

**MENTAL HEALTH
IN YOUNG PEOPLE**

DAN LICENCE

DAN LICENCE

- MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING COACH
- MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID INSTRUCTOR
- FACE TO FACE SUICIDE PREVENTION
- FACILITATOR AT RUBY WAX'S FRAZZLED CAFÉ
- MINDFULNESS TEACHER

Mental Health

- NOT EXCLUSIVE TO THOSE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH “PROBLEM”
- WE ALL HAVE MENTAL HEALTH, AND IT CAN BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE
- IT’S EXACTLY THE SAME AS PHYSICAL HEALTH, THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BEING YOU CAN’T SEE IT.

“10% OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (AGED 5-16) HAVE A CLINICALLY DIAGNOSABLE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM, YET 70% DON'T GET APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS AT A SUFFICIENTLY EARLY AGE.”

Types of Mental Health Problems

- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Eating Disorders
- ▶ Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)

Depression

A mood disorder affecting how a person thinks, feels and is able to cope with daily activities, to the point where it drastically inhibits their ability to live a normal life.

- The number of people with depression aged 15 to 16 has nearly doubled between the 1980's and present day.



Depression

According to the American Psychiatric Association, there's 4 main factors that can contribute to depression:

- ▶ **Chemical imbalance in the brain:** In particular serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. Low levels of these can contribute to symptoms of a range of mental health problems.
- ▶ **Genetics:** They can run in families. Studies show that if one identical twin has depression, the other has a 70 percent chance of developing it in their life time.
- ▶ **Personality:** People with low self-esteem, who are easily overwhelmed by stress, or who are generally pessimistic appear to be more likely to experience depression.
- ▶ **Environmental factors:** Continuous exposure to violence, neglect, abuse or poverty may make some people more vulnerable.

Anxiety

A TERM USED TO DESCRIBE INTENSE FEELINGS OF FEAR, PANIC OR WORRY. THIS IS OFTEN ACCOMPANIED BY PHYSICAL SENSATIONS, SUCH AS HEART PALPITATIONS, A DRY MOUTH OR FEELING FAINT.

- Women are almost twice as likely to be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder as men.



**What are some of the signs
and symptoms?**

Signs and Symptoms

Common things to look out for include:

- ▶ Suddenly seeming tired all the time; persistent fatigue
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating or remembering details
- ▶ Loss of interest in activities or hobbies previously enjoyed
- ▶ Feeling bored all the time/not looking forward to anything
- ▶ Not wanting to see their friends; isolating themselves
- ▶ Letting their school work slip, when they used to care about it
- ▶ Irritability or lack of patience

**What do you do if you suspect
one of your students has a
mental health problem?**

Step 1: Ask and Assess

- ▶ A relaxed approach tends to yield better results compared to a direct approach, so try to establish a rapport with them first.
- ▶ Resist the urge to label it straight away. Instead, ask questions: “you seem a bit tired today”. “I can see you’re finding it hard to focus”. “Is everything ok?”



Step 2: Listen non-judgmentally

- ▶ Listen without any judgement or pre-conceived ideas about their condition.
- ▶ It's a legitimate illness and it doesn't mean they're any less able to learn.



Step 3: Give reassurance

- ▶ What they have is a real medical condition.
- ▶ It doesn't make them weak or any less in character.
- ▶ It's very common; a lot of people have it and are still successful.
- ▶ Recovery is possible.



Positive vs negative things to say

Positive

- ▶ It's ok to feel this way/this is common.
- ▶ Your friends or family aren't going to judge you
- ▶ I'm here for you/listening
- ▶ You're not suffering alone
- ▶ There's always someone you can talk to

Negative

- ▶ Man up or grow up!
- ▶ Attention seeking
- ▶ We all have problems
- ▶ I don't have time
- ▶ Stop complaining
- ▶ Just get on with it

Step 4: Educate them about treatments available

Medication

- ▶ Pros: Can have great success in relieving the symptoms of a range of mental health issues.
- ▶ Cons: Can have unwanted side effects.

Talking Therapy

Popular forms of therapy include:

- ▶ Counselling
- ▶ Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- ▶ Psychotherapy

These are available both privately and on the NHS; however, if going through the NHS, the waiting list can be anywhere from 3 to 6 months.

Further Information

▶ **MIND**

One of the largest mental health charities around. Offers extensive information and advice on a variety of mental health issues.

Tel: 0300 123 3393

Website: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

▶ **Young Minds**

Offers free, confidential advice to any adult/parent worried about the mental health of a young person.

Tel: 0808 802 5544

Website: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Talklines

▶ **Papyrus**

Charity for the prevention of suicide in young people, offering confidential support.

Tel: 0800 068 41 41

Website: <http://www.papyrus-uk.org>

▶ **ChildLine**

Free 24hr helpline for children and young people in the UK.

