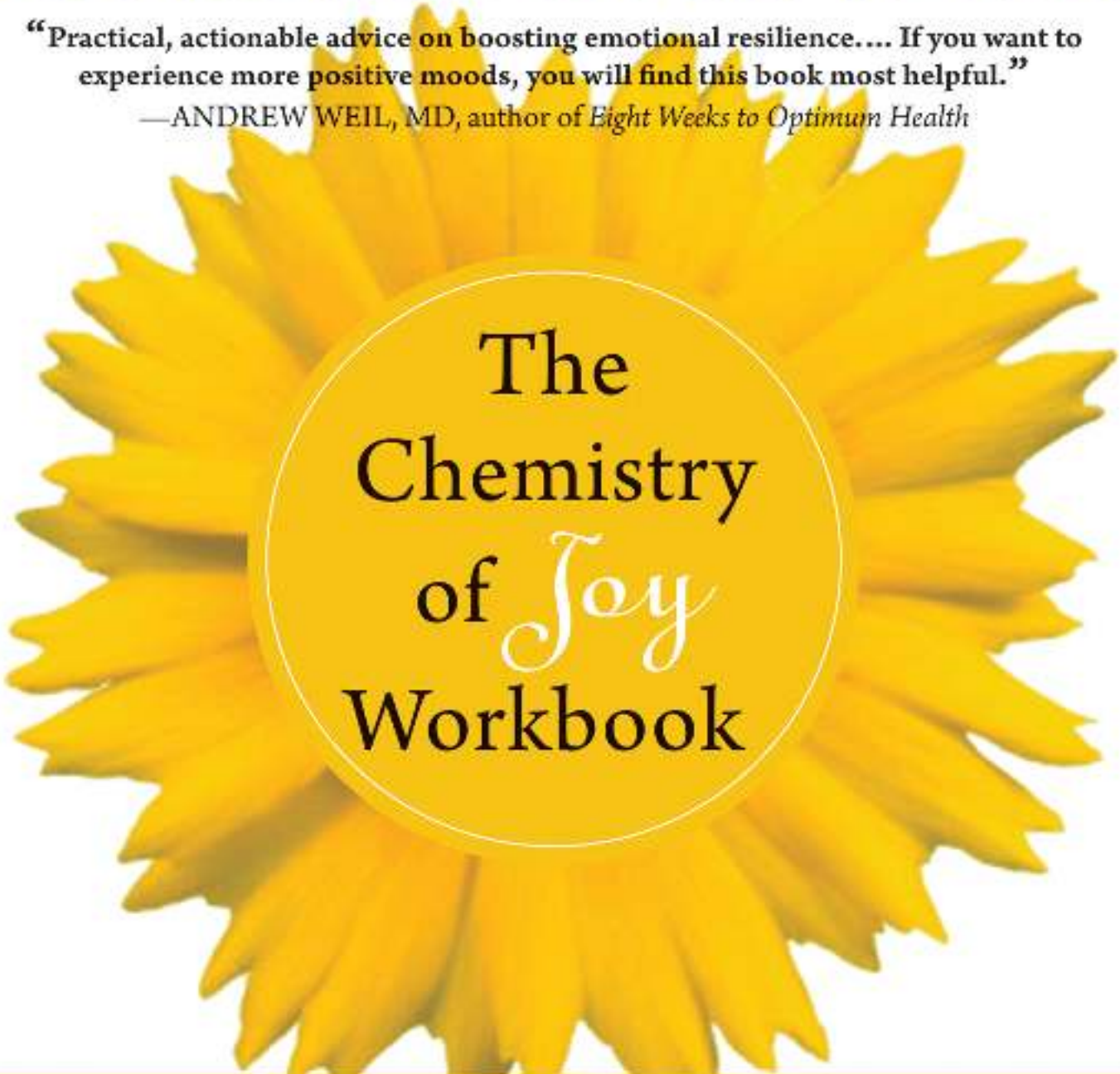


A NEW HARBINGER SELF-HELP WORKBOOK

“Practical, actionable advice on boosting emotional resilience.... If you want to experience more positive moods, you will find this book most helpful.”

