

STEP-UP TO WELLNESS

A GUIDE FOR TRAINEES

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INTRODUCTION

What is this all about?

Burn-out is defined by H. Steven Moffic, M.D. as “a dying down of the embers of our passion for work, to levels not explainable by length of time working.” In more concrete terms, it is psychological, emotional, or physical exhaustion which is not the direct result of medical or psychiatric illness. At the same time, burn-out often goes hand-in-hand with medical or psychiatric problems, each feeding off of the other in a kind of vicious cycle.

Some common symptoms associated with burn-out include depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Depersonalization is a form of desensitization, where a sense of monotony and helplessness associated with repeated, poor outcomes leads to callousness and reduced empathy. For example, a physician in the emergency department might become disillusioned with certain “frequent flyer” patients who are attempting to manipulate them into prescribing narcotics. As they see more and more negative outcomes, they might begin to feel like they are not making a difference.

In his article on burn-out published in the Journal of Psychiatric Administration and Management, Dr. Moffic explains how burn-out lies in a somewhat gray area between mental illness and normal human experience.¹ It appears as a health problem in ICD-10, but it is not found in the DSM-5. The effects of burn-out, however, are very real and include decreased work efficiency, increased risk of drug and alcohol use, and increased risk of suicide.² As one would expect, research demonstrates that the patients of physicians suffering from burn-out suffer as well, with poorer outcomes.

Unfortunately, the problem is systemic, and it begins early in medical education. A cross-sectional analysis of over 4,000 U.S. medical students revealed that 49.6% have experienced burn-out, with 5.8% reporting suicidal ideation. Another study of over 1,000 medical students from the same group revealed that burned-out students had less empathy, and ultimately decreased professional competence. A survey of over 4,000 medical residents revealed that the problem continues in post-graduate medical training, with 61% viewing themselves as more cynical since starting residency, and 23% feeling that they had become less humanistic during residency.

1 Moffic, H.S. (2017). A New Psychiatric Administrative Ethical Challenge: Burn-Out. Journal of Psychiatric Administration and Management, 5(1), 13-15.

2 Markell, M. & Isaksen, L. (2016). The Stress Response [Powerpoint Slides]. Lecture Given at SUNY Downstate College of Medicine.

Dyrbye, L.N., et al. (2008). Burnout and Suicidal Ideation Among U.S. Medical Students. Ann Intern Med, 149(5), 334-41.

Thomas, M.R., et al. (2007). How Do Distress and Well-being Relate to Medical Student Empathy? A Multicenter Study. J Gen Intern Med, 22(2), 177-183.

Collier, V.U., et al. (2002). Stress in Medical Residency: Status Quo After a Decade of Reform? Ann Intern Med, 136(5), 384-90.



What can we do then to avoid burn-out, and to therefore promote wellness in ourselves, while improving patient outcomes? First and foremost, as health care workers, we have to be careful about holding ourselves to an unreasonable ideal. When we listen to the flight attendant explain the procedure for loss of cabin pressure, we don't think twice when they state "place the oxygen mask on yourself first, and then attend to your child." After all, without attending to our own needs first, how can we hope to help others?

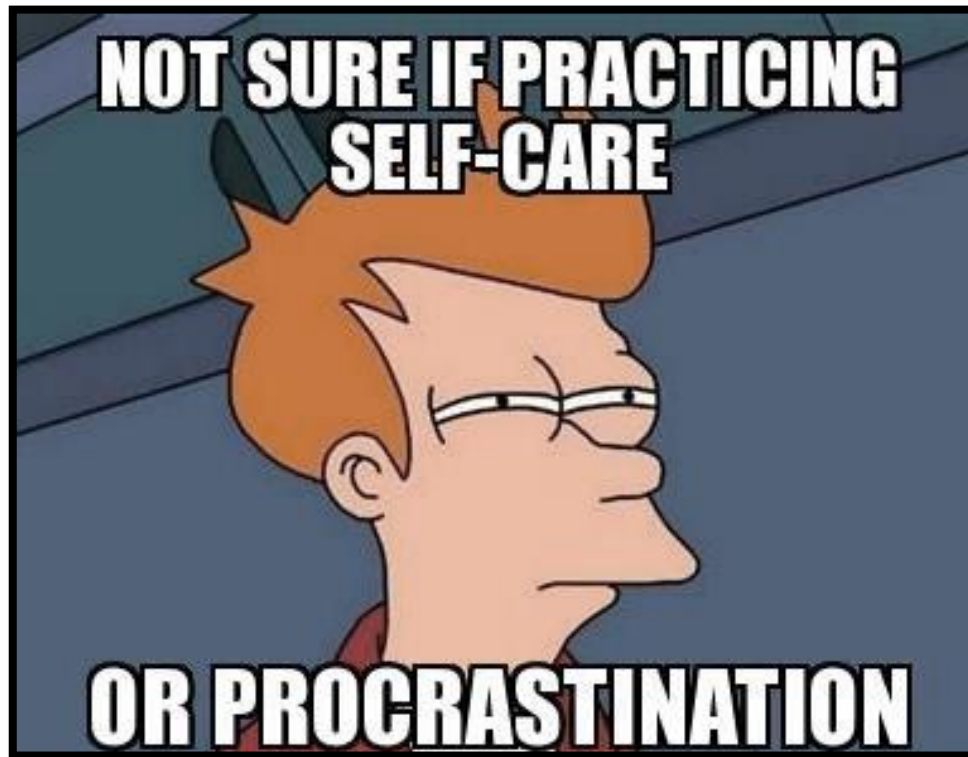
In this manual, we provide some concrete and easily implementable strategies for preventing burn-out and maintaining good mental hygiene. We intend this to be a living document that will evolve to include more suggestions as we receive them, along with a new section on institutional strategies in the months and years to come. Your feedback will help to improve this document, to benefit fellow students and physicians, and continuously improve the quality of patient care we provide.

