

## THE HISTORY OF WILD 5 WELLNESS



**WILD** in WILD 5 Wellness is an acronym for **Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands**. The 5 in WILD 5 Wellness are the five wellness elements that include exercise, mindfulness, sleep, social connectedness, and nutrition.

We know life can be stressful and can negatively impact your overall well-being. We believe these five wellness interventions, when practiced together, will prove beneficial to many.

WILD practices date back to our ancestors. These wellness interventions are nothing new as they have been around for many moons, and were part of our ancestors' daily lives. These wellness elements truly are ancient practices for modern times!

Below are a few examples of how ancient societies practiced WILD 5 Wellness:

1. **Exercise:** One had to expend energy to hunt and forage for food. It wasn't as simple as hopping into a car and swinging by a local drive-through. Exercise was part of their daily routine and a necessary component of survival.
2. **Mindfulness:** Hunter-gathers engaged in ritual dances resulting in altered states of consciousness – a way to connect with the spirits. Through these traditions, ancient societies engaged in a type of mindfulness practice.
3. **Sleep:** When the sun disappeared beyond the horizon and darkness fell, sleep was a natural response. There were no distractions like television, Facebook, online gaming, and smartphones to saturate their eyes with unnatural light and disrupt their circadian rhythms.
4. **Social Connectedness:** Family units equaled more people to hunt and forage resulting in a better chance of survival. There was safety and power in numbers. Groups stayed together in order to survive and prosper.
5. **Nutrition:** Ancient societies, particularly those from Mediterranean cultures, were known to eat foods rich in green leafy vegetables, fish, fruits, nuts, and olive oil. These eating practices supported optimum physical and mental health.

# Become a Star Sleeper

By conquering insomnia and  
**ACHIEVING SLEEP WELLNESS**

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 **WILD 5★ Wellness™**  
Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands

# BE YOUR OWN SLEEP ADVOCATE

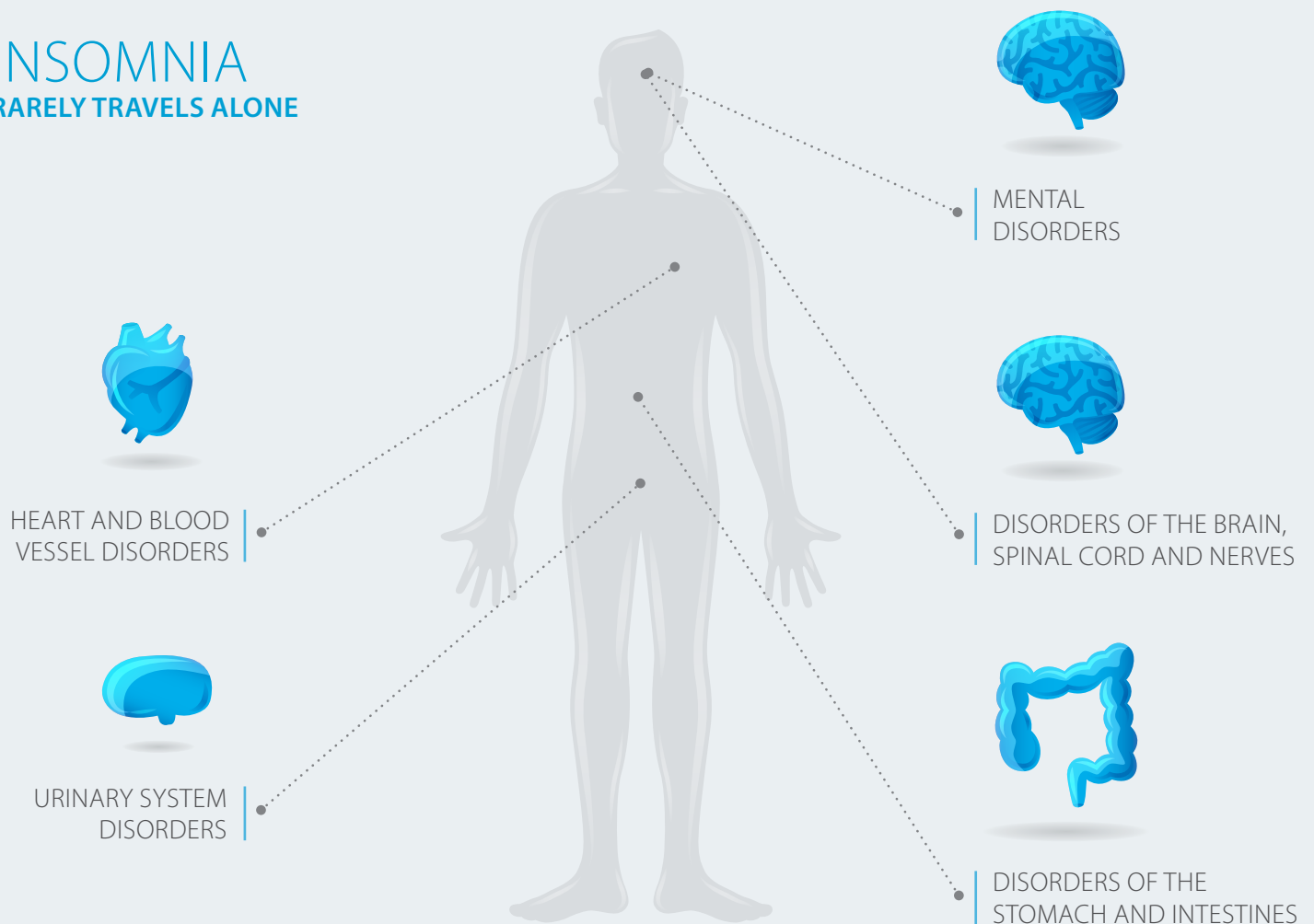
*"The amount of sleep required by the average person is five minutes more."*

— Wilson Mizner

And put your insomnia to rest

Insomnia is always difficult to deal with, but it can be especially exhausting when you suffer from anxiety, major depressive disorder (MDD), and/or chronic pain. To help you recover from the extra stresses you may deal with on a daily basis, it is very important to learn how to manage, and hopefully overcome, your insomnia.