—ANDREW WEIL, MD, author of *Eight Weeks to Optimum Health*



The
Chemistry
of Joy
Workbook

OVERCOMING DEPRESSION USING
THE BEST OF BRAIN SCIENCE, NUTRITION, AND
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MINDFULNESS

A Comprehensive 10-Week Program

HENRY EMMONS, MD, SUSAN BOURGERIE, MA, LP,
CAROLYN DENTON, MA, LN, and SANDRA KACHER, MSW, LICSW

“Depressed? Anxious? Before you reach for a prescription, reach for *The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* and follow the instructions. This book is the answer and I highly recommend it!”

—Christiane Northrup, MD, ob/gyn physician and author of the *New York Times* bestsellers *Women’s Bodies*, *Women’s Wisdom* and *The Wisdom of Menopause*

“I have recommended Henry Emmons’ *The Chemistry of Joy* to many people. In *The Chemistry of Joy Workbook*, he gives practical, actionable advice on boosting emotional resilience that is completely aligned with my own philosophy of integrative mental health. If you want to experience more positive moods, you will find this book most helpful.”

—Andrew Weil, MD, author of *Spontaneous Happiness*, *Healthy Aging*, *Eight Weeks to Optimum Health*, and other books

“This book offers a brilliant new analysis of depression as a breakdown of positive mental and physical factors, and then gives readers a powerful toolbox of methods for restoring these factors in mind, heart, and body. Grounded in science, eminently practical, focused on the positive, and full of heart, this is a great resource for feeling better and for increasing the inner strength and resilience that will prevent depressed moods in the first place.”

—Rick Hanson, PhD, author of *Buddha’s Brain* and *Just One Thing*

“*The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* provides a wealth of practical information and advice for anyone who struggles with depression. Using readily available therapies and simple instructions, the expert authors offer a comprehensive self-care plan that addresses the causes of depression at the levels of body, mind, and spirit.”

—James Lake, MD, chair of the International Network of Integrative Mental Health and author of the *Textbook of Integrative Mental Health Care*

“Many great wisdom traditions tell us that joy and happiness are not conditions that have to be created anew, but are natural and innate in everyone. Our task is to remove the obstructions that prevent us from realizing the inherent delight of life. *The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* is a marvelous tool that can help anyone accomplish this.”

—Larry Dossey, MD, author of *The Power of Premonitions* and *Reinventing Medicine*

“*The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* gently, lovingly, and assuredly offers us the tools to reach the oasis of serenity we all seek, providing each of us with the opportunity to experience the best of what life has to offer.”

—David Perlmutter, MD, FACN, ABIHM, author of *Power Up Your Brain*

“This is a workbook that actually works! It provides an excellent set of self-assessment tools that can help you better understand yourself and the causes of any psychological challenges you may be experiencing. It’s practical and easy to understand, and it offers the opportunity for genuine insight.”

—Phillip Moffitt, founder of the Life Balance Institute and author of *Emotional Chaos to Clarity* and *Dancing with Life*

“This workbook is a true lifeline. Follow its clear, engaging, expertly designed steps and you’ll experience healing and thriving like never before.”

—Raphael Cushnir, author of *The One Thing Holding You Back*

“A needed synthesis for people who need a balanced approach that incorporates the best wisdom of modern psychiatry and alternative medicine. This book communicates the science of brain chemistry in a straightforward manner, explaining the medical treatment of depression in plain English for the many people who want to understand the suffering inside them. I especially appreciate the compassion and the depth of experience that informs this useful book, from beginning to end. It is a work of great expertise and great love.”

—Mary Hayes Grieco, director of The Midwest Institute for Forgiveness Training and author of *Unconditional Forgiveness*

“With extensive questionnaires, case examples, and individualized solutions covering all bases, this user-friendly workbook provides scientifically based recommendations for helping you reconnect with the joy that is your birthright. Just read and apply it—you will be happy you did!”

—Hyla Cass, MD, author of *Eight Weeks to Vibrant Health*

“Henry Emmons has done it again! A joyful way to take advantage of the healing he brings to us. What a great tool and a visionary message!”

—Kathleen DesMaisons, PhD, author of *Potatoes Not Prozac*

“This is a well-organized and clearly written book that shows a step-by-step process that enables the reader to create a richer and more meaningful internal life.”