Tel: 0800 1111

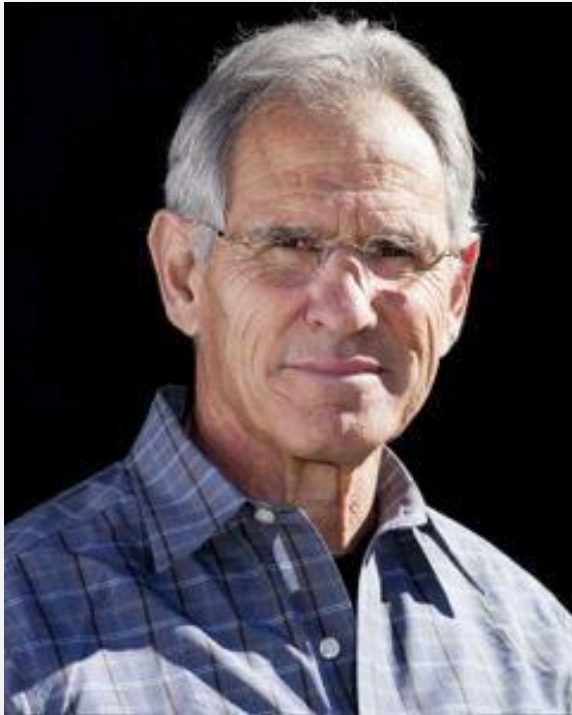
Website: <http://www.childline.org.uk>

Step 5: Encourage self-help strategies

- **POSITIVE EMOTION**
- **ENGAGEMENT**
- **RELATIONSHIPS**
- **MEANING**
- **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**



What is Mindfulness?



JON KABAT-ZINN

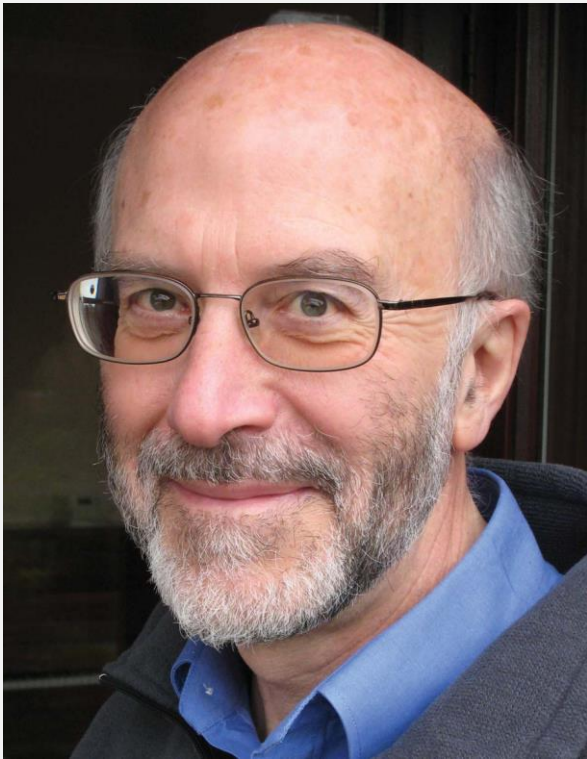
- MINDFULNESS IS A THERAPEUTIC TOOL TO HELP MANAGE STRESS AND ANXIETY.
- IT'S ABOUT CULTIVATING A PRESENT STATE OF MIND, THROUGH DEVELOPING AN ONGOING AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE OF OUR THOUGHTS MOMENT BY MOMENT.

8 Weeks of Mindfulness Training

HAS BEEN SHOWN TO:

- STRENGTHEN THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX, WHICH IS GOOD FOR EMOTIONAL REGULATION
- INCREASE GREY-MATTER DENSITY IN THE HIPPOCAMPUS, IMPORTANT FOR LEARNING AND MEMORY
- DECREASE GREY-MATTER DENSITY IN THE AMYGDALA, WHICH IS ASSOCIATED WITH ANXIETY AND STRESS

THE 2 MODES OF MIND



John Teasdale



Philip Barnard

“DOING” MODE AND “BEING” MODE

“Doing” mode:

- Goal oriented, and gets activated when the mind perceives a difference between how things are and where it wants to be

“Being” mode:

- Isn't focused on specific goals, but rather accepting and allowing what is.