Granted, sometimes the recommendations in this manual are not 100% feasible. It is near impossible to have a consistent bedtime when you are scheduled for shift work. There will be days when you buy many hamburgers and donuts from the hospital cafeteria. There will be weeks where you forget to see your friends, call someone important, or get a healthy helping of sun. Some months will be amazing, and others will leave you longing an alternate life. The grass is always greener on the other side, and sometimes it's just in a sad state of needing water. And that's okay.

We will never be that perfect UWORLD vignette, eating healthy and meditating, but we owe it to ourselves to try our best, and that's all anyone can ask.

DEDICATION

To the life of the medical student; to never knowing if you know anything



PHYSICAL SELF CARE

"Let's get (a) physical"
Olivia Newton-John inspired

NUTRITION



Doug the Pug estimating his ASCVD score.

Quick Hit

- Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan
- Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount
- Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake
- Shift to healthier food and beverage choices

Nutrition: 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Key Recommendations



The *Dietary Guidelines'* Key Recommendations for healthy eating patterns should be applied in their entirety, given the interconnected relationship that each dietary component can have with others.

Consume a healthy eating pattern that accounts for all foods and beverages within an appropriate calorie level.

A healthy eating pattern includes:^[1]

- A variety of vegetables from all of the subgroups—dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other
- Fruits, especially whole fruits
- Grains, at least half of which are whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages
- A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- Oils

A healthy eating pattern limits:

- Saturated fats and *trans* fats, added sugars, and sodium

Key Recommendations that are quantitative are provided for several components of the diet that should be limited. These components are of particular public health concern in the United States, and the specified limits can help individuals achieve healthy eating patterns within calorie limits:

- Consume less than 10 percent of calories per day from added sugars^[2]
- Consume less than 10 percent of calories per day from saturated fats^[3]
- Consume less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day of sodium^[4]
- If alcohol is consumed, it should be consumed in moderation—up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men—and only by adults of legal drinking age.^[5]

Storage Solutions

The key to medical student success is flexibility and mobility, so you can bring your food wherever you go. Therefore it's worth investing in a set of glass containers for travel and for storage at home. Glass containers preserve flavors, heat food more evenly, and have a greater longevity for the intense 4 years ahead.



Choosing Meals

Certain styles of food lend themselves to easier preparation than others and include a healthy balance of proteins and vegetables. A few examples include Latin American, Mediterranean, Italian, and "Salads" (which makes up its own style overall). Fortunately, there are ways of preparing food weekly that will save time and leave you with ingredients that can be applied to any of these 4 categories, and more!



Efficient Prep Tips

Easy Freeze - Choose a day each week where you can prepare 5-6 days worth of food. For variety, consider cooking large servings of 2-3 different dishes that you can rotate throughout the week. Cooking in a large pot or a crock pot (well worth the \$20-30 investment) can be a quick way to let the meals prepare themselves while you study on this "cooking fiesta" day. Then, once all the food is done store it in freezer bags or containers. Typically, for freezing you would want to use plastic which can accommodate the expansion of foods.

Cooking on the Spot - Choose a day each week that you can dedicate 1-2 hours to cutting vegetables. This can be on the weekend or a weekday, whatever works for you. Ultimately you'll end up with nearly 10-12 cups of vegetables (some staples include onions, bell peppers, jalapeno peppers [for some spice], squash, and/or zucchini). Store these in one of your larger glass containers and then when you need cut vegetables throughout the week for one of the above 4 meal styles, you're ready to go!

NUTRITION



"I'm supposed to say no to this?"
-Doug the Pug



Quick Hit


Dedicate a block of time each week to preparing your weekly meals



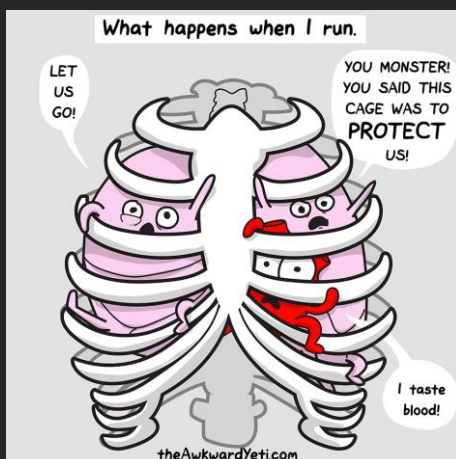
Any start is a good start.