—Pia Mellody, author of *Facing Codependence* and *The Intimacy Factor*

“If there were one book I could give to every person who wants to love the life they are living and live the life they love, it would be this one. It is fertilizer for the life force that is your birthright.”

—Dawna Markova, PhD, author of *I Will Not Die an Unlived Life, Wide Open*,
and coeditor of *Random Acts of Kindness*

“This book is an outstanding example of the emerging field of the mind-body-diet connection. It represents a clinically validated pathway to increased happiness that translates into a greater joy of life.”

—Barry Sears, PhD, author of *The Zone*

“*The Chemistry of Joy* has helped many people who suffer from depression not only survive, but thrive. This workbook will multiply those numbers as it leads the reader through a series of reflective exercises and practices that flow from the notion that personal change comes from self-acceptance. In true Henry Emmons style, the approach is well-grounded and serious but appropriately lighthearted—exactly what’s needed by people who are weighed down with self-reproach. In the words of a Buddhist teacher whose spirit reminds me of Emmons’, ‘You are perfect as you are—and you could use a little improvement!’”

—Parker J. Palmer, author of *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, *Let Your Life Speak*,
and *The Courage to Teach*

“This workbook mirrors Emmons himself in many ways: it is kind, insightful, supportive, practical, and wise. Here is a fabulous tool for those struggling with depression. The authors have created the best guide available to become happier and more resilient.”

—Scott Shannon, MD, psychiatrist and assistant clinical professor in the department
of psychiatry at the University of Colorado

“*The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* is not just another self-help workbook. Henry Emmons, Susan Bourgerie, Carolyn Denton, and Sandra Kacher have created a remarkable roadmap to rediscovering our innate potential for flourishing, optimum health. They remind us that the next revolution in healthcare does not lie in the discovery of more medical magic bullets but in supporting our potential for resilience. This workbook will be an invaluable resource for my patients and for me. I look forward to walking the pathways to health with them.”

—James Duffy, MD, FANPA, psychiatrist and chief of integrative medicine
at Sierra Tucson

“Blending the wisdom of traditional healing approaches with the rigor of scientific strategies, *The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* is filled with insightful ideas and empowering practices that will not only help to heal the despair and isolation of individuals with depression, but will serve as a guide to personal growth and transformation at the heart of living a life of meaning, connection, and well-being. Soak in these healing suggestions and give yourself the beginnings of a new way of life.”

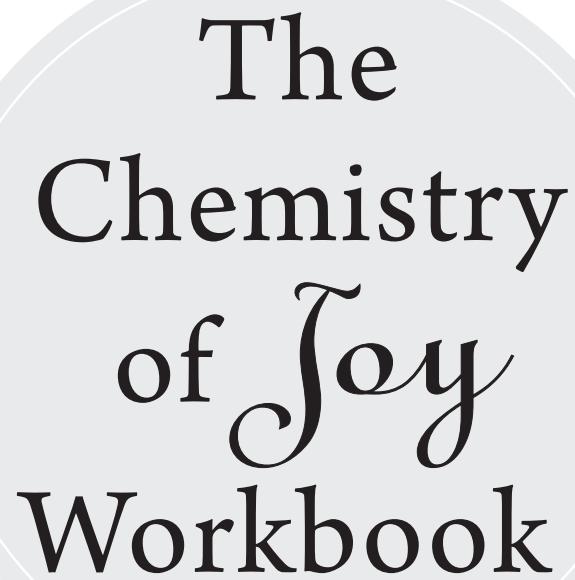
—Daniel J. Siegel, MD, executive director of the Mindsight Institute and clinical professor
at the University of California, Los Angeles School of Medicine

“As I read through *The Chemistry of Joy Workbook*, the word heuristic repeatedly came to mind. A ‘heuristic’ is an experience-based technique for problem solving, learning, and discovery. Henry Emmons and team have written a book rich in heuristic-like solutions to an eternal dilemma: Why are we unhappy and how does this lack of joy further complicate our lives? Step by step, and through a brilliant journal-like design, *The Chemistry of Joy Workbook* identifies and unravels the obstacles to the science of satisfaction.”

