour? What is the point of meditation anyway? Before you dismiss meditation as a form of treatment for anxiety- read this chapter!

Meditation is not all about reducing stress or letting go and taking a few moments for ourselves to try and recompose and regain our thoughts. Meditation is about more than that.

It is about finding balance, inner peace and calm in a world where it seems almost every aspect of our lives is capable of triggering stress, worry or anxiety. Our bodies and minds may be strong and tough, but there is only so much negativity that it can take before it starts to take its toll and affect our health, sometimes to a point where it could become unbearable.

If only there were a magic formula of some sort where we could keep out these negative feelings that are capable of causing such destruction within our minds and bodies, but there isn’t. Which is why we need to turn to meditation as a way of managing our worries and anxieties, to find a way to find that balance within ourselves and recharge our energy.

The beauty of meditation is that it is simple yet powerful. Simple enough that anyone can learn how to do it effectively with the right tools, teachings, and techniques. Anyone can learn the art of meditation, and it isn’t as difficult as you may imagine. Sure, you may have tried it a few times and found yourself struggling in the early stages to quiet your mind and achieve a focus, calm, and mindful state, but that is perfectly normal, especially if you’re a beginner just starting out on this journey.

Mastering the art of meditation, like everything else, takes patience, time and practice. You’re putting far too much pressure on yourself if you expect to get it right from the moment you sit cross-legged on your mat and shut your eyes hoping to achieve deep meditation right from the get-go. No, it

takes time and practice, and you need to be patient with yourself. In this book, you will find a four-week plan that will help you achieve deep meditation, and the key to succeeding in this is to remember that you need to be patient. Practice makes perfect, which is why your goal of achieving deep meditation is spread out over four weeks, you need time to master each stage and phase of the process before moving onto the next. With repeated effort and your goal clearly in mind, you will see results at the end of the four weeks.

6.2 Why Meditation?

Is it just about calming our minds and finding inner peace? One part of it yes, that is why a lot of people find meditation to be a helpful practice. Those who avidly do this find that their mind is peaceful and free from worries and mental discomfort, making it easier for them to achieve happiness compared to those who do not practice meditation at all. If you've never tried it, you may scoff at the idea of how sitting quietly for a few minutes every day is going to make a difference in your life, but you would be surprised.

Think about it. What is it that successful people and motivational speakers often say they do as part of their daily routine? That's right, they spend a few hours meditating in the morning. Clearly, it's working for them, isn't it? Because they're able to go through life, even with the struggles that may come their way, with a positive attitude and they don't let stress get the best of them.

Now, you don't necessarily have to practice meditation in the morning the way they do, you can meditate and anytime that works best for you. There is no hard and fast rule. You can even meditate more than once a day if you need to and you find that it helps. You make your own rules according to what works best for you. By spending a few minutes each day training your mind and making meditation part of your routine, you will discover that your mind gradually is able to find peace a lot easier and finding happiness is something that doesn't seem so elusive anymore, even if you have certain challenges that you may be going through in your life. Even in the most difficult of circumstances, you will find that you're able to remain calm, steady and still be able to look at the bright side of life.

Learning to control our minds is one of the most difficult things we can do. It's easy to let our thoughts get the best of us, which is why it is so easy to be consumed by negativity and external circumstances can affect us to such an extent. The thing about this is, we don't even realize just how severely we are affected by it all because we're not really thinking too much about it. Fluctuations in our moods seem like a normal, everyday occurrence and we brush it off as being part of life and we can't control it. But that's where you would be wrong.

Because you can control it with meditation. Create that inner space and clarity in your mind that will enable you to always be in firm control of your thoughts, despite the circumstances you may be facing. Meditation is how you find that mental balance, so you're never at one extreme or the other (never too sad or never too happy). It's always about finding the right balance. You've always been told you need to live a balanced life, eat balanced meals, why not have a balanced mind too? Meditation is a way of bringing your mental clarity, and to change the way you look at the world around you.

At its very core, meditation is about taming your mind. A lot of people struggle with trying to overcome anxiety, despair, agitation and other habitual thought patterns which they may find difficult to break out of. Taming the mind through mindful meditation is how you give yourself control of your own well-being once more. Meditation will bring you a sense of fullness and completion, and believe it or not, it is the only way to truly achieve tranquillity that is easily accessible to everyone on this planet. True, there may be other temporary forms of serenity, but nothing will come close to bringing you the long-term peace that you seek no matter what you may be going through in your life the way meditation will. And what is why we learn to meditate.

Meditation has been practiced traditionally for hundreds – if not thousands-of years, it is not something that just came about overnight as a new trend. Meditation is something that is inherent in all human beings, something we all have it in us to be able to do. Many are already reaping the benefits of what meditation has to offer, and now it's time for you to start doing the same thing.

6.3 The Long Term Benefits of Meditation

The reason why most of us end up becoming stressed and anxious on a regular basis is that we do not place importance on mind and soul health. Taking care of our bodies not only means just the physical aspects of it but the mental and emotional aspects too.

Often we're just focused on taking care of the physical part of ourselves that we neglect to remember our minds need just as much attention and care because we don't realize the extent of what being weight down by stress, worry and anxiety can do it for us. These negative emotions are so powerful that in extreme cases, they can even manifest themselves physically.

Before we delve deeper into the benefits of meditation for anxiety, here are the benefits of practicing meditation consistently for your overall health and vitality:
Reduction in your stress levels

- Improvement in your concentration and focus
- It improves your cognitive and creative thinking skills
- With greater mental clarity, you're able to make better decisions and solve problems
- An increase in self-awareness
- An increase in happiness
- An increase in self-acceptance because meditation helps you reconnect with your inner self
- It will help you learn to appreciate life more as you become more aware of your surroundings through mindfulness

- You learn how to block out distractions in your life
- It improves your breathing and your heart rate
- Helps you feel more connected to yourself
- It helps regulate your mood and anxiety disorders
- Helps you sleep better at night
- Helps lower your blood pressure levels
- Increases serotonin production which will help improve your mood
- You gain clarity and peace of mind

- Your problems seem more manageable when you don’t let your mind get the best of you
- Increases your sense of well-being
- Helps you regain emotional steadiness
- It improves your mental resilience against adversity and pain
- It increases your optimism

Benefits of Meditation for Anxiety

When we talk about meditation for anxiety, keep in mind that meditation is PART of the anxiety treatment. It is not meant to be a replacement for anxiety treatments prescribed by your doctor or therapist. Meditation for anxiety should be considered as a complementary treatment for anxiety and for good reason.

Research conducted in 2013 by the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center researchers focuses on which brain regions are activated through mindfulness meditation. This research was published in the Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience journal. Another research also focused on generalized anxiety disorder and the benefits of meditation. This research focused on 93 individuals with DSM-IV diagnosed GAD which looked at an 8-week manualized mindfulness-based stress reduction program focusing on attention control. This program resulted in a significant reduction in anxiety for three to four study measures and participants also showed better positive self-statements.

- **How Meditation focuses on the mind**

Consistent meditation disables the distractions we face by filtering it before it starts to bottleneck. Think of this like a river dam that ensures the right amount of water to be flowed down to households, industries, and agriculture. Meditation, in the same way, filters the less important data that we are exposed to and sends only the necessary and important info into our brain. In other words, it helps us determine what information should we focus on and what we do not need to focus on that may cause chronic anxiety.

- **How Meditation Reduces Cortisol**

Researchers from Rutgers University and the University of California also conducted research relating to mindfulness meditation and the effects on cortisol. The study shows that consistent meditation reduced cortisol dramatically, with some results showing at least a 50% drop. Daily meditation for even 3 minutes is effective for the brain- you do not need to be a yogi with years of training to do this. Meditation is like the firefighters you call to extinguish this hormone that brings in so many diseases that can protect your health and happiness. When you do mindfulness exercises, you create an environment that is 100% inharmonious with anxiety. This mental environment prevents anxiety from manifesting in your mind and brain.

- **How Meditation Evolves The Brain Beyond Anxiety**

A study conducted by Dr. Sara Lazar in 2005 was a landmark study that showed the brains of those who meditated were much thicker and had more folds and surface area in their prefrontal cortexes. This study is used now by various neuroscientific and psychological researches as the go-to foundational study for other mental health issues such as depression.

Those who meditation, even for 10 to 15 minutes a day are usually anxiety-free, happy and healthy. While this has been known in anxiety teachings and treatments, it is only now that modern science is recognizing the power of meditation with procuring a healthy mind and body.

- **Meditation Controls Anxiety through a mind-body connection**

Back in the 1970s, Harvard physician Herbert Benson looked at the behaviors of the patients visiting him due to stress-related disorders such as anxiety. His observation led him to look at ways that he can counteract this association, simultaneously revolutionizing the mental care industry and helping people. Dr. Benson’s discovery was the connection between the mind and body through meditation. It slowed metabolism, reduced the heart rate, resulted in measured breathing and quieter brainwave activity. All of this combined brought out the right foundations for healing.

- **Meditation Reverses Anxiety using relaxation**

When meditating, our body activates the parasympathetic nervous system and simultaneously deactivates the body's stress mode. When this happens, the body reverses several health issues, primarily anxiety. Relating to Dr. Benson's research above, the mind-body connection gives the body the meditative state it needs to relieving anxiety and managing stress.

- **Why Meditation Builds Your Mindful Muscle**

Yes, we have mind muscles too. Instead of constantly having knee-jerk reactions to a wide variety of craziness, silliness, and scariness that we often experience, meditation also allows you to look into the thoughts that come into your mind which you need to give your attention to, especially the thoughts and emotions that you often neglect. Our thoughts come and go and via meditation, we can at least focus on the various emotions with a more structured mind without needing to chase the rabbit down its never-ending hole. Through meditation, we can build our mental muscles and allow us to understand the deepest levels of our mind and connect to our thoughts, emotions, and mind.

- **How Meditation squashes Anxiety: Endorphins**

Yup, that's right! It is not the only exercise that releases endorphins but also meditation. For a better mood, meditate for a few minutes after your exercise as it can bring you into a calmer, cool and happy place of your own.

When you exercise or go for a long jog, usually it gives you a natural high and joggers refer to this feeling as 'runner's high'. This zen-life state of happiness and bliss is one of the reasons why people like jogging and meditation is exactly like that except it also makes you feel calmer and it also elevates your mood.

Whenever you exercise, spend at least 5 to 10 minutes after your workouts or jog to meditate as it also helps your body come back to its normal breathing rate, allowing you to cool down both physically and mentally.

- **How Meditation Quiets The Mind**

When you no longer overthink things or you do not have to worry or have the feeling of constant fear, or when you stop worrying endlessly about what the future holds, you get to experience a silence that is intoxicating. Meditation allows your mind to explore this side of your natural state, the stillness that is true and pure. When you meditate constantly, you eventually start to quieten your mind and stop thinking about the ticking clock, the chores you have to do and the work you need to get done. You quieten your mind to spend a few minutes in bliss and these few minutes can benefit you in a longer and more pronounced aspect of your life.

6.4 Which Type Of Meditation Is Best For You?

There are various kinds of meditations that you can try for anxiety, stress as well as panic. Just remember that meditation is just one of the things that you would be requested to do so by a health care provider or doctor. Meditation is a complementary treatment to anxiety and you should view it that way. It is not the be-all-end-all when it comes to treating anxiety because everyone's anxiety is different and it requires various different treatments for different people.

With that said, here are the different kinds of meditation that you could do to decrease your anxiety, work on your breathing as well be more mindful:

- **The Loving Kindness Meditation**

Also known as the Metta meditation, the goal of this meditation is to cultivate an attitude of kindness and love towards everything around you, even your own enemies and also to the sources of stress. This meditation involves breathing deeply to open your minds to be more loving to their loved ones and to the people in this world. The key to this meditation is to repeat the message as often as possible until you feel an attitude of loving-kindness. This meditation is created to promote the feelings of compassion and love to oneself and the people around them. It can help in anger, resentment, and frustration as well as interpersonal conflict. You can look forward to reducing anxiety, depression as well as PTSD.

- **Progressive Relaxation**

Also known as the body scan meditation, this meditation focuses on scanning your own body to release the areas of tension. The goal of this meditation is to notice tension in the body and also allow stress to be released. During this meditation session, you usually begin at one end of the body and work your way throughout your whole world. You can start either with your feet and work your way up or your head and work your way down.
With this meditation, you tense and relax each muscle in your body mindfully and you are also encouraged to visualize peaceful situations. Progressive relaxation can help you promote generalized feelings of relaxation and calmness and this is something that can help with chronic pain. You will learn how to slowly and steadily relax your body and also help you sleep better.

- **Mindfulness meditation**

This form of meditation encourages people to remain aware and present at the moment. Instead of dwelling in the past or even dreading the future ahead of you, through mindfulness meditation, it encourages awareness of your existing surroundings. Rather than reflecting on what could be or maybe, you simply live in the moment without any judgment or overthinking.

You can do this meditation anywhere, such as at your work desk, while waiting in line for coffee, at your lunch break. This enables you to calmly be aware of your surroundings, the sounds, the sights as well as the smells. Mindfulness involves being aware of your breathing as well as drawing attention to the areas of tension in your body. Research has found out that mindfulness meditation can improve focus, memory as well as reduce fixation on negative emotions and lessen impulsive emotional reactions.

- **The Breathing awareness meditation**

This type of meditation is designed to encourage mindful breathing. It involves breathing deeply and slowly, counting breaths or focusing on breathing. The goal is to focus only on your breathing and ignore other thoughts that come into your mind. Breathing awareness also brings the

many benefits of mindful meditation and it includes reducing anxiety, brings more emotional stability as well as improved concentration.

- **Kundalini Yoga**

This type of meditation involves more yoga movements with meditation blended in with mantras and deep breathing. The best way to meditate using kundalini yoga is by learning from a teacher or joining a class. You can also learn poses and mantra through YouTube videos. Kundalini yoga not only focuses on mental strength but also physical strength, like other forms of yoga. It improves mental health by reducing depression and anxiety.

- **Zen Meditation**

Zen meditation is a form of meditation from the practice of Buddhism. Also called Zazen, this meditation is learned from a teacher because it involves specific postures, techniques, and steps. Zen meditation requires to focus on breathing and mindful observation of your thoughts with no judgment. This type of meditation requires a quiet space to be one with only your thoughts. While it is similar to mindfulness meditation, zazen, however, needs more practice and discipline. If you want relaxation as well as spiritual guidance, zen meditation could be something you can try.

- **Transcendental Meditation**

This is another form of meditation that has a more spiritual nature. It also involves you to be seated and to breathe in and out slowly and the goal here is to rise above or transcend your current state of being. During meditation, you need to focus on a mantra and the mantras are determined by the teachers based on the year you were born, age and other factors. People who practice transcendental meditation report having more spiritual awareness as well as heightened mindfulness.

Meditation to Relieve Anxiety

The goal for meditation to relieve anxiety is to let go of our emotions and reactions and just make an observation from a detached perspective. With

meditation, you teach yourself to observe without assigning emotion to any given situation. All you need to do is observe with a blank state of mind.

Meditation also practices your mind to have a better sense of awareness of the present while still staying in control of any negativity that may come and prevent it from increasing. Meditation heightens the brain’s cognitive function through mood training and mental training which can alleviate anxiety and decrease stress levels. It also teaches us to respond to reflectively and not reflexively. In doing so, not only do we prevent anxiety, but we also prevent depression and other mood disorders.

Chapter 7: Affirmations

7.1 What Is Affirmations and How It Works

Affirmations have helped many people make significant changes in their lives and the people around them. Do they work for everyone? Why do some people have achieved success using this technique but some people do not get anything from it?

What are Affirmations?

Affirmations are positive and direct statements that help an individual overcome self-sabotaging and negative thoughts. It helps a person visualize and believe in their goals, dreams, and abilities. In other words, you are affirming to yourself and helping yourself make positive changes to your life goals.

Affirmations have the power to work because it can program a person's mind into believing a concept. The mind is known not to know the difference between what is real or fantasy. That is why when you watch a movie; you tend to empathize with the characters on the screen even though you know it's just a movie. But as soon as you leave the cinema, you are back into reality but can't help feel sorry or happy for the characters.

There are both positive and negative affirmations and some of these affirmations such as being told you are smart when you were a child or being told that you are clumsy can stick with us in both our conscious or unconscious mind.

If a negative belief is firmly rooted in our subconscious mind, then it will have the ability to override any positive affirmation even when we aren't aware of it. This is one of the reasons why people do not believe in positive affirmations because it doesn't seem to be working. Their negative patterns are so high it just knocks out the sun! So how do we add affirmations into our daily life and how can we make them prevail above our negative thinking?

7.2 The Best Way to Practice Affirmations

- Step 1- On a day that you are alone and not busy or distracted (if you don’t have a time like this, then make one) list down all your negative qualities. Include any criticism that others have made of you and those that you have been holding onto. Remember that we all have flaws so do not judge. By acknowledging your mistakes, you can then move forward and work on your flaws, and you can make a shift in your life. When you write these down, take note to see if you are holding any grudges along the way or holding on to it. For example, do you feel tightness or dread in your heart?

- Step 2- Begin to write out an affirmation on the positive aspect of your self-assessment. Use powerful statement words to beef up this assessment. Instead of saying ‘I am worthy’ say ‘I am extremely cherished and remarkable.'