## INSOMNIA RARELY TRAVELS ALONE



If you've ever suffered from insomnia, you know it can seem like a wrecking ball that damages many aspects of your life. Insomnia rarely appears all by itself and is often associated with mental health disorders and other medical conditions. If you struggle with insomnia, please talk to your healthcare provider and make sure you don't overlook other potential health issues.

### INSOMNIA IS OFTEN:

- UNDER-RECOGNIZED AND UNDER-TREATED
- BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH
- A MAJOR CAUSE OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

The good news is that insomnia is **VERY TREATABLE**, so let's get you started on becoming a successful sleeper!

# KICK THOSE BAD HABITS OUT OF THE BEDROOM!

*"Insomnia is a gross feeder.  
It will nourish itself on any  
kind of thinking, including  
thinking about not thinking."*

— Clifton Fadiman

And start catching some zzz's

Most of us are taught about practicing good personal hygiene early on in life, but what about good sleep hygiene? Good sleep hygiene is a collection of habits that can help you fall asleep with less difficulty and stay asleep more soundly.

Here are a few recommendations to help you take steps towards a good night's sleep:

- Choose relaxing activities before bed and do them in low light.
- Remember - your bed is for sleep and sex only.
- Try and avoid daytime naps.
- Get up and go to another room if you are unable to sleep.
- Return to bed only when you feel sleepy.
- Do not watch the clock.
- Do not fall asleep anywhere other than your bed.
- Do your best to avoid caffeinated drinks after 12:00 pm.

As you begin to make these changes, don't worry if you have a few setbacks. It takes time for change to become a part of your regular routine. Just remember to hang in there and continue to practice your good sleep habits.

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Are you sleeping with  
the enemy?

Tablets, mobile phones, computers, televisions...  
None of these items are your friend at bedtime  
– they are the opposite! Be sure to limit screen  
time before bed and make your bedroom  
a "no phone zone"!

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# LEARN HOW THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIORS IMPACT SLEEP

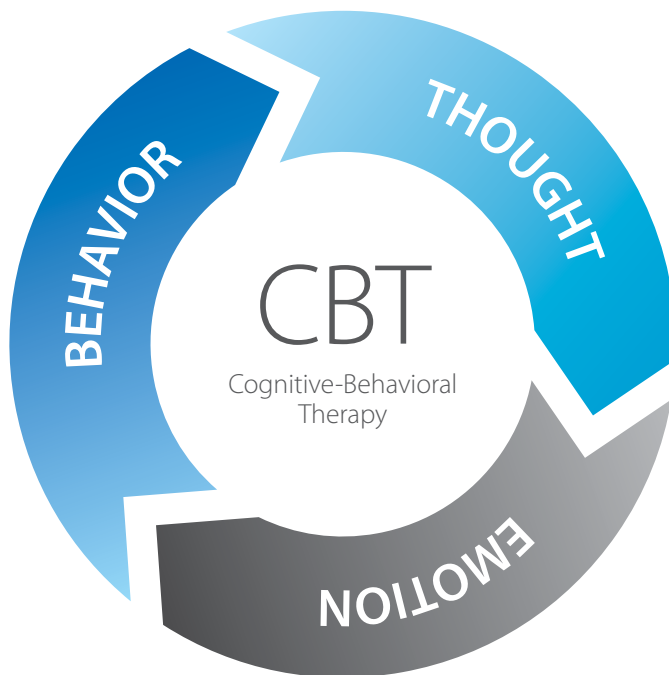
*"A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book."*

— Irish Proverb

Remember, YOU are the most important member of your sleep dream team!

If practicing good sleep habits doesn't have you nodding off with ease, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for insomnia (CBT-i) may be just what the doctor ordered.

CBT-i is a structured program that helps you recognize and replace the thoughts and behaviors that may be causing your insomnia. You may consider asking your healthcare provider to recommend a psychotherapist that is trained in providing CBT-i therapy.



- WHAT WE THINK  
Affects how we act and feel
- WHAT WE FEEL  
Affects what we think and do
- WHAT WE DO  
Affects how we think and feel

A few more helpful techniques:

- **Sleep Restriction:** spend less time awake in bed to train yourself to fall asleep more easily
- **Cognitive Therapy:** talk therapy to help you feel less anxious or stressed when you think about sleep
- **Sleep Hygiene Education:** learn new habits to help you sleep and change bad sleep habits

## DEAR DIARY

Another great way to help you understand where your insomnia is coming from is to keep a detailed sleep diary. Be sure to check out the sleep diary at the back of this booklet, along with our other helpful sleep tools!

CBT-i can help you uncover the source of your sleep problems so you can get back under your covers and sleep easy, especially when you combine it with practicing good sleep habits.

# SOUND HABITS FOR SOUND SLEEP

*"I'm so good at sleeping.  
I can do it with my eyes closed."*

— Unknown

Consider non-medication treatment as your first defense against sleepless nights

There are many different types of insomnia medications available and each one has its own list of risks and benefits. Sleep medications may prove helpful for your insomnia but they may not always be the best first choice. If you do decide to take a sleep medication, please remember that non-medication strategies described in this booklet should also be practiced on a daily basis.

## ON THE REBOUND

Some prescription sleeping pills may cause rebound insomnia, meaning it may become even harder to fall asleep without the medication.

### If you are taking a medication to help you with sleep, remember:

- **ALWAYS** talk to your healthcare provider about any medication you are currently using or plan to use.
- If possible, first try a non-medication intervention to improve sleep.
- Use the smallest dose for the shortest duration of time.
- Avoid or minimize alcohol intake when taking a sleep medication.
- When you and your healthcare provider decide to stop a sleep medication, please consider a slow and gradual taper.
- Avoid combining sleep medications and **NEVER** increase the dose of the sleep medication without consulting your healthcare provider.
- **ALWAYS** practice good sleep hygiene techniques, whether you're taking a sleep medication or not. Practicing good sleep hygiene is an absolute necessity.

Once you begin to understand and recognize your sleep issues, you'll be able to finally make some great changes so you can say goodnight to insomnia, once and for all!



The Do's of  
Good Sleep  
Hygiene

Keep a copy of this chart in your bedroom so you can review the do's, and take a snooze!



**Avoid all ambient light** in the bedroom.



**Avoid watching TV** 90-minutes before bedtime.



Wake up at the **same time of day** and get out into the morning light!



