

You're at the right place, right now, IF...

- You want true health- physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual
- You want your body, energy, mind and emotions to support you in living your potential
- You want to cut through the clutter of conflicting wellness 'tips' received everyday
- You're tired of chasing health 'goals' through dieting, gym-ming and running
- You want well-being to be your default state of being and not a goal to chase

If YOU are ready to stop being taken for a ride, and get in the driver's seat of your journey to well-being then this series of guidebooks is for you. To be your companion in the journey towards well-being, irrespective of your age, background, ailment or health issue.

The Secret Sauce - Yog

The "secret sauce" to reversing ailments, to being healthier than we were ten years ago, to thriving and reaching our potential is Yog. Yog is NOT Yoga. "Yoga", the "modern" oversimplified version of Yog, is a set of physical contortions - Asanas and Pranayama. Yog is a system for living, not just practices for wellness. Adapted to today's context, Yog can make us achieve far more than just reversal of diseases.

About the 'From Yoga to Yog' Series

This 5-part series of books gives an insight into yog - the science to remove the root cause behind "dis-ease" and restore internal harmony. Well-being and harmony in our external reality is a natural outcome of this state.

- 1) From Treatments for Illness to Yog for Wellness
- 2a) From Obsessive Diets to Yogic Aahaar
- