

SIMPLE STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR MOOD



Simple Steps To Improve Your Mood



By Dr. Sarah Allen



Simple Steps To Improve Your Mood

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Thank you for downloading my free booklet. If you have got this far you are probably struggling with your emotions in some way and want to change how you are feeling. I am here to help.

When you feel overwhelmed and stressed, life's challenges, big or small, are a lot harder to manage. Finding balance in our lives is never easy and sometimes I think it is just another thing we feel we should put on our "to do" list, but we never quite get around to it. I think it is easier to try to look at achieving emotional balance as a very important work in progress. You won't be able to do all these things I suggest in the report at once, but adding one or two things small changes a day to your routine can really help to improve your mood and make life more enjoyable. When you come to think about it, this is what life ought to be.

I have found that when put in to practice regularly five very important steps help you move in the right direction when you are trying to improve your mood. The most important step is to take control and the four sections below will help you do that.



1. Just breathe. It Really Works When You Need To Calm Down

2. Reduce Stress

3. Start Looking After Yourself – You Are Important!

4. Increase Your Positive Activities

5. Change the Way You Are Thinking About Things



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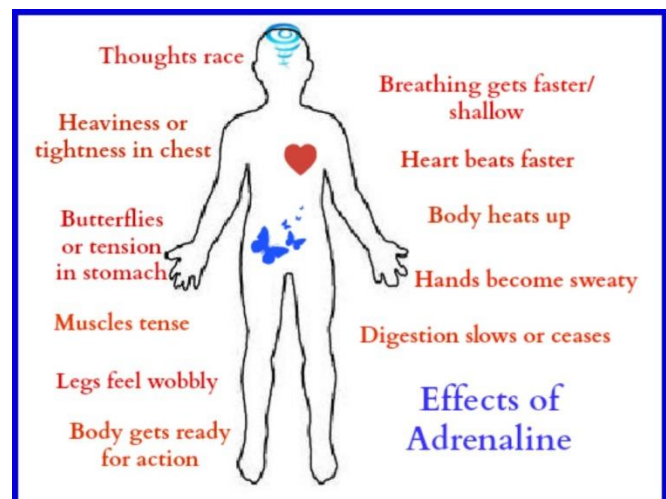
STEP 1 – Just Breathe

In small doses, stress can actually be useful as it helps you to stay focused, alert and increases energy. But when stress becomes chronic, it can damage your health, your mood, your relationships, and your overall quality of life. Stress is sneaky! It can easily creep up on you so that being frazzled and overwhelmed starts to feel normal. You may not even recognize how much it is affecting you so it is really important to recognize the signs and symptoms of stress and then take steps to stop feeling so overwhelmed.

The Fight or Flight Response:

When we worry or become anxious, our sympathetic nervous system is triggered. You have probably heard of the Fight or Flight response. This is where adrenaline floods through our body to gear us up to either run away or fight the object causing us to be scared. No one feels all of the physical effects shown below, but we tend to experience the same few ones such as:

- An increase in heart rate
- Your breathing speeds up, you may feel breathless, a choking feeling or heaviness in your chest
- Muscles feel tense, achy or shaky
- You feel hot and maybe sweaty
- You become lightheaded
- Your vision may become blurred
- Butterflies or cramps in your stomach or an urge to go to the toilet
- Your thoughts race so you can't think straight





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Originally our bodies were flooded with adrenaline to enable us to fight or run away when faced with danger. We don't usually have to physically fight people anymore or run from danger (not many bears around here!) so we now find that this physical response is activated in situations where it isn't appropriate like in traffic jams or during a stressful day at work. The physical sensations it generates leaves us agitated, anxious or angry because we are not physically releasing it.

The Relaxation Response:

The physical responses to adrenaline do eventually go down by themselves but experiencing this anxiousness and agitated state feels unpleasant so the way to counteract these feelings **quickly** is to engage our parasympathetic nervous system by deep breathing.