**Avoid alcohol and heavy meals** before bedtime.



**Stop drinking caffeine** at 12:00 pm.



**Avoid** laptops, tablets, e-readers, and cell phones 90-minutes before bedtime.



Relax with a **good book in bed**.



Try and **avoid daytime naps**.



**Exercise in the morning, afternoon, or evening** but not within an hour of bedtime.



Use your bedroom for **sleep and sex only**.



Practice **quiet and calm** activities before bed.



# Your Sleep Diary

## WEEK 1+2

Keeping a sleep diary for 2 weeks is a great way for you to learn about your sleep habits, and can help you keep track of anything you'd like to talk about with your healthcare provider. Fill in your diary daily, and then bring it with you to your next appointment.

Smartphone apps to track your sleeping habits are also available.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>WEEK 1</b>							
What was your bedtime last night?							
What time did you wake up this morning?							
How many hours did you sleep last night?							
How many times did you wake up last night?							
How rested did you feel upon waking this morning? (0=not at all, 10=fully rested)							
Rate your daytime level of fatigue yesterday (0=extremely fatigued, 10=no fatigue at all)							
What time was your last caffeinated drink yesterday? What time was your last alcoholic drink yesterday?							

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>WEEK 2</b>							
What was your bedtime last night?							
What time did you wake up this morning?							
How many hours did you sleep last night?							
How many times did you wake up last night?							
How rested did you feel upon waking this morning? (0=not at all, 10=fully rested)							
Rate your daytime level of fatigue yesterday (0=extremely fatigued, 10=no fatigue at all)							
What time was your last caffeinated drink yesterday? What time was your last alcoholic drink yesterday?							

# MY ACTION PLAN

Please fill out your action plan and take it with you to your next appointment, so you and your healthcare provider can create a game plan to conquer your insomnia.

## 1. MY CURRENT SLEEP HABITS:

## 2. WAYS I CAN DEAL WITH MY SLEEP PROBLEMS:

## 3. ROADBLOCKS THAT KEEP ME FROM SLEEPING WELL:

## 4. CURRENT LIST OF PRESCRIBED AND/OR OVER-THE-COUNTER SLEEP MEDICATIONS (IF ANY):

## 5. MY ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVING MY SLEEP:



*Eat well and  
shine like  
a Star*

By improving mental wellness  
**THROUGH OPTIMIZING NUTRITION**

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# HERE'S SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

*"The food you eat can be either the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison."*

— Ann Wigmore

You really *are* what you eat!

Did you know that every single brain chemical you possess comes directly or indirectly from the food you eat? Any time you reach for a snack, keep in mind that your good food choices mean healthy brain chemicals. Those healthy brain chemicals are directly linked to your:



Without a doubt, you are what you eat – that is why eating nutritious food is critical if mental wellness is your goal!

**A SIMPLE RECIPE IS WORTH REPEATING!**  
**You + Healthy Diet = OPTIMIZED Mental Health**

# CHEW ON THIS!

*"No disease that can be treated by diet should be treated with any other means."*

— Maimonides

## The MIND Diet

Are you interested in eating to promote a healthy mind and body? Of course you are. The MIND Diet is a great place to start in your pursuit of achieving optimum wellness, because it promotes a healthy mind-body connection. Have a look at the image below to become familiar with the different foods associated with the MIND Diet.



### Keep this in MIND

If you need a little more incentive to consider following the MIND Diet, studies have shown that it can decrease your chances of developing Alzheimer's Disease!

By practicing and maintaining healthy nutritional practices, you will be taking steps towards having a great sense of well-being!

The MIND diet contains 15 separate elements. These are listed in the table below:

<b>MIND DIET SCORING</b>	
<i>MIND DIET COMPONENTS</i>	<i>One Point scored for each component</i>
Eat Whole Grain foods 3 times a day	1 point
Eat Green leafy vegetables 6 times each week	1 point
Eat an additional vegetable once a day	1 point
Eat berries twice a week	1 point
Eat red meat products less than 4 times a week	1 point
Eat Fish at least once a week	1 point
Eat poultry twice a week	1 point
Eat beans 3 times a week	1 point
Eat nuts 5 times a week	1 point
Eat fried foods less than once a week	1 point
Eat butter or margarine less than once a day	1 point
Eat cheese less than once a week	1 point
Eat Pastries, or sweets less than 5 times a week	1 point
Drink alcohol or wine one serving per day	1 point
<b>Mind Diet Score: ____ (_____)</b> <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 100px;">Date</div>	
<b>GOAL: Increase Mind Diet Score by __ point(s) every ____ (week, month, etc.)</b>	

Score: \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)   
 Date

Score: \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)   
 Date

Score: \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)   
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Score: \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)   
 Date



Bring your  
inner  
**Star  
Athlete**  
into Play

By taming depression & improving  
**WELLNESS WITH EXERCISE**

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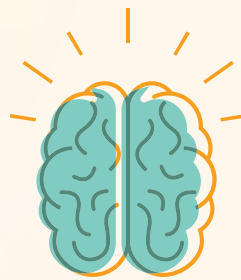
# HAVE EXERCISE ON THE BRAIN

And put depression out of your mind

*"True enjoyment comes  
from activity of the mind  
and exercise of the body;  
the two are ever united."*

— Wilhelm von Humboldt

It can be hard to find the energy to exercise, especially when depression has you feeling down, tired and unmotivated. Doing your best to exercise no matter how you're feeling is good for anyone, but it's particularly important if you're fighting depression. Physical exercise can help you tame your depression if you make it a part of your daily routine.



## **Depression:**

- Can be a serious medical condition
- Leads to tiredness and fatigue
- Takes away motivation and drive
- Is a treatable illness!

## A healthy mind from a healthy body

You probably know that exercise helps us lose weight and reduces blood pressure. You might even know that it improves our immunity and helps us fight infection. But we think you'll be surprised to learn that exercise also boosts our brain functioning, increases brain size, and even reduces our risk of developing depression!

The good news is that with exercise, recovery from major depression **is possible!**

But remember, active effort is needed to defeat it and keep it from returning, so let's get your exercise action plan up and running!





# IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE... IT'S EXERCISE SCIENCE!

It's simple: exercise regularly to reduce your depression (and so much more)!