THE TIME TRAP

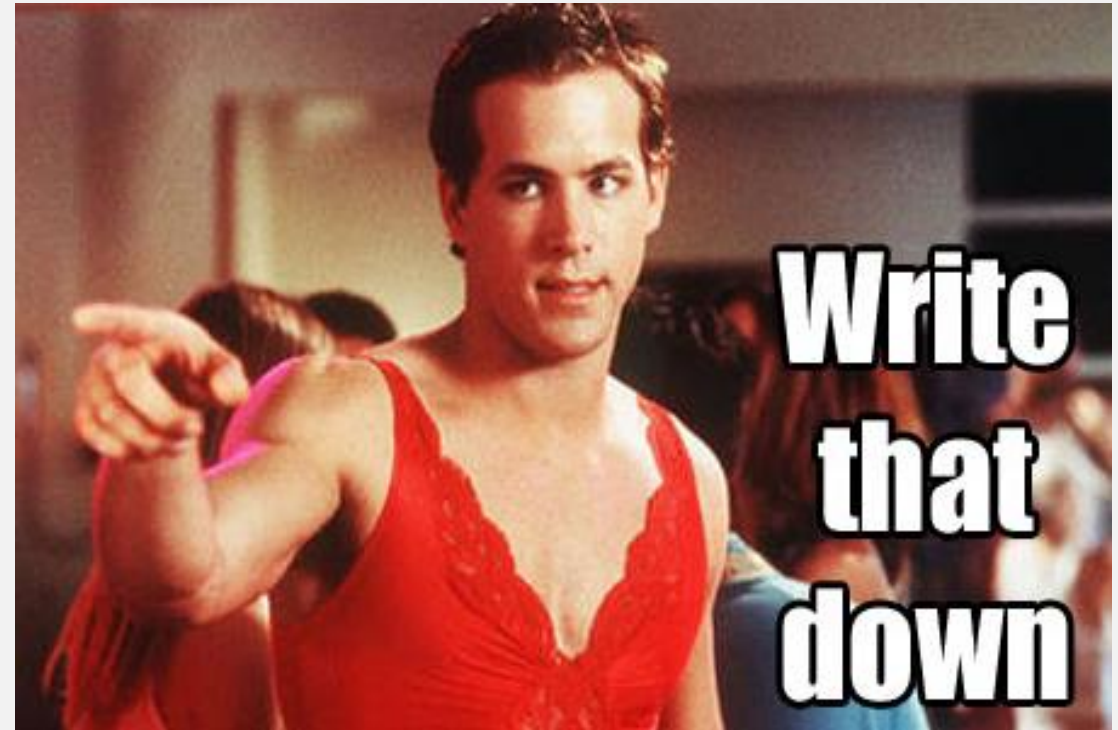


- **The past = depression**
- **The future = anxiety**
- We need to train our minds to focus on the ***present.***

THE TIME TRAP

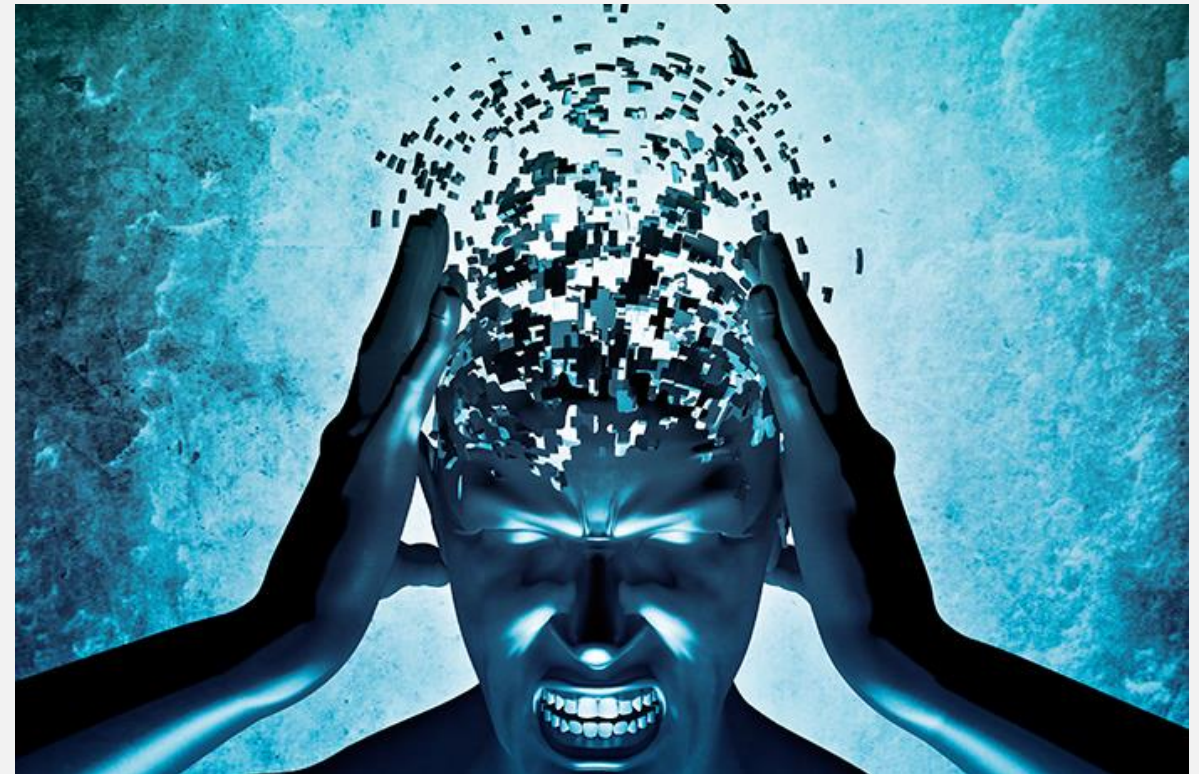
“Worrying is like a rocking chair, it gives you something to do, but it doesn’t get you anywhere”

– Van Wilder



HOW DOES MINDFULNESS HELP WITH MENTAL WELL-BEING?

- ***One of the biggest factors for people with mental health problems is constant negative thinking***
- ***We spend roughly 47% of our day thinking.***
- ***Thoughts have a physiological effect on the mind and body, which causes stress and inflammation***



How Mindfulness Helps Mental Well-being

***“You can’t stop the waves,
but you can learn to surf”***

The aim of mindfulness is not to make negative thoughts go away, but to try and lessen the focus on them. It’s like going to the gym for your mind. Every time you successfully anchor your awareness back to the present, it’s like doing a bicep curl for your brain.