SLEEP



 Quick Hit
7+ consistent hrs/night

EXERCISE



Sleep

The CDC recommends 7+ hours of sleep per night for adults

Try your best to follow these National Sleep Foundation recs:

- Go to bed at the same time each night and rise at the same time each morning.
- Make sure your bedroom is a quiet, dark, and relaxing environment, which is neither too hot or too cold.
- Make sure your bed is comfortable and use it only for sleeping and not for other activities, such as reading, watching TV, or listening to music.
- Remove all TVs, computers, and other "gadgets" from the bedroom.

Sleep Apps

- SleepBot (free): mysleepbot.com
- Sleep Cycle (0.99): sleepcycle.com
- Motion-24/7: 24-7.motionx.com
- eSleep (0.99): provides noises to aid sleep

f.lux



Makes the color of your computer's display adapt to the time of day, warm at night and like sunlight during the day. It's even possible that you're staying up too late because of your computer. You could use f.lux because it makes you sleep better, or you could just use it just because it makes your computer look better. Justgetflux.com

Exercise

Goal for adults: at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity (2 hours and 30 minutes) each week

Fun exercise ideas:

- Blogilates free beginners calendar; Pilates videos available on Youtube & blogilates.com
- 30 day yoga challenges
- Musicmotion Running: matches music to your pace
- Story Running
 - Runtastic runtastic.com
 - Zombies, Run! zombiesrungame.com
 - BattleSuit Runner Fitness



Types of Exercise

Moderate Intensity

- Walking briskly (3 miles per hour or faster, but not race-walking)
- Water aerobics
- Bicycling slower than 10 miles per hour
- Tennis (doubles)
- Ballroom dancing
- General gardening

Vigorous Intensity

- Racewalking, jogging, or running
- Swimming laps
- Tennis (singles)
- Aerobic dancing
- Bicycling 10 miles per hour or faster
- Jumping rope
- Hiking uphill or with a heavy backpack

Water Intake

It is important to stay hydrated. Water intake recommendations depend on your weight and amount of activity. Use the water calculator at guardyourhealth.com/health-tools to find your level.

DRINK ALL THE WATER



Medications

If you need them, take them as recommended/prescribed! Be sure to use a reminder method, like a phone alarm or post it, to keep yourself on top of things. #compliance

Breathing

Deep breathing can help decrease the body's 'fight-or-flight' (stress) response, and help with mood stabilization, anger control, and anxiety management.



Breathe2Relax is a hands-on diaphragmatic breathing exercise app from the National Center for Telehealth & Technology.

EXERCISE



Quick Hit

2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate activity/wk

WATER INTAKE



Quick Hit

Avoid primary polydipsia

MEDICATIONS

BREATHING

NOTES, PLANS & THOUGHTS

PHYSICAL

Why is physical health important to you?

What are your strengths? What areas can you improve?

What are your physical health goals?

REFERENCES & FURTHER READING

- 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Health | health.gov
- How Much Sleep Do I Need? | [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
 - American Academy of Sleep Medicine | aasmnet.org
- Recommendations & Guidelines | Physical Activity | [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
- Health Tools | www.guardyourhealth.com/health-tools

PHYSICAL

Images used:

- Doug the Pug | itsdougthepug.com
- Family Guy | fox.com/family-guy
- The Awkward Yeti | theawkwardyeti.com

LIFESTYLE SELF CARE

"All I'm trying to do is survive and make good out of the dirty, nasty, unbelievable lifestyle that they gave me."

Tupac Shakur

STRUCTURE & ROUTINE



Quick Hit

Write it down and get it done!

Structure & Routine

Incorporating structure and routine is hard. Creating new habits takes daily practice!

1. Decide on a goal that you would like to achieve for your health.
2. Choose a simple action that will get you towards your goal which you can do on a daily basis.
3. Plan when and where you will do your chosen action. Be consistent: choose a time and place that you encounter every day of the week.
4. Every time you encounter that time and place, do the action.
5. It will get easier with time, and within 10 weeks you should find you are doing it automatically without even having to think about it.
6. Congratulations, you've made a healthy habit!

Practice Sample

My goal _____

(e.g. 'to eat more fruit and vegetables')

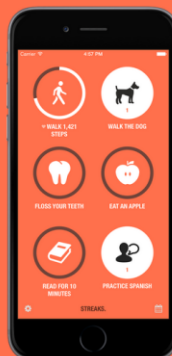
My plan (when and where) _____

I will _____

(e.g. 'after I have lunch at home I will eat a banana')

Apps to help with habit & routine setting:

- Habitica: a free habit building and productivity app that treats your real life like a game. Habitica.com
- SuperBetter: increases resilience. Superbetter.com
- Momentum: Don't break the chain! Momentum.cc
- Streaks: Choose up to six tasks you want to turn into daily habits. Streaksapp.com



Choose up to six tasks you want to turn into daily habits.

- Walk the dog
- Floss your teeth
- Eat an apple
- Practice Spanish

Time in Nature

Studies have found time spent in nature to be correlated with increased sense of energy and well being. We all know the feeling of staying in one room for more time than we'd like to admit, and never glimpsing the outdoors. Something as simple as taking out the trash, going for a walk, or even standing in the sun for 2 minutes, counts as being outside. Try taking a look into Wilderness Medicine courses. Get outdoors when you can!