*"All truly great thoughts  
are conceived while walking."*

— Friedrich Nietzsche

So how exactly can physical exercise help control depression? Scientists now firmly believe that physical exercise directly benefits the brain, especially the parts that control our mood. If that's not enough reason to get moving, physical exercise also seems to increase the size of the parts of the brain harmed by depression.

## Who can use exercise to fight depression?

Scientists have studied physical exercise extensively in people with major depression. The results are very promising. So let's see who can benefit from exercise to beat depression:

- People of ALL age groups benefit from exercise and its effects on mood
- Women and men benefit equally from exercise's ability to reduce depression
- People with all types of depression – mild, moderate or severe – enjoy the benefits of physical exercise

**Now that you know that exercise can help ANYONE fight depression, get out there. Embrace physical exercise fully to reap the many benefits!**



### PACK A 1-2 PUNCH AND HIT DEPRESSION HARD!

Both exercise and medication (antidepressants) are used to fight depression. The good news is that the combination works better than either of them alone. Science shows that exercise seems to make antidepressants work better. So exercise not only makes you feel better and boosts your brain function, but it also improves your depression treatment!

# VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE... AND OF EXERCISE!

Throw a curve at your body.  
Your mind will thank you!

*"Health is the vital principle  
of bliss, and exercise, of health."*

— James Thomson

Now that you know the *How* – how often, how hard, how long – you might be wondering about the *What*. What works best to treat depression – aerobic exercise (i.e. walking, bike riding) or resistance training (i.e. weight lifting)? The simple answer is: BOTH! Not only does the combination produce the best results, it'll also keep things interesting.

So don't be afraid to mix up your exercise routine and try different things. We think you'll be pleased with the results!

## **KEEP THOSE FEET MOVING AND DON'T GIVE UP!**

Remember this important fact: the benefits of physical exercise on depression continue to increase the longer we stay active. Exercise really is a great investment! So keep at it to keep feeling better!

## Why do we fall?

So we can get back up! You might feel down or have trouble finding the motivation to exercise from time to time. It's okay to have a setback and stumble now and then. Luckily, physical exercise not only reduces depression, it also helps us experience strong emotions like happiness, pleasure, joy, etc.

So when you're down, just focus on taking that first step, or lifting that one weight, and you'll be smiling again in no time!

When struggling with depression, imagine being able to exercise and counter those negative feelings with positive feelings. Not a bad deal, right? We encourage you to give it a try and see if exercise makes you feel better.

## **NEED A SPOT?**

We want you to have all the help you need to get the most out of exercise. Be sure to use the tools at the back of this booklet, designed to help you develop your exercise routine and track your progress. And don't forget to share with your healthcare provider!



# EXERCISE: A NATURAL HIGH

Being active will lift your spirits. But don't take our word for it, see for yourself!  
Here's an exercise and mood log to track your successes.

**Use this tracker to record your mood before and after you exercise, and to make a note of what you did and for how long. This will help you identify what works best for you and will give you a big motivational boost to boot!**

**My Goals for the week:**

**Mood Scale:**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not depressed Very depressed

Please rate your mood before and after exercise by circling the appropriate number below

<b>Mon.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>Tue.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>Wed.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>Thu.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>Fri.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>Sat.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>Sun.</b> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Date:"/>	<b>Activity:</b>  MOOD   Before: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<b>Duration:</b>  MOOD   After: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Inspiring quote of the week: \_\_\_\_\_

Listen  
to the  
**Star**  
within  
yourself



By taming depression & improving  
**WELLNESS WITH MINDFULNESS**

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 **WILD<sup>5</sup> Wellness™**  
Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands

# KEEP AN OPEN MIND

To beginning your journey as a more mindful person

*" Be happy in the moment, that's enough. Each moment is all we need, not more."*

— Mother Teresa

## Mindfulness – what does it mean?

Being mindful means being aware of your:

Thoughts

Feelings

Bodily sensations  
in your daily life

An important aspect of mindfulness is acceptance. This means that you pay attention to your thoughts and feelings without judging them and doing your best to remember there is no "right" or "wrong" way to think or feel in any moment.

By taking a mental step back and becoming aware of your thoughts and feelings you can help yourself notice signs of stress or anxiety, which can eventually help you manage those feelings.

## WHY YOU SHOULD PRACTICE MINDFULNESS:



**good for the body:** studies have shown that, after just eight weeks of practicing, mindful meditation boosts the immune system's ability to fight off illness.



**good for the mind:** studies have found that mindfulness increases positive emotions while reducing negative emotions and stress.



**changes the brain:** research has found that it increases density of grey matter in parts of the brain that are linked to learning, memory, emotional regulation, and empathy.



**helps to focus:** studies suggest that mindfulness helps us tune out distractions, while improving our memory and attention skills.

MIND FULL  
OR MINDFUL?

Do you want to have a mind that is FULL or one that is MINDFUL? Take a moment right now to consider your own mind and how you are feeling. We encourage you to read on and learn how you can commit to starting your own mindfulness practice today.

# GET TO THE HEART OF YOUR GREY MATTER

*"Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power."*

— Lao Tzu

By combining Mindfulness Meditation with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

If there has ever been a match made in heaven, it's Mindfulness Meditation and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – otherwise known as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). MBCT is a relatively new form of help that combines Eastern philosophy and practice (Mindfulness) with Western philosophy and practice (Cognitive Therapy). It is designed to help people deal with multiple issues such as depression and anxiety, and can be used to treat symptoms, and to prevent problems from returning.



## MEDITATE ON THIS!

A recent study of stressed individuals who practiced mindfulness for 8 weeks experienced a decrease in the size of their amygdala, the part of the brain that is responsible for fear and the many changes that it causes in the body. Excessive stress can cause fearful and worried feelings and the amygdala responds by becoming "hot" and over-active. The study showed that meditation appeared to "cool" down this important part of the brain.

## We can't stress these facts enough!

Studies have shown that people who meditate respond to stress differently. When faced with stressful situations, their heart rate does not increase as much as those who don't meditate or who are new to meditation. In the long run, this is very good for the heart and the body!

Generally speaking, meditating and mindfulness will help you develop and maintain a more positive frame of mind by reducing your emotional reaction to stressful events, so read on and learn how to get your "Om" on...