Basically, deep breathing and adrenaline can't co-exist in the same body.

Deep breathing triggers the stimulation of the Vagus nerve—a nerve running from the base of the brain to the abdomen, that emits a useful neurotransmitter (acetylcholine) that dampens our nervous system, lowering heart rate, relaxes muscles and most importantly, stops your thoughts from racing so you can think straight. In effect, the relaxation response is the anti-fight or flight response!



So How Do We Get This Relaxation Response?

The relaxation response is activated by doing paced breathing which involves taking smooth, slow, and regular breaths. Sitting upright is usually better than lying down or slouching, because it can increase the capacity of your lungs to fill with air. It is best to 'take the weight' off your shoulders by supporting your arms on the side-arms of a chair, or on your lap. Print out the next page and keep it handy.



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How To Do Paced Breathing:

1. Take a slow breath in through the nose, breathing into your lower belly so you feel it inflate like a balloon (for the count of 4)
2. Hold your breath for 1 or 2 seconds
3. Exhale slowly through the mouth so that you are pushing out the air in the “balloon” and you feel your belly suck in (for the count of 5)
4. Make sure the exhale breath is one or two counts longer than the inhale breath as this activates a greater relaxation response.
5. Wait a few seconds before taking another breath

About 6-8 breathing cycles per minute is often helpful to decrease anxiety, but find your own comfortable breathing rhythm.

A lot of my clients have reported that they find this technique works even better if you increase the number of breaths each time:

First breath – inhale for the count of 4, exhale for the count of 5

Second breath – inhale for the count of 5, exhale for the count of 6

Third breath – inhale for the count of 6, exhale for the count of 7

Start from the count of 4 again and repeat the cycle.

Practice, Practice, Practice:

You do not need to be feeling anxious to practice paced breathing – in fact, at first you should practice while feeling relatively calm. You'll gradually master this skill and feel the benefits!

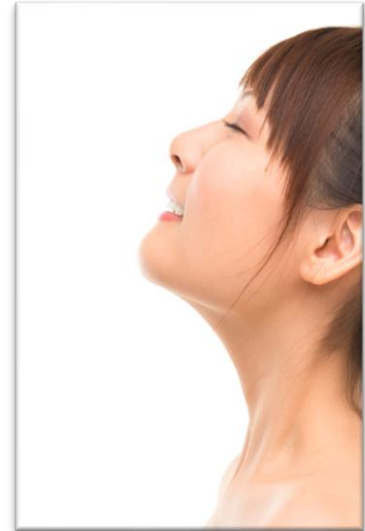


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Use this technique next time you feel stressed about something. It is even effective if you are experiencing a panic attack.

Summary:

1. We experience a **trigger thought** e.g. – *“Something bad is going to happen”, “I’m not going to be able to cope”*.
2. We then have a body reaction due to the **fight or flight response**.
3. **Do paced breathing** to activate the relaxation response.
4. **Say to yourself** – “I can cope with these feelings, I’ve got through it before. This will pass”.



The purpose of calm breathing is not to avoid anxiety at all costs, but just to take the edge off or help you “ride out” the feelings so that when you feel calmer you can use the strategies we talk about later to challenge the thoughts and things you do or don’t do that are unhelpful to you.

How to Cope With Racing Thoughts

Do your thoughts ever race? Thoughts can start off triggered by a specific situation or worry and then become a string of confused and racing ideas. This can be overwhelming, confusing and distressing and racing thoughts can hinder your ability to concentrate and accomplish daily tasks. They can also affect your memory and quality of sleep.