- Step 3- Practice every day reading this affirmation loudly for five minutes at least three times a day in the morning, afternoon and at night before going to sleep. You can do this while shaving or putting your make up on, or when you are fixing yourself a cup of tea or if you are in the shower. At best, look in the mirror, so you look at yourself and repeat these positive statements. You can also write these affirmations in your notebook at any time you feel like it. Take note of how your writing changes over time. If we do not like something, often writing this down will encompass using smaller handwriting but if we right in big and bold letterings, we are increasing the affirmation of this. This is really a mindfulness journey to get to the agenda of positive affirmation.

- Step 4- To enhance the impact, do body movements such as placing your hand on your heart when you felt uncomfortable writing out negative criticism of yourself in Step 1. As you work on reprogramming your mind to alter it from the concept of affirmation to a real and definite personification of the quality that you see.

- Step 5- Get a friend or a coach to repeat these affirmations to you. For example, if they are saying that you are cherished and remarkable, and then connect this statement with your situations such as ‘excellent colleague’ or ‘good fathering.' If you are not comfortable with doing this with someone, then look at your reflection in the mirror and reinforce your positive message.

- Affirmations can be an incredibly powerful tool that can help you change your state of mind, alleviate your mood and more importantly, ingrain the changes your desire into your life. But for all of this to happen, you first need to identify the negative and work on getting rid of them in your life.

7.3 Types of Affirmations

Examples of Positive Affirmation
Here are some examples of positive affirmations that you can use to relate to the various areas of your development:

- I know, accept and am true to myself
- I believe in myself and have confidence in my decisions
- I eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly and get plenty of rest
- I always learn from my mistakes
- I know I am capable of anything and can accomplish anything I set my mind to
- I have flaws and I am not perfect but that’s ok because I am human
- I never, ever give up
- I can adapt and accept what I have no control over
- I make the best of every situation
- I always look at the bright side of life
- I enjoy life to the fullest
- I stand up for what I believe in, my morals and my values
- I treat others with respect and recognize their individuality
- I can make a difference
- I can practice understanding, patience, and compassion

- I am always up to learn new things and be open-minded
- I live in the moment and learn from my past and prepare for my future

These are just some of the positive affirmations that you can use to be optimistic and pursue a fulfilling and happy mindset. Have fun in creating your own affirmations or tailor the above to suit your needs and situation. Most of the affirmations above can be used daily to uplift, inspire and motivate you and those around you.

Apart from the ones above, here are five other types of affirmations that you can use that are more geared towards the situations that you are in:

Affirmations to believe in Career Success

We all want success in our careers and it is common to worry if you are not prepared or if you do not have the right skills. If you ever need affirmations before a job or promotion interview, here are some of them:

- I'm perfect for this job. I have the right skills
- I am confident, I have the experience and I have great persuasion skills
- I have the ability to make a difference in this company

Affirmations to make you feel attractive

It is normal to sometimes feel like we are not handsome or beautiful. This is just low confidence. If you ever feel like you have low self-esteem, here are some affirmations to repeat to yourself:

- I am beautiful both in and out
- I am perfect just the way I am and I am proud of the way I look
- I love the clothes I am in. I feel great today!

Affirmations to combat fear

Fear is something we all face and it can materialize for so many reasons. It can be a new job, moving to a new place, meeting someone old or new,

doing something different. Here are some affirmations to help empower you:

- I am strong and capable and I have been training for this.
- I can overcome any obstacle. There is nothing to fear.
- I am ready for real change and I welcome it with open arms.

Affirmations for Dating Confidence

Who doesn't feel worried when going on a date? Even if we are ready to find a new partner, we are often intimidated and limited by our own beliefs and self-esteem. We are worried about what the other person thinks about us. Here are some affirmations that can give you that confidence boost:

- I deserve love and I am confident that I will find it
- Dating is fun, even if it does not go the way I planned
- Every date is an adventure and I will have fun
- I will meet the right partner at the right time

Affirmations that build belief in prosperity

Because the world we live in measures success by how much money we make, it is easy for us to think we are unsuccessful or that other people are doing better than us. We think these thoughts no matter how great our life is and the things we actually have. Though that, wanting more money is not wrong. Having more money means having the ability to get a better house, or a better car or better opportunities for education, or simply a better life. If prosperity and abundance are what you need, here are some affirmations to believe in:

- I am moving closer to a life that brings in new opportunities for better income
- I am excited to be part of this new investment opportunity
- I will get what I want because I worked hard for this. This prosperity is mine.

Bottom Line

Apart from practicing these affirmations, you can also support your self-esteem and belief with other techniques such as meditation and yoga to rewire your brain and focus is towards success in any way or form you want. Simple exercises like affirmations can enable you to reconnect with parts of yourself that you know you deserve better.

Chapter 8: Keep your Brain in Peak Condition

8.1 Mind Games

Just as how we keep our body active, we need to invest time to keep our mind active too. The same importance we give to our bodies sometimes is not cascaded down to our brains. While a little bit of reading is great, research shows that varying our mental health activity is the element to long-term peak brain success. According to findings by Neuroscience, a human brain reaches peak performance between 16 to 25 years old and after this, the cognitive function starts declining.

While it does not sound like such good news, the great thing is no matter how old you are, science proves that with constant and persistent brain exercises, it can benefit your brain.

There are many ways in which you can train your brains such as reading, of course, writing, Sudoku and crossword puzzles, brain teasers and always learning new things and challenging your mind.
Benefits of challenging your mind:

- It improves your memory
- It improves your logic
- It increases your attention and focuses
- Your verbal skills improve

According to Dr. Sherry Willis from the University of Texas, brain training enables individuals to become more efficient at performing daily tasks even from the mundane to the more technical ones.

Intelligence is not a fixed element in the person that you are. It is not something that you are born with. It depends on your environmental and societal factors, your experiences, the desire to learn more as well as your passion. By keeping your brain on its toes, you can ensure that your brain is exercised properly and to its fullest potential.

8.2 Physical Exercise s

It is a known fact that regular exercise can protect your health and help you maintain an ideal body weight in the long run. But did you know that it can also yield additional benefits for the busy professional such as yourself? Studies have shown that regular exercise releases hormones to boost your mood, reduce stress, helps you sleep better at night and if performed in the mornings, help jump-start your day. In the end, exercise helps to boost productivity at work and ultimately boost your business success. Here are some examples of how regular exercise can help not only improve your health but your professional career as well:-

- **Goal Setting And Determination**

When we start exercising or picking up a new sport, we will always set goals for us to achieve. The training we put into these goals such as completing a marathon can help business professionals use that same determination and drive to pursue the challenges and objectives they face in the boardroom.

- **Increase Your Confidence**

Every time you hit the gym and accomplish a goal that you set for that workout, you begin to feel good about yourself. This accomplishment by having a great workout can translate into every area in your life. This can improve your confidence level throughout the day and make you feel great about everything you set yourself to do.

- **Improve Creativity And Thinking Skills**

Studies have shown that exercise does not only benefit the physical part of your body but also the mental part as well. It was shown that cardio exercise not only improved the aerobic capacity of an individual but also improved their cognitive functions as well. The increase in blood flow to the brain has shown to be the main cause of this increase.

- **Reduces Stress**

When we are stressed, we notice that we are unable to act and think properly thus we end up making a lot of not-so-good decisions at work. Exercising helps us battle this stress by releasing endorphins when we induce our bodies through physical activities. These endorphins give us a natural high and allow us to approach our day with a calmer mindset.

- **Increase Energy Levels**

Working day in and day out can lead to an increase in fatigue levels to an individual. If you don't fight this, you end up going to work with low energy levels that will inhibit your performance at work. In a study done on the effect of exercise on an individual's energy levels, it was shown that performing exercises on a daily basis helped them to increase their energy levels by 20 percent while it also helped to reduce their fatigue levels by 65 percent.

Exercising regularly not only helps you to be awake throughout the entire day but it has shown through this study that it helps you get better sleep at night. We have gone through some of the important points why exercising is important both physically and mentally to a busy professional like yourself. But if you have not exercised before or had trouble getting into a routine, it can be a daunting task to reap those benefits that we spoke off earlier. So, the best thing we need to do to build a routine out of exercising is to plan ahead. Let's see the steps that we can take:-

- **Goal Setting**

Determine the individual goals that you want to achieve. It can be from reducing your weight or picking up a new sport. Whatever it may be, be sure to note it down and focus on it.

- **Choosing Your Workout Times**

Choose a time in the day that you feel you can focus on and complete your workouts. This can be either early in the day or at night. There can even be a case where you can sneak in an exercise during lunchtime if your office has a gym. But ultimately, you have to decide what is best for you and a

routine that you will most likely stick to base on your busy schedule. Another important aspect to remember is to always listen to your body. If your body is still sore from your previous workout, or you are feeling tired sick, best to skip the workout for that day. But don’t skip the next one when you feel better.

- **Choosing An Exercise**

Once you have set your goals and workout time, it is no time to choose what workout you want to do. This can be as simple as going for a jog or doing jump ropes. Swimming is another popular exercise that is easy and convenient to do. Joining a local gym and signing up for their aerobic or yoga classes also is a popular choice amongst busy professionals. How about hitting those weights? Don’t know where to start? Get a personal trainer to help you through the basic and fundamental movements. The most important criteria to remember here is to select an activity whether it be a solo or a group activity that most likely you would stick to in the long run and become a part of your daily routine.

- **Learn To Have Fun**

The one final thing that you will need to know once you have covered all the other aspects above is to have fun with the exercise you are doing. Ensure that the activity that you have chosen doesn’t make you feel bored and not fun. When you keep things energized you less likely to give up. So for this, try to join a class or get a workout partner as a start to push you and keep you occupied.

8.3 Making Time in Your Life

For most of us managing our time becomes such a challenge day by day that it will ultimately affect our productivity. We can’t seem to reduce the number of tasks that keep piling on our to-do-list and we just keep getting bombarded with emails, write-ups, reports and not to mention our own personal and household responsibilities.

In 1955, in an essay by Cyril Northcote Parkinson, he coined a phrase known as the “Parkinson Law.” He states that "work expands so as to fill

the time available for its completion." What this means is that the more time we allocate for completing a task or project, we end up taking more time to complete it. Hence, many at times we feel that we can't complete a task even if we thought we have given ourselves ample time to work on it. In the end, the only way we can negate this is to put stricter deadlines and really push yourself to complete them. That's where the "Pomodoro Technique" comes in to play.

This technique is a time management technique that focuses on grouping tasks into 25 minute windows of time. For each 25 minute time window, you will be allocated a 5-minute break. Once you complete four 25 minute windows in succession, you are allowed a longer break which is usually between 15 to 30 minutes. This system was introduced in the late 1980s by a man called Francesco Cirillo.

This system works because instead of focusing on one particular task for an extended period of time, you actually break it down to smaller manageable windows. Also, with the smaller time frame, you will be less tempted to break away and do other unwanted tasks such as checking your email, going through social media or any other distracting activity. Through the Pomodoro Technique, you will find that you end up getting your tasks completed due to this newfound sense of urgency, you will be able to focus on the task at hand, you avoid multi-tasking completely, reduce your stress levels and you will also increase your determination and concentration in completing a task.

Here are some simple steps to get going with the Pomodoro Technique: -

1. Determine your task and decide how much time you will need to complete it
2. Using a timer on your mobile phone, set it to 25 minutes.
3. Focus and work on this specific task for 25 minutes. Resist the urge to be distracted.
4. While you are trying to accomplish your task, do not try to multitask other random tasks.
5. Once the 25 minutes are up, take a quick 5-minute break and get back to the task if you haven't completed it or move on to another task if you have completed the previous one.

6. Remember, once you have completed four Pomodoros in succession, take a 15-30 minute break.

Just like any technique, there are guidelines that you will need to understand and follow in order to maximize your result. Here are four of them: -

1. Remember to take your breaks – When the timer stops, stop your task. You will need this break to relax and refocus back on your next task. Do a task that takes your mind away from work but won't consume more than the 5-minute window allocated.
2. Task Time Length – This isn't much of a guideline as it is a variation. Sometimes a given task can take more than 25 minutes. As such, you can combine two Pomodoros and take the combined break time as allocated. But one thing here is not to go beyond three Pomodoros at one time.
3. Batching Pomodoros – If a specific task takes less than 25 minutes to complete, group several Pomodoros that can be fitted into the 25 minute window time frame.

Using the Pomodoro Technique, you will find yourself being able to easily focus your thoughts and get into the zone in completing a task without being distracted. Many might think this method is too systematic or regimented, but this technique is one sure-fire way to ramp up your productivity and keep yourself focused.

8.4 Designing Your Plan

Deciding what your mission is will set the course of your journey- what you want to achieve by the end of it, where you see yourself at the end of this journey and what you hope to change and what you hope to keep. Consistency and discipline are the one thing that separates an averagely talented person doing something extraordinary and a naturally talented person doing something mediocre with their lives, not using their talents to the fullest potential.

A person's achievement is a contribution of different qualities. Each quality represents a different improvement in a person's life. A person can be super

talented, have the right connections, be at the right place at the right time or Lady Luck just happened to be smiling on them at that precise moment. They can have all the right things going on for them in order to achieve success.

The truth is, there is a slight difference between people who are genuinely successful and those that just got their 15 minutes of luck or fame. For long-term and sustainable success and happiness, the one thing that enables all of this is, being DISCIPLINED.

Designing your life mission is something you cannot see or touch or taste or smell but its effects are momentous. It can transform the fat into the slim, poor into rich, depressed to happy. Yes, you can say that luck plays a role but self- discipline, and productivity are what prepares you to face what this lucky break may bring.

If you want to become a highly successful person, then the first step is to define your goals, to find your mission in life. All of us here can become somebody, so become somebody. We are all here for a reason and we all have significance in this world and all of us are given unique attributes. Some people are lucky to have attributes that are quite obvious like talent in singing and dancing whereas some take time to discover these attributes. Some don't even know they had it in them until they were pushed to their limits or came out of their comfort zone.
Michael Gerber, in his book 'E-Myth: Why Most Small Businesses don't Work' instruct readers to visualize the day of their funeral. When visualizing this, he asks readers to imagine what their eulogy would be like, what would their lifetime achievements be, what would people remember most of them and what would matter most at the end of their lives.
To become disciplined and productive is to also have a purpose in life. What are your goals?

By writing your personal mission statement, it gives you the opportunity to establish what is important to you and it helps you make the necessary decisions to stick to your goals. For some, a mission statement helps them to chart a new course in life.

Think about what outcome you want to see or feel or reap by the end of it. Remember when you create this mission statement, it is your responsibility to stick to it and see this through.

Let's start by doing a little exercise. Get a pen and paper and write down your personal mission statement:

- What are the things that are most important to you?
- What are the things that you want to do in this life?
- What are your values and beliefs?
- What are your personal goals?
- What are your professional goals?

When doing this exercise, remember that creating your mission statement isn't a one-time thing that's set in stone. Give yourself that opportunity to review your mission statement annually and see if it has resulted in aligning positively with your life, career, jobs, and relationships. Make adjustments if necessary.

Once you are done writing your personal mission statement, you need to think about how you will accomplish this. Let's just say that your mission statement at the end of your productivity journey is to lead a healthier life. Here are some examples of how you can accomplish this:

- Wake up early and do a 10-minute exercise
- Meal prep for the week so you do not create any cravings to indulge in
- Surround yourself with likeminded people
- Join a boot camp or fitness class that you are interested in

No matter what your bottom line is, no matter what goals you have- whether it is to climb the corporate ladder, save a certain amount of money, lose weight and get fit or even work on your relationship- all these things can be achieved by practicing productivity. Because not only will you accomplish your goals, you will also lead a healthier lifestyle and above all, be happy. Jesse Owens, American Olympic track gold medallist once said 'We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort'.

At times when there is a conflict or barrier when working on your goals, people with self-control were much better equipped at dealing with these conflicts than those without. People with self-control, a positive mindset, discipline, and higher productivity spend less time indulging with habits or behaviors that distract them from achieving their goals. Here are some traits of productive people:

- They are able to make positive decisions much more easily.
- They do not make choices based on their feelings or impulses
- They make informed, rational decisions
- They do not get overly stressed or upset by any changes that come their way

Success isn't something someone is born with. It is cultivated and learned behavior. It requires one to repeat and practice their day-to-day tasks. Now that you know what, why and how- you can begin to piece your mission statement together. A mission statement shouldn't belong either- it should be something that you can sum up in one or two sentences. Write down your mission statement and place it somewhere you can always see is that it can give you motivation when you just aren't feeling like working out or putting in those extra hours. Once you have done your mission statement, it's time to kick start your journey towards being a highly productive individual!

Creating a Personal Commitment

One of the first few things anyone must do to become productive is to make a personal commitment. Your commitment should be that from this day forward, you are going to do the things you know you must do, and when must you do them. This commitment must include the rule that you cannot allow yourself to make excuses or justify why you aren't doing what you are supposed to be doing. Yes, it's hard to do but the key here is to start small. It's the process, not the end result.

Doing small changes in your daily life will help you towards becoming productive and self-disciplined. Start your day by waking up early. If your regular wake up time is at 8 am, then make it 7.30 am. Make your bed or empty out the trash. All these tiny things are what get you en route to become more disciplined. Robert Collier wisely said 'Success if the sum of

small efforts, repeated day in day out'. Becoming disciplined may seem like the hardest thing you can do, but the rewards are immense. A successful life is built on a foundation of the discipline.

Building Your Personal Commitment to Change

Commitment is all about being dedicated to doing something, to take action in order to bring out the desired result. It is the dedication to take action. Make no mistake that commitment is a result of an external force. No-commitment is an internally motivated feature. You need to be willing to take action because you care about the results.