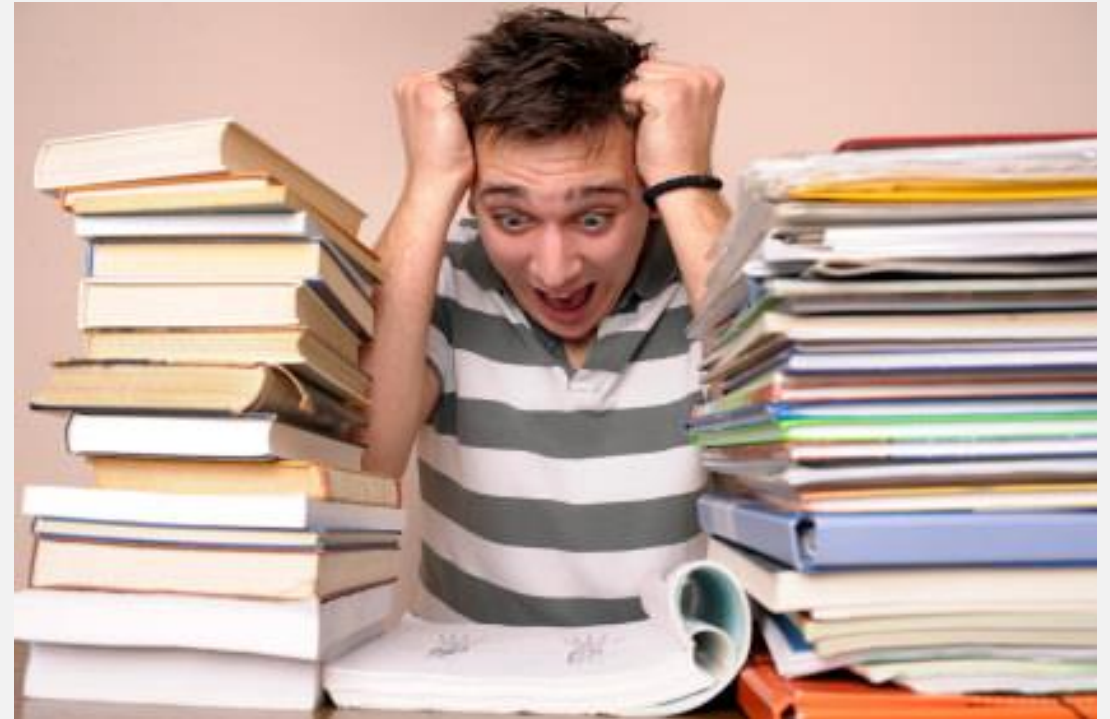
SUMMARY

- For those pre-disposed to mental health problems, there's a tendency towards constant negative thinking
- Negative thoughts have a physiological impact on the mind and body which puts us in a state of stress and anxiety
- This puts us in a spiral that if not caught early enough, runs the risk of developing into a mental health problem
- In order to tackle that, we can use Mindfulness to help manage our thoughts by simply monitoring them, labelling them and over time reframing our attitude towards them

TEACHING STUDENTS ABOUT MINDFULNESS

Why?

- Young people have a lot of pressure with things like exams, social media, struggles with perfectionism etc
- Their brains (specifically the prefrontal cortex) are not fully formed to deal with this stress, as well as changing hormones
- Mindfulness teaches emotional regulation that can help manage stress, prevent impulsive behaviour, increase performance in exams and decrease classroom absences



TEACHING STUDENTS ABOUT MINDFULNESS

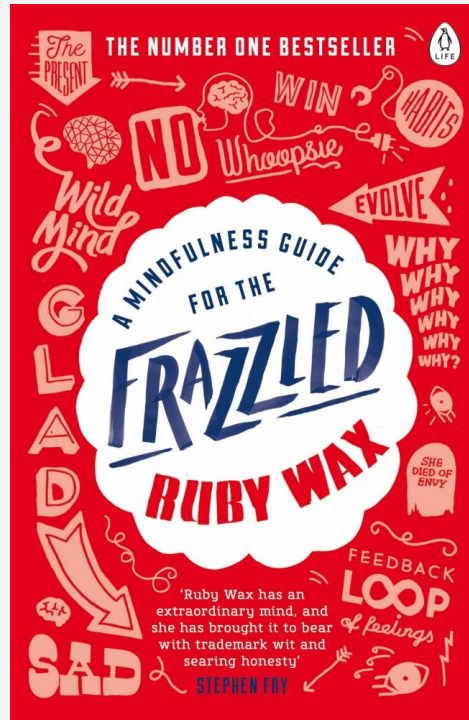
Exercises

- **Before lesson** – Plan a game for the start of the lesson based on something that has happened throughout their day. For example, you could ask them to count how many red cars they saw on the way home. Or how many steps it is from school to home.
- **During lesson** - If you're studying a book, or a text and there's a situation where the character becomes distressed, ask them to imagine what the character is feeling in that moment. Where they might be feeling it in their body. Ask them to describe what it might feel like.
- **In case of emergency** - Introduce your student to the concept of FOFBOC, (feet on floor; bum on chair). This is a mental health first aid technique to help anchor the mind back to the present when someone is having a difficult time concentrating.