PADDLE



BIKE



HIKE



WATCH

Relaxation: the state of being free from tension and anxiety

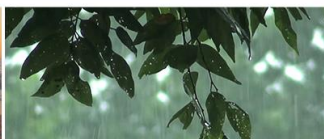
If you can't make it outside, here are some apps that help you feel at peace wherever you are:

- Headspace.com: has a free ten day trial to learn mindfulness meditation
- Calm.com: provides background environmental scenes and sounds along with guided meditations.



Calm

Guided meditations, soothing nature scenes,
and ambient sounds to ease your way through the day.



TIME IN NATURE



Quick Hit
If you need a moment, take
a moment.

RELAXATION



Inner peace

SETTING GOALS



✓ **Quick Hit**
Set SMART goals.

PRODUCTIVITY



Setting goals

Setting SMART goals can help make your dreams come true. Grab a piece of paper and use the following set of SMART questions to brainstorm, think, and plan.

S Specific
What am I going to do? Why is this important to do at this time? What do I want to accomplish? How am I going to do it?

M Measurable
How will I know that I have reached my goal?

A Attainable
Can I see myself achieving this goal? Can I break it down into manageable pieces?

R Realistic
Is this goal too difficult to reach? Too easy?

T Timely
What is my target date for reaching my goal?

Manage your focus, not your time!

Here are some tools that can help minimize distractions and keep you on task!

- StayFocusd is a productivity extension for Google Chrome that helps you stay focused on work by restricting the amount of time you can spend on time-wasting websites. Once your allotted time has been used up, the sites you have blocked will be inaccessible for the rest of the day.
- Momentum: Replace new tab page with a personal dashboard featuring to-do, weather, and inspiration.
- (OFFTIME): For set periods of time of your choice, the service blocks disruptive notifications, calls or SMS plus access to tempting applications is restricted.
- Pomodoro Technique Timer (many versions available online and in app stores):
 - Decide on the task to be done.
 - Set the pomodoro timer (traditionally to 25 minutes).
 - Work on the task until the timer rings. If a distraction pops into your head, write it down, but immediately get back on task.
 - After the timer rings, put a checkmark on a piece of paper.
 - If you have fewer than four checkmarks, take a short break (3–5 minutes), then go to step 2.
 - After four pomodoros, take a longer break (15–30 minutes), reset your checkmark count to zero, then go to step 1.

Pleasure

Don't forget to do the things you love & make you feel alive. Not only will you feel better, but you will be more motivated to get your work done when you are looking forward to your reward. If you are out of ideas, look below. Take yourself on a date!

ALPHABET DATES FROM A-Z

- A ARCADE, AQUARIUM, ART GALLERY
- B BOWLING, BOOKSTORE, BOTANICAL GARDEN
- C CONCERT, COMEDY SHOW, CAMPING
- D DINNER, DRIVE-IN, DRIVING RANGE
- E EARLY BIRD SPECIALS, EXERCISE, EDUCATION
- F FARMERS MARKET, FESTIVALS, FISHING
- G GAME NIGHT, GARAGE SALES, GO KARTS
- H HIKING, HORSEBACK RIDES, HUMANITARIAN
- I ICE SKATE, ICE CREAM, IKEA
- J JAZZ, JIGSAW PUZZLE, JUNK FOOD
- K KARAOKE, KITES, KAYAK
- L LUNCH, LIVE SHOW, LIGHT SHOW
- M MOVIES, MASSAGE, MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL
- N NETFLIX, NIGHT MARKET, NFL
- O OUTDOORS, OPERA, OCEAN
- P PICNIC, PUTT-PUTT, PINTEREST
- Q QUADRUPLE DATE, QUARTERS, QUICKIE
- R ROAD TRIP, ROLLER SKATE, RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
- S STARGAZE, SHOOTING RANGE, STAYCATION
- T TRIVIA, TEST DRIVE, TAILGATE
- U UNDERGROUND, UNDERWATER, UNIVERSITY
- V VINEYARD, VACATION, VOLUNTEER
- W WALKING TOUR, WINE TASTING, WHISKY TASTING
- X XBOX, XPLORE NEW FOOD, XHIBIT
- Y YOUTUBE, YOGA, YARDSALE
- Z ZOO, ZIPLINE, ZOMBIE TOURS

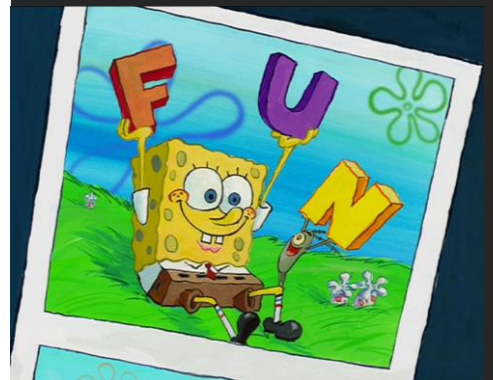
LOCALADVENTURER.COM

P L E A S U R E



Currently reading: How to succeed in the Death Star without really trying.

Quick Hit
YOU DO YOU.



NOTES, PLANS & THOUGHTS

LIFESTYLE

Why is lifestyle health important to you?

What are your strengths? What areas can you improve?

What are your lifestyle health goals?