For successful and sustainable change, you need this level of commitment. This is what fuels a person's desire to take the next step, to keep things on going and to always look for solutions whenever there's a problem. So how do you know the strength of commitment that you have for your professional or personal goals?

Firstly, all of us have commitments that are about things and issues that we care about. For instance, you may be displaced by the discomfort you feel right now about how things are, or you may feel the yearning for something better. You may also be moved by an exciting challenge to create something new for yourself or your company. So ask yourself- what is it that is important to me and why do I need to change? What are the things I care most about? The change will never be achieved without any commitment. We need to have a strong commitment that engages us to change and to sustain.

Take Action to Build Commitment for Change

Follow these guidelines to help you make a strong commitment to change:

Express and Demonstrate Change- Whether your commitments is to your organization or to your job or to your family, always remember that change does not come from a large organization, rather it's the people that change. Leaders need to be involved in expressing and demonstrating their commitment to goals in order to influence change. An environment of change needs to be created in order to encourage others to commit.

Be clear on your purpose to change to make a change is to have a clear focus. If your agenda is clear with measurable results, you will not lose

sight of your goals.

Invite Reflection- Reflecting on what you have done and how you have worked before to attain your previous goals will help you achieve your future ones. Sometimes looking back helps you pinpoint what exactly went wrong or how best to improve on this.

Make room for emotional change- Allow yourself to express discomfort, excitement, fear or sadness. You are after all human and making changes is a big thing in anyone's lives. So you will be experiencing different emotions along the path to glory. Make adjustments along the way if you need to.

Be free to commit- Don't restrict yourself when it comes to changing. Just understand that change takes time and energy, so don't expect to launch in a series of different changes at one go and expect yourself to commit immediately.

Follow through- When you have committed yourself to change, you need to make sure that you clearly demonstrate the actions that are required to make that change. Start small and keep the momentum going till you reach your personal best, and then it's time to reinvent and make new changes- keep the wheel going. Never stop re-inventing.

Chapter 9- Conclusion

Rewiring your brain to improve your life takes a lot of work, whether or not you have anxiety and with meditation, whether you are new to it or you've tried it before it helps for anyone looking to gain a calmer and more relaxed mind. For those with anxiety, meditation and breathing exercises help us channel all that energy building up and let it flow smoothly between our mind and body so that we can comprehend situations around us better and make more informed decisions on what to do when problems arise. Throughout this book, we discussed our anxious brain and why we tend to overthink things as well as how anxiety affects our bodies as well as our mind.

We also looked into the connection between the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex. Though this may sound scientific, this chapter at least gives a sense of awareness to people with anxiety as to why this happens and why our mind works the way it does .

Understanding this connection is helpful so we are educated and aware of what we can do on our own to stop this connection from destroying us. You may have seen this word called the amygdala hijack which is to prevent the amygdala from acting the way it does, or in other words prevent it from responding out of measure. This whole book aims to help you understand your brain and why it is anxious as well as how meditation helps as a complementary treatment for anxiety and stress.

If you are taking pills, having sessions with your therapist and taking the necessary steps to lessen your anxiety attacks, then you should include meditation and yoga as part of the treatments for your anxiety. Although meditation is something that is beneficial for everyone, not everyone is currently putting it into practice. Some people are not practicing meditation at all. Why? Because it isn't a habit. That and a lot of us lead very busy lives, sometimes our plates seem too full to take on anything else. There will always be a reason *not* to start something, which is why it is entirely up to you to *make time* for it.

Establishing a Meditation Practice that fits your needs

The purpose of establishing a meditation practice is because you want to make meditation a habit, a part of your daily life, something you willing to do every day without even thinking twice or resisting it because you're pressed for time.

Establishing a practice will help meditation become an ingrained activity in your life, much like how brushing your teeth or showering, preparing something to eat and even your daily commute to work. Those habits are so deeply ingrained in you that you do them without any effort or a lot of thought put into it.

That's what establishing a meditation practice aims to do for you right now, and something you need to establish as a foundation leading up to your four-week plan program to achieve deep meditation. The following steps will help you start establishing a meditation practice for yourself, preparing you to be well and truly ready for the four-week plan to achieve a deeper state of meditation:

- **Baby Steps at First –** Trying to do too much too soon is how a lot of people crash and burn. You *need* to start small and this can't be emphasized enough. Yes, it seems like slow progress in the beginning, but that's okay. Remember that old saying *slow and steady wins the race?* Keep the bigger picture in mind and practice patience. Start small at first by meditating for short periods of time, maybe 5-10 minutes a day, especially if you're new at it. You can do anything for 5-10 minutes a day with no resistance, and the time will pass before you even know it. When you see how easy that was, it keeps you motivated to keep adding onto that. Creating small, achievable goals you can do every day is how you begin building the habit of making meditation a part of your daily life.

- **Use Guided Meditations –** There are apps that will guide you through the meditation process, and if you need to rely on one,

in the beginning, go ahead and do it. Guided meditations can be a great tool, especially for beginners on this journey, to help you stay on track and on the right path. It will help you make sure that you're breathing techniques are what they should be, that you're relaxed, it helps you visualize and it helps you free your mind and immerse yourself in the whole experience if you're not constantly focused on whether or not you're doing it right. Guided meditations make it much easier for beginners especially to start getting into the flow of things and helps you progress in the right direction with your meditation sessions, especially when you're doing it alone as a solo practice, it's good to know that you're heading in the right direction.

- **Create Your Space –** Creating a space within your home that you actually look forward to spending some time in is an essential part of establishing a consistent meditation practice. Create a space in your home that is dedicated solely for your meditation sessions, and fill that space with anything you need to make you feel comfortable, that makes you feel like you want to be there for a while. You can fill it with pillows, cushions, pictures that inspire you, incense or scented candles if it helps, anything that helps soothe your soul and brings you a sense of calm. That will go a long way towards helping you make meditation a consistency in your life if you have a space that you look forward to spending some time in each day because of the comfort and calm that it envelopes you in.

- **Calendar It In –** In the beginning, you'll need to have reminders that you need to practice your meditation for today. Make it a point to pencil it into your calendar or make it note of it on your calendar app on your phone. It can be easy for other things going on during the day to take precedence over your meditation session, which is why you need to purposely make that time to just stop and meditate before the day comes to an end and you realize you didn't get to spend any time meditating at all.

IMPROVE YOUR PEOPLE SKILLS

A GUIDEBOOK TO IMPROVE YOUR SOCIAL SKILLS, WIN FRIENDS, UNLEASH THE EMPATH IN YOU AND RAISE YOUR EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT

By Greg Williams

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Chapter 1: Social Skill s

Definition of Social Skills

A social skill is an ability that helps one to interact as well as communicate with other persons. The skills can either be verbal or non-verbal, through gesture, personal appearance as well as body language. As well, social power is learned conduct that allows an individual to reach social reinforcement. Social skills are known to create as well as maintain relationships between people. They help us to initiate conversations, make friends, have excellent sportsmanship as well as be in a position to handle bullying efficiently. The process that we learn social skills is referred to as socialization. Some analysts prefer using the term behavioral skills In the place of social skills.

Behavioral skills help build social skills. The skills are used in treating addiction and also are a way of helping people who suffer from depression, developmental disabilities as well as indefinite personality disorders. Considering that people encounter numerous social problems, having an encounter in a safe environment will ease the stress as well as the punishment from the meeting. Helping one have the right social skills will raise their reinforcement. Social skills are linked to being successful, have independence as well as emotional well-being. Excellent social skills will help you demonstrate the superior potential to observe, solving problems as well as responding in social circumstances. Humans are a social being and pose social skills is a vital way to help them communicate with one another. We can communicate with others and deliver messages, what we are thinking and also what we feel. You need to have social skills to make a conversation successful.

Why Social Skills are Inside to All of Us

Everyone is supposed to be equipped with social skills to help them to run their day to day life. Consistency will not be achieved when we do not have the right social skills. Being regarded as a decent human being will come from one exercising their social powers in the expected ways. We all need to have excellent social skills despite age, gender, ethnicity, as well as our

status. There are reasons why we have the social abilities inside of us. The reasons include.

To enable us to create more Relationships

Identifying with people will result in a relationship, and many cases end up in a friendship. You cannot grow in life if you do not recognize your relationship with other individuals. For you to find satisfaction in life, you need to have a social network that enables you to create new friends. Having social skills with us will help us to identify well with people, you become charismatic as well as have an admirable character. People like interacting with charismatic individuals because they seem to be interested in the other party. For you to advance in life, you will be required to have firm interpersonal relations with people. Excellent sharpened social skills will help you live a happy as well as a pleasant experience and give you a better view of life.

To promote excellent Communication s

Social skills will develop your interaction with other persons since you can communicate with them. Having better communication skills will boost your social skills. We are able to deliver the thoughts as well as our ideas and what we generally fell. The reason we should have social skills in us is so that we can relate to people. We are also in a position to work in a big group. Communication can either be verbal or non-verbal. Non-verbal communication connects people and as well build trust between them. Making eye contact, occasionally nodding when talking with someone and maintaining an open posture indicates that you are not closed off. Having social skills in us is more than speaking typically but as well as integrating nonverbal skills.

To aid us in achieving more Efficiency

If you love interacting with people, you need to avoid being around the people you cannot be compatible with. Spending time with a person who has no similar interest as well as a viewpoint with you will not help grow. In such cases, you need to use a polite way to tell that person you need to find someone else to interact with. Possessing excellent social skills will

help you know how to handle that person to achieve more efficiency. When in a social situation, you need to spend time with the people that you share some ideas and have similar intentions that will help you advance in life. Having a set of excellent social skills will always help you be polite in all situations. Learn to say no when you don't want to engage in something, and people will embrace that with time. Participating in a conversation when you feel not interested will kill your moral to participate in a productive talk.

Helping us to build a better Career

Working in any organizational set up will require you to have excellent social skills. You tend to spend more time interacting with either your colleagues or your employees. You cannot stay in isolation since that will not contribute to the success of the organization. The social skill that you have will help you have a healthy relationship in your workplace. Excellence, as well as growth, will be achieved when everyone brings together their unique talents. Getting along as well as understanding people will expose you to many career-related outlets. The social skills that you have will as well help you in some cases to secure a job. Even after securing the post, you will be more likely to make progress. Everyone appreciates good work, practicing social skills that you have will as well make you be promoted. Having excellent social skills will serve as a way of influencing as well as motivating people to have things done in the way they are supposed. Some conversations may even lead to you securing a well-paying job or a salary increment.

Improve your quality of Life

Social skills help us to create significant social networks that later help us to deal with loneliness or depression. You are likely to experience a happy being compared to someone who has no social networks or an introvert. Better social skills can help us to boost our confidence and strike a conversation with someone, which may lead to the creation of a friendship. Engaging in an interview will help you stay warm and comfortable too. It is essential and will help you live a long and healthy life. Social skills will serve as a foundation of a positive relationship with either your friend or family. You feel the sense of belonging when associated with a particular

social get together. You can’t compare living a timid life and being bold. Keeping much to your self will do more harm than good. Thinking positively will give other people the impression that you are fun and productive to be around with. With developed social skills, you get more confident with how you conduct yourself in either a social or professional setting.

To help you manage Conflicts

Developing social skills will help you better understand how people interact in any social setting. You will adapt to any personality and have the confidence to manage conflict in case of any. Having social skills will help you how to have a productive conversation to resolve disputes. You will learn how to listen as well as interpreting body language actively. It will aid you in knowing the kind of response to give.

It will benefit both you and the ones around you

You will not give yourself the chance to blend with people if you don’t like to mingle with people in a social gathering. Being in a social group will help you boost your social life as well as the relationship. You will have a chance to meet with other persons besides the ones you know. Meeting new faces will allow you to interact with resourceful persons. The more you interact with different people, the higher the chances of growing. Knowing how and what makes people comfortable will be boosted by your social skills. Engaging in a conversation with someone can impact them positively, even without your knowledge. Your self-confidence will be increased, and you will not be afraid of making any errors. Having social skills in you will help you to know how to conduct yourself, whatever the case, and in any situation. Being enthusiastic makes your character attracts the people around you. That will give you an excellent opportunity to widen your circles as well as strengthening your relationships.

Why Social Skills are Affecting Our Lives

Even though social skills are viewed as tools to help the society, as well as individuals, grow, they can also affect us negatively. Poor social skills, as well as lack of these skills, will lead to increased cases of stress and

depression. Your mental health, as well as the physical one, can be significantly harmed as a result. You are more likely to experience difficulties in handling other people as well as your relationships.

Some necessary social skills, like communication, have several effects on our lives. Poor communication skills will lead to the breaking of relationships as well as leads to arguments. You will lose the morale to do anything, and in an organizational set-up, this will lead to reduced turnover. Productivity is as well likely to go down, and hence, the desired results will not be achieved. Conflicts and disagreements will arise between people affecting how they relate with each other. Communication through modern technology can, at times lead to reduced sociability amongst people. It makes young people lack confidence and cannot deliver before a social gathering. Lack of trust will keep you away from a multitude of opportunities. Helping other people grow is our primary goal in life, and this may not come to be if we do not interact with people often. You may not know what people are going through and what their feelings are if you don't get to socialize with them. The advantages associated with having the desired social skills may not accompany someone who has no appropriate social skills. Lacking social skills will be difficult for you to make it in life.

Being an introvert will result in loneliness, which leads to stressful situations, and it may grow to be depression. Not meeting with people on a regular basis can keep you away from many job opportunities. Using your social skills in a recommendable way can make your career growth and vice versa. Some social skills can lead to someone being proud. Pride will make one not want to interact with someone of a different financial level with them. It will make them feel avoided, and that may lead them to seclude themselves and fell avoided too. Downcast eyes are, in some cases, viewed as someone being shy or lack confidence. It is as well regarded as a sign of indecency in some cultural practices. Having a face to face conversation can as well be misinterpreted when it involves people of different genders. Social skills can be learned, and each set has a set of social skills. You cannot transfer some social skills from one environment to a different one.

Social skills affect the way we relate with others. In other words, if you are shy, you might develop some problems with the way you connect with your fellow colleges. In most cases, shyness is translated as a lack of courage and

interpreted as fear. However, one can improve in such skills and lead a better life. If you are a conservative, you might have issues with development. In other words, if you are resistant to change, you might find it difficult to associate with people who are change-oriented. Thus, as an individual, you need to understand that some of these social skills that people develop affect the way they relate with each other.

It is worth noting that poor social skills can be a source of mental illness. As pointed out, social skills allow one to communicate with others effectively. Thus, if you have developed poor social skills with time, you might have some difficulties while interacting with others. In most cases, people who have negative thoughts and poor social skills tend to be lonely and more stressful as compared to people with excellent social skills. Scholars claim that loneliness is one of the causes of mental illness among individuals. Socially needy people tend to pile up issues, and they don't communicate. However, some of these social skills can be developed and grasped with time. In other words, if you want to improve on your social skills, you can adopt some by learning or watching how other people do things. The aspect is critical in the sense that it allows people to be socially active and avoid cases where loneliness pile up in terms of stress and lack of sharing. Thus, as an individual, you need to concentrate on improving your social skills as they are helpful in life. If your environment doesn't favor you, you may consider changing it and adopt one that will increase your concentration as well as improve your experience. In other words, the environment that one dwells intends to affect the way one thinks or behaves. Thus, it is vital to check on the aspects of life that surrounds you. The art is linked to the fact that the environment affects one social skill which tends to change and individual experience as well.

Chapter 2: How to Improve Your Social Skills

In life, if you are shy and struggle in fascinating conversations, you might be having issues in your social life. However, there are some of the social skills that one can gain through learning. For instance, if you aren't a social person, start behaving like one and do it smartly. Don't allow issues such as anxiety to hold you back. However, you need to make decisions and keep talking to people, whether new or old pals. Even if you are feeling nervous, make a point of improvement in terms of social skills by joining a small party or spend more time with crowds and try striking conversations. With time, you will improve on some for the social skills you feel you are deprived of. It is worth noting that if you want to draw more attention from people, make a pint of asking open-ended questions. Such questions invite people to respond with a yes or no, and the art may open up the door for more conversations. Thus, as you start the journey gaining some social skills, encourage others to talk about themselves and ask questions that will increase their interests in the topic in question. The art allows one to feel appreciated and turn out to be a charismatic speaker, let alone a good listener.

Take a look at some of the strategies you can use to improve your social skills

Listen More Talk Less

It is worth noting that good speakers are also good listeners. In other words, if you want to be a good speaker and improve on some of your social skills, you need to be a good listener as well. The art of listening is critical in the sense that it allows one to gain some social skills that are vital in life. It is worth noting that a lot of knowledge is achieved when one is listening rather than speaking. The art of talking means that you are giving away information, while the art of listening means that you are receiving information. In other words, if you train yourself to be listening more, you will gain more power and a lot of knowledge when speaking. You will have learned a lot of details that are critical when conversing .

Also if you listen more, you won`t have time to reveal anything that you will later regret. In other words, if you speak something, you won`t have a

time of recalling it back. However, if you are keen on listening, you will be in an excellent position to identify some of the informing that needs to be left behind. It is worth speaking thoughtfully and removes all the doubt rather than talking a lot and later wished that you never spoke. Also, if you listen a lot, you will be in a good position of understanding issues that have been talked about. In other words, you won`t keep repeating problems that have already been discussed, and you will maintain some originality. If you are an active listener, the chances are that you will learn some of the things that annoy people. In other words, you will quickly understand some of the critical elements that make people feel upset or feel un-appreciated. However, if you are among the lot that speaks a lot without listening to what other people say, there are chances that you will have some difficulties understanding some of the issues that cause people to feel unappreciated. You will keep speaking and lose your stature as well since people won`t know what you are talking about .