# EXERCISE YOUR MIND

*" You have brains in your head.  
You have feet in your shoes.  
You can steer yourself, any direction you choose. "*

— Dr. Seuss



## A Mindful Moment with a Raisin

(A mindful eating experience)

Slowly eat a raisin and use all of your senses, one after another, to observe the raisin in great detail, from the way it feels in your hand to the way its flavor bursts in your mouth. This exercise reminds us that eating a single raisin can be a truly mindful experience and offers us a glimpse into how often we go through life in a mindless haze. Don't like raisins? Don't worry – you can try this exercise with different foods like a piece of chocolate or a grape. Once done, be sure to congratulate yourself on completing a mindfulness exercise!

## Now let's try a Cognitive (thought) exercise

Sometimes the automatic thoughts we have are inaccurate and cause us distress. Take a moment and read the description below. While doing so, imagine you are in the scenario.

### Walking Down the Street Exercise:

- You're walking down the street
- On the other side of the street you see someone you know
- As they pass you on the street, you smile and wave
- The person does not wave back and keeps walking

### While doing this exercise:

What thoughts did you have?

What feelings did you have?

What bodily sensations did you experience?

As you reflect on your answers above, if you had any negative thoughts, feelings, or bodily sensations, please consider this - is it possible that you misinterpreted the situation?

### Let's do a Cognitive (thought) exercise together!

What if the person didn't see you waving to them or they didn't recognize you?

Or, what if they were preoccupied and not aware of their surroundings? Do you now see how automatic thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations may not be 'accurate'? By using our cognitive thoughts, we can challenge these negative perceptions.

By understanding how you react to and interpret this scenario, you will have experienced a cognitive exercise.

**Congratulations!**



# TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MINDFULNESS RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

You may be feeling a bit lost and not know where to begin, but trust us when we say you have lots of options! We recommend that you have a look to see what's available – you'll be pleasantly surprised at all the resources you find.

## MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS

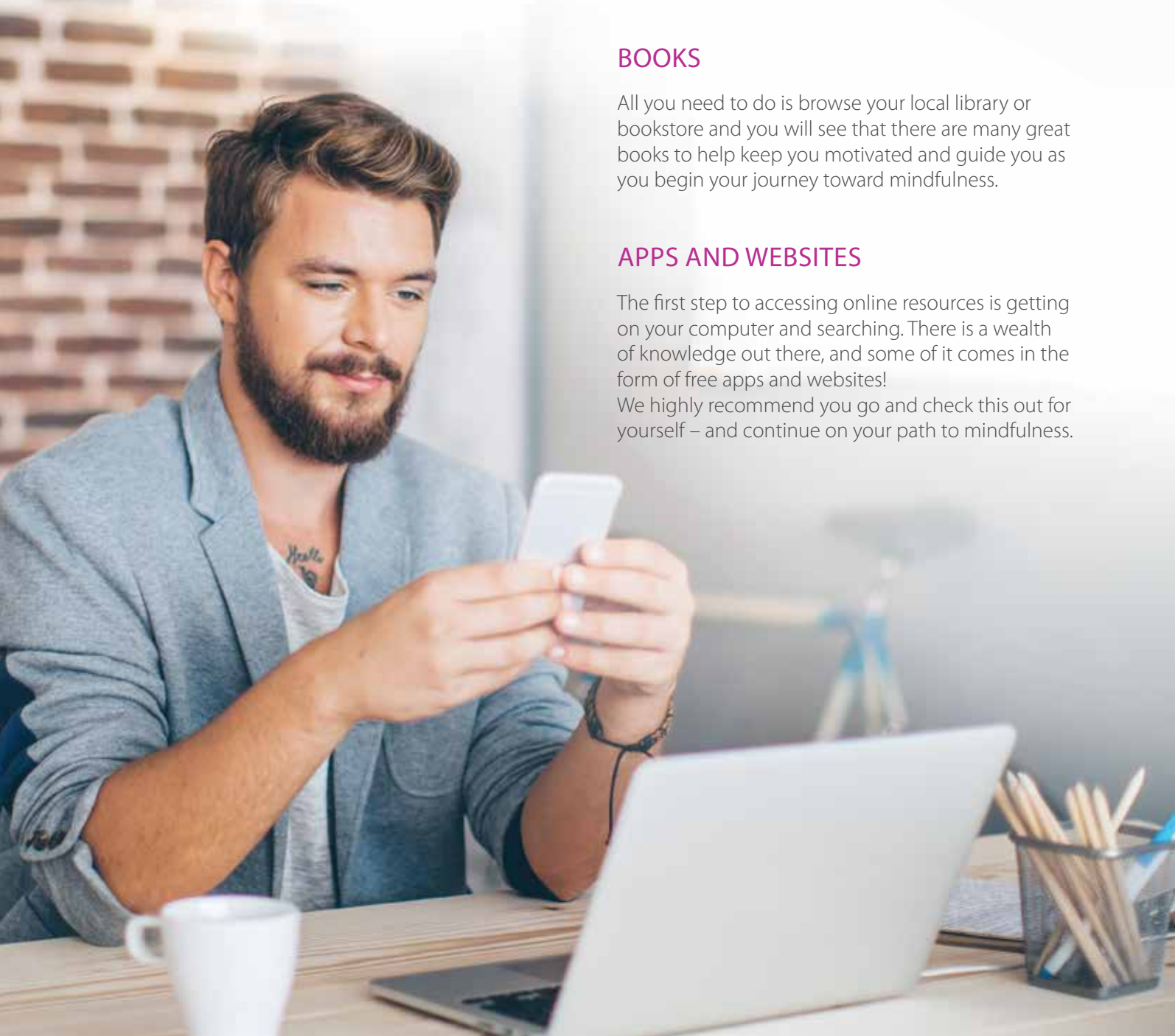
You may want to consider locating an MBCT 8-week class in your area to help you get started. If attending a class in person isn't an option, there are also programs available online.

## BOOKS


All you need to do is browse your local library or bookstore and you will see that there are many great books to help keep you motivated and guide you as you begin your journey toward mindfulness.

## APPS AND WEBSITES

The first step to accessing online resources is getting on your computer and searching. There is a wealth of knowledge out there, and some of it comes in the form of free apps and websites! We highly recommend you go and check this out for yourself – and continue on your path to mindfulness.