REFERENCES & FURTHER READING

- Changing Your Habits for Better Health | niddk.nih.gov
- Gardner, B., Lally, P., & Wardle, J. (2012). Making health habitual: the psychology of “habit-formation” and general practice. The British Journal of General Practice, 62(605), 664–666.
Article summary of various studies of nature and well being: greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_nature_makes_you_kinder_happier_more_creative
- A Brief History of SMART Goals | projectsmart.co.uk
- Pomodoro Technique/Tomato Timer | cirillocompany.de/pages/pomodoro-technique

LIFESTYLE

Images used:

- Spongebob | nick.com/spongebob-squarepants
- Kung-Fu Panda | dreamworks.com/kungfupanda
- Toy Story | toystory.disney.com
- RuPaul’s Drag Race | logotv.com/shows/rupauls-drag-race


MENTAL & EMOTIONAL SELF CARE

NO! Layers. Onions have layers. Ogres have layers. Onions have layers. You get it? We both have layers.

-Shrek

POSITIVE SELF TALK



 **Quick Hit**
Practice repeating your affirmation throughout the day.

Positive Self Talk:
Excerpt [Psychology Today](#)

One of the ways to recognize, promote, and sustain optimism, hope, and joy is to intentionally fill our thoughts with positive self-talk. You may have a negative message that replays in your head every time you make a mistake. By using positive self-talk mistakes become opportunities to replace negative views of who you are with positive options for personal enhancement.

Positive self-talk is not self-deception. Rather, positive self-talk is about recognizing the truth, in situations and in yourself. When negative events or mistakes happen, positive self-talk seeks to bring the positive out of the negative to help you do better, go further, or just keep moving forward. The practice of positive self-talk is often the process that allows you to discover the obscured optimism, hope, and joy in any given situation.

Here are some strategies to help practice positive self talk:

- 1) Notice your internal negative chatter
- 2) Pick & repeat a positive affirmation(s) that works for you. Some examples:

I am capable.

I know who I am and I am enough.

I choose to be present in all that I do.

I choose to think thoughts that serve me well.

I choose to reach for a better feeling.

I share my happiness with those around me.

I feel energetic and alive.

I am confident.

I always observe before reacting.

I know with time and effort I can achieve.

I love challenges and what I learn from overcoming them.

Each step is taking me to where I want to be.

- 3) Practice telling stories about your future with positive scripts, preferably reaching your goals.

Feeling one's feelings

We are taught to name the emotion of others, but how good are we at noticing our own? Sometimes we can be wrapped up in a feeling and sometimes we can be running away from it. It is helpful to take a pause, notice what you are feeling, and accept how you are feeling in that moment. It is okay to feel happy, anxious, terrified, lazy, hungry, or goofy.

Noticing your emotions allows you to address where they are coming from and what influences the way you feel. If you were talking to yourself as a mentor... what would you say to yourself? Strategies of relaxation and self-reflection as mentioned in other parts of this manual can help with this process and help modulate your response to your own emotions.



SAM: Self Help for Anxiety Management allows users to track and record their anxiety level and identify triggers. It also suggests self-help options for users cope with the physical and mental symptoms of anxiety. There's an option to build a personalized anxiety toolkit.

Pacifica is an app for stress, anxiety, and depression based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, mindfulness, and wellness. Comprised of quick activities alongside a supportive community, Pacifica is designed as a daily tool to help people address stress, anxiety, and depression at a gradual pace.



Mood Journaling

Once you've noticed your emotions, you may want to keep track of them over time. But do your hands cramp when writing? Here are some more apps to help.

MoodTools- a free, convenient, and easy-to-use smartphone app that provides six evidence-based tools to aid against clinical depression and negative moods on a large scale. It contains several different research-supported tools: Thought Diary, Behavioral Activities, Safety Plan, Educational Information, PHQ9 Tracking, and Videos.

MindShift- will help you learn how to relax, develop more helpful ways of thinking, and identify active steps that will help you take charge of your anxiety. This app includes strategies to deal with everyday anxiety, as well as specific tools to tackle: Making Sleep Count, Riding Out Intense Emotions, Test Anxiety, Perfectionism Social Anxiety, Performance Anxiety, Worry, Panic, and Conflict.

T2Mood Tracker- allows users to monitor and track emotional health. The app records a range of emotions for anxiety, depression, head injury, stress, posttraumatic stress and a user's general well-being. Users can also create items to track their progress in unique areas.

FEELING ONE'S FEELINGS



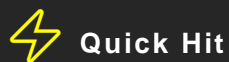
Quick Hit

YOU DO YOU (again).