—Peter D’Adamo, ND, MIFHI, author of *Eat Right 4 Your Type* and director, Center
of Excellence in Generative Medicine, University of Bridgeport

“A thoughtful, user-friendly, wide-ranging guide to attitudes and practices that will make your journey through depression easier, faster, and more fruitful.”

—James S. Gordon, MD, founder and director of The Center for Mind Body Medicine
and author of *Unstuck: Your Guide to the Seven-Stage Journey Out of Depression*



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OVERCOMING DEPRESSION USING
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Introduction

Restoring the Elements of a Resilient Life

Surely joy is the condition of life.

Henry David Thoreau

Resilience is natural. Even after a long, hard winter, when the proper conditions arrive, nature simply springs back to life of its own accord.

Resilience may be natural, yet every day we encounter people who are enduring a hard inner winter, whose joy and vitality have long ago gone dormant. Many of them have lost heart. Having tried all the usual remedies with little success, they wonder if they will ever fully reclaim their lives. They come to us with a single question, framed in a thousand different ways: “What can I do to feel better, to bring myself back to life, to recover the joy that I have lost?”

This workbook is our answer to that question, and we are so glad to share it with you. We are a team of healers trained in holistic psychiatry, integrative nutrition, and the psychology of mindfulness. We have a shared passion for blending the elements from these different ways of knowing into a coherent, healing whole. Our goal is simple: to offer insights, strategies, and skills that really work.

How do we know that this approach works?

- It is based upon the most current research in neuroscience, genetic expression, nutrition, and the psychological sciences.
- The inner skills we offer come from the wisdom of mindfulness, which has been a powerful antidote to human suffering for over 2,500 years.
- We have witnessed thousands of people reclaim their lives from depression, anxiety, and other stress-related conditions by following the pathways that we will describe in this book.
- We practice these skills ourselves and we know firsthand how life giving they can be.

THE ENEMIES OF JOY

Though it is often hard to see life as essentially joyful, we believe that it is. While it may be hidden, the experience of joy is natural and effortless, and it is available to us at all times, whether or not we are aware of its presence.

A man approached one of us after a workshop to say how much he appreciated this truth. "My son died two years ago," he explained, "and I was devastated. I sank into a dark depression. Your work helped me to reconnect to the joy that was his short life. Now I can carry sorrow and joy at the same time, and the one no longer outweighs the other."

This man knows that joy is not merely a feeling; it does not mean that we are always happy or expansive. Sadness, loss, and sorrow are not the opposite of joy, and they do not necessarily prevent us from accessing it. Joy involves an accepting stance toward life, a deep connection with that which is most life giving, a sense of gratitude that arises spontaneously when we realize the abundance that is in our lives.

Joy comes of its own accord when we are in our naturally healthy state. Yet it requires that we be resilient, and there are many forces that sabotage our efforts to remain resilient and so block our access to joy. These enemies of joy result in:

- an imbalanced body
- an unsettled mind
- a disconnected heart

All are signs that our resilience is under siege.

In each of these categories, there are outside forces beyond our personal control, but also things we do to ourselves that unwittingly cause us more harm:

- The imbalanced body is assaulted from the outside by exposure to toxins, such as pollution, food additives, radiation, and other harmful forms of energy—and from the inside by our own diet and lifestyle choices.
- The unsettled mind is accosted from the outside by stresses such as emotional or physical trauma, the weight of others' expectations, disturbing images or news items, financial uncertainty, or personal loss—and from the inside by the attachments of our own minds.
- The disconnected heart is burdened from the outside by the experience of loneliness or isolation caused by social upheaval, loss of loved ones, ruptures in relationships—and from the inside by our own tendency to shut down and withdraw whenever we feel threatened.

Even the most resilient among us may become fearful or depressed when visited by several of these enemies at once. And even those who are most vulnerable may remain resilient if they take care to keep restoring themselves in the face of that which is depleting.

This workbook is designed to guide you toward balancing your body, settling your mind, and connecting your heart, so that the enemies of joy have far less power over you. They can be fierce, but you can be just as fierce in how you respond to them.

THE BREAKDOWN OF RESILIENCE

Resilience is essential to the joyful life. When you have a deep source of resilience and the skills to maintain it, you are able to adapt to change, to face challenges, and to deal with life's inevitable stresses and still come out all right, perhaps even strengthened, on the other end. In this naturally resilient state, joy can enter of its own accord, just as the grass grows in springtime simply because the conditions for its growth have returned.