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Paced breathing can help when your thoughts are racing and another useful technique to try is called **grounding**. When we worry, we spend too much time thinking. Grounding helps you get out of your brain and bring your focus to your body. ***Close your eyes and focus on your breath. Notice how your body feels sitting in the chair. Push your feet on the ground and feel the energy draining from your mind, down your body and through your feet in to the ground. Use all your senses. What can you feel with your hand? What can you hear? Open your eyes and focus on something in the room. What do you see? Feel your breath as it travels up your nose, fills up your chest and comes out of your mouth.***

Allow your thoughts to come and go. Just because you think something it doesn't mean it is true or will actually happen. Allow your thoughts to be separate from you. Avoid judging or responding to your thoughts, just observe them as they run through your mind, turning down their volume so you can focus on your other senses.

You can follow this link to listen to a guided visualization that imagines leaves floating on the surface of a stream. For each thought that comes to mind, allow that thought to take its place on a leaf and float down the stream. Allow those thoughts to come and go, you don't need to respond to them.

[drluoma.com/leaves meditation.](http://drluoma.com/leaves-meditation)

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is another very helpful technique in calming your mind and relaxing your body. PMR involves tensing specific muscle groups and then relaxing them to create awareness of tension and relaxation. It is termed progressive because it proceeds through all major muscle groups, relaxing them one at a time, and eventually leads to total muscle relaxation. A relaxed body results in a calm mind. If you come in to see me I can give you a CD that has a 20 minute progressive muscle relaxation as well as a short 7 minute relaxation exercise and a 10 minute beach visualization. You can also click the link below to watch a short PMR video.

psychcentral.com/progressive-muscle-relaxation-soothes-stress-video



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STEP 2 – Reduce Everyday Stress

Sometimes life is more stressful than at other times, usually when you have to juggle many things at once. I like to think of it as we have a bucket of stressors. Throw this stress in and we are fine, throw in a couple of more stressors and we are just about okay, but it is that last thing that comes along that makes your 'stress bucket' over full and everything gets totally overwhelming. We need to look at all the things you have in your 'stress bucket' and see what we can get rid of so the things we can't change are more manageable.

The table below shows the many negative effects stress can have on your mind and body.

Effects of Stress	
Brain Effects	Mood Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Memory problems• Inability to concentrate• Poor judgment• Seeing the negative rather than positive• Constant worrying• Anxious or racing thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moodiness• Irritability or short fuse• Agitation, inability to relax• Feeling overwhelmed• Depression or general unhappiness• Sense of loneliness and isolation
Physical Effects	Behavioral Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aches and pains• Frequent illnesses• Diarrhea or constipation• Nausea, dizziness• Chest pain, racing heartbeat• Loss of sex drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in eating habit (more or less)• Changes in sleep habits (too much or too little)• Isolating yourself from others• Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities• Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)• Using alcohol, cigarettes or drugs to relax



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You may feel like the stress in your life is out of your control, and it's true, sometimes you can't control situations or the way other people act. So what can you do to start improving the way you feel? Take charge of your body, your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule and the way you deal with problems. It seems hard right now but you can take small steps and as you begin to feel better, the more progress you make.

Doing nothing will only make problems worse!

STEP 3: Boost Your Mood By Increasing Your Positive Emotions

The easiest and most enjoyable way to improve your mood is to increase the amount of time you spend doing positive activities. You may have found that feeling sad or worried has sapped all your energy and it is hard to get the motivated to get going with anything apart from the things that must be done. One of the most important ways to improve your mood is to take the view that life isn't something to just get through, it is something to enjoy!

Here's an important question. When was the last time you actually asked yourself – "What is it that I want?" We often get in to the habit of looking after others' needs, especially your children and partner, and forget that sometimes you have to make yourself a priority too. I am not talking about being selfish, just recognizing that you deserve the kindness you show to others to be directed at you too. Start simple – "What do I want for dinner?" not "I'll make what everyone else will eat". Include your needs in there sometimes too.





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This includes taking time for your own interests. We often get so busy that we don't make time for fun in our lives. We are so busy striving to "get everything done" – working, running around after the children, keeping on top of laundry and the house – that we don't stop to have fun or to relax and just be still.