MOOD JOURNALING



LIBRARY OF POSITIVE MEMORIES



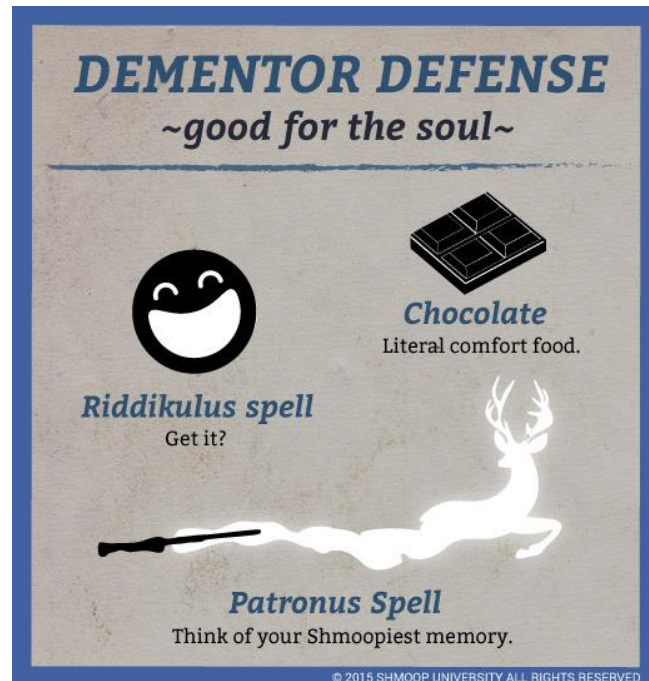
Expecto Patronum!
(ex-PEK-toh pa-TRO-num)

SELF-CARE PLAYLIST



Library of Positive Memories

What did Harry Potter use to battle those dementors? A happy memory! Think of a few positive memories that have great meaning and keep them in your pocket for when that darkness starts creeping in. Some chocolate might be in order too.



Self-Care Playlist

Although not quite evidence-based medicine, a pick-me-up playlist can do wonders for mood. Make a playlist of upbeat, uplifting songs for a potential rainy day when you may need them.

Suggestions:

I Will Survive- Gloria Gaynor
Strong Enough- Cher
***Flawless- Beyoncé
Run the World (Girls)- Beyoncé
Bye Bye Bye- *NSYNC
It's Not Right but It's Okay- Whitney Houston
Tears Dry On Their Own- Amy Winehouse
Born This Way- Lady Gaga
Masterpiece- Jessie J
It Ain't Over- RuPaul
Born to Run- Bruce Springsteen
Beautiful Day- U2

Working with a good therapist

It takes a bit of work to get started with therapy, but finding a good therapist is well worth it. Getting started can be confusing so here is a list of different types of therapy that are offered. Your first appointment will be an opportunity to try it out and see if the partnership works for you.

Counselling is ideal for people who are basically healthy, but need help coping with a current crisis, such as anger, relationship issues, bereavement, redundancy, infertility, or the onset of a serious illness.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) aims to help clients to think more positively about life and free themselves from unhelpful patterns of behavior. In particular, CBT can help with depression, anxiety, panic attacks, phobias, OCD, and PTSD.

Psychotherapy involves talking more about how your past influences what happens in the present and the choices you make. Psychotherapy can be especially useful for people with long-term or recurring problems to find the cause of their difficulties.

Family therapy explores family views and relationships to understand the problems the family is having. Family therapists deal with lots of different issues, including: child behavioral problems, mental health conditions, illness/ disability in the family, separation, divorce and step-family life, domestic violence, drug addiction or alcohol addiction

Couples therapy can help when a relationship is in crisis (after an affair, for example). Both partners talk in confidence to a counsellor or therapist to explore what has gone wrong in the relationship and how to change things for the better.

In **group therapy** up to around 12 people meet, together with a therapist. It's a useful way for people who share a common problem to get support and advice from each other. It can help you realize you're not alone in your experiences, which is itself beneficial.

Interpersonal therapy is a talking treatment that helps people with depression to identify and address problems in their relationships with family, partners and friends.

Behavioral activation is a talking therapy that encourages people to develop more positive behavior, such as planning activities and doing constructive things that they would usually avoid doing.

Mindfulness-based therapies help you focus on your thoughts and feelings without becoming overwhelmed by them. They can be used to help treat depression, stress, anxiety and addiction.



T H E R A P Y



And how do you feel about that?



Quick Hit

Find the therapy/ist that works for you.

NOTES, PLANS & THOUGHTS

MENTAL &
EMOTIONAL

Why is mental & emotional health important to you?

What are your strengths? What areas can you improve?

What are your mental & emotional health goals?

REFERENCES & FURTHER READING

- Power of Positive Self Talk | [psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)
- Talking Therapies Explained | [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

MENTAL &
EMOTIONAL

Images used:

- You can do it... | Etsy shop *skullcandydesigns*
- Bob's Burgers | [fox.com/bobs-burgers](https://www.fox.com/bobs-burgers)
- Dementor Defense | [shmoop.com](https://www.shmoop.com)
- John Cusack in Say Anything | 20th Century Fox
- Dog & Chair | [Midult.com](https://www.midult.com)
- Heads Grid | [talkspace.com](https://www.talkspace.com)

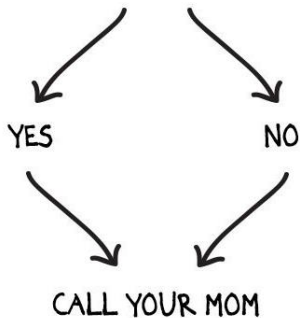
INTERPERSONAL SELF CARE

"If I murdered someone, she's the person I'd call to help me drag the corpse across the living room floor. She's my person."

-Grey's Anatomy

FAMILY

HAVE YOU CALLED YOUR
MOM LATELY?