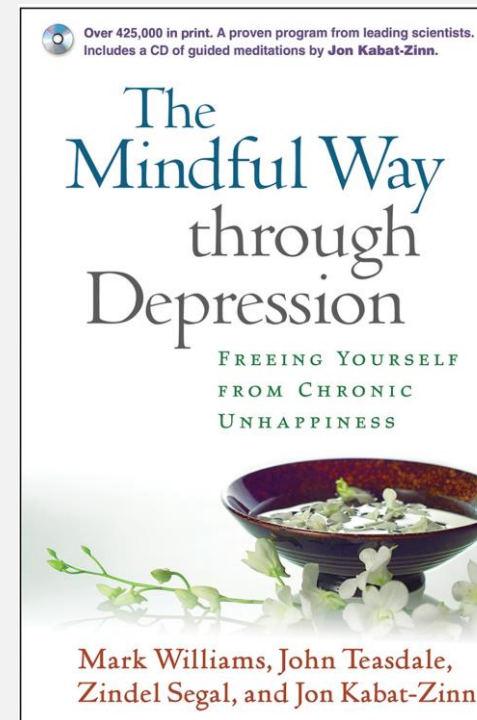
Teaching Mindfully

- ▶ **Labelling** – Attempt to label the emotion you're experiencing by thinking of a word that best describes the sensation. Anger, Fury, Rage etc.
- ▶ **Scanning** – Try pausing for a second and turning your attention inwards by scanning your body for any feelings of tension. Eighty-five per cent of what we communicate is through body language, so it's important to make sure your posture isn't aggressive as your child will mirror this and react negatively.
- ▶ **Focusing** – Put the spotlight of your attention on your student by listening intently. Really focus on the details of what they're saying. By paying attention in this way, it lowers your cortisol levels and makes you calmer, which will make your student calmer. If this doesn't work, try to focus in on one particular feature on their face, for example their eyes, nose or mouth and investigate it with curiosity, as if it's the first time you've noticed it.

For More Information



Frazzled – Ruby Wax



The Mindful Way Through Depression – Mark Williams

APPS



POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY



Martin Seligman

- *Founder of Positive Psychology*
- *Became president of the American Psychiatric Association in 1998*
- *Dedicated his presidency to “Positive Psychology” or “the scientific study of what makes us happy and healthy”.*

PERMA MODEL

Positive Emotion

Engagement

Relationships

Meaning

Accomplishments



POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Pleasure vs Enjoyment

- *Pleasure relates to satisfying our bodily needs - hunger, thirst, going to the toilet etc*
- *Enjoyment is when we're engaged in something creatively or intellectually*



Positive Emotions



- ▶ **Do you use your strengths and talents on a regular basis?** If not, is there a way you could bring those talents or strengths into your life more regularly?
- ▶ **Do you even know what your strengths are?** If not, try taking the VIA Survey

GROWTH MINDSET



“The core belief that our ability now does not reflect our ability in the future and that through hard work and perseverance, our basic qualities can be improved”. – Carol Dweck

Growth Mindset

We can achieve this by:

- ▶ Setting achievable targets within the lesson that build towards a long term goal.
- ▶ Praising the effort, rather than the result - “Well done! You worked really hard on that”.
- ▶ Giving comments in a feedback sandwich. Positive. Negative. Positive. I really like what you’ve written there, the handwriting needs a bit of improvement, but the content is great!
- ▶ Teaching students that it’s ok to fail - When you fail you learn. Failure is a necessary part of success in a lot of cases. You could even give examples of people who have failed yet still become successful.

STOICISM



Negative Visualisation

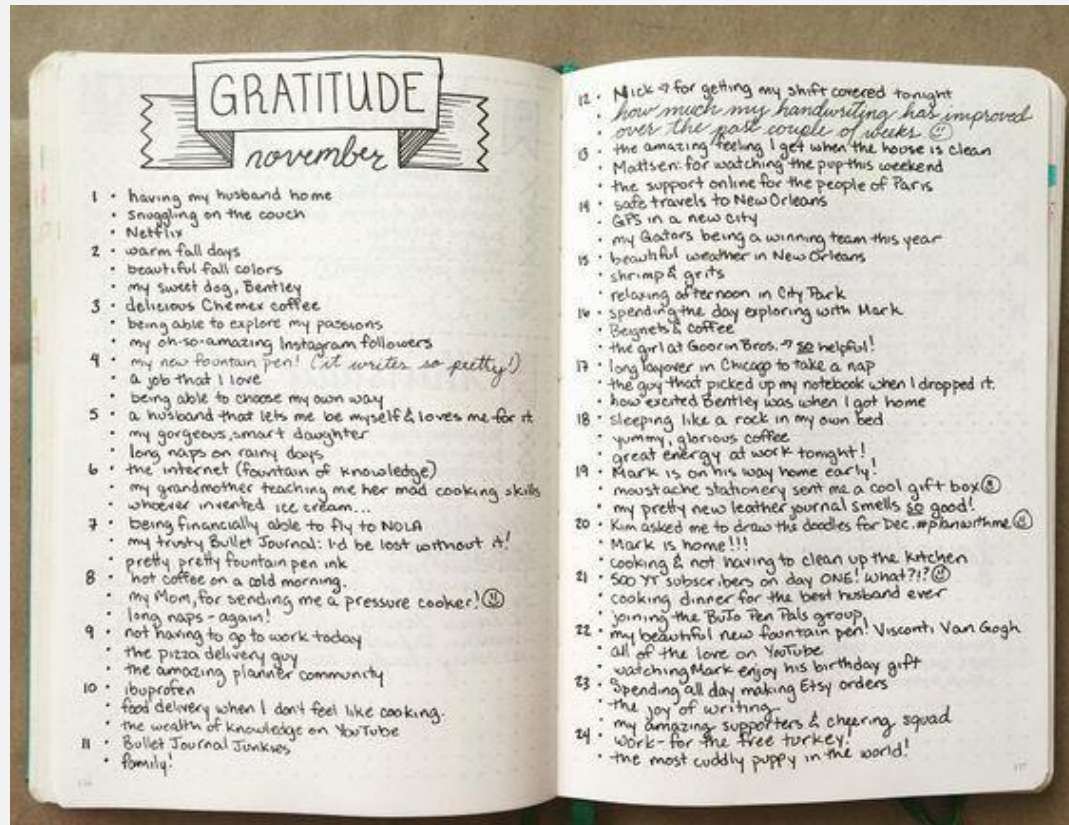
- To contemplate bad things happening, and exploring the worst case scenario of that, in order to decrease the impact they can have on us, when despite our best efforts, they do happen.