Think before you speak

A good speaker is always charismatic. Good speakers always make sense in whatever they are talking about. In most cases, they think before speaking. They will spend some time trying to analyze what they feel in their hearts. Such speakers will put themselves in the shoes of their listeners and try to figure out what the audience will feel. It is worth noting that mindful thinking before one speaks is critical in life. It allows one to open up and speak sense. Also, it will enable one to figure out the exact feeling that people have as they listen to someone. If one can think criticality before speaking, one will be in a good position of creating a pleasant environment that will allow the audience to listen more and learn more from the speech.

The art of thinking before you speak is critical in the sense that it allows one to analyze whether whatever is to be spoken is true or not. In other words, if you are quick in analyzing your speech before releasing it, you will be in a good position to weigh all the information and determine what is right and what is annoying to the public. For instance, if someone asks you a question, there are chances that they might be having a clue of what is right? In most cases, if you didn’t speak the truth, they will know in the long run. Thus, if you are telling a story, it is good to think whether whatever you are speaking is true or not. Don`t exaggerate issues but speak

all that is real and be honest with all that has happened. The aspect is critical in the sense that it allows one to be free and avoid being in chaos when the truth is revealed. It is worth noting that it is better to stay silent rather than say something that is not helpful. It is good to consider whether whatever you comment is useful or inspiring. If whatever you are about to speak may hurt someone, it is better to remain silent and avoid annoying others. For instance, if you are about to compliment someone about the things that they have done, make a point of choosing your words to avoid hurting others. It is good to issue a congratulation message rather than praise someone at the expense of others. Also, if you are watching someone struggle with something, make a point of helping them overcome the issue silently rather than mocking them.

Mindfulness and Listening technique s

Mindfulness refers to the practice of paying attention to the present moment without making any judgments. In other words, it is the act of considering the emotional reactions that one may have over specific issues. The art of listening mindfully is critical in the sense that it allows one to be considerate of what they speak. Also, mindful listening is crucial in the sense that it will enable one to avoid a lot of distractions when listening. It is worth noting that one keenly listens and remembers only 25 % of minutes after listening to someone. In other words, if you are not careful with what you are looking, you may end up learning to note, and in the long run, you may end up being a lousy speaker as well. Listening is vital in building some of the tips that are necessary for one to be essential in life.

Mindful listening is critical in the sense that it allows one to develop some self-awareness tips that are critical in life. If you listen with your minds tuned to the speaker, you will be conscious of the environment that is surrounding you. You will also have chances of uncovering some of the unknown biases that can only be identified in listening to someone. Also, if you want to increase your empathy, make a point of being a mindful listener. In other words, you will be in a position of understanding the other person well and share their feeling .

Mindful listening is essential. It allows one to develop some of the social skills that are vital in life. If you want to practice mindful listening, you need to halt all whatever you have been doing and offer all your attention to

whatever is being spoken. Also, it is good to enjoy whatever you are listening too. The aspect is critical in the sense that it allows one to create a safe environment for learning. In other words, try to create an enabling environment where you can effectively listen. It is worth noting that active listening starts from the minds. In other words, you need to alter your mindset and focus on the speaker to trap all that is being communicated. It is worth noting that active listening requires one to maintain eye contact with the speaker. You need to reflect on what you are listening to and choose to select what is vital. In other words, you need to ask yourself whether you are looking carefully or whether you are making assumptions over what is being spoken. You need to be attentive and try to make discoveries as you search. In other listen attentively and note some of the issues that are different and might be surprised that you know very little of the problems you thought you had captured in other sessions. Avoid making judgments as you listen. However, you can make conclusions or reflect on what you have heard later.

Relaxation Techniques

It is worth noting that our minds aren’t robots or machines. It reaches a time where one is required to relax and allow the thoughts to regain energy. In other words, if you allow your thoughts to rest and freshens up, you will be able to capture more issues afterward. Thus, after listening and capturing new aspects of life, you need to relax and allow your minds to regain some energy. Some of the vital relaxation techniques include yoga, breath focus, mindful meditations, repetitive prayer, as well as body scan, among others. It is worth noting that conscious thinking uses a lot of energy. Therefore, one needs to relax and empty their minds, as well. For instance, the art of breath focus allows one to take slow but deep breaths that allows the thoughts to relax and focus on breathing rather than any other aspect of life. Yoga is also vital in the sense that it will enable one to empty their minds and allows them to refresh up. Such techniques are critical in the sense that one can relax and create some space for more aspects.

The Environment and your Mindfulness

A conducive environment allows one to think well and relax. In other words, if you are in a noisy environment, there are chances that you won`t be able to think right, and your mind has an issue with the art of listening as

well. It is worth noting if you can`t hear well, there are chances that you won`t be able to think as well. Thus, you need to be sensitive to the environment that might affect the way you think or act.

It is worth noting that the minds of an individual are at times affected by what one does or sees. In other words, the things you see might negatively or positively affect what you see. According to the principles of colors, the hues, or the coloring around your home may have an impact on your mood as well. For instance, red symbolizes passion, and it is very vital in boosting one`s energy. On the other hand, blue and grey promote some sense of relaxation as well as tranquility. The colors can also be used as alternatives in high traffic areas. Thus, it is wise to consider the colors that surround you. It is worth noting that white is a classic home paint that exudes calmness as well as purity. However, white colors make a room to appear small or poorly lit. Yellow and green colors, on the other hand, may signify creativity or prosperity in the way. The art is linked to the fact that the colors have a perfect accent that is associated with a natural spackle as well as success.

Nature touches the minds of a person. It is worth noting that the green color is associated with the art of being mindful. The connection between life and awareness depends on the environment that one is in. In other words, if you want to concentrate and achieve a particular aspect, make a point of investing in the environment that surrounds you. In most cases, a situation with plants tends to be livelier. Lighting in a study room shows that one is the focus and ready to face reality as well. It is critical to note that your environment can be a source of stress. In other words, the way you arrange your house may affect what you think as well as the way you deliberate in issues. Consider your furnishing as well as the timber that put on your environment. The art is due to the fact that that timber, stone as well as textiles that are crafted naturally tend to be healthier and more potent than the human-made counterpart. Thus, make a point of considering some of the furniture you use in your room. Your room needs to be shining so as you can think well and act appropriately.

The effect of climate change on what human being things act or behave ought to be considered. In other words, the physical environment tends to affect the global as well as the economic disruption that one poses. The art

of change in the situation tends to increase the number of people or issues in a certain. The art of being mindful depends on the factors that surround an individual. It is worth noting that most people didn’t think about the things the routine things such as throwing trash in a bin or taking a shower. However, most of us are concerned with the things that promote environmental sustainability. In other words, mindfulness allows individuals to disengage from automatic thoughts and become more open to behavioral change as well as make critical choices that are helpful .

An enabling environment also supports mindful meditation. In other words, if you are in a conducive environment, you will be in a position to think right and faster than being in a noisy environment. Although there are people who tend to adopt new ways of doing things in a noisy environment, their concentrations tend to be relatively low. Practical mindfulness requires one to be attentive to all the sounds that pass across one ear. It is worth noting that being mindful doesn’t involve the sensitization of the people in a particular environment. However, it consists of the art of sustaining a clean environment that allows one to think the right way. The nature that surrounds a place plays a critical role in dictating what someone thinks. In other words, the minds are strongly connected to the fundamental issues that surround it. The art of being active, happy as well as being friendly, depends on the natural features that cover a particular phenomenon. Thus, people tend to prefer places that favor them in terms of being mindful and productive. In most cases, the art of being mindful tends to improve with the environment, and a highly esteemed environment tends to offer more satisfactions hence more preferred.

Chapter3: Using Emotional Quotient to Your Advantage

What is emotional quotient?

You've probably heard of IQ (measure cognitive abilities) and not EQ. Emotional quotient is sometimes referred to as Emotional intelligence. But you might be wondering what it means. Well, this is the level of measure of personal emotional intelligence.

Also, it's the ability of a person to know their emotions and those of others and differentiate the variety of emotions correctly. Emotional quotient is useful in our day to day activities; with it, you will be able to guide your behaviors and influence that of others. After all, you can give others the power that you only possess.

Additionally, this is a vital factor in all aspects of your life. That is your mental, spiritual, and social life. It helps you connect at a deeper self. And mold you into a desirable human being. EQ is what enables have to have serious conversations with your partner or empathize with your friend when they are going through a challenging situation or discipline your children when they do wrong.

EQ assists in emotional and social learning in children. College students with EQ get to perform better engage in more social interactions and develop constructive behaviors rather than the destructive.

Components of emotional quotient

- **Self-regulation** - You need to recognize yourself and your behaviors. Then, you regulate, express and manage your emotions
- **Self- awareness-** self-awareness acts as a foundation EQ .understanding your feelings is vital as tend to extend those emotions to others
- **Social skills** – social skills helps to foster interaction amongst people. Those with high EQ, can interact well with others and expressing themselves is never a hard task

- **Empathy** - empathy enables you to register people feelings, known how they feel
- **Motivation**- people with high emotion quotient are self-motivated. They are happy achieving internal success, rather than external. They work hard towards their goals. Achievements such as wealth, respect, or fame don't fascinate them much. But reaching their goals is what entices them.

Characteristics of people with high EQ

1. They have a healthy work-life balance- they know how to interact with people at workplaces and air out their views when they don't agree with issues.
2. Easy going- you can talk to them, with feeling intimidated
3. They are grateful- they don't take their lives for granted, and little things fascinate them. They are thankful for everything life family, life, and also their jobs.
4. open-minded- they are not confined to their beliefs of a certain thing, but are open to new ideas and are ready to embrace them
5. They know their strengths are always willing to work on their weaknesses.
6. Forgive others easily- they don't hold grudges but forgive others
7. Know them- they know their likes, dislikes, and what they stand for in life.
8. Empathetic- they put themselves in people's shoes and can sympathize with them.

Those without emotional quotient

People are different, and forcing other people to behave in a certain way can end up bad. You don't force someone to become what you want, but you let them willingly become. EQ is not necessarily inherited but is a skill that can be developed over some time if you train.
The following are characteristics of people without EQ;

1. Unable to control their emotions. Can react veraciously to anger situations.
2. They don’t care about other people's feelings. Or instead, they are clueless. They don’t notice if someone is sad or happy.
3. They don’t know how to deal with sadness or grief. In short, emotional scenes in movies don’t move them. You neither cry and feel the part

Importance of developing emotional quotient

When you develop this skill you get to ;
Improve your relationships . It could be with your partner's friends, neighbors, or relatives. You build on your communication skills and know-how to persuade, being open, and channel your emotions.
Understand yourself and others well - you don’t forever become clueless, but you can study how you react to your emotions and also you know how others in your environment
You connect with others . Most human beings crave connection. You connect with others at a deeper level. When you connect with others; you boost your overall performance in school, home, and also work.

Skills that will assist you in developing emotional quotient

Channel your emotions well

Are you the type to break things when angry? Recognize how you react to situations. Anger can be destructive, and you should learn how to control it. Share the joyful moments with the people around you.

Learn how to motivate yoursel f

Appreciate yourself in everything g you do. Believe you can do anything and you will. Do something even you don't feel like doing. It could be waking up, writing, etc. self- motivation pushes you to be a better you.

Practice self- awareness

Know yourself. Investigate yourself and learn the little aspects you didn’t S know about yourself. What you feel. Remove distractions from your life

and learn how to motivate yourself.

Recognize the way other people feel.
Understand people and listen to people more. People are vulnerable. When you recognize other people's feelings, you will be able to foster a romantic atmosphere, also respect other people's needs and wants. You become selfless.

Self-awareness technique s

Self-awareness means that you can recognize yourself on a personal level. This is s inclusive of your strengths weaknesses, emotions, thoughts, and also believes. Self-awareness makes you understand people and return their feelings,
Also, you can correct your behaviors and improve yourself for the better things about you start to change, and you become more optimistic when it comes to life. Self-awareness increases your level of EQ and gives you a sense of direction in your future. Lastly, you learn how to optimize yourself.

The following are self-awareness techniques:

Have a journal
In this journal scribble everything and anything that goes on in your life. Your, goals, your, strengths, your weakness, your success stories, among other things, a journal helps you free yourself from various emotions, especially those of anger. You vent out and in return, become happier.
You learn to appreciate yourself more and work hard towards achieving your goals
Be objective about yourself .

Self-awareness enable3 you learn and accept yourself the way you are. You learn more things about yourself. What perceptions do you have when you experience certain aspects of life?
Learn how you react to happy situations, sad situations, or people. Write things you are proud of and what makes you. Being objective enables you to encourage others to be the better versions of them, as you are.

Meditate

Meditation is a good, mindfulness activity. It helps you relax your mind. This is a high daily activity of self-awareness.
Find a quiet, comfortable place to start your meditation. Then, close your eyes and be in the moment and, lastly breathe. Meditation helps you relax. You reflect on yourself, your goals, and assist you to focus more.

Ask feedback from your friends.
Feedback is important. Ask your friends for honest feedback. They should tell you how you behave and how they perceive you. They act as a mirror. Honest feedback will enable you to know yourself more and also know the qualities to improve.

Interrogate yourself.
Ask yourself questions concerning a different aspect of your life.
They could be your likes, dislikes, what you are good at, things that make you happy or the one that interests, write down on your journal. You can always review later.

Take personality tests
Several personality tests are online. With them, you are enabled to measure your innate capabilities as a human being. The test gives you a good self-awareness ground, and you can improve. Personality tests don't need to be 100%.
Finally, Self-awareness is crucial as it helps you become the best version of yourself.

Self -management

Self-management means taking responsibilities and the actions that you take in life. You become the boss of you and regulate your behaviors, emotions, thoughts, in different situations.

The following are rules of self-management rules. They are what guide you in your self-management journey:

- **Cultivate trust** - you need to created trust or be trustworthy so that people will have faith in you.
- **Be yourself** - don't copy others. You are amazing the way that you are. Copying others will stop you from living your best

life. Be original

- **Have a courtesy** -courteous phrases like thank you, sorry, and excuse me don't cost any dime. They make you responsible, and a respected person as you mind what others feel.
- **Always learn to say no**- you don't have to say yes, to all situations. Saying no to friends outing is okay as it can give you more time for yourself.
- **Speak up**- don't be quiet when things are wrong; people need to know you and what you stand for. You don't expect people to hear what is in your heart or mind, dear.
- **Keep your promises.** When you promise a thing to someone strive to fulfill it. Keeping promises enhances the trust that people have in you
- **Take care of yourself** - If you don't, then who will? Make yourself the priority. Exercise, meditate, ad eats healthily and have fun in all things that fascinate you.

Key self-management skills
The following skills will help you manage your skills.

Initiative
From the name, this means that you take actions concerning different events that take place in your life. You don't need one to tell you that something needs to be done but, instead you, do it. You are not pushed but you self-motivate yourself.

Organization
With organization skills that plan what you need from most relevant to the least important. The organization ensures you get most done out of your daily activities.

Accountabilit y
Accountability means that you are responsible for yourself. When things go wrong, you can rectify without blaming others. Blaming sucks and it's only for those who don't want to own up to their mistakes. Accountability enables you to improve your skills.

Importance of self- management
Self- management enables you to take advantage of rare opportunities.

When called upon to take on duty, you don't hesitate since you know how to organize yourself and are ready to grasp any opportunities that present themselves.

Focus on your goals -
For goals to achieved, several things need to take place. That is lots of work hard and commitment. But, self-management becomes your drive to do anything.
Become comfortable when working and know how to organize time
The saying goes to say that time is money. When you know how to plan your time, then you get a lot done in your life. You become happier as your productivity rates improve. When working, you don't have any worries because you know yourself more .

Control your emotions
Knowing how to deal with situations and finally you know to behave. Getting along with others won't be difficult, as you have empathetic s skills in you. You know what you want and exactly what you stand for.

Social awareness

Social awareness is the understanding of one's environment or community. That could be the culture, norms and regulations, and problems. You understand your environmental well and discover how to deal with the conditions surrounding it. Also, you can interact with people and know how they feel. With this, you can deal with intrapersonal and societal problems.

With this, you can solve personal problems. In this technological world, Social media and video conferencing is not a big deal. But in reality, people crave attention. Technology has resulted in social isolation.

Importance of social awarenes s

When you lack social awareness, then, you will be a misfit to society. You need to understand what is going on around your environment. The advantages include:

- It helps to understand and communicate with people. Speaking to people is important. When you as aware of what is going around you, then you will be able to conduct a conversation.
- You become more empathetic- social awareness enables you to notice pain in people. Hence, you help others deal with their grief.
- You develop problem-solving skills- when a problem arises, then you can come up with a solution and solve it.
- You get respect from people- people begin respecting you as they feel you understand them and can solve certain situations.

How to develop social -awareness skills

Become self-aware

When you know who you are, then you know exactly who you are. You observe and react to the situations of others who need your help. You think of others and help them deal with different situations in their life.

Practice forgivenes s

Holding grudges is not good for yourself or even others. It creates hostility. Forgiveness improves the quality of your life. You became aware of other people's feelings. Lastly, you deal with people in a better way.