One of the most important things we can do to improve our mood is to increase the things we do that make us happy. Make time for friends, time to relax, get back to doing a hobby you enjoyed in the past and most importantly, try something new. Novel activities challenge our brain to pay attention and combining attention and positive emotions helps to build positive neural pathways in our brains. It wakes us up so we are not going through life on automatic pilot!

Doing something, anything really, can feel overwhelming when you are not happy. You may not think that you will enjoy doing an activity, but often, once you make yourself do something (and you can always stop doing it at any time) you feel better. Each push you give yourself moves you further forward, increases your energy and makes the next thing you try easier. Doing nothing keeps you in that downward spiral of negative emotions.

What Is The Number One Thing We Can Do To Boost Happiness?

Turn the page to see.....



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Gratitude, the state or feeling of being thankful, is an almost universal concept among world cultures. In fact, nearly all of the world's spiritual traditions emphasize the importance of giving thanks in some way. Research on gratitude and appreciation suggests that people, who score higher on gratitude scales, also score higher on happiness ratings.

One of the most popular psychology techniques to practice appreciation is by writing a gratitude letter. In this method, a person writes a letter to anyone who they feel has positively impacted their life—stating in detail how they bettered their life. It could be a parent, a teacher, a friend, an employer—virtually anyone.

Then, they arrange to meet with and read their letter to this person who positively impacted their life. Research shows that this technique greatly increases a person's level of happiness for up to a full month. Even if actually going to read the letter in person makes you feel uncomfortable, the act of writing a letter and not even mailing it increases positive emotions too.



This technique has been shown to increase happiness the most for the people who are the unhappiest. So if you are feeling sad when you do this, the greater the boost it will give you.



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Another Simple Way to Increase Happiness

One of the most successful techniques to come out of the Positive Psychology movement (Seligman) is the task of keeping a daily journal where you write down three positive things that have happened during your day. It doesn't need a lot of journaling if that's not your thing. It's simple, every evening jot down three things that have made you feel happy.

Why does this work? Well, if we know we have to write something in the evening, we keep our eyes open during the day and therefore are more likely to notice and pay a little bit more attention to positive events. Quite simply, noticing something positive and noting how it makes us feel happy makes our brain increase serotonin. If we do this regularly, over time we increase our happiness.

I have tweaked it a little bit and have divided this daily task into two sections; things that we just observe and things that we made happen. It only takes a couple of minutes to write down three examples of each.

Three Things That Made You Smile/Feel Good



Write down three positive things that you noticed today.

"I saw the daffodils were poking through the soil next to my garage and it made me smile that spring is finally on its way".

"My son came through the door and gave me a big hug hello".

"I looked at a cartoon on Facebook and thought it was so funny I laughed out loud".

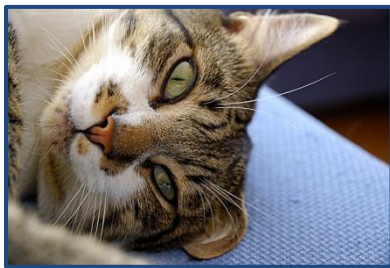


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When we are feeling down we tend to just focus on the negative and ignore the positive. Part of therapy is to widen your focus to include things that went well and that you enjoyed, not just what irritated you. The act of noticing and paying attention to the experience makes the brain take more notice and therefore feel more pleasure. This is the opposite of being on automatic pilot as you go through your day.

Three Things That You Had A Part In Making It Positive

Jot down three things that went well for you today. Why did it happen, what role did you play?



"I began the morning in a relaxed way by lying in bed cuddling with my kitty cat – because I set the alarm to go off ten minutes earlier than I needed to get up I still had plenty of time to get ready".

"I felt very connected to my child because I put down my phone and really listened to how his day at school had gone".

"I had a lot of work to get done but I made myself take a break and take my friend up on her offer of going for a walk. Afterwards I felt more refreshed and was able to be more productive".