GRATITUDE

“Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for.”- Epicurus.

Gratitude Diary:

- **Get students to write down 5 things every day that they are grateful for**

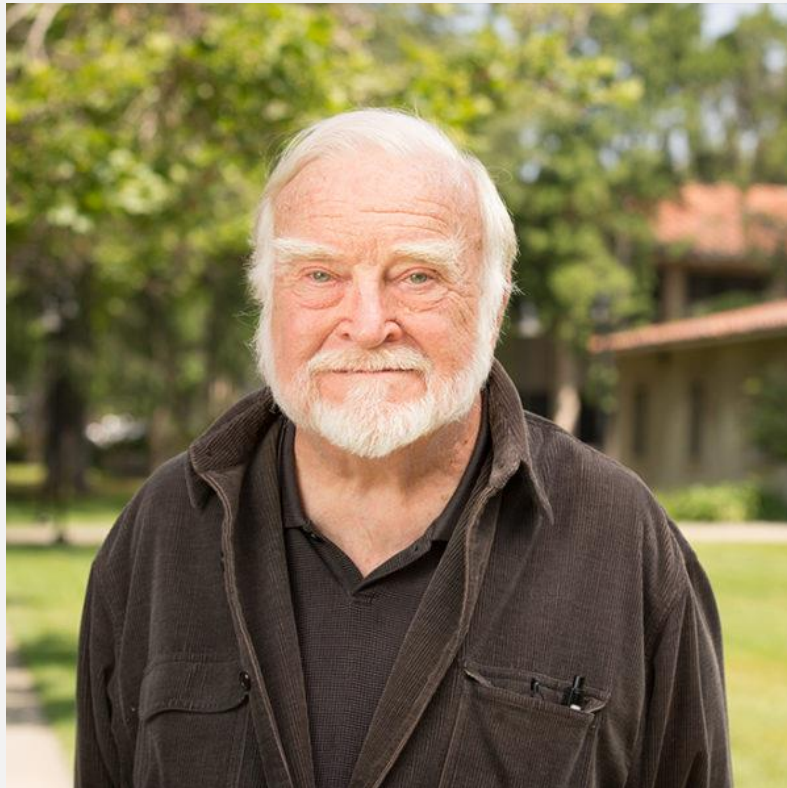


ENGAGEMENT

- Engagement is most often associated with creativity, but you can also experience deep engagement when participating in sports, spending time with friends, or working on projects that you're interested in.
- Anything that you're engaging in where time seems to just “fly by”. This is what's known as “flow”.



FLOW



Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Flow

“...is being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you’re using your skills to the utmost.”

Engagement

3 ways to develop engagement:

- ▶ **Incorporate an activity you love into your daily routine** - Make a list of activities that you really enjoy, where you've completely lost track of time because you've been so immersed in it. Then try to incorporate at least one of these activities into your daily routine.
- ▶ **Establish your character strengths** and learn how to use them regularly. Or build a life/career around them. The VIA survey is a great place to start figuring out where your strengths lie.
- ▶ **Be present.** Mindfulness can be an excellent way to help engage you with the present. A simple "body scan exercise" for ten minutes each day is a good starting point.