Be mindful

Whatever you do, your actions and feelings, you need to be aware of people living around you. Be polite and calm. This will connect with people more and enhance your happiness

Affirm regularly

Every morning in the mirror, tell yourself that you are an important person and you are able. Affirmation improves yourself self- awareness. You even start appreciating those in your environment more.

Listen more, talk less

People love being listened to. Let people rant about their problem to you, and you can offer them solutions. Or rather a shoulder to lean on

Think before you ac t

You need to be fully aware before speaking or answering a question. Some answers can be offending, so always try to be careful.

Make yourself better

Every day you should be competing with yourself. You ought to strive to be a better person than you were yesterday. So each minute tries to better yourself. The following are some ways to achieve this:

Go offline

Try it for a month, and you wouldn't regret it. Social media has a lot of noise. Being offline will not only help you love yourself but also appreciate you more?

Observe

The world has numerous opportunities. It awaits people to take advantage of such situations. Learn from the mistake, choose wisdom from the words of people you admire, come up with ideas from your evening walk. You just need to do is open your eyes and see.

Rea d

Read a lot. Books, newspapers, magazines, and blogs. There is lots of information on your books which helps you improve yourself. The best part is you can choose any genre you want. Do you love technology, health, or travel then go for it. With time your knowledge of things will improve.

Stop procrastination

This is a killer of dreams. Just rise from that comfy situation and dare to become. Do you doubt yourself? You can.

Help others

You wouldn't know how this will make other people smile. Small acts like helping an older man to cross the road, or opening a door for someone is not only fulfilling to you but also the other person.

Surprise people

It could be you, workmate, friend, or parent. Make a smile on people's faces. They need it. People will love you and appreciate you more.

Writin g

Write about anything. It could be to create your day, a person you admire and adore. Writing helps you cultivate discipline. You'll want to practice

your skill daily.

Compliment yourself.
You are beautiful and smart. Compliment yourself every day and congratulate yourself on the little achievements that you make.

Practical examples

Emotional intelligent takes a massive part in our daily activities and your workplace.

How people conduct themselves in a meeting

Meeting where everyone talks and they aren't listening to each other can be chaotic. Hence, reflecting people's ego. But, when one person speaks at a time, then, evidently, people are listening to each other. EQ is at plays a role in this. It just shows how people have respect and care about the other party's emotions .

People expressing themselves in an office

When people can express themselves openly, without being hindered is a practical example of EQ. This depicts their feelings, views, and opinions is important to the organization. The exchanges should be in a respectful manner.
Organizations, where the employees are free to speak out, are pleasant. When search issues are rated out, an emotionally intelligent boss wouldn't be offended bit would instead take affirmative action and congratulate the person for being free.

Flexibility

Emotionally intelligent people have a warm heart. They know that they work with human beings and nit machines. They would instill strict rules on the work environment. Instead, they understand that people are different and respect their work as long as the job is done.

Freedom and space to be creativ e

Organizations should create room for creativity. Refusing people the idea is not only unethical but also terrible. When a superior suppresses one thought, then it can only show that their emotional quotient is low.

There is compassion

Arguments, in homes, workplaces usually occur. Dealing with people's mood swings, changed attitude says a lot about your EQ level. Being able to understand that a person's mood is terrible, and responding to the other person calmly is equally important when an employee fails to do their work well, then, the leader should think before scolding him and throwing hurtful words to them. They should motivate them and encourage them to work hard. The result will enhance teamwork.

Interacting out of work hours

Interacting during lunch breaks, chatting on the corridors, catching a bus after work shows social behavior. Social activities ensure that people have funned, share their joyful moments, and also their sorrowful moments. Thus, they bond. This depicts how emotionally intelligent they are, and connect with other people and create social interactions.

Developing emotional quotient personally

When you are upset or angry, and you show it on yourself, then this will likely push people away from you. Learning how to control your emotions would make you friendlier.

You need to have self-awareness and self-cautious be to achieve this. Then use self- regulation to develop emotional quotient. Learning to calm is important since it doesn’t influence our decision-making process.

Chapter 4: How to Reduce Stress and Anxiety

Mindfulness

What do we mean when we look at the term mindfulness. Mindfulness is looked at as an art. This is something that people can practice from time to time. Mindfulness then is the art of focusing on a particular activity so that at the end of it all they can become better at the activity. This is done by all groups of people whether the working class, students and other people. It is used to enhance concentration at the activities one is focusing on. It increases the performance of the activity.

So after knowing all about what mindfulness entails, it is important to know how to increase it. The first thing is by meditating once you wake up in the morning. I know how you are wondering how that is even impossible. This helps one to reflect on what goals they expect to achieve at the end of the day. Once one knows what the want it is easy to concentrate in order to get it easily. The daily morning meditation is soothing and it helps you to look forward to the expected. Thus helps in building mindfulness in a particular person.

The next thing is one should take a break. This is what people call taking time out. This helps one clear their mind. It is not easy to concentrate when you are really tired. When one is tired they brain shuts off since it cannot take any more of the information or tasks that one is giving it. One should rest preferably sleep, taking a hobby or watching television. These are great ways to distract oneself and recollect themselves. It is important that one should be well-rested if they want to achieve maximum mindfulness in one’s life.

Another thing is that one should bring together all his or her thoughts. One should ensure that is thinking singly and not in multiple directions one should ensure that they are able to bring their thoughts together. One cannot focus on anything if their head is everywhere. One should keep their head in one place and avoid any distractions. Find a way to put your thoughts in a composed manner. It maybe is through exercise, meditation, and other methods too. Putting one’s thoughts together is very important at any time. This is another great way to improve one’s mindfulness.

Also, there is another way that is eating well. Eating well means eating healthy and filling oneself until one is full. One can never work if he or she is hungry. Also eating healthy counts since it allows someone to be strong and immune to diseases. If one is sick then they cannot concentrate on anything that they do. These small facts make eating well very essential. The body and the mind are connected hence eating and mindfulness go hand in hand. So it is important to follow an eating schedule if you really want to improve on your daily mindfulness.

Lastly, there is knowing and understanding others' mindfulness. Before you fully understand yourself then you must understand others fully. It may be how they think or work it depends on you. One cannot work alone others count for your success. It is great to know others live their lives if you want to blend in with them. One cannot just be an island interaction is very important. If one is comfortable with other people it makes it easy to concentrate on other things. The fear of others may hinder one’s concentration and thus may cause one’s mindfulness to be very low.

Mindfulness is important in our daily lives and we should maintain it as always. One should work on improving their level of mindfulness for better results.

Social Anxiety

Before I dwell on what is social anxiety, I will first give out the meaning of anxiety. Anxiety, therefore, is the fear that one gets of a certain activity or occurrence. So what then is social anxiety? Social anxiety is then the fear of interacting with other people in society. It basically forms the name of this type of anxiety. It is also called social phobia. Phobia is the other name for fear.

There are so many causes of social anxiety am going to mention a few to make you understand how this type of anxiety comes about. The first cause is that it may emerge from abuse. That may be from emotional, physical and sexual abuse. It may not matter at what age it happens but if at all one goes through abuse they tend to shut off the world. They also live in fear of other people this makes them avoid them, in the long run, they become loners. They are mostly alone and sad for most of their time.

Another cause is that one might have undergone bullying or is undergoing bullying. This is mostly done to someone by people who are of the same age as the victim. This affects the person physically, mentally and psychologically. That means one is affected very largely. This makes one take a step at ignoring others due to the fear they might have. Bullying scars one for life and that is very painful. Their coping mechanism is just to avoid other people. These people have to go through therapy if they are going to recover. This is a cause that mainly affects students.

Also, there is the fact that one could have lost a parent or someone close to them. This is the hardest thing one can undergo. It affects one in so many ways. One's emotions are usually all over the place. One tends to go into a metaphorical dark corner. They do not understand what they are feeling or really going through. It is usually rough and may decide to push people away. They think that they will be better off alone than with others by his or her side. This is one of the major causes of social phobia.

Another thing that is a very good cause is conflicts or violence in the family. When someone is in a family that is well not thriving in a harmonious way then they tend to keep their distance from people. Since one spends most of their time as a kid with their family they tend to believe people are like their family in terms of their behavior. If one's family is violent and unstable then that is what they will passive for the whole world. This then leads them to keep away from others due to the fear that they have.

The last cause is the reaction a woman gets after giving birth. Women have different reactions once they give birth. This is because they are very different. Some women are happy and accept themselves easily for who they have become. This also includes the body changes after birth. There is also another group of women who really respond negatively after giving birth. They hate their bodies and find it hard to accept themselves. They then avoid people since they are ashamed of being body- slammed about how their bodies are not perfect anymore. This makes a major cause for the current generation.

Social anxiety happens every day. It happens to most people and they usually do not know how to handle this kind of anxiety. The main thing that

the victims should use therapy. They should use psychological therapy to their advantage for them to become very normal like the other people.

Reprogram Your Mindset

People often ask themselves what mindset really is. The mindset of a person is how one takes certain information or activity either positively or negatively in the mind. What someone thinks is very important. Whether someone thinks positively or negatively about something makes the total difference. They are the ones that determine your success or failures in a particular thing. They are very important aspects that most people tend to ignore not knowing how much they influence their lives. They are also inbuilt but can be easily changed but by the person himself .

The first thing one has to do is leave what they are used to. This like the comfort place of someone. One should be open to trying new things in their life. One should not be afraid of taking a really huge step. One should be a very huge risker in life. Always take things like taking water. That means taking a positive step to a new thing and then see what comes next. The more you dive into new things in a positive manner the better the results that come out at the very end. This is a very important step to take.

The other thing is finding people who are just like you. That means finding people who have the same mindset as you. That means people who share your goals and aspirations. They are people who view life like you do and enjoy it as you do too. They act like the object that pushes you to try new things. They give you advice and also stick by your side no matter what may pop up. Their perspective on life is quite similar to yours so clashing of yours and their opinions are nearly impossible.

Also, one should note the situation they are in and see what mindset they should take in after some thought. This may seem absurd but all situations have different responses. That flatly means that even the mindset put in should different too, they cannot share the same mindsets of the person. These differences give someone a challenge and at the end of the day, one gets a ton of exercise in matters of the mindset. One has to know what mindset to apply and whether it is suitable or not. This helps someone to know their way through life and everything it brings.

Another thing to do is to change one's habits to fit one's new mindset. It is only fair that once one thinks of changing they should be ready to make a full-on change. This is actually a big step that one has to take for easy moving on. This allows someone to change their ideas and how they execute them. In the very end, one becomes a new person. That is a new mindset and new behavior. This should be adopted if you really want to maintain their newly attained mindset then this is very important.

It is good to know that mindset is the thing that allows you to be confident and do new things. When one has a great mindset then their confidence is great too. That means one can do anything and they can achieve anything. It also makes some to trust themselves through everything. One can try things they thought they could never do but it all depends on the mindset. This is a great topic to look at. There is more to mindset and how it works in human beings but am only giving the few tips that are above.

Practice Assertiveness

Assertiveness is the art of someone standing with their decision no matter what. This is about believing in yourself regardless of the situation. One is supposed to stick by themselves and not change even if the pressure exerted at the time is very immense it does not matter.

There are so many ways to increase your assertiveness. I am going to discuss a few to act as a guide for you to use. The first way is by not allowing one to sway your opinions. Many people call it agreeing to the disagreeing concept. This is when you and others are discussing and end up one-two different sides then it is important to listen to their side but not join him or her in their opinion. One should be cautious of what they want and not let others change what they know and believe in their ideas.

The next thing is being a good listener. Even if though am saying one should not be swayed it is important to listen to the others. The opinions of others matter at all times. All you have to do is sit and listen to their ideas and before you know it he or she will be listening to you. It is two-way traffic for this situation. The idea is to understand the concept the person is looking at and he or she should do the same. This, in the end, leaves one knowing themselves and the others too.

The last thing is to avoid being guilty. Guilt can lead you to not do what you really want. Guilt can make one forget about their own decisions. This is then should be something one can easily avoid after all. One should be proud of what they decide and should feel. One should know that their opinions are valid and right. One cannot just please everyone and if you could you would be miserable at the very end. The more one understands this concept then the more it becomes easy to be assertive. This is very important in the process of being assertive .

All the above aspects show how one can be more social with others. Socializing is not that hard but we learn new things every day. These new things help one to deal with new people in their lives. It is great to know how to deal with people every time. The more you read the more you see how social skills are easy. All the aspects work differently. That means they all work separately. The mindset, assertiveness, and others work towards improving people to people skills. This is very elaborate and the mentioned aspects are just but a few.

Chapter 5: Emotional Intelligence

What is Emotional Intelligence?

To understand emotional intelligence then one must understand the term emotions. So what are these so-called emotions? Emotions are the behavior one shows after a certain event. They are many including happiness, sadness, mad or angry and others. They are all designed for different occasions and they are strictly used where required. Emotional intelligence comes in here. Emotional intelligence hence is the ability of one to decipher and understand their emotions this also includes where and how to use one’s own emotions. If one is able to do this he or she has emotional intelligence.

To understand more of emotional intelligence then one should look at the components of emotional intelligence. I am only going to mention and discuss five of these components. This is what makes the background of emotional intelligence .

The first is knowing oneself. This is known as self-awareness. This helps one to understand their emotions. You cannot understand others' emotions without understanding yours. It is important to see the graph or patterns of how you react to different situations. It is important to master your moods without criticizing yourself. Get to learn who you are and appreciate it. Then after you have done this reading others and knowing how to respond to them is well pretty much easy. This helps someone work on controlling their emotions at all times. It also helps one to know how to direct one’s emotions after all.

The other component is being able to keep oneself in check. This is often known as self-regulation. This is where one has to train himself or herself in the art of keeping their emotions in check. This works hand in hand with self-awareness. Once you know how your emotions work then it is easy to keep them in check. How to do that all depends on you. It is one’s responsibility to know and to keep their emotions in check. Others cannot that for you hence it is you who has the power when it comes to emotions .

Also, there is motivation as a component. This is where one has to have an interest in learning and improving themselves. In this topic, the learning and

the improving involve the emotional part. One should be ready to learn about his or her emotions and to know how to improve them at the very end. One should be enthusiastic about what all their emotions are like. One should be able to accept themselves at the very end. It is always advisable to be motivated to know themselves even better than they think they know them. This step is important as the rest.

The next is being able to put yourself in other's shoes especially if they are in trouble or at a hard place. This feeling and virtue are known as empathy. Most people confuse empathy and sympathy. Sympathy is feeling pity for someone who is not faring well. These two meanings show the difference between these two terms. They are interrelated but are totally different. Empathy is a virtue that when expressed shows that someone can feel. That means that the person can be able to express their emotions and that is a good sign. It shows a sign of humanity .

Lastly, there are social skills. These refer to how people interact with others. Emotions usually hold a big place in terms of interacting with others. When one has not put their emotions in check then it is easy for them to blow out when they are communicating with other people thus ruining their social life all in all. When one has their emotions in check on the other hand then it will be easy to communicate with others without pissing them off. It is important to remember that their feelings and other feelings are to be considered always.

It is good to note that all the components are the key to emotions and daily living. Emotions help one to socialize with others. They are the root of humanity. They all work together and differently all together: the components. It is all-important to know that your emotions and others too are important. The components work to making one a better person emotionally. If one becomes better emotionally then they are bound to be better in their aspects too and that also makes someone a better person at the very end of it all and makes you better with people .

How to use your emotional quotient to understand your needs

Emotional intelligence is also known as emotional quotient. This is looking and being able to read one’s emotions in the long run of things. One should be able to use his or her emotions in the right manner without worrying.

Also, there is the ability to keep things in check. This is keeping one’s emotions in balance especially when one is conversing with others.

The following are ways in which we can use our emotional quotient. The first is used is that one understands more of others than oneself. We have seen that emotions do not only revolve on oneself but affect everyone that is around you. The more you look at it the easy the concept is. It is all about socializing which happens every day. Since one is in constant interaction with others it is important to understand them that means in the emotional side in this context. Since one is focused on make themselves emotional fitting for others they focus on what others want from him or her .

It helps one to get into more of very personal communication. Emotions make some so human. There are feelings of empathy and sympathy which are so touchy and personal. They help someone to get into the groove of living with others. Emotions make you care about others and that makes you vulnerable. It also helps someone to be able to share his or her feelings with others. One becomes more open to people’s help and also their opinions. One is able to get the treatment they give to others given to them at any time.

The other one is being able to talk and inquire about others and what they might be feeling this is very important. It is interconnected with the issue of personal communication. With this one is supposed to involve themselves with others' lives if this going to work. This is usually possible when people know each other and are open at saying anything to each other. Trust is formed at this point or stage of life. It is good to always inquire about others it helps to show care or concern. This is another perfect use of emotional intelligence .

The other point to know is what people want out of you or your deeds. This is what is called expectations. Since one becomes less self-centered and more of what others want, one becomes more observing and thus one can know what others want. With that knowledge one is able to know how to emotionally act in that particular situation. One knows how to fulfill others' expectations once one knows what they are like. This is a great step taken after one becomes more of a people person and also after one decides to have very personal relationships and conversations with others.

Also, the other use is the ability to increase one’s attention. This is the ability of one to focus on the current situation and that is in an emotional way. This is where someone listens and focuses on themselves and others all together. It is easy to see things in their light when the attention is full. This point helps one to focus on oneself and all others. One may indulge in anything and should make sure it gets to be okay. This should be important it helps one to deal with others in a great way since you give them your time .

