

# STAYING OPTIMISTIC DURING CHALLENGING TIMES

## OBSTACLES MAKE ME STRONGER

- “Be patient and tough; someday this pain will be useful to you” – Ovid
- “Never let a good crisis go to waste” Winston Churchill
- The Chinese character for Crisis is a combination of Danger and Opportunity

## KEEP YOUR GOAL IN SIGHT

- What is most important to you?
- Who are you in the midst of this?

危机

wei ji  
(danger) (opportunity)

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY – MARTIN SELIGMAN - 1998

Positive Psychology focuses on studying and cultivating happiness, strengths, self-esteem and optimism that will support us during challenging times.

- “If you can change the lens through which you view the world, you can change every outcome in your life.” Shaun Achor Ted Talk on Happiness
- 75% of success is based on your social support, optimism levels and the ability to see stress as a challenge instead of a threat
- You can create lasting positive change through
  - Gratitude Practice
  - Journaling
  - Exercise
  - Meditation

## GRATITUDE – one of the practices most highly correlated with well-being

- What am I grateful for ?
  - [Gracias a La Vida](#) sung by Mercedes Sosa
  - Keep a gratitude journal – each day, list 1 to 3 things you are grateful for.
  - [Thnx.4.org](#) - free online gratitude journal from the Greater Good Science Center
  - If we magnified blessings as much as we magnify disappointments, we would all be much happier – John Wooden

## MOVE

- How am I getting outside today?
  - Forest Bathing is a thing!
- How am I moving my body today?
  - JUST SHOW UP – Just get started with mini habits
  - Make sure you get enjoyment out of the activity
  - Exercise is clinically proven to help with depression and focus
  - It is like taking Ritalin and Prozac only better
  - Even just one minute of daily movement will help you (more has more benefits)

## MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- Developing even a 1 minute meditation practice has many benefits ( more has more benefits ☺)
- Meditation made easy
  - Breathe in, Breath out – follow the breath
  - If your mind wanders, just say “Oh Well” and start again
- Loving Kindness meditation practice
  - May I (you) be safe
  - May I (you) be healthy
  - May I (you) be happy
  - May I (you) live in peace

## BREATHE

- 4-7-8 Breath - Breathe in to your belly for 4 counts, hold for 7 and exhale for 8 (or practice 5-2-8 breath). Just doing this daily is a meditation.
- Vagus Nerve activity is facilitated during exhalation and that helps to relay relaxation from the Central Nervous System to your body
- Many well-known clinics use deep breathing for pain relief, anxiety relief, addiction struggles and insomnia

## SLEEP

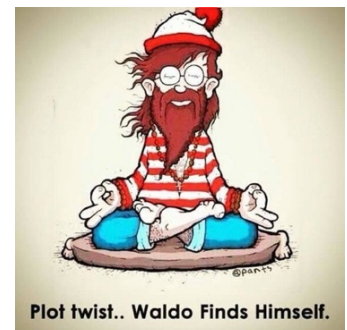
- Sleep Hygiene – dark, cool, quiet, comfortable room
- Work shutdown and Digital Shutdown – find a consistent time to shut down your devices
- Avoid heavy meals, alcohol, extra liquids, and strenuous exercise before bed
- Blue light from screens interferes with the timing of Melatonin production
- Insomnia – sleeping pills do not produce natural sleep
- With severe insomnia, find a sleep clinic...a CPAP machine or mouth device for sleep apnea can make a big difference in your well-being

## LAUGHTER

- Laughter can be the best medicine. Fill your world with things that make you smile

## CREATE

- What beauty am I creating, cultivating or inviting today?
  - What can you learn....[PlaygroundSessions](#) for piano
  - Coursera, edX for free classes from prestigious schools



## THE SERENITY PRAYER

God grant me the SERENITY to accept the things I cannot change  
COURAGE to change the things I can and  
WISDOM to know the difference

## HELP OTHERS

- “You are called to help the unhappy.” Seneca

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE

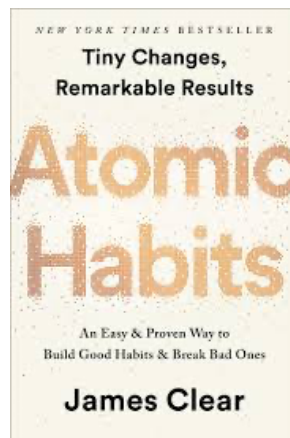
- It is OK to be struggling now. Just be sure to reach out if you need help.
- Let go of your expectations of normal
- “Change is the only constant in life. One’s ability to adapt to those changes will determine your success in life.” Benjamin Franklin