*" Our own worst enemy cannot harm  
us as much as our unwise thoughts.  
No one can help us as much as our own  
compassionate thoughts. "*

— Buddha

# MY ACTION PLAN

Please fill out your action plan and take it with you to your next appointment, so you and your healthcare provider can create a game plan to strengthen your mindfulness practice.


## 1. MY CURRENT MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

## 2. IN TERMS OF EMOTIONAL REACTION, I AM A LOW, MODERATE, OR HIGHLY REACTIVE PERSON:

## 3. ROADBLOCKS TO STARTING MY MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

## 4. ROADBLOCKS TO MAINTAINING MY MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

## 5. MY ACTION PLAN TO DEVELOP A MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

A group of people are dining outdoors at night. They are seated around a table with plates of food, glasses, and lit candles. The scene is illuminated by warm string lights hanging above them. The background shows trees and foliage.

# Be a Star in your own life

By improving wellness through  
**SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**

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**WILD<sup>5</sup> Wellness™**  
Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands

# MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE IDEA OF BECOMING MORE SOCIAL

So you can connect with what makes you happy

*"True friendship is like sound health: the value of it is seldom known until it is lost."*

— Charles Caleb Colton

## Social connectedness – what does it mean?

Social connectedness is the measure of how people come together and interact – and we're not talking about how many comments you share with your friends on Facebook!

When you're dealing with stress, depression or anxiety, you may be tempted to become less social, but that can create

a nasty cycle that leaves you feeling more isolated, anxious, and depressed.

By nature, we are very social creatures and when we connect with friends and family through fun and engaging activities, we're actually helping to maintain our sense of well-being.

## SOCIALIZING MORE WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS WILL HELP:



Getting out and connecting with people is a great way to improve your physical health and mental and emotional well-being.

### Lonely Hearts Club

Did you know that feelings of loneliness and social isolation can eventually lead to inflammation in the body? Increased inflammation can cause all kinds of health problems, including heart disease.

# GET FRIENDLY WITH THE RULE OF TWO Q'S

And improve your social connectedness

*"I would rather walk  
with a friend in the dark,  
than alone in the light."*

— Helen Keller

## Rule # 1: QUANTITY

How often you socialize is very important. Ideally, you should try to connect with someone on a daily basis. That may seem impossible – but if you call a friend for a quick chat during your lunch hour – even that brief interaction will make a difference in how you feel. Consider calling, emailing or texting someone or – better yet – get together with a friend or family member in person.

Don't limit your socializing to just once or twice a week. Be sure to commit to **daily** contact with others.

## Rule # 2: QUALITY

The quality of the people you connect with makes a difference. Avoid toxic relationships or those that violate your personal boundaries. Be sure to connect with people who enrich and nourish you.

Here are a few questions you can ask yourself before spending time with someone:

- Is this person negative or upbeat?
- Do we share a strong bond?
- Are we able to have deep conversations?
- Do we have fun together?

Try to keep company with people who are fun and who make you feel happy.

### THE MORE THE MERRIER!

Having about 4-5 strong, close, meaningful, positive relationships in our lives really impacts our happiness!

### YOUR DAILY DOSE

Laughter really is the best medicine!  
Social relationships that are filled with **laughter** and **fun** are particularly good for your psychological and physical well-being.



# IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A GREAT WAY TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS...

Volunteering makes perfect sense!

Volunteering is a great way for you to start building a sense of community, which in turn can help you make new friends and connect with others. People who volunteer have reported an increase in overall happiness, improved physical health, greater self-esteem and self-confidence. Why not get out there and participate in an activity that benefits you and so many others?

In the meantime, here are some things to remember as you work on staying socially connected:

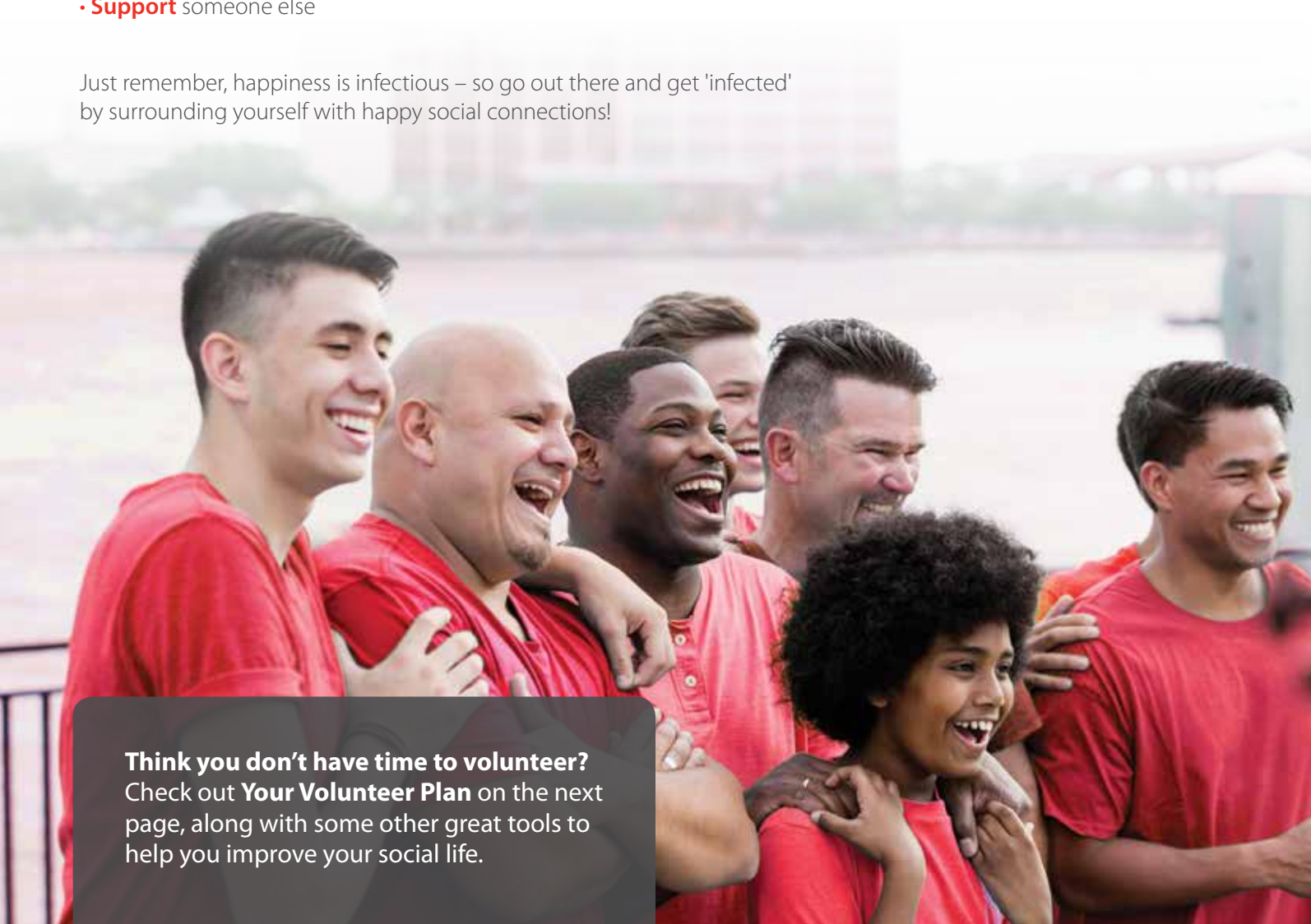
- **Identify** what is stopping you from interacting with others
- **Commit** to an activity
- **Join** a support group
- **Explore** a new activity
- **Find** people who inspire you
- **Support** someone else