The other thing is to increase the ability of someone to feel what others are feeling. This is putting yourself in other's shoes. It is usually a way to show support to others and their problems or even issues. It shows that one cares and is concerned about others and that makes one seem so nice. This gesture shows maturity in one’s emotions and life. It is also a very great use of the emotions one has. One gets connected to others through this feeling of empathy. It works for those people who are sympathetic too since they are interrelated.

The last one is that one should put their needs far and let others need ahead. One should be less self-centered and care about others. One should be considerate of others. This is the basic rule of emotions. They might be yours but they are made to deal with others for them to work efficiently. They are meant to make you feel more of what human one can be. They make you a better person at the time you understand them. Your needs should become after others. Make others your priority and see who you become at the end .

The following shows the uses of emotional intelligence. The help one get through daily life and all its challenges and what’s more without somehow one becomes a little lost. Every day one should work on their emotions even if it may seem absurd. They are basics to live at all times. It is important that one tends on their emotions. They are like gardens which when planed one has to tendon them at all times. Emotions are very key in life they work with the body and mind side by side and for that, they should be respected.

The emotional intelligence scale

The emotional intelligence scale was developed in 1998 by a man named Schutte. It was based on the reflective of dimensions model which was formed in 1990. It was a scale that had 33 things or ideas in it. They included knowing when one could speak of their issues, how to face the issues that come with life and also trying things with a new and bright positivity that burns in each person.

There were four questions and tests that were brought to light afterward. This was: the first was the emotional quotient inventory 2.0. this test has empirical evidence meaning it is accepted worldwide as a valid scientific test. It has been developed slowly by global research. It is delivered online thus suitable for this century. It is used for people the ages 16 and above. The test itself has open-ended questions and look at one's life. It also takes a maximum of 30 minutes to be complete. It looks at matters of particular skills and also the issue of conflict resolution. The results are bent to find the emotions of a person and also how they help one in making decisions. That means it looks at the daily performance of someone at their basic social institutions. Since they are online after the test is taken the results are processed online and are immediately sent online too. They also look at the five components that affect the emotional intelligence of a person. The test is a free procedure. The person administering the test should be qualified for such a task. That may require people like a psychiatrist or other related professionals in that field.

The second one is called the profile of emotional competence. Its results do not combine inter-personal and intra-personal emotional intelligence. It looks at the components of emotional intelligence. This test takes time and a lot of research to validate but it is as free as can be. It consists of 50 items and takes up to 15 minutes to administer. It also has a short form where there are just 20 items and the time for taking it is 10 minutes in the max. it must be administered by a psychologist who has specialized in emotional intelligence and all. It is available for clinical research.

The third question is known as the trait emotional intelligence questionnaire. It is free of charge and is on academic and clinical trials. It has both the full form and the short form. The full form has 153 items that have distinctive facets and a global trait too. The short-form as from the name has 30 items and is used to measure the global trait. This comes from

the full form. The name of this test uses questionnaires to find out the emotional intelligence of people that take the following test. In the questionnaire, there are gathering ratings that are represented. There are both 360 degrees. They are mainly used by children who are 8 to 12 years of age. They are the most suitable for this kind of emotional test and are very age-appropriate. This is because there is a questionnaire made just for the children. For this kind of questionnaire, it contains 75 items and has a 5 point scale. It also looks into some facets of children. This is very friendly for all ages since their questionnaires are there for everyone and for all the ages that are there.

The last question is Wong's emotional intelligence scale (WEIS). It is a self-report measure of emotional intelligence. It works with four dimensions of ability. They are divided into two parts. The first 20 parts one gets to choose their reflective reactions and the other part is made up of the 20 ability pairs. The questions used here are similar to those used in emotional intelligence tests. They look at one's strengths and weaknesses and also looks at one's personality at large. It checks on issues such as the emotions that arise in one. The other is to know and understand how one can respond to a certain situation. Also one answers how they can bring more people into their fold. The other is to know what makes one feel happy and contented with life and what makes you feel sad and like you want to give up. Also, there is describing how you feel using your words all along. There is also understanding how others feel in a given situation that they might be in at the time. Finally, is knowing when you are really angry and finding a solution as fast as you can.

These scales of emotional intelligence have been made to suit everyone. Each looks at emotions differently. Some look at self-report, the other-report and finally are the ability measures. Every scale has its features which I have dwelt in. they all matter if you really want to understand emotions. It may seem complex but I have tried to simplify it for the sake of everyone. This is a very good topic. It is interesting and it is something one can take up reading. Find everything that may seem unanswered about human emotions. Hope this gives a good and clear picture of things.

The measurement of emotional intelligence is just like any other test meaning there is the capability of comparison. It helps to know how high or

low your emotional intelligence is. Their several questions are asked once in a while in this kind of test. What I mean is the question of emotions. There so many questions that are asked all to know emotional human behavior. There is a question on moving on. This considers if you are able to move on from an ordeal or if you get stuck and never seem to move on. This helps one to know if they are emotionally vulnerable or they are strong to accept the way things are and get a new fresh start for themselves.

There is also a question on whether one is able to know and act on their feelings. This leads to the question do you know if you are happy, sad, mad or even angry? These are some basic feelings you should be able to detect very easily and if not one should train themselves so that they become better at it. The questions are many more but those two give you a clue on which questions are asked about emotions. These questions when answered determine how well you are with your emotions. To be specific this two questions when answered yes that mean you have high emotional intelligence and when your answer is no then your emotional intelligence is very low.

Chapter 6: Emotional Intelligence Assessment

Instructions for this assessment

Emotional intelligence is an important measure of how we relate with other people, influence their lives and react to situations. The test is meant to help you gauge how much you have grown in making relationships with other people better, and realize the areas that need to be improved. The test is geared towards making you a better person, and not to make you feel bad about yourself. The questions are in form of situations that we experience in our daily lives when relating with people, especially those who are closer to us; the answers are the feedback we give to the described situations in form of how we behave feel or even think. When giving the answers, for you to get an accurate assessment of yourself, be honest. After taking the test, you will be required to calculate your score following the score scales provided. The recommendations on how to improve your emotional intelligence will be provided; use it according to your score .

Relationship management

Emotional intelligence helps one to identify emotions, understand, and manage, and use emotions to help others or yourself. EI has divided into four clusters and one of them is relationship management, which consists of seven competencies. Visionary leadership, which helps one to inspire groups and individuals; making others grow, which entails supporting other people to strengthen their abilities through listening to their feedback and guiding them appropriately. Relationship management also involves influencing other people, and the individual should be able to have a variety of strategies that considers maintaining your integrity. Influencing people entails so many things such as having clear communication and listening to the people you are managing, convincing them to take up ideas that are useful to the company or themselves. In relationship management, one should also have better strategies for dealing with conflicts that arise between those he or she is managing and amongst themselves. It involves team methods of conflict resolution, maintaining a relationship with other people and building bonds that will help in working together.

Emotional Intelligence Test for a Relationship Management

Answer the following question by selecting the best answer that applies to you

1. I always respect the view of other people during a discussion.

Agree to ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

2. I always great my juniors in the morning and at the end of the day ask them about their daily activities.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

*3. I always start to try to control emotions that control my moods.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

4. I always make up time to talk to my friends and bond with them.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

5. I always try to initiate the reconciliation process with my spouse or girlfriend.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

6. I know what I am good at and what I am not.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

7. Most of the time I find ways to relieve stress through taking a walk in the park

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

8. After doing something, I value feedback from my spouse or friend

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

9. I always dress up to look good for my spouse.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

10. I always know my feeling towards a particular situation.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

11. I prefer criticizing people more than I praise them for the good things they have done.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

12. I stay fit and healthy through exercise and eating a balanced diet.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

13. I take some time out of my work to talk with my workmates.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

14. I try to keep the effects of my stress to other people as low as possible.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

15. I like knowing more about my partner’s family and their progress.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

16. I know my spouse's favorite yogurt flavor and always try to know any changes.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

17. I always remain in control of my emotions during arguments.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

18. I always make a commitment and stay focused.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

19. I am a good financial manager at my house.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

20. I always speak my mind when we are having an argument with my friends

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

21. I like being optimistic about my future.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

22. I always arrange for a getaway party for my friends.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

23. I always keep my priorities right.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

24. I always seek help when I am in need.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

25. I release tension though stretching my muscles and breathing in deeply.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

26. I like being updated on my partner’s passion, tastes, and preferences.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

27. I like multiplying money though doing business.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

28. When I realize that it is me who is on the wrong, I quickly apologize.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

29. I like encouraging my friends to achieve their dreams rather than point out their failures.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

30. I do not always take up my view; I often take time to listen to the views of others.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

31. I sometimes use humor to cool down tensions caused by conflicts.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

32. being honest is my thing, even when the situation requires a little lie.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

33. When I am stressed I try to find out what is causing it and get rid of it.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

34. I easily talk about how I feel with my spouse.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

35. I do not like keeping one job for a long time.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

36. I regularly ask for feedback on what excites my partner in terms of sexual pleasures

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

37. I watch my health and engage in activities that promote it.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

38. I do not like being caught off guard; I always try to plan to deal with hard times ahead.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ◉ Disagree

39. I like celebrating with my partner his or her birthday and anniversaries.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

40. When solving a conflict, I like all of us to be winners at the end of a resolution.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

41. I do not understand the importance of money management.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

42. I always know what excites my partner and what does not.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

43. I do not like seeking help on sexual problems with my partner.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

44. I always seek to know my friend’s dreams and aspirations

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

45. I try to swim out of difficult situations in order to succeed.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

46. I constantly rebuke my partner on their past mistakes.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

47. I always take time to enjoy intimacy with my partner.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

48. I invest more of what I earn to make my relationship with my partner better.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

49. I always keep in touch with my workmates even when not at work.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

50. I am always reminded about our anniversary by my partner.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

51. I have goals that I always strive to achieve.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

52. I have an insurance plan for those who depend on me.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

53. I like improving myself in terms of skills.

Agree on ◉ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

54. I try to calm down my friends and comfort them when they are feeling sad.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

55. When things are not going well between me and my partner, I try to make things working without blame.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

56. I reflect on my dreams and aspirations regularly.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

57. I try to understand disturbing events in a positive way.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

*58. I find time to check on what is disturbing my friends.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

59. I keep my weight in check always.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

*60. I let my friends choose tasks for themselves when we are out having fun.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

61. When a friend is struggling with his or her tasks, I try to help him or her finds his or her way out.

Agree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

62. I always take a break from arguments when things are not working out.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

63. During arguments, I always try not to hurt myself but do not care if my partner gets hurt or not.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

64. I regularly look at my irrational way of doing things and try to correct them.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

65. I always accept forgiveness from a friend who has hurt me.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

66. I listen to my partner's problems more often and try to help him or her to solve.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

67. I do not care about what affects my partner sexually.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

68. I often identify and eliminate things that cause stress.

Strongly agree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly disagree

69. My position comes first and the other person follows in an argument.

Agree on ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Disagree

70. I work hard to emerge a winner when I face challenges.

Strongly Agree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly Disagree

Calculating your score

When calculating your score, you look at the four models of emotions, which include the identification of emotions, using them, managing and manipulating them to solve problems situations. The score scale is 1to 5, and this depends on the question; if the answer to the question is strongly disagree, then strongly disagree begins the scale as 1 and strongly agree is at the end of the scale as 5. If the correct answer is agreed, then the agree starts the scale and the rest follows up to disagree, which is given a scale of

5. 1 represents 10 points, 2 represents 8 points, 3 represents 6, 4 represents 4 points, and 2 represents 2 points. This means that 1 is the highest score and 5 is the lowest score. Only the answers with the highest score will be given per question and the rest will be determined and calculated by the person who has done the test.

The questions tests skill on relationship management on the following aspects self-expression, judgment, sensitivity, self-control, openness, self-analysis, and analysis of others.

Questions on self-analysis the high scorers will often show that they are in touch with their emotions, as well as feelings, and therefore, they are always aware of the changes that occur when the experience certain emotions. The high scorers are those who get 8 and 10 points. The moderate scorers, on the other hand, their awareness of the changes in their mood is moderate and therefore, sometimes they are aware of the changes in their mood and sometimes they are not. The score range is 6 points. The low scorers are not aware of their emotions; they rarely pay attention to their emotions and feelings, and when they are experiencing emotions, they do not think about the causes or the effects .

When it comes to the analysis of others, the high scorers will easily identify the emotions and feelings of other people. They quickly sense the changes in the emotions of other people. The moderate scorers sometimes pay attention to the emotions and feelings of other people and sometimes identify when the emotions and feelings of other people change. The low scorers, on the other hand, pay little or no attention to the emotions and feelings of other people and show indifferent to what other people are feeling.

The other aspect of relationship management that is tested in the test is self-expression, which is how better you communicate your feeling to others. The high scorers in this aspect are highly skilled in describing their own emotions to others and communicating them, while the moderate scorers are moderate in describing their emotions and feelings to other people. The low scorers struggle to communicate their emotions and feelings, and therefore, they rarely share their feelings with other people.

When communicating with other people, you should easily tell when something is wrong, for instance when someone’s smile is not genuine. The

high scorers in this aspect are able to pick up emotional cues very easily to realize when there is deception or change in emotions. The moderate scorers are moderately competent in picking up emotional cues and realizing when things are not going right, and the low scorers have no idea if there are changes in the emotions when they are communicating with the other people. The low scorers, therefore, experience the changes when things are already out of hand and reacting to them is not possible.

The aspect of the use of emotions can be measured determining how a person thinks during a particular situation. The high scorers will often follow their feeling and allow them to give guidance on how they react to situations. For example, if your feelings let you concentrate on what is more important at the moment, then you are competent in using your feelings positively. The moderate scorers let their feelings guide them sometimes, while the low scorers prefer to use the incoming information about a situation instead of letting their feelings to guide them.

Chapter 7: The Art of Persuasion

Basics of persuasion

Persuasion is making people follow your idea or support you in doing something. This happens in arranged interactions such as business meetings, job interviews, and in daily social interactions. For persuasion to be effective the individual that is using this method must know some basics.

The topic of persuasion is very important as it determines the effort and tactics used in persuasion. If the topic is too complex for the audience, it might not be easy to convince them and therefore all the efforts available that seem effective can be employed to convince the audience. The topic might also be too complex for you as the persuader, and therefore, seeking help from the experts is always useful. It might not sound good when you give wrong information about something and expect people to believe you.
The age and level of education of the people you are talking to is also an important aspect to have in mind. This helps to choose the language and approach to use to persuade them; the method you use to persuade children is not the same as the one used to persuade adults or students in college. Also, experts in health cannot be persuaded using the same language as that used to persuade mothers who have little knowledge in the field of health.

Tools for persuasion which include facts and aids such as videos should be considered and their accessibility; you cannot use something you do not have, and therefore as you prepare for the persuasion always keep this in mind.

Methods of Persuasion

Reciprocation

The society operates on the principle that I give you back what you gave me. This can be in the form of behavior, favor or even something physical. For example, if I helped you when you needed help, when I need help you will help me as well. This is because, after I help you, you become obligated to do help me at a later time when I need it and not to the other person who did not help you. This method of persuasion works because the groups in the society that uses the principle of reciprocation are always competitive compared to the groups that do not use. Members of such a

group will gladly give out resources because they know that it is a credit that will be paid back when the time comes. Therefore, when you are persuading people, master the skill of sharing or exchanging favors with the ones you intend to persuade and you will create a partnership that would enable you to get what you want from them.

Use of Scarcity

According to research the merit of something does not matter unless it is put in a context where it is required. Simply put, people will always be in need of what they cannot get at that time. When you have an idea, and what you are offering to the people is something that they can easily get it somewhere else, there is a likelihood that they will not listen to it and take it. Therefore, for a persuade to be effective in using this method, he or she should present arguments that have many advantages to make the other party realize that your idea is the one with more merits and move in your direction. Again, it is important to know that sometimes people are interested in what they would lose, because in some instance what one loses can be more valuable than what he or she is gaining. Therefore, it is also important to always good to explain on the losing side to persuade those who feel that they will lose the most important thing or part. However, to make sure that the negative side does not affect your persuasion, bring in new information to guide them to your side. There are people, who are quick to analyze situations, and it is not easy to convince them, always do your research well to make sure that they are not left out.

The Use of Authority

Most people trust information from the expert or from powerful people; if it is from the experts then it is true. This one becomes difficult because it is not always that a doctor will talk to people about health issues or a lawyer about legal matters, but you can always include them in your conversation to assure the people that what you are telling them is the knowledge that is approved by experts. If this is not possible you can use terminologies from the field of your topic and quote phrases or words spoken by experts in the field to establish the authority of your information.

Use of the Consistency

Persuasion is sometimes a process, and you must involve the people in the process up to a point that they feel that there is no way back. This is done during a discussion when decisions are made at each stage and there is no reversal of a decision that is made in the previous stage. The persuader can use a language such as, we can now count on you, right? The person agrees to the statement, and the next state is welcomed for discussion. The fact that they agreed in the previous stage prompts them to agree to what they are being asked regardless of what they feel about at that stage.

Use of Liking

People will always agree to follow the people they have a liking for, and dismiss the other person. Persuaders have known this behavior and mostly use it to their advantage. That is why most advertisements are done by famous and most like celebrities; the advertiser knows that if they like the person, they would tend to like the product that is associated with that personality. The thinking of the audience is that by using the product, you are part of the person advertising the product. The same idea can be used to support big ideas and programs.