## BUILDING POSITIVE HABITS

- Think of habits as stepping stones towards your goal
- Focus first on an important area of self-care that you feel will make the biggest difference in your life - your Keystone Habit.
- Pick a mini habit that supports your Keystone habit
- Perform your habit daily and if you have to miss a day, do not miss two days
- Make your habit so small that it is almost impossible to fail
- Motivation – create an immediate reward to support a positive feedback loop
- Habit trackers can help. People who wear a pedometer walk on average 1 mile a day farther than people who do not keep track
- Successfully maintaining a small habit makes you happy. Happiness floods your brain with dopamine and that makes your brain more malleable so that you are more likely to install more habits 😊

WE ARE  
WHAT WE  
REPEATEDLY DO.  
EXCELLENCE,  
THEN, IS NOT  
AN ACT, BUT  
A HABIT.

*Aristotle*



A PAIR & A SPARE

# Healthy Habits

DAILY COUNTDOWN



## Books worth a look

Plato's Lemonade Stand – Tom Morris  
Everything is Figureoutable – Marie Foreo  
Atomic Habits – James Clear  
Mini Habits – Stephen Guise  
The Happiness Advantage – Shaun Achor  
Eat Move Sleep – Tom Rath  
Food Rules – Michael Pollan  
8 Weeks to Optimum Health – Andrew Weill  
Why We Sleep – Matthew Walker  
Thanks – Robert Emmons  
Love 2.0 – Dr. Barbara Fredrickson  
How to Feel Better – Nick Hall  
Brain Food – Lisa Mosconi



## Websites Worth a Look

[Optimize.me](https://www.optimize.me) – Brian Johnson – Positive Psychology and more to help you flourish

A Free Optimizer's Covid-19 Toolkit

<https://www.optimize.me/covid-19/>

[JamesClear.com](https://www.jamesclear.com) – Forming healthy habits one tiny step at a time

[MarieForleo.com](https://www.marieforleo.com) - Relentless, grounded and spunky optimism

[Greater Good Science Center](https://www.greatergoodsciencecenter.org) – UC Berkeley – Science based insights for a meaningful life

[Goodthinkinc.com](https://www.goodthinkinc.com) – Shaun Achor – Positivity and Optimism for Organizations

Also watch his inspiring Ted Talk – [The Happy Secret to Better Work](https://www.ted.com/talks/shaun_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work)



# Installing One Very Small Positive Habit Inspired by James Clear and Stephen Guise

Circle an area below:

**Gratitude Connect Move Sleep Breathe Create Get Outside**

What is one small habit you could install that would help support your circled area?

Is there a way to take that small habit and make it any smaller?

Now make your new habit stupid small! So small that you cannot fail.

What time of day is easiest for you to do your new habit?

To make it as easy as possible, attach it to an existing habit.

For example, *after I walk my dog, I will do one extraordinarily modified push-up.*

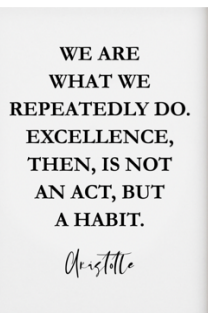
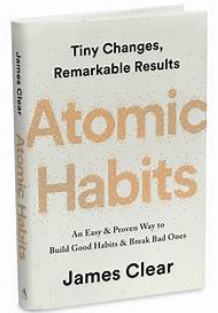
What reward can you give yourself for performing your habit. It can be something as simple as putting a check on a habit tracker to treating yourself to something bigger.

When would you like to start your new habit?

Congratulate yourself daily on your new habit 🙌🙌🙌 BRAVO!

*Examples of Tiny Habits*

- *Meditate for 20 seconds a day*
- *Just show up on you exercise mat every day. Sometimes I just stand there 😊*



***YOU just made your habit so small that it is almost impossible to fail.***

***And remember, we are all human so....***

***if you do fail, , say "Oh Well" and simply start again.***

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