*" Good friends are like stars.  
You don't always see them, but  
you know they're always there."*

— Unknown

Just remember, happiness is infectious – so go out there and get 'infected' by surrounding yourself with happy social connections!

**Think you don't have time to volunteer?**  
Check out **Your Volunteer Plan** on the next page, along with some other great tools to help you improve your social life.



# MY VOLUNTEER PLAN

Take a few minutes to research volunteer opportunities in your area. Call and/or visit three places that look interesting, sign on the dotted line and then begin volunteering! A few ideas could be your local pet shelter, retirement home or YMCA.

Volunteer Option 1

Volunteer Option 2

Volunteer Option 3



Please take some time to think about your current relationships and how you'd rate them.

How often are you socializing on a weekly basis? Taking a hard and honest look at these questions will help you decide how you want to modify and improve your relationships. If you feel your relationships are toxic or harmful in any way, you may want to consider discussing this with your healthcare provider and/or consider seeing a psychotherapist to address these issues. You may find it helpful to jot down some notes to the questions below:

How often do I *socialize*?

I consider these relationships/ friendships as *toxic*:

I'd describe the *quality* of my friendships/ relationships as:

How can I *improve* these relationships/ friendships?



# MY ACTION PLAN

**Please fill out your action plan** and take it with you to your next appointment, so you and your healthcare provider can create a game plan to strengthen your social relationships.

## 1. MY CURRENT SOCIAL HABITS:

## 2. ROADBLOCKS THAT KEEP ME FROM BEING MORE SOCIALLY CONNECTED:

## 3. WAYS I CAN OVERCOME THESE ROADBLOCKS:

## 4. THREE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES I WOULD ENJOY:

## 5. MY ACTION PLAN TO DEVELOP BETTER SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS:

**WILD 5★ Wellness™**  
*Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands*

**WILD 5 Wellness  
HERO Exercises**



## Why WILD 5 HERO Exercises Matter



**HERO** stands for **H**appiness, **E**nthusiasm, **R**esilience, and **O**ptimism. These four components are extremely important to a person's overall wellness. Please don't underestimate the power of these exercises.

As you begin these exercises, you'll notice there is quite a bit of overlap between the HERO components. As an example, happy people are often more enthusiastic, resilient, and optimistic. Strengthening one of the HERO components helps strengthen the others.

It's remarkable how each of the components of HERO - happiness, enthusiasm, resilience, and optimism – positively impact overall wellness:

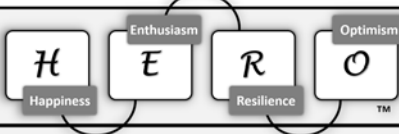
- Linked to longevity
- Linked to a stronger immune system
- Mitigate pain
- Predict lower heart rate and blood pressure
- Predict lower rates of depression
- Linked to better physical wellbeing
- Linked to better coping skills

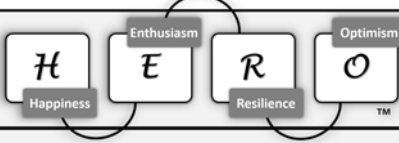
Given these benefits, spending 5-minutes a day strengthening your HERO muscle makes sense.

The HERO exercises are in addition to the WILD 5 Wellness daily practices of exercise, mindfulness, sleep, social connectedness, and nutrition. This may sound like a lot of work but remember these exercises only take about 5-minutes a day.

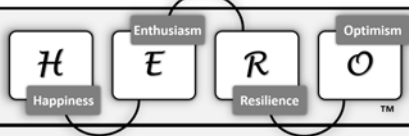
Find a time that works best to complete the HERO exercises. Put it on your calendar with reminder alerts. As you establish this practice, you will come to value this time of thoughtful reflection.

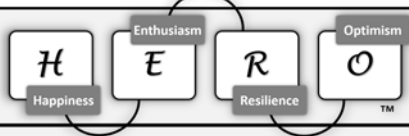
Here's to an invigorating HERO workout!

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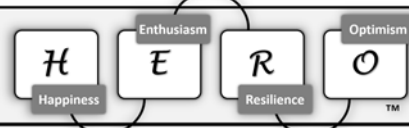
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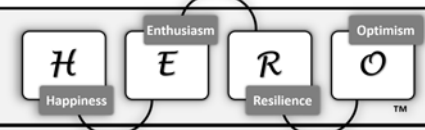
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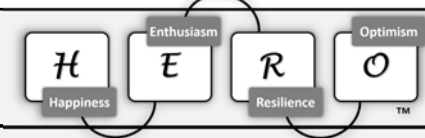
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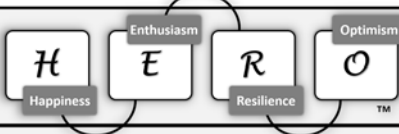
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being of service to others is a great way to build resilience. List two things you did today (or will do tomorrow) to give back to others or to brighten their day.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. _____</li> <li>b. _____</li> </ol> </li>   <li>2. Is your glass half-full or half-empty? How you view the world matters! Write down two things that happened today that you viewed as negative. Take a moment and give this some thought, and then write down a less negative, or even a positive interpretation of the same events.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. _____</li> <li>b. _____</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
<p><b>In order to carry a positive action we must develop a positive vision.</b>            ~ Dalai Lama</p>	