The Use of Consensus

The consensus method uses the idea that if you get more people on your side, there is a possibility that the others will follow you. This method is used mostly used in parliament discussions; the idea that is supported by many people is endorsed and assumed that it is a decision that has been made by all the members of the parliament. Persuaders have known that if they get many people to their side not matter by what mean, their idea would easily be taken as acceptable by all and endorsed. The other group is therefore persuaded to join the large group.

The choice of method depends on many things such as the characteristics of the audience, the topic you are talking about, how much knowledge you know about the topic. Different methods can also be used in one situation; for instance, when politicians are persuading people, they can use reciprocation and consistency to let people agree with their idea and follow them. The most used method for small children is the use of the liking method; you can cover sweets with their best cartoon, and you will be sure that they will compel their parents to buy for them the sweets.

Body Language

When making a presentation in front of people and you need to establish the credibility of the information you are giving them so as to make an impression that would make them believe and take up what you are telling them. In addition, your aim might be to create a relationship with the people you are talking to. In this case, your body language must be in line with your words to create an impact on whoever you are speaking to. Most people look at the body language to determine how serious you are or how serious is the issue you are talking about, and in most cases, it affects their decision to follow what you are telling or not. In the case of a clash between your words and your body language, many people would follow your body language .

Therefore, you should make an effort to use your body language correctly to persuade people to believe or take up whatever you are telling them. First, you should make sure that the first impression you make to those you are persuading makes them connect with you. According to research, it takes only a few minutes of your first meeting to make an impression, and as you continue to interact, some of the people would have already made up their minds. When you meet people for the first time, face them directly, and like you, great them, give them a powerful smile as many people focus on your face to gauge your emotional state, attitude, and feelings. Looking directly at them shows interest in them, and they would be ready to listen to you. If there is something that has created tension between you and the other party, it is better to immediately show understanding by slightly tilting your head and nodding. Always be careful not to make a rigid face. Maintain a smile also creates a warm feeling and confidence between the two parties, thus establishing a rapport.

The first touch also has an impact; it can either be a cold or warm touch. In most cultures, when people meet for the first time, they touch through a handshake. A handshake is universally acceptable, and is done in social setting and business meetings; it is considered as safe. It conveys and brings about a warm feeling and friendliness. Therefore, it is good to keep your handshake brief and firm enough by applying only the required pressure and holding for less than 5 seconds. Most people dislike handshakes that are unwelcoming and show disinterest; such interests include cold fish

handshake and finger or limp handshake, where only fingers tough briefly. The power play handshake that shows a dominating character, as well as the vise handshake, does not create a good impression, especially in the business meetings.

You should also adopt a posture that portrays openness; this also brings about a warm feeling and it is a sign of being receptive. Some people usually unbutton their coats before sitting down and sit forward moving closer to each other to show that they are relaxed and ready to listen to them.

The walking posture also has an effect on the way people might perceive you and later listen and agree to what you have to tell them. Walking upright shows that the person is confident and competent while walking with slumped shoulders shows that the person is not certain, ease and he or she is vulnerable. Some swing their hands s they walking quickly and briskly for them to appear s goal-oriented people.

During your conversation with the other party, it is important to maintain eye contact. It is logical that if you like someone, you will constantly give them a glance; it makes people know that they are appealing to you or you find what they are saying interesting. If you want to show people that you feel empathy, you can do it by looking at them directly in their eyes. Where people look during a conversation also determines the relationship the parties conversing have; it is easy to convince a person you show a good relationship with and vice Versa. When you show nervousness, it is obvious that you would not look the person directly into the eyes, which brings in a feeling of mistrust; a party that does not trust you would rarely give in to your persuasions.

The dressing is also part of the body language as it portrays the image of the person. More often people world judge others according to the clothes they have on. Without knowing, clothes we wear bring to light our deep personal values, as those who are seeing us connect with them consciously or unconsciously. For instance, if you put clothes that are considered conservative, people will give us such labels immediate they look at us. However, if you choose to be neat and smart, most people would immediately connect with you and therefore trust you. The clothes also

bring out the impression of authority, and with the right clothes, one can easily create an impression of competence, authority, and professionalism. Doctors wear a white coat, and when you meet him or her in the white coat talking about healthy, it is likely that you will listen and believe him or her more than when in normal dressing. The same applies to business suits in the business world. In the normal social setting colors of the clothes take control with colors such as blue, charcoal grey and black showing more strength and competence. Therefore choose the right clothes and color to show authority and competence in whatever you are talking about.

Once you are now deep in the conversation with the other party, it is important to involving mirroring and pacing to make sure that the other party is following you. This is important to establish whether your persuasion has an impact, and if not you can slowly change your tactics to keep the other party on track. More often, when people have established a deep rapport, their body language synchronizes automatically, and this can be seen in their body posture. Their sitting posture will be somehow similar if they agree on whatever they are talking about, and similarly, if they fall out in their conversation, their body posture clashes. Although mirroring comes naturally, as a persuader, you should consciously use it to bring people on your side. For example, a good seller will establish a rapport with the buyer, but looking at the language of the buyer and his or her vocabulary use, the seller will slowly mirror the language of the buyer to make him or her knows that they are at the same level. In this case, the buyer and the seller will eventually agree on the same thing, which is to exchange the product and money. Mirroring can be done in other ways such as speech patterns and sitting or standing posture, however, you should be careful not to offend the other part because it might appear as mimicking.

Chapter 8: Making Friends

Human beings are often described as social beings. This means that we have several relationships with people in the world. These relationships have to lead to the rising of the creation of friends. A friend can be described as an individual who has a special bond or shares a mutual affection. Having friends is very important in the being of humans. An individual is supposed to know three components when making friends. An individual is advised to know types of friends how to make friends and importance of friends in their lives.

Types of Friends

1. Loyal best friend

There are several moments in life an individual can experience that is very heart aching. The set of a friend known as a best friend who is loyal will help an individual to remain sane during these moments. Everybody deserves to have a friend who will not judge him or her in complicated situations. These kinds of friends are always supportive of anything an individual decides to do. They let an individual get into a hot mess and still give a helping hand from problems. They know the deepest secret of somebody but still have the unconditional form of love for an individual.

2. Fearless with adventure

Despite the world being termed as the global village, there are several things in it. The world contains several activities being done, numerous people to be met and new experiences to be undertaken. Several people have programmed themselves to only operate their lives with their daily routine. This makes people forget several things that go on in the daily life apart from their routines. Therefore, this kind of friend has the role of taking people outside the shell they are used to. These friends are responsible for introducing an individual to new cultures activities ideas, philosophies.

3. Brutal open confidant

The normal life of a human being presents him or her with different situations. There are certain moments in life where an individual is accustomed to hearing the bitter truth. This role is tasked to a friend who is referred to as an as brutal open confidant. There are several situations that this kind of friend can manifest. A good example can be depicted in a relationship setting. If an individual has broke up and gets together with a loved one, for a period of five times, the situation can be described as normal by other people. However, the role of a brutal open friend in this situation is to tell a person to completely end the relationship. He or she goes ahead to tell an individual that he or she deserves better.

This can be an honest view that is honest from other people and it might be bitter to be done or heard. People are encouraged to have friends who are honest with them on every issue they face or think about. It is advisable to keep holding on to a relationship with an individual who is honest. These people are very rare to come by on this generation. In addition, these people offer a constructive form of honest.

4. Wise mentor

The common philosophy practiced by this kind of friend is to only look down on people on moments you are helping them. This kind of friend is very smart, intelligent and admirable. It is easy to change when this kind of friend is around you. The change process is easy because such a friend has the ability to motivate you when you are discouraged. They are a very important set of people in one’s life because they help him or her to achieve a set of goals in life.

A wise mentor doesn’t necessarily have to be an individual one shares with a hobby or occupation. Such a friend can be tuned to be several steps ahead of an individual. He or she also has a higher scale of patience and wisdom in life to be able to offer life guidance. This friend can either be a neighbor, a colleague, or somebody who is beyond one with years. Despite these specifications, the person is supposed to be an individual you look upon in life.

5. One from a different culture

People in the modern generation are very inter-mixed. Therefore, an individual would not be in good terms being referred to as somebody who chose to stick to his or her own ways. The globe is better when people from different upbringings interact. Having a friend from a different social upbringing helps an individual to explore different values, traditions, and customs. There are several moments in life that an individual can adopt these new practices .

One is supposed to be careful in befriending people who are from different cultures. It is because people who are supposed to be befriended are those whom you click with. The next step is supposed to put in the effort to learning traditions values and customs as you get to know him or her on a personal level.

6. Polar opposite

People are designed in a very complicated way. It is very difficult for an individual to get along with someone who is of a different personality or character. The way we majorly operate is by teaming up with people who have the same view as us an attacking those who oppose it. However, there is a high chance that an individual will detach from the rest of the world if he or she only focuses on likeminded people. Therefore an individual can break free of the norm and associate with people who have opposing views. Having such a friend will help an individual to open his or her eyes to a different view of life. This kind of friend helps one to get closure of the opposing views he or she has.

7. Friendly neighbor

The modern form of living and housing structures has made people not know their neighbors. This phenomenon can be described as shameful. It is because there are certain neighbors who are very nice. Having such a friend can save an individual in certain occurrences in life. This is a friend who will help you pulling the key or locking the door when one forgot. A friendly neighbor can be very dependable people and are a breed worth dying for. However, one is not supposed to introduce him or herself to every person in a new neighborhood he or she goes to.

8. Work friend

It will shock several people who learn to know that they spend 50% of their time at work if they are self-employed. It is a common thing for people in the current world to think about their careers. This entails pays, overtime chances and career promotions that are often thought of. It is scientifically proven that an individual can be highly depressed when he or she is lonely at work. This makes it important for an individual to get a work friend who he or she can converse with. Such a friend can help a person to get through the week easily because it is easy to converse with them about work-related issues. The set of a work friend does not have to be one's best friend.

Steps of Making Friends

The process f making new friends look like an intimidating process. However, it is a very very rewarding act. It is because these friends we create in our day to day life tend to form a bigger part of life we leave. The help people share out their joy express their fears and reveal their pain. People who are seen to be swift in making friends, it is possible to find that at some point in their life, they were secluded people. However, the question that crosses people's minds is how they made it. There are several steps that an individual can use to make friends in his or her life. These steps include:

1. Realizing the fear in one's head

The first step an individual has to do is making sure that one has a good image mentally before meeting people. There are several people who see the event of meeting new people as scary. There are several things that cross an individual mind when making friends. People tend to focus on how well the conversation is going, if the person likes him or her and if one has made a good impression. These thoughts are what make the process scary when they are thought of continuously. Therefore, one is supposed to clear his or her head and keep his or her normal character.

2. Starting slowly with people a person is familiar with

It is difficult to jump in a zone of strangers when you have not been associating with people. This makes a need for using people one knows to help ease the process. This is a very easy task but it acts as a stepping stone. There are several groups of people that can start with. An individual can choose to reach out to acquaintances. He or she go-ahead to look for common groups he or she can join then proceed to know friends of the acquaintances and accepting invitations.

3. An individual getting out him or herself

This is the next step an individual can use after getting to know friends in his or her inner circle. An individual is supposed to get out extending his or her scope of people. The process can easily be done when a person joins several meets up groups, volunteers to several acts attend various workshops, becomes open to the online communities and visits socials places such as bars and clubs.

4. Being bold to take the first step

When one is used to having people around him or her, there is always a responsibility of will make the first move. A person is supposed to make the first move if the other party is delaying. The step can be simple since it starts with a “hello”. During this time, a person can share something and give the other person an opportunity to share his or hers. It can be about how his or her day is faring.

5. Being open

The stage entails two critical aspects of making friends. The first aspect involves an individual having an open mind and not being judgmental. There is a set of friends an individual can choose to have who have the same thinking about life. However, a person is supposed to be open and give friendship time for its blossoming. It is because there are several good friends who can come from different backgrounds. The second aspect involves an individual opening his or her heart. This act involves trusting the goodness that can come from other people and believing in it. Opening the heart with good intentions often attract the same kind of people who reflect an individual.

6. Getting to know the other party

Friendship is a mutual issue therefore; both parties are supposed to know each other. Several questions such as where a person comes from, what he or she does, what he or values and what motivates him or her are cleared during the process.

7. Connecting with the other party genuinely

There are several factors that can make an individual lose the whole point of friendship. These factors are associated with an individual only thinking about him or herself. Concerns such as what will people think of me or what to say the net is supposed to be shunned away from. One can learn how to be presentable and know how to present his or her ideas. However, he or she is not supposed to be obsessed with them.

8. Being yourself

One is not supposed to change his or her character in order to make new friends. Therefore, an individual is supposed to be him or herself. It will give people who like you a chance to decide if they are willing to the relationship to the next level. Getting friends is attracting people who feel are compatible with your way of life.

9. Being there for him or her

Ideal for friendship is supposed to be a supportive union. A person is supposed to be there when he or she is able to offer help that is needed by a friend in need of it. This help can be returned later during the progression of life. Helping other people also offers a form of satisfaction.

10. Have the effort of staying in touch

This is the crème of friendship. There needs to a constant form of communication to a person an individual has created as a fried. The process needs effort because it is important to maintaining a long-lasting form of friendship.

Chapter 9: Leadership

Leadership is a core factor in the current world. Because it is critical to managing people to make people work towards a common goal. Those people at the helm to manage people are given the task of leadership. This post of leadership is either vested in people or by wing support and trust from people.

Therefore, leadership can be described as the act in which one influences people to achieve a common set of goals. One is supposed to put the effort into interpersonal relationships for the process of influencing people to be successful. It is because people who are leaders commonly identify influence and achieving set objectives as common denominators.

Characteristics of Leadership

It is a continuous process of influenc e

Influence can be described as an individual being able to transform several aspects of people's lives. The common aspect that influences changes are believes the behavior and attitude of an individual. The transition experienced can either be directly or indirectly experienced. The process of influence enlists leadership as the process of social influence. The process supports or gives people aid in attaining a common set of goals.

Leadership is multi-dimensional

The most essential backbone of leadership is the attribute of followership. Therefore, leadership does not entail an individual having only one dimension on issues. The diverse and multi-dimensional comes into play when an individual employs his or her thinking system and organizational performance. The organizational performance involves people who are below him or her. This ideology makes leadership nonexistent if there are no followers.

Leadership have several facet s

Leadership contains several aspects that are needed in the current world. The first set of combination includes personality and tangible skills. The tangible skill that is being talked about refers to self-drive, personal integrity, good personality, and self-confidence. These facets also include styles and situational factors. Styles trod from fair to authoritarian while situational factors include both internal and external factors.

Leadership is oriented on goals

The act of leadership entails organizing people to focus on the same aim. These set objectives are what influence is narrowed to achieving. Having the same goals that align is what also brings people together in the current world.

Leadership is not anchored on a specific personality trait

The world has been sometimes blinded to believe that leadership focuses only on one trait. The most common trait that is linked with leadership is known as charisma. However, charisma is a common trait that can be manifested by various people. The set of people that have this common character trait include sports heroes and movie actors yet they are not leaders.

Leadership does not have to be a formal position

The notion of leadership being associated with the high-end position is supposed to be withdrawn. It is because the world has witnessed several great leaders who did not hold high positions. One of the most famous leaders who brought enormous change without holding a position was Martin Luther King Jr. On the other hand, there are several people in the current world who hold high positions and are not leaders.

Leadership does not involve only set objectives

People who are under leaders have other things that want to be done collectively. Therefore, leadership entails getting other things done in the process of influencing people.

Leadership does not entail only a set of behavior s

There are several ideologies that can shift this principle involving leadership. They seem to equate leadership with delegating duties providing inspiration and giving motivations. These are actions that can be done by people who are not leaders. There are some of these attributes that are not done by effective leaders.

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

For principles of leadership to come to light, there are several things a leader is supposed to do. These are the basic principles a leader is supposed to follow. They include:

1. Knowing oneself and always seeking to improve oneself

There several things an individual is supposed to know about him or herself when he or she is a leader. One is supposed to know his or her being and completely understand the attributes he or she poses. The process of seeking to improve oneself entails the constant strengthening of an individual's attributes. The process can be achieved through several things. This includes formal classes, self-study, interacting with other people and self-reflection.

2. Being technically proficient

This is one of the principles that signify leadership. An individual is supposed to be able to have a solid familiarity with the tasks of those below him or her. It goes a notch higher to a person understanding his or her roles.

3. Seeking responsibility and taking responsibility for one's actions

Leadership involves a person looking for several new ways that steer a group of people to more heights. When things tend to go wrong soon or later, a good leader does not blame those below him or her. The best course of action taken by leadership is to analyze the situation and then take corrective measures that are appropriate. When everything has been corrected, leaders are not afraid of taking on the next form of challenge.

4. Making decisions that are timely and sound

Leadership entails having a great ability to solve issues. It goes ahead to demanding for an individual who can clearly make decisions that are accurate and have good ability to plan for the future.

5. The setting of a good example

A leader is supposed to be a good example to emulated by his or her followers. People below an individual are not supposed to only hear about what they must do. A good precedent is shown to be actions from the seniors. Leaders are supposed to be the change they desire to be seen in other people.

6. Knowing out of one's followers and constantly looking out for their well being

Good forms of leaders are people who are constantly updated with human nature. Leadership also provides the need for an individual to sincerely care for the people who are below him.

7. Keeping everyone constantly informed

A great form of leadership involves a person who is a good communicator. A leader is supposed to know how to communicate and keep his followers constantly informed. The individual is supposed to also suppose to be able to communicate to the superiors or those above him or her.