Just as we tend to ignore the positive and notice the bad things that have happened, we also tend to ignore the positive influence we have over things and events. I think it is so important to recognize not only what was good, but how you came to make it happen so you can hopefully repeat it in the future.

The same with negative things – if you have the attitude that things just happen rather than recognizing what you did or didn't do to affect the outcome - it makes events feel out of your control and we humans are happiest when we feel some sense of control.



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STEP 4. Look After Yourself – You Are Important Too

There is a huge connection between our physical health and our mental health. The following section on how to look after yourself can also be found in my booklet **Simple Steps to Overcome Anxiety & Worrying** so if you have downloaded both booklets you will notice that the information is repeated but that is because looking after yourself really helps improve your mood, whatever negative emotion you are experiencing.

Get More Sleep!

Getting more sleep sounds easy in theory, but so many people find it hard to achieve. The average amount of sleep needed by adults for their body and mind to be fully rested is around seven to eight hours a night. This of course can vary but you know you aren't getting enough when your mood is negatively affected.

Lack of sleep can stop you thinking clearly, wrecks productivity and can alter your mood significantly. According to the National Sleep Foundation (NSF) the "walking tired" anger more easily, have problematic relationships and are less likely than those who sleep well to exercise, eat healthfully, have sex and engage in fun leisure activities; all because they are too tired.



What with work, errands and seeing to your family's needs, you have so much to do that you can only get them done by staying up late. Maybe going to bed in the wee hours is the only way to get some "me time".

Staying up late is probably not working for you though and improving your sleep is one of the best ways to



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improve the quality of your life. We need to work on being either more organized or less perfectionist about getting things done, knowing it's okay to ask and expect help, and knowing it is totally necessary to have "me time". But not at the expense of sleep!

In the meantime, we need to work on setting up a good night-time routine. Our every day "to do list" is much less daunting when we are refreshed!

The National Sleep Foundation states "It's not uncommon for people who don't get enough sleep to be depressed or for people who are depressed to not sleep well enough." This is very 'chicken and the egg'. Who knows which comes first, but what we do know is that over time, impaired memory, mood and other functions become a chronic way of life. In the long term, this can affect your job or relationships.

So how can we improve sleep? Firstly, keep regular sleeping hours. **A bedtime ritual** teaches the brain to become familiar with sleep times and wake times and programs the brain and internal body clock to get used to a set routine. Most adults need between six and nine hours of sleep every night. By working out what time you need to wake up, you can work backwards and set a regular bedtime schedule.

Here Are Some Ways To Relax

- ❖ Have a warm bath (not hot) as this will help your body reach a temperature that's ideal for rest.
- ❖ Writing "to do" lists for the next day can organize your thoughts and clear your mind of any worrying thoughts that pop in to your head (more about that later...)
- ❖ Relaxation exercises, such as light yoga stretches, help to relax the muscles. Don't exercise vigorously though, as it will have the opposite effect.
- ❖ Relaxation CDs can help as they use a hypnotic voice to guide you through muscle relaxation and soothing music and sound effects to relax your brain.
- ❖ Watching TV or any computer or phone screen keeps the brain engaged and active so it is harder to fall asleep. It is better to read a book or listen to the radio as that relaxes the mind by distracting it from the present worries.



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Secondly, you can't expect to "go, go, go", then be able to fall straight to sleep. **Winding down** is a critical stage in preparing for bed.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember in getting enough sleep is that **your needs are important** and putting your need for sleep above the demands of others is the kindest thing you can do for yourself and those who are important to you. Insomnia can often be caused by lying awake worrying which brings me to the next step I think it is important to work on in order to improve your mood.