FRIENDS



Quick Hit

Call your friends too!

Family

Family means something different to each one of us, but they often signify the most important people in our lives. These relationships can be very complex and challenging. However, most relationships have an underlying current of love and can be great supports through tough times.

- Consider writing a letter to someone important to you
- Hang up a photo of someone meaningful to you
- Set a time to call someone once each week, so you both develop a habit

That space between 'friends' and 'family'

Relationships come in many shapes and sizes. When it's in the form of a significant other or a partner, this person can be a cornerstone of comfort, joy, relief, and encouragement. Whether your relationship is decades old or still germinating, it's important to water it daily. Little things can be critical in maintaining your relationship:

- Share your feelings and show appreciation for each other
- Be open and try to be aware of how your stress clouds your interactions
- Value the time you get to spend together and little things you get to do. See our "Alphabetical Dates" List in Self Care.

Remember, a significant other is just that: significant. Even if you're stressed, know that they're there for you and show your appreciation for their support. You'll both be happier for it!

Friends

F is for friends who do stuff together! Friendships can also be great supports or giant stressors. It can be hard to meet up with friends you meet outside school or even see friends on different rotations IN school.

Nevertheless, friends can be great co-conspirators, co-adventurers, or confidants. Need some ideas on what to do? Review our Lifestyle section for some activities to do with friends.

Therapy

Interpersonal conflicts can be hugely stressful. Sometimes we all need assistance in sorting them out. Sometimes friends or family are all we need to figure it out, but sometimes connecting with a good therapist is key. A good rule of thumb is that if someone could be someone's job to give you the skills/answers you need, you should consider looking for a therapist.

Head back to the therapy section of mental and emotional self care to review the various types of therapy, including interpersonal therapy.



Support Groups

Support groups, either through structured therapy or community organizations, can also be great ways to debrief and work through various situations. You can have the benefit of discussing your thoughts with similar people but you can also hear about how other people approach their struggles. Below is a list of various groups that some people find helpful.

National Groups:

Alcoholics Anonymous: AA's stated "primary purpose" is to help alcoholics "stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety".

Narcotics Anonymous: Narcotics Anonymous offers recovery to addicts around the world. We focus on the disease of addiction rather than any particular drug. Our message is broad enough to attract addicts from any social class or nationality. When new members come to meetings, our sole interest is in their desire for freedom from active addiction and how we can be of help.

Nar-Anon: 12 Step Program for Families & Friends of Addicts

NAMI Support Groups: Support groups for those with mental illness with different groups for different types of families.

Balint: a group of physicians or other clinicians who meet regularly and present clinical cases in order to better understand the clinician-patient relationship.

Local topic groups:

- Grief support
- Anger Management
- Veteran Support
- Mindfulness
- Post-Trauma
- Various disease/condition specific groups

THERAPIST



SUPPORT GROUPS



Caption: To tell you the truth, I'm not even that hungry... but when I see those marbles, I just lose it.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Religious Leaders

For many people, faith plays a large role in their life. This makes it all the more important to maintain that connection in times of stress or when we think we're gradually being separated from pillars we've come to appreciate. If it is an important part of who you are, try to maintain that connection.

Even if you do not identify with a specific religion or philosophy the leadership in those communities can often be bastions of knowledge and wisdom. Many leaders have secondary training in counseling, making them great people to talk to. Whether it's a monk, rabbi, Imam, priest/priestess, or nun consider seeking them out or attending a service.

Not sure if you want to talk in person or want to do a bit more exploring? Many religious leaders have talks or sermons available online or in print for your perusal.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service

Organizing or participating in community service can be beneficial in many ways. Not only does it allow you to contribute to your community, but it cultivates a practice of gratitude and connection to others.

While some schools incorporate service-learning into their curriculum, you may need to pursue opportunities on their own. Don't worry, many community organizations are often looking for volunteers.



Quick Hit

If you have the time, lend a helping hand.



NOTES, PLANS & THOUGHTS

Why is interpersonal health important to you?

INTERPERSONAL

What are your strengths? What areas can you improve?

What are your interpersonal health goals?

REFERENCES & FURTHER READING

INTERPERSONAL

Images used

- Called your mom? | Mr. Tandy on Flickr.com
- Hippo Cartoon | Guy & Rodd

SPIRITUAL SELF CARE

The distinction between spiritual and religious can be nebulous. Spiritual refers to the drive towards the well-being of mind/body/spirit outside of organized religion. Beyond that, the distinction is up to you.

Prayer

While typically associated with organized religion, prayer can be secular or nondenominational. Prayers can be for daily gratitude, blessing food, peace, healing, strength or patience.

Example:

Morning Courage Prayer

There are great challenges that I must face today,
make me ready for the task, strong in resolve.
May I conquer any lingering fears and unsureness,
strong in my conviction, flexible in my attitude,
may true courage fill my heart, mind, and spirit.

Meditation

There are many types of meditation, many stemming from ancient traditions. Here a few examples:

1. Mindfulness
2. Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)
3. Chakra Meditations
4. Zen
5. Transcendental
6. Guided visualizations
7. Mantra Meditations
8. Qi Gong

Visit liveanddare.com/types-of-meditation for a guide on 23 types of meditation.