8. Developing a sense of responsibility to those people who are below him or her

The process of leadership is transformative. The process is supposed to develop good character traits in people. This is a role that is tasked with a leader who is at the helm. These traits are supposed to be efficient and effective when an individual is tasked with the role of achieving certain communal goals.

9. Ensures that the roles given are understood, supervised and done to completion

This principle is well achieved when a leader is a good communicator.

10. Training as a team

There are several heads who call those below them a team. However, this might not be the case because of how they handle the group. Leadership entails moving and doing things as a group. This helps to cover the

weaknesses and strengths of other people. This helps people to accomplish their tasks and goals easily.

11. Using the full capabilities of one's followers

By having a team it is easy to accomplish this principle. After understanding the weakness and strength of those below one, he or she can be able to delegate tasks to these people according to their strengths. He or she can then improve the weakness of his or her followers. This helps to obtain maximum utility of those below an individual.

ADVANTAGES OF LEADERSHIP

A strong leader can help a group of people to break through their set out goals. These people help others to flourish. On the other hand, a poor set of leaders is related to the failure of achieving goals by those they lead. The process of managing people focuses keenly on leadership. Good leadership accelerates effectiveness and efficiency when managing people to attain common goals. The advantages of leadership are myriad. They include:

1. He or she inspires and guides the juniors

A leader helps in providing supervision to those people who are below him. This process of supervision comes in handy with guiding people who are below him or her. In this context, guidance entails a leader instructing those who are below him to perform their duties in a manner that is efficient and effective. This helps to create a sense of belonging to those who are under an individual. It also helps to bring an improved sense of commitment from people. Therefore, people are able to convert their desires to achieve passion.

2. Secures co-operation from people

Leadership is an act that sells and does not tells. While other people tend to dictate, a great form of leadership persuades people. This helps to create enthusiasm when working toward a common aim among people. Such an act helps people to gain immense co-operation from people.

3. Helps to create confidence

In the world we leave in, confidence is a very important factor. It is achieved when an individual expresses his or her efforts while doing the job to his or her followers. It entails giving people clear roles and guided lines to work within an efficient and effective manner. This helps people to achieve goals in a more fast way. Confidence also involves hearing and addressing complaints that are made by people an individual leads.

4. Builds a good working environment

The process of management is proving to be critical in helping people to get the thing done. A good environment is a great breeding ground for growth and development. Therefore, a good leader is supposed to keep in mind the power of good relations. He or she is supposed to be in consistent communication with people hearing them out. When these people have a problem, he or she is supposed to be able to provide them with solutions. Leadership creates a conducive working environment because people are treated with humanitarian terms.

5. Aids in maintaining discipline

Securing compliance and order from people becomes an easy task for an individual. The process is only described as easy when he or she has turned those below him or her to be followers. The process can be done by motivating employees using rewards. The rewards can be economic or noneconomic. This helps to get those under him or her to work involuntarily manner to achieve set out goals. Therefore, willingness is the first set a leadership provides to help maintain discipline among people.

6. It helps to facilitate the integration of group goals and personal goals

A leader is a visionary person who is tasked with the ability to decide on the destination to be reached. The vision of goals provided by a set of people is supposed to be well synchronized with their personal objectives. A leader is tasked with the role of helping people below him or her gets the synchronicity of goals in both their private and group goals. This also promotes a sense of belonging among people. It is a key factor in enhancing coordination between people.

7. It has the ability to work as a transformation agent

There is no change that can be witnessed only by thinking. It is important for people to release that the process and practices of change are successful when people have a good leadership system. It is a leader who helps to change people and influence their thoughts and actions. This helps to create a path that has the least resistant to the desired change.

8. It boosts people morale

Boosting of people morale moral can be described as the act of a leader making sure that his or her followers have the confidence of achieving their goals. Leadership helps people to be psyched up to performing their roles to attain the objectives.

Leadership Issues in the Contemporary World

The eye that has been focused on leadership in the current world is strong. There some issues about leadership that has been clearly been brought to light. They include:

1. Emotional intelligence

A good leader is supposed to have high levels of intelligence quotient and also have high levels of technical intelligence. These two aspects are critical however; it is also important for a leader to poses high levels of emotional intelligence. There are five components that determine an individual emotional quotient. These components include good social skills, great levels of empathy, being self-motivated, being self-regulated and being self-aware. It proves to be difficult for an individual to become a leader without these five components of emotional intelligence. The recent years have seen Nooyi Indiria become the president of one of the largest companies in the world know as Pepsi because she had high emotional intelligence.

2. Gender and leadership

The question that lingers in people's minds when the topic is raised is if gender is important in leadership. Several leader participation models have found out that leaders who are women have a unique quality. The unique

quality portrayed by women leaders more than men leaders is the attribute of being more participatory. These set of leaders are very interactive to their followers. This is what gives them a high rating from people who work under and above them. Leadership is supposed to give a chance to every gender in the world. Therefore, every gender is supposed to be given a chance and motivation to take the mantle.

3. Cross-cultural leadership

The recent times have seen the world becoming a village because of advancements in transport and communication sectors. Several organizations across the globe have been identified by appointing expatriates. Companies such as Vodacom have employed people from various social backgrounds and countries. Such a company has gone to a different millage of sending its workers to different companies to work from there. The best case that can elucidate this case is their former employer known as Bob Collymore. He was a man from the Carrabin Islands, he grew up in Britain and he was sent to Kenya during his last assignment.

There is an important reason that supports these acts by multinational companies. The main important reason is to reduce the cultural shock that is caused by interacting with new people. On the other side, culture plays an important role in and therefore those who are tasked with leadership are supposed to understand other people's cultures. The world has also seen elected leaders of having different backgrounds holding high offices because of their expertise. The best example is Mr. Barack Obama who is the former president of the United States of America.

4. Building trust

There are several leaders in the past and in the present general who are corrupt and are not accountable. These incidences are known to the public because of the power in technology in communication. Such activities have the biggest potential to demeaning trust that is bestowed to leaders by those they call followers. High trust involves a leader who is open, loyal, consistent and impeccable integrity levels. This is what the current world refers to as an ethical form of leadership.

Chapter 10: How to Be a Good Storyteller

There are people who love telling stories even though they may not know how to make their stories interesting to the listeners. People are interested in able to tell it when the storyteller is good. They will tell it through the way an introduction is done. As much as there are good storytellers, there are also bad and boring storytellers. However, it is important to ensure that you have good storylines that will capture the interests of the audience.

When you are a poor storyteller, you are likely to lose your audience. This is because they easily lose interest in your stories as they are not catchy enough to keep you listening. Did you know that the best way to engage people by giving stories? It can be in a presentation or a meeting. A good storyteller must own certain abilities. Any person may tell a story that was narrated to them by others. But one to be a distinguished storyteller must be able to do it repeatedly and in an interesting way .

He must be able to create the story afresh each time he narrates it. This makes it memorable and gives a meaningful experience for each audience. The success of any story depends on how it is narrated. When narrating a story the narrator has to give an explanation or give the meaning of any unfamiliar word that he happens to use.
A good storyteller performs many functions. He becomes the performer and a teacher as well as a social observer and a comedian too. He plays each role depending on the needs of the audience. This is because different stories are narrated to different audiences.

There is a story that is narrated to children, others are narrated to teens while there are those that are narrated to adults. If for instance, he is performing for children he will use simple and clear language and any other devices that the children will find entertaining.
The narrator will have to use the Imitation of speech from different characters in the story. For instance, telling a story about the hare, he will need to imitate characters and gestures comically as per the story. This will help in making the children entertained throughout the storytelling session. The storyteller should, therefore, look for relevant stories for each age group. A one to succeed in being a good storyteller, he or she must possess the below abilities.

Interested in Culture

A good storyteller is usually a person who is interested in the culture of his people. He has all the information about his culture. He has pride in his culture. He enjoys the richness of his language and knows its idioms and the figure of speech used.

Always Pleasant

He is always a pleasant person who enjoys entertaining the audience and is happy to pass the knowledge he possesses to others.

Have a Good Memory

A good narrator has a good imagination, is creative and has a good memory. A good memory will help in ensuring that they remember all incidences they are about to narrate well. This will help a lot in the flow of the story .

Be Open-Minded

An open-minded person should not be shy or timid. This is because he has to use some obscene words which cannot be unavoidable during narration. He is an actor who gestures with his hands and other parts of the body. The narrator's open-mindedness will enable them to be able to welcome any ideas about bettering their narrations without hesitating.

Keen Observer

He does not only knows the past but also a keen observer of what is happening today and able to comment on the conditions. He acts as a bridge between the world of yesterday and today.

How do You Tell a Good Story?

Have a Hook

As a storyteller, it is important to ensure that you hold the interest of your audience. This means that you need to get their interest first and that is what we call having a hook. You will be able to do this by ensuring that the start of the story is interesting. This will help in ensuring that you catch the interest of the storyteller from the start of the story. When starting the story,

you should ensure that you give clues of what the story is about. As the story unfolds, the storyteller should keep giving leads on how the story will end which will help to keep the storyteller interested throughout the story.
By giving the audience a sense of what the story is about, they will not get lost. How you introduce the story will determine whether the audience will continue listening to you or not. Any time a storyteller starts a story and the audience doesn't seem interested, it is advisable to ensure that you look for ways to keep them interested.

Having a Point to the Story

Before you even start giving the story, it would be important to ask yourself if the audience needs to actually listen to you. Asking yourself that question will help you to decide whether you need to continue giving the story or not. It may give you a reason for looking for a better topic that will be more interesting to the audience. It is by asking yourself that question that you will be able to know if you should change the goal of the story or not. A storyteller should make sure that they package their story in such a way that it only contains the details which will support the goal of the story.
For you to keep the flow of the story, make sure that at the point where people need to laugh they laugh. They should also show sadness when your intention is to make them feel sad. This will enable you to be able to keep them connected to the story. It will not be necessary to give details that are not necessary to the story. When the flow of the story is good, you will be able to have an easy time connecting with the audience. This will also help you as a storyteller to be able to conclude your story when they least expect it. By doing this, it means that they will be left in suspense which will leave them wanting to hear more of your stories. However, the audience will want to hear more of your stories when they are able to connect with you from the start of the story to the end

Choosing the Most Appropriate Time to Tell the Stor y

A storyteller should be in a position to tell the right story at the right time. This will help in ensuring that the audience listens to you uninterrupted to the end. The story you choose to tell should always fit people's mood at a particular time. When people around you are sharing their funny stories, you should come up with a story that relates to their happy tales. When they

are discussing tragedies, you should come up with stories about stories that are related to that topic. It wouldn't be wise to tell happy stories in when people's mood is sad. They may not even listen to you since their focus is on other things.

A good storyteller should also be in a position to relate the story to the situation at hand. When they are traveling, they should be able to tell a story related to traveling. This will make the story relevant to the current situation which will make the listeners connect with everything that is happening in the story. It is also important for a storyteller to make sure that the context of the story is one that is well understood by the audience. They can do this by giving a little background about the story they are about to narrate especially if the listeners are not aware of the characters in the story .

A good storyteller should be observant. They should interact with the people around them in order for them to identify other good storytellers among them. This will help them to share ideas on coming up with good stories. Through the ideas, they will be able to find their strengths and weaknesses. They will, therefore, work on their weaknesses which will help them to become better storytellers.

Making the Stories to Sound Real

Most people will be interested in your stories if they sound real. They will be able to relate them to real life. A good storyteller should be in a position to make the audience to imagine the scenes as if they were real. When they do this, they will be able to deeply connect with the story and will keep remembering the story even after listening to it.

A good storyteller should also be able to able to dramatize some of the scenes in the story. They should only dramatize the necessary parts in order to avoid overdoing it. Overdoing the scenes may make the narration boring hence the need to avoid them. When narrating a story about how you were attacked by the shark in the ocean, you do not need to show how you were attacked but rather how you fought back. This will make the story interesting since everyone in the audience will be keenly following to see the dramatic scene of how you fought the shark.

A good storyteller should also avoid repeating himself. Repeating details makes the audience to get bored. They may be tempted to stop listening to you and switch to other things. The trick is to make the audience interested in your story so just give details once and move to other new details.

Give More Facts and Fewer Details

Too many details bore the audience. Sometimes it would be better to give a simple description of how events unfolded. The audience will be keen to capture all the details than when you keep giving long stories. They will be able to flow with the narration when you are precise and straight to the point. For the listeners to keep the interest in the story, you should be able to give vivid details which the audience will keep in their minds all along. They will flow with you as they imagine the scenes. This is because vivid scenes are interesting and at the same time surprising. The vivid details are also said to relate to the stories. The vivid details are also said to help a reader to imagine the scenes as if they were happening at that particular time. It is therefore important to ensure that as a storyteller, you give the readers more facts and fewer details.

Ensure that You Practice Related Skills

We all know that the best way to practice storytelling is by doing it in your day to day conversations. However, one can still device better ways of doing so. A storyteller should ensure that they read as many storytelling books as possible. This will help them to be able to learn new storytelling skills which enables them to become better storytellers. A storyteller should also be able to identify the stories that interest them. This will make it easy for them to have a good flow in their story since they are comfortable with the topics they have chosen.

A storyteller will be able to tell that they have sharpened their skills when they keep their audience entertained throughout their stories. In actual performance, the audience is very important. The audience acts as a catalyst for the artist. A storyteller will be able to tell that they have succeeded in their storytelling journey when;

They Can Describe a Character or a Scene in an Interesting Way: You can give a vivid description of a character depending on the way the character behaves. This will make the audience to create mental pictures based on the description either in terms of character or scene. The use of some characters can be symbolic.

You Achieve a Good Flow in Your Story: Telling a story is not an easy task. It is with more practice that you master the art of storytelling. The more you write stories, the more creative you become. You will term yourself to be successful when you are able to narrate stories with a good flow and which the audience connects with. Once you own the stories, you will be able to narrate them comfortably. You will also be able to deliver the required message and which the audience can relate with.

Incorporate a Personal Story or a Song in Your Narration: A storyteller needs to be a person who can read people's moods when they are listening to their story. They should, therefore, make their stories interesting enough by including nice songs in their narration. They can also incorporate a personal story which is helpful in breaking the boredom. The personal story should be in relation to the narration. This will be of great help to the audience who sit for long hours doing the same thing. It may be so boring doing the same thing for long hours. A storyteller should, therefore, devise ways of making sure that the audience keeps listening to them. So, if your personal experience is captivating share it. If you don't have one look for a song that will suit whatever was being discussed. This will break the monotony and make the audience to join you in the song.

Merging With the Recent Events: Talking about stale things can be boring more so with the current generation. The only way could be merging what you were saying to what takes place in the current society. This will involve them and will participate actively. Through their participation, they get to understand the stories and even retell them to other people in the future. You will, therefore, have succeeded in maintaining the audience so at no time will you lack an audience to listen or read your stories. The audience will even recruit other members who may also start listening and also reading your stories. There is no greater motivation than a growing audience. It gives you the morale to research ways of giving better stories in order for you to keep your audience. This also benefits you since you sharpen your skills so you do not remain the same.

Use Provocative Questions : A good storyteller should be in a position to use provocative questions when there is a need. Provocative questions are important since they keep the audience interested. They will keep listening to you. It also helps in making sure that they are fully involved in the

storytelling session. The audience must listen actively in order for them to answer the questions correctly. It also helps them not to get bored. They are expected to stay awake which makes them follow the story keenly. Using provocative questions is therefore very important and using them as a storyteller helps the audience to follow the story and also understand it.

Conclusion

Thank you for making it through to the end of *improve your social skills* , let's hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals whatever they may be.

The next step is to put the things learned to practice. One learns what social skills are. Most of the people never asked or answered that question but at the very end of this book has answered that. One also sees the importance of socials skills in our daily living. We also see if the social skills are in someone or they are acquired. There is also the fact that social skills differ from one person to another and then we can easily know how to work on them. As always the difference in social skills makes our relation to people different.

The book also talks about emotional quotient and how to use it to your advantage. The meaning of emotional quotient has been looked at keenly. There also talks of self-awareness and all its techniques. There is also the self-management and all its aspects. There is also all about social awareness this is related to social skills and one must understand the aspects of social skills. There is also the point of making oneself better when you feel not so great and finally, there are practical examples that were listed to show these aspects in a more vivid form.

While interacting with others stress is bound to take over once in a while. That means one has to look for relieves. This book gave the ticket way to that. Those are things one should practice and also gave one phobia associated fear of being social. There is the talk of mindfulness and how one could improve. There is also the social phobia and all of the aspects concerning it. There is also setting the right mindset of the things one does. This may be positive or negative that depends on the person himself or herself. Also, assertiveness is key and was looked into.

The other thing discussed is emotional intelligence. In this what was looked into was the meaning of emotional intelligence. There is also the use of emotional quotient to deal with one's need. The uses were explained very keenly. There is also the intelligence scale and everything about it has been discussed. Therefor types of questions all discussed. There are types of

aspects they use in the questions. It is one important thing in terms of emotional intelligence and the quotient in general. All have been discussed to the brim in the wonderful you just read.

Finally, there was an assessment of emotional intelligence. There instructions for the self –assessment. There is also the relationship management seen. Also the way of calculating the emotional intelligence score. There is also the art of persuasion. There are the basics of it and the methods of persuasion. The body language is also very key. Also, things like making friends have been looked at. Leadership is also key in this book so it has been seen through and finally, one is taught how to be a great storyteller. This is to avoid someone being bored with you while you are talking.

Finally, if you found this book useful in any way, a review on Amazon is always appreciated !