Exercise – It Really Does Help To Boost Your Mood

Here are 7 reasons why exercise helps you feel happier:

- Just 20 minutes of exercise a day will calm your mind and lower stress hormones. Exercise boosts endorphins and serotonin levels as well as other brain chemicals that improve your mood.
- Physical activity is being increasingly recognized as an effective tool to treat depression as research has shown that 30 minutes of exercise a day x 5 days a week = same positive mood effects as taking an antidepressant
- New research has taken the connection one step further, finding that moderate exercise can actually prevent episodes of depression in the long term.

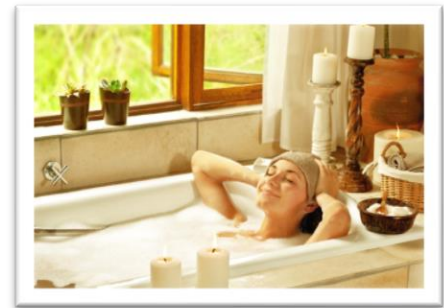




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- Exercise helps you gain confidence - Meeting exercise goals or challenges, even small ones, can boost your self-confidence.
- It can take your mind off worries. Exercise is a distraction that can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression.
- Can lead to increased social interaction. Exercise may give you the chance to meet or socialize with others. Just exchanging a friendly smile or greeting as you walk around your neighborhood can help your mood.
- Helps you cope in a healthy way. Doing something positive to manage anxiety or depression is a healthy coping strategy. Trying to feel better by drinking alcohol, dwelling on how badly you feel, or hoping anxiety or depression will go away on its own can lead to worsening symptoms.

So tell me again why you're not exercising? And before you say it's because you don't have enough time, go back to the previous section that stresses that you need to prioritize your needs. If it's because you don't like exercising, I think you probably just haven't tried the right activity yet. Exercise doesn't have to be just running on a treadmill. Also, one reason exercise works is because it heats up our bodies and that increases serotonin levels. Having a nice long shower or soak in the bath does that too, therefore, on days you can't exercise a relaxing bath is a good alternative.



The Relationship between Food & Mood

We have discussed how sleep and exercise influence our mood and the third important factor in taking care of our physical needs is all about what we eat.



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Feeling Cranky? You Need Fuel!

Did you snap at your kids...and the telemarketer on the phone? Crankiness can be a sign that your body needs fuel. Just like our kids, when our blood sugar levels drop, so does our mood. Just be sure to refuel the right way: with foods that don't leave you with a blood sugar crash an hour later. A great way to blast irritability is to eat *combination* foods at each meal and snack time. This means combine foods that contain a carbohydrate with either some protein or some fat.

Carbohydrates are a great source of energy that quickly burns out so adding some fat or protein will slow the digestion process, causing your sugar and energy levels to remain stable for a longer amount of time. A great example of a combination snack is an apple with peanut butter. The apple is your healthy complex carbohydrate and the peanut butter is a healthy fat.



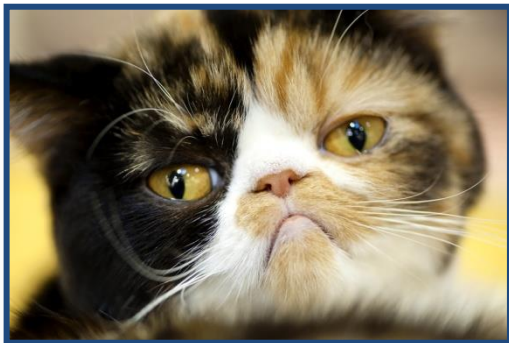
Feeling Stressed? Bring Out the Chocolate (Yay!!!)



Stress is building, so what can calm you down fast? Experts say that chocolate—particularly dark chocolate—may help reduce the stress hormones that are swarming in your body. A study by Swiss researchers found that eating just a small bite of dark chocolate (about 1.4 ounces) has the power to lower the stress hormones cortisol and catecholamines in the body. Chocolate also increases serotonin levels reducing your anxiety. So, go on, treat yourself.



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Feeling Sad or Anxious? Go Fish...