Some other suggestions:

- [Headspace.com](https://www.headspace.com): has a free ten day trial to learn mindfulness meditation
- [Calm.com](https://www.calm.com): provides background environmental scenes and sounds along with guided meditations.

P R A Y E R

M E D I T A T I O N



SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

Spiritual Community

Similar to houses of organized religion, you can also gather in spiritual communities. This could be yoga centers, meditation retreats, monthly ritual groups, or online support groups. Try looking on MeetUp.com for a specific group near you or visit SundayAssembly.com to find people who want to connect spiritually and pragmatically but who may not have a particular affiliation.



FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is about YOU, not about the other person, event, or thing.

:

Forgiveness can be a powerful tool for self-liberation. Forgiveness can be directed towards other peoples, past wrongs, and *to ourselves*. Forgiveness is not synonymous with acceptance, excusing, forgetting, or being a pushover. Rather, forgiveness is the intentional and voluntary process by which a victim undergoes a change in feelings and attitudes regarding an offense, lets go of their negative emotions such as vengefulness, and gradually develops an ability to wish the best for original offender.

There are various exercises to practice forgiveness from writing offenses down and ripping them up to specific meditation techniques.

One example:

-Write a letter to the person/event (even yourself) regarding your thoughts. Hide the letter for a few days or mail it to yourself. When you revisit it, repeat a mantra of forgiveness while destroying the document.

"I forgive you (name) for (whatever the transgression was).
I forgive you totally and completely. I release you and I release me.
We are both now free."



Finding your path: This is the ultimate question, especially as we go through challenging experiences. Where am I going? Am I doing this right? Am I making the right decisions?

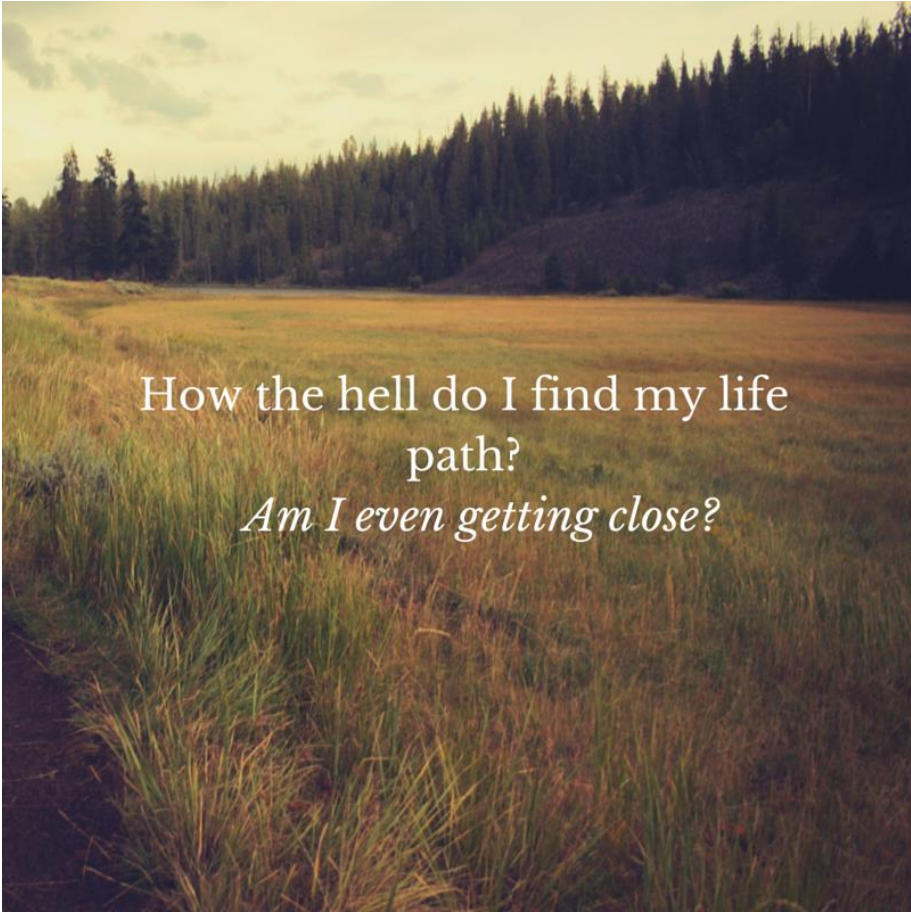
Unfortunately, no person or guide can tell you these answers other than yourself. Feel free to use the techniques discussed in this guide to help sharpen your intuition and settle on a path that is right for you. Keep exploring or investigating and eventually something will feel like it can fit.

Remember that life is more about the journey than the destination. And if you do make a mistake? Thus is the human condition. We are all allowed to make mistakes. Besides,

“I'll never know, and neither will you, of the life you don't choose. We'll only know that whatever that sister life was, it was important and beautiful and not ours. It was the ghost ship that didn't carry us. There's nothing to do but salute it from the shore.”

— Cheryl Strayed

FINDING YOUR PATH



How the hell do I find my life
path?

Am I even getting close?



NOTES, PLANS & THOUGHTS

SPIRITUALITY

Why is spiritual health important to you?

What are your strengths? What areas can you improve?

What are your spiritual health goals?

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SPIRITUALITY

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