RELATIONSHIPS

“Find your tribe” – Sebastien Junger

- Loneliness and isolation increases the likelihood of mortality by 25%, which puts it on a similar level to other well-known risk factors, like obesity and smoking.
- When we feel isolated, pain centres in our brain become activated, which increases the amount of inflammation in our bodies



RELATIONSHIPS

Encourage students to:

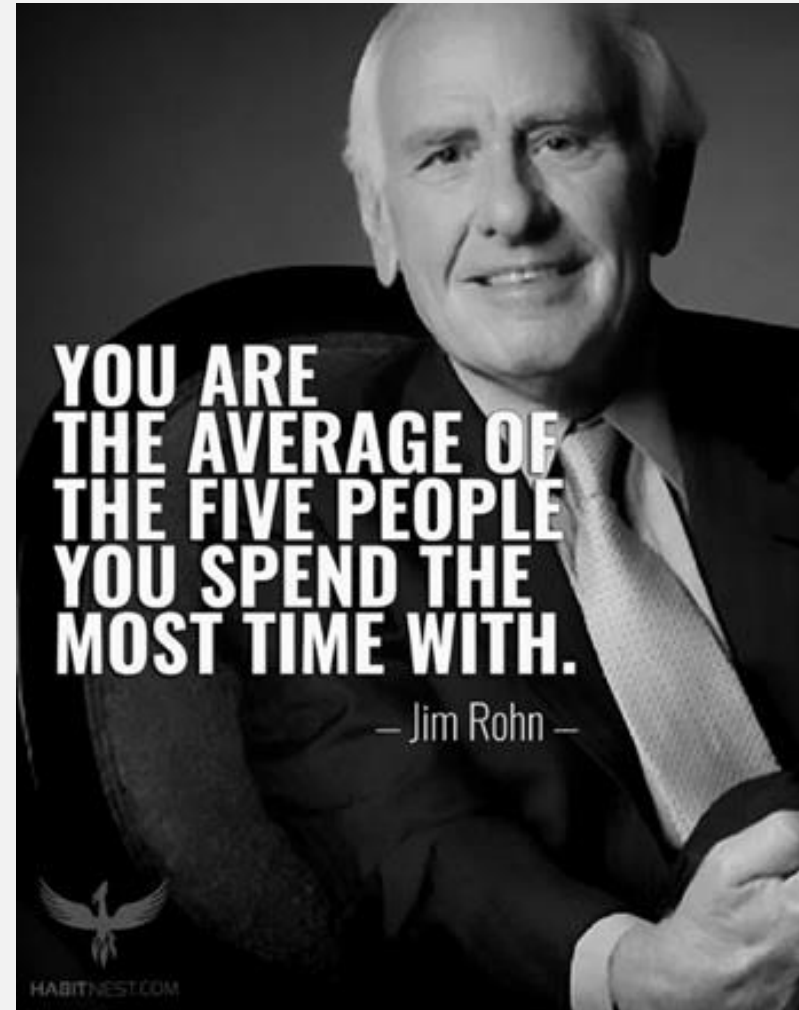
- ***GET OFF SOCIAL MEDIA!!!***
- ***Text or call a friend***
- ***Join a club***
- ***Go for a walk in nature***



RELATIONSHIPS

“Kill your vampires”

- Surround yourself with *radiators*, not drains.
- Take stock of your immediate circle. Do those people add or subtract from your existence? If the answer is the latter, remove them.



MEANING

Grit

“Having sustained passion towards achieving long term goals”