There are many studies going back to 1998 that show how omega-3 fatty acid deficiency correlates with an increased rate of both anxiety and depression. Brain cell membranes are made up partly of omega-3s so it is possible that increasing omega-3 levels through food makes it easier for serotonin to pass through cell membranes. Research still needs to be done on the exact mechanisms involved but we do know that omega-3 does affect the membranes and changes cell functioning. The best sources of omega oils are cold water fish, eggs, nuts and fish oil supplements. Flax oil supplements are also good for vegetarians to increase their omega levels. As with all supplements, ask your doctor first to make sure there are no adverse reactions with current medications before trying fish oil. Also, there are some studies that show no change from taking omega oil but it is worth trying it for yourself for a few weeks and seeing if you notice any benefits.

Should You Try Medication?

For mild to moderate anxiety and/or depression, talk therapy has been shown to be more effective than medication and does not have the intrusive negative physical side effects. Patients treated with cognitive therapy are more likely to get better than with other types of therapy and many studies have reported that patients using therapy vs. medication show more positive improvements at 12 months and longer post therapy.

However, when I work with someone who can see that the coping strategies we are talking about in therapy are a great idea but their

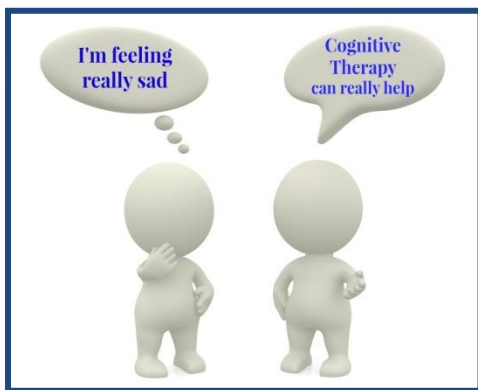




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depression makes them not have the motivation to be to do them, I often suggest having a consultation with a psychiatrist and used together, therapy and medication can really work well in lifting you to a place where you can utilize the strategies we are discussing. Specifically, antidepressants help reduce the extreme sadness, hopelessness, and lack of interest in life that are typical in people with depression.

Taking antidepressants can get you to a level where you can start to do things and think about things differently. If you don't make changes to your situation, coping skills, relationships etc. when feeling better on antidepressants though, it is likely that the depression will come back when you stop the medication.



I see antidepressants as one of the many useful tools to use to get back to feeling back in control of your life and I work with good psychiatrists who prescribe the appropriate medications while I do the talk therapy (cognitive therapy). Medications do have side effects though and the benefits have to be weighed against the cons for on an individual basis as everyone responds differently. The most important thing is to work with

someone who is experience and they will know how best to help you.

STEP 5 – Cognitive Therapy: Changing The Way We Think About Things

I think that this is the most important change you can make to influence how you feel. Thoughts are the words we say to ourselves without speaking out loud. We can have many thoughts each hour of the day. Thoughts are private experiences; other people don't know





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what we're thinking unless we tell them and most importantly, people can have different thoughts about the same thing.

When people are anxious or depressed their thoughts tend to veer to the negative and they are very good at looking for evidence that supports negative thinking, while tuning out information that shows neutral or positive information.



Thoughts can also be called 'self-talk' and the way we speak to ourselves really affects how we feel. When Self talk becomes so automatic that you don't even realize that you're doing it.

For simple example: imagine that you are asleep in bed and a noise in the kitchen wakes you.

If you think – 'oh, the cat knocked something over' you will feel fine, turn over and go back to sleep.