Resilience is your nature, yet it is under siege. Mental and emotional disorders are now epidemic, creating great personal and societal suffering:

- Of Americans over age eighteen, 26.2 percent (more than one in four adults in this country) suffer from some type of diagnosable mental disorder in any given year (Kessler et al. 2005), and nearly half of them meet criteria for more than one disorder (U.S. Census Bureau 2005).
- Mood disorders, including major depression, *dysthymia* (a milder but chronic depression), and bipolar disorder, affect 20 million Americans (10 percent) each year (Kessler et al. 2005). Depression is the leading cause of disability in the United States, and will soon be number one throughout the world (World Health Organization 2008).

- According to IMS Health, as reported by National Public Radio (Shute 2011), doctors wrote 254 million prescriptions for antidepressant drugs in 2010, making them the second most prescribed drugs after cholesterol-lowering medications.
- Anxiety is even more common, with one in five (60 million) people in the United States suffering from a diagnosable anxiety disorder (Kessler et al. 2005).

There are a host of other conditions that are also stress related, such as insomnia, hypertension, heart disease, memory disorders, gastrointestinal problems, and drug and alcohol abuse. Virtually every chronic illness is impacted by stress.

The frequency of these problems has increased dramatically over the past few decades. What can be done to reverse this breakdown in resilience?

RESILIENCE IS NOT LOST, JUST WAITING TO BE REAWAKENED

We have worked with thousands of people, individually and in groups, to help them reclaim their lives from the grip of depression. Surely, this takes courage, and courage is aided by the belief that it is at least *possible*—not only for others, but also for you—to awaken to joy. What has worked for thousands of others can also work for you.

If you were in our offices, you would hear stories of inspiration like these:

Cheryl has a rich life with a rewarding career, three lovely children, and a supportive husband and friends. There seemed to be no reason for it, yet she had suffered frequent and debilitating depressive episodes throughout her life, despite very good mental health care. In the spring following her participation in our program, she said, "For the first time in my adult life, I made it through the winter without a depressive episode!" That was four years ago, and she still remains healthy, vibrant, and active. Her depression has not returned.

William, who had had unremitting depression since his teenage years, said, "Although I didn't find the 'magic cure' I'd been looking for, I now accept myself—depression and all—and feel more hope than I ever have before." He felt hopeful because now he was learning that there were choices he could make and things he could do for himself that clearly improved his mood. He had a sense of direction and a set of skills that he finally believed offered a way out of lifelong depression.

Allison not only recovered from a severe depression, she also went further: "It made it seem possible to move from depression to actual joy, not just to a place free from pain."

Individuals are able to reclaim more of their lives, because this is an approach that integrates many aspects of what it takes to live a resilient and joyful life. We are addressing the sources of suffering from several angles and bolstering the skills of resilience through multiple avenues.

One of our integrative programs is called Resilience Training. Our research with this program shows that nearly everyone who follows it improves, and most recover fully, even from the severe form of this illness known as major depression (Dusek et al. 2009). Here are some of the highlights from our research:

- Depression scores dropped by 71 percent.
- Over 60 percent of participants achieved full remission from depression.
- There was a 71 percent improvement in quality-of-life measures.
- Similar improvements were found in perceived stress, anxiety, and work productivity.

Our goal is for you, too, to find relief from suffering, whatever is causing it and however it appears in your life. We want you to reclaim your birthright gift of resilience and the joy that accompanies it.

Resilience is a renewable resource that depends more on skill than on genetics, circumstances, or sheer luck. This book is devoted to helping you restore and maintain that resource so that joy can flow back into your life.

Part 1

Preparing for the Journey

Chapter 1

Pathways to Joy: Make This Journey Your Own

Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.
[Traveler, there is no path. You make the path by walking.]

Antonio Machado

Restoring the elements of a resilient life requires that we each make our own path. It begins with a single step, but that alone will not make it a path. That first step must be followed by another and then again by another.

When your resilience is depleted, it may seem an overwhelming prospect to take even that first step. There is a tendency to blame yourself for an inability to “snap out of it,” yet most people have no real guidance on how to reclaim their lives.