- *Angela Duckworth*

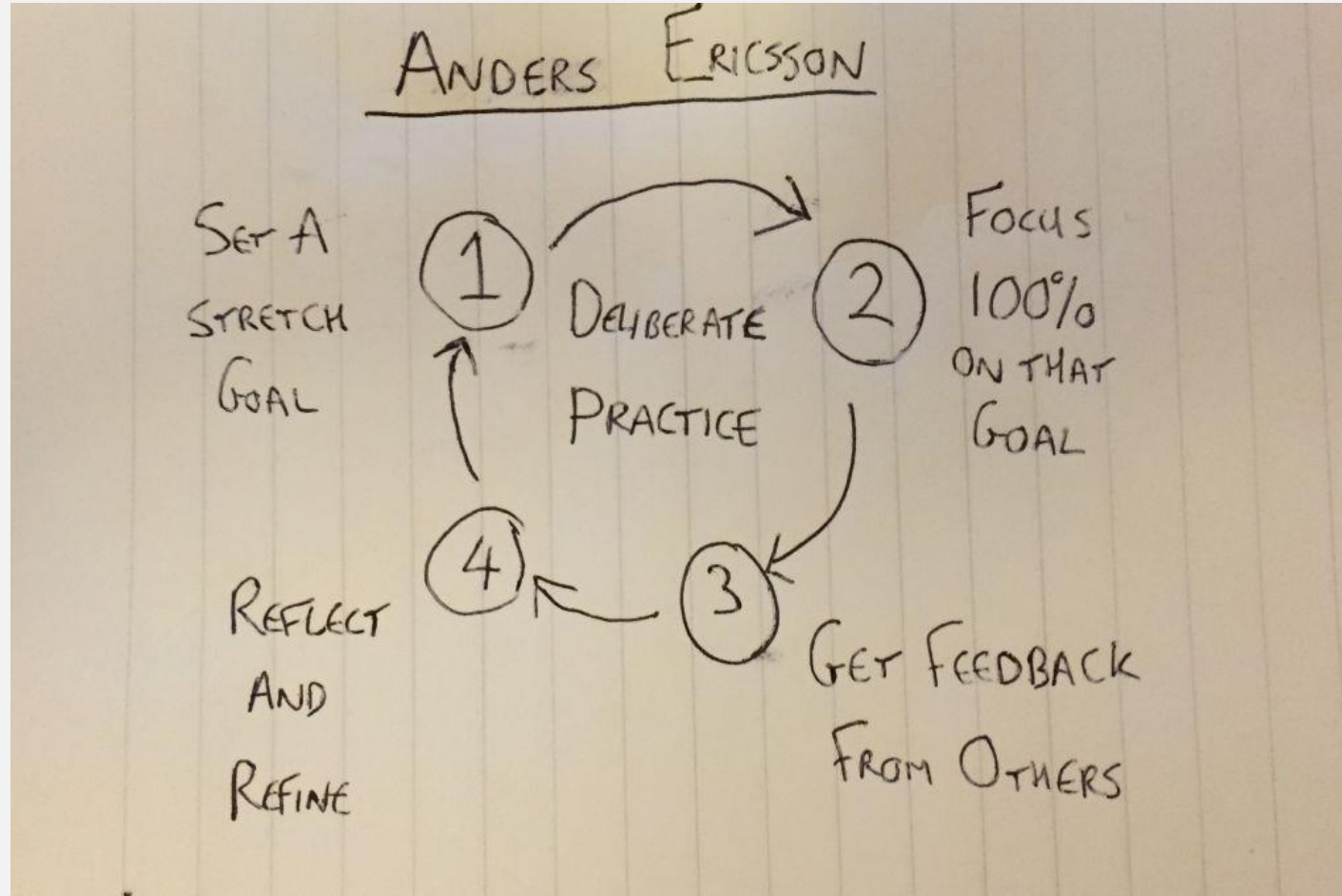


Meaning

3 ways to develop Grit:

- ▶ **Develop their interests** – Ask them what they're passionate about? What would they do if money was no object? If they could wake up tomorrow and be anything, what would they be?
- ▶ **Cultivate purpose** - In choosing what to do, take into account whether it will benefit other people. Interest is selfish. Purpose is meaningful.
- ▶ **Know the science of “Deliberate Practice”** – Once they've established their ultimate goal, the best way to stay focused on achieving that goal, is by engaging in “deliberate practice”.

Deliberate Practice



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Goals

- Write down 3 main goals that you want to achieve by the end of the year
- Break those goals down into smaller chunks that you can achieve each month, each week and each day
- Engage in deliberate practice

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

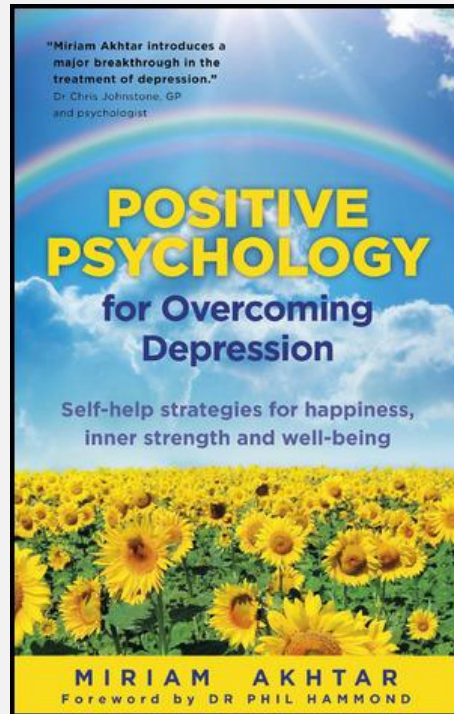
“Life is what happens when you’re busy making other plans” – John Lennon



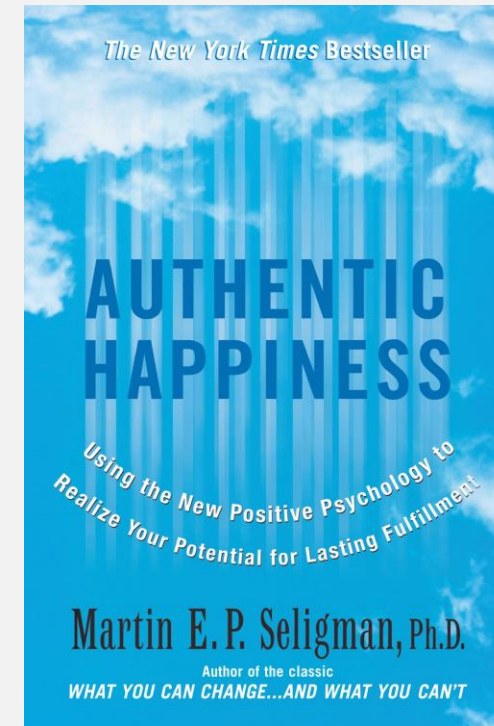
RELAX!!

- Enjoy the process - be driven but not overdriven
- Try and take at least 10 minutes each day to do something you enjoy
- Try new things – what’s the worst that could happen?

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Positive Psychology for Overcoming Depression – Miriam Akhtar



Authentic Happiness – Martin Seligman

GREAT DREAM

Ten keys to happier living

GIVING



Do things for others

RELATING



Connect with people

EXERCISING



Take care of your body

APPRECIATING



Notice the world around

TRYING OUT



Keep learning new things

DIRECTION



Have goals to look forward to

RESILIENCE



Find ways to bounce back

EMOTION



Take a positive approach

ACCEPTANCE



Be comfortable with who you are

MEANING



Be part of something bigger

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org