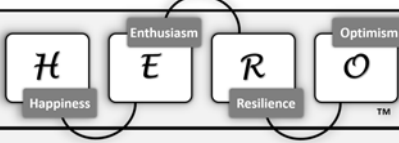
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thinking about happy memories can positively impact your level of happiness! Write down two memories that bring a smile to your face. Next, spend a few minutes reliving each of these happy memories, and watch your current level of happiness increase.                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. _____</li> <li>b. _____</li> </ol> </li>   <li>2. Gratitude is known to increase feelings of happiness and enthusiasm. To increase these feelings, mindfully consider your day and write down two examples of things that happened today that increased your feelings of gratitude.                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. _____</li> <li>b. _____</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People are quick to point out faults and weaknesses. Acknowledging others' successes is a great way to build and strengthen your resilience while making another person feel great. Think of two people that have recently achieved some type of success, personal or work-related, and write down how you plan to acknowledge their achievement.                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. _____</li> <li>b. _____</li> </ol> </li>   <li>2. Have you heard of <i>Passing it Forward</i>? Someone does something kind for you and you pass it forward by doing something kind for another. Write down two times others have done something kind for you and how that made you feel. Make a plan to pass along those acts of kindness and brighten someone else's day.                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. _____</li> <li>b. _____</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
<p><b>Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.</b>                      ~ Confucius</p>	

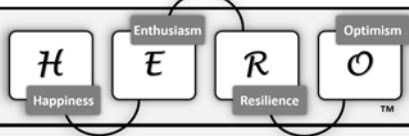
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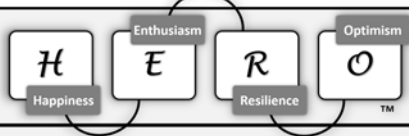
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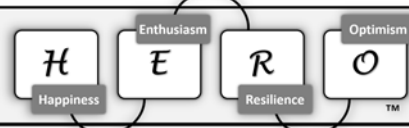


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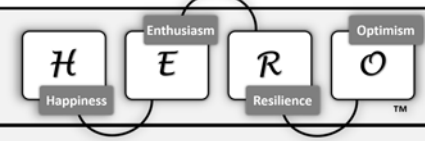
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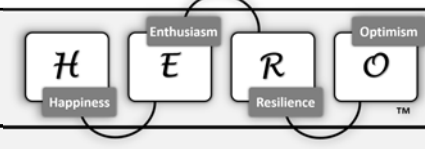
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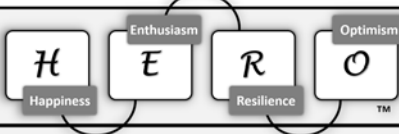
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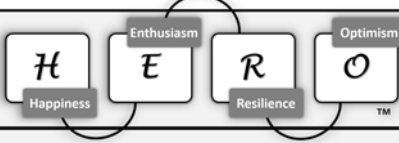
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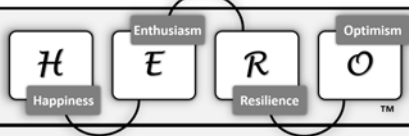
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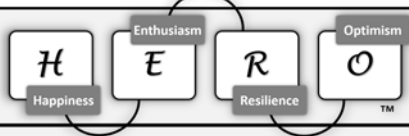
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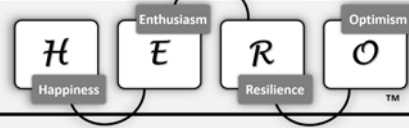
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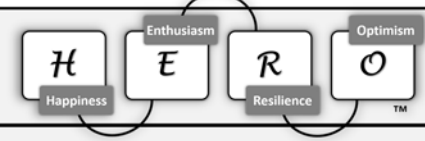
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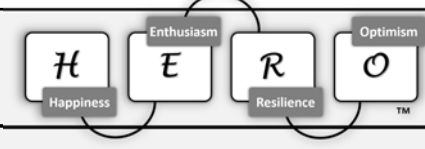
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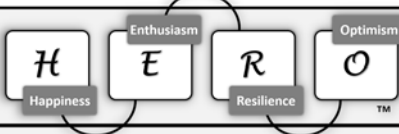
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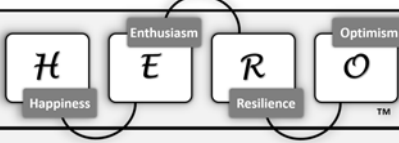
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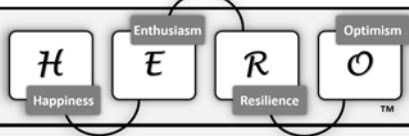
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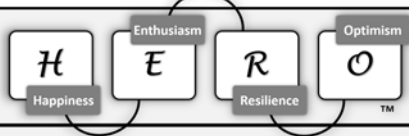
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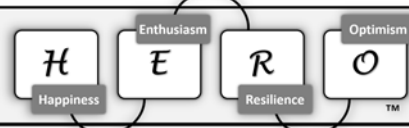


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# WILD 5★ Wellness™

Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands

## Participant Tracking Form

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Exercise: <i>Did I exercise today?</i>		Mindfulness: <i>Did I mindfully meditate 10 minutes today?</i>		Sleep: <i>Did I implement 4 or more of the 6 pro-sleep techniques last night?</i>		Connectedness: <i>Did I socialize today?</i>		Nutrition: <i>Did I eat at least one food from the MIND Diet today?</i>		HERO <i>Did I complete my HERO exercises today?</i>	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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14	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO

	Exercise:		Mindfulness:		Sleep:		Connectedness:		Nutrition:		HERO				
	Did I exercise today?	YES	NO	Did I mindfully meditate 10 minutes today?	YES	NO	Did I implement 4 or more of the 6 pro-sleep techniques last night?	YES	NO	Did I eat at least one food from the MIND Diet today?	YES	NO	Did I complete my HERO exercises today?	YES	NO
16	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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30	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	YES		NO	YES		NO	YES		NO	YES		NO	YES		NO