The aim of this workbook is to give you that guidance and to help you create and follow your own path to a resilient and joyful life. Each person's path is unique, yet there are a few elements that form the essence of the journey for all of us. We offer nine such elements, *pathways* that can restore your resilience and open you to at least the possibility of a joyful life.

THE PATHWAYS TO JOY

There is no single “key” to happiness or success. People cannot be reduced to a few brain chemicals, or to certain repetitive thoughts or negative beliefs, or even to a diminished spirit. The real power in this program lies in its being a unified approach that embraces different facets of what it means to be fully human. It is a true integration of the various elements of resilience, blended into a coherent whole.

The following nine pathways will help you reclaim your resilience and your capacity for joy. They are grouped into three clusters, representing different aspects of who we are as human beings: body, mind, and heart. They provide powerful antidotes to the enemies of joy that were described briefly in the introduction: an imbalanced body, an unsettled mind, and a disconnected heart.

The Body Pathways

Caring for the body provides you with the conditions to thrive. By themselves, these pathways will not guarantee joyfulness or resilience. Yet they are essential for a resilient life. The three body pathways—nurturing, balancing, and flowing—will help you to establish a solid foundation for resilience so that the rest of your journey can be deeply fruitful.

THE FIRST PATHWAY



nurturing

In the first pathway, we examine how the information your body derives from food influences its functioning. You will identify any missing ingredients—or systems that may be out of balance—that prevent your body from naturally self-correcting. Questionnaires will help you discover if there are physical areas that you need to address, and if so, we offer specific guidance on how to do so.

THE SECOND PATHWAY



balancing

A healthy mood can only be sustained if brain chemistry is balanced in the best way for your individual needs. What is called “depression” is not just one thing that can be treated in the same way for each person. This second pathway helps you determine whether you may have a specific type of brain-chemical imbalance. We will then help you create your own plan for optimal nutritional supplementation so that your hard-won natural balance can last.

THE THIRD PATHWAY



flowing

This pathway reminds us that we are part of the natural world and aligning with it is a key to resilience. There are natural cycles that impact mood, including daily rhythms, sleep, and seasons. Yet each of us has our own unique lifestyle patterns and needs. Our questionnaire helps you discover your mind-body type, and we provide information that helps you design a practical and effective plan to flow more easily with your own nature.

The Mind Pathways

One foundation of our approach is the good medicine of mindfulness, grounded in 2,600 years of Eastern wisdom. A mindful life can lead to a calm and joyful mind. By following the three pathways of settling, opening, and knowing, you will help the mind to become calmer, to open to your experience, and to see more clearly so that you will be able to face whatever arises in your life with greater wisdom and equanimity.

THE FOURTH PATHWAY



settling

The untamed mind easily jumps from thought to thought without awareness or intention. Its activity is unceasing, and it seems powerfully drawn to harmful thoughts and painful emotions. The good news is that, like an impulsive puppy, the mind can learn to quiet, indeed to “Sit!” In the fourth pathway, we introduce you to the basics of mindfulness practice, which will enable the mind to settle and the body to relax.

THE FIFTH PATHWAY



opening

Learning to fully experience the complete range of human emotions is a fundamental part of recovery from depression and of creating a joyful life. In this chapter you can learn to turn toward even painful emotions, grounded in mindful awareness of their impermanence and your capacity to feel them without being overwhelmed. And you’ll discover the truth that being emotionally aware leads you to discover life’s joys in a deeper way.

THE SIXTH PATHWAY



knowing

Grounded in mindfulness, you will gain perspective on some of your most intensely painful emotional experiences and learn more skillful ways of responding to them in the moment. These experiences offer you the chance to develop greater self-awareness and a sense of mastery. The tools you will learn in this chapter can dramatically improve your sense of well-being and help prevent the recurrence of depression.

The Heart Pathways

There is much that happens beneath the surface of awareness in every person's inner life. You can lay the groundwork of good physical health, tame your wild mind, and expand your capacity to be with the full range of emotions. But without connection to the larger world, including the unseen mysteries, you lose touch with your deepest and most life-sustaining energies. Your taproots need to sink deeply into this life source in order to thrive, and that involves connection with the inner self, with others, and with spiritual truths and practices. Following the pathways of connecting, belonging, and deepening gives access to these deeper sources to nourish resilience and create the conditions for lasting joy.