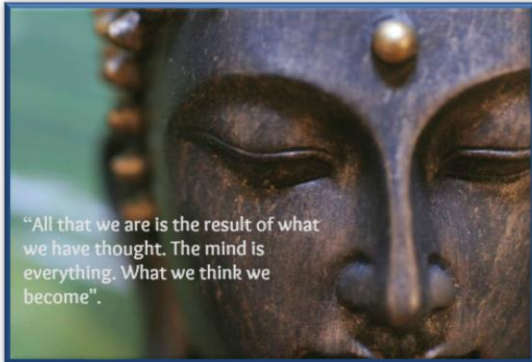
If you think – 'my selfish husband/son/roommate, they know I have to get up early tomorrow, they don't care about waking me up', you will feel angry and probably will toss and turn not getting to sleep because anger raises our adrenaline.

Lastly, if you think – "aghhh, there's a burglar downstairs!", you will feel scared and call 911.

In each case it is what you think that affects how you feel and your subsequent behavior. The most important thing to remember is that you can change your mood and your behavior by changing what you say to yourself!



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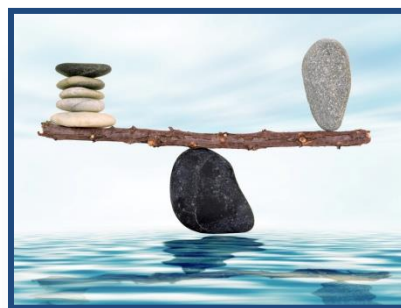
What we think = how we feel = how we behave.

During therapy I ask clients to recognize when they feel a negative emotion such as anxiety, anger or sadness and “catch” the thought that they are having. These thoughts tend to be automatic and negative and because we are beating up on ourselves without even realizing it, they

elicit a negative emotion. Who wouldn't feel bad if they are telling themselves they can't do something or they are bad in some way.

This is the first part of the type of therapy I practice called Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). It is a short-term "here and now" therapy that is a proven effective treatment for a wide range of problems including depression, anxiety, stress, eating /weight issues and relationship problems.

We then really focus on what you are thinking and challenge those thoughts so you can change your behavior and find out that the situation isn't as bad as you are thinking it is. By thinking and doing things differently, especially things that are out of your comfort zone, you build new pathways in the brain that increase serotonin and other feel good brain chemicals. I don't just mean let's turn all your negative thoughts into positive sunny ones. That wouldn't be realistic. Let's do a reality check instead. Then by looking at all the evidence you can challenge those unhelpful thoughts and develop a more balanced perspective.





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Thank you for taking the time to read my booklet. I hope it has been helpful and will go on to be a source of useful tips and tools you can use in everyday life. Remember though that you can't change everything at once. It is best to try to change one or two things at a time and work on those so they become useful new habits. Then go on to incorporate more changes, one at a time.



For more information about Dr. Sarah Allen's counseling services please visit her website at www.drSarahallen.com or contact her to discuss whether you could benefit from working with her on 847 791-7722 or email her on the contact form on this page www.drSarahallen.com/contact.

Please note: Dr. Allen's professional license only allows her to work with clients who travel to her Northbrook office or via remote sessions within IL.

Unfortunately, Dr. Allen's professional license doesn't allow her to offer personalized advice by email which is why she likes to write blog posts and booklets so she can share information with people who live too far to see her in person.

You can visit her blog on www.drSarahallen.com/blog or join her on Facebook <https://facebook.com/drSfcallen> to read more psychologically based tips on how to lead the life you want to live.



Simple Steps To Improve Your Mood

About The Author



Dr. Sarah Allen is originally from the UK but has been living and raising her family in Northbrook, a northern suburb of Chicago, for over 20 years.

She received her doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Southampton University, England, where she trained in a psychotherapy treatment called cognitive behavior therapy (CBT).

CBT is short-term "here and now" therapy that is a proven effective treatment for a wide range of problems including depression, anxiety, stress, eating /weight issues and relationship problems.

Her skills and 25+ years of experience allow her to get to the root of problems quickly and show you practical ways to feel more in control of your life.

There are many ways we hold ourselves back from happiness. Sarah empowers her clients with the tools necessary to deal with the stress that life and relationships bring, both in the present and for when they show up again in the future.