THE SEVENTH PATHWAY



connecting

One of the most disheartening aspects of depression is the sense of separation, isolation, and shame that so often comes with it. Moving out of this isolation begins with authentic acceptance of and connection with yourself.

In the seventh pathway, we challenge the illusion that you are isolated and defective, and guide you toward wholeness and connection with your basic goodness. We offer meditations and exercises that work to heal disconnection from self and transform your capacity for love of self and others.

THE EIGHTH PATHWAY



belonging

In the eighth pathway, we move further into the healing power of connection and explore the possibilities of creating a genuine sense of belonging and community.

Transformation begins within. We offer powerful meditation practices that help you move beyond yourself to find joy in interconnection with others and the larger world. We follow this inner work with recommendations for actions that help you create a place of belonging for yourself.

THE NINTH PATHWAY



deepening

One of the most disheartening enemies of joy is disconnection from your deepest, most authentic self. The deepening path outlined in this final pathway leads you to an opportunity to reclaim your own inner wisdom. We draw from depth spirituality and our own experience to make listening to the voice within both accessible and meaningful.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

The pathways to joy are integrated, with each one supporting the next. We suggest that you begin by rebalancing the body, then settling the mind, and finally connecting with heart. Yet the pathways are also fluid and interconnected, so they can be done in any way that best suits your needs. You may find that a particular set of pathways is especially important for you. Or you may wish to revisit a pathway that you have strayed from in order to strengthen it. The following are examples of how you can make this program your own.

- *Clare's Story: A Focus on Body*

Clare was a fifty-two-year-old woman who had experienced mild to moderate depression most of her life. While there were periods when she had felt strong and resilient, the past several months had become especially difficult for her. She had other lifelong health issues, such as migraine headaches, frequent sinus infections, and dermatitis. She was frustrated with herself because she has an insatiable sweet tooth and had gained weight during the past year. She had recently found out that she was vitamin D deficient. She also felt fatigued due to poor sleep, which made it hard for her to concentrate. After completing the resilience skills questionnaire, Clare found that working toward rebalancing her body would be most important to her overall success in this program.

- *Paula's Story: A Focus on Mind*

Paula felt as if she had been swimming in stress hormones since childhood. Her parents were emotionally abusive and had very high expectations for her success. Paula eventually became CEO of a large company and held the job for twenty-five years. She had recently retired and moved back to her hometown to be near family. Until the move, life had been full and fast paced. Then, despite the diminishing of her outward stress, she became unable to sleep and her mind was unfocused. "I feel like I'm living

outside of myself,” she said. Her score on the resilience skills questionnaire suggested that she put special emphasis on settling her mind.

- *Frank’s Story: A Focus on Heart*

At the age of forty, Frank had been struggling with self-acceptance for thirteen years, starting shortly after he came out to his family as gay. He was very hard on himself and tended to be a perfectionist. Recently transferred to a new city for his job, he became socially isolated. He was still able to function at work, but he started sleeping excessively and not eating regularly. He was beginning to feel as if he was not worthy of being loved. Frank’s scores on the resilience skills questionnaire helped him decide to put most of his energy into strengthening his connection with heart.

SO HOW SHOULD YOU BEGIN?

Each step in the program is meant to build upon all of the previous ones. It always works well to start at the beginning and follow them in order, but we encourage you to make this process your own by focusing on the pathways most important to you. The following resilience skills questionnaire will help guide you in deciding where to begin. You will discover what you are already doing well but will also see where your resilience skills risk becoming depleted. Your results will help you decide where to place your attention and energy so that you can recover your own access to joy.

Remember that these are skills you naturally possess, but they need to be refreshed and renewed throughout your life, especially if you have encountered numerous enemies of joy along the way.

Resilience Skills Questionnaire

For each question below, circle the number that is most true for you:

1—Hardly ever

2—Some of the time

3—As often as not

4—Most of the time

5—Nearly always

1. I take time to provide and prepare nourishing foods, and I eat with enjoyment and awareness. 1 2 3 4 5

2. I notice when I am hungry or when I am full, and I act accordingly. 1 2 3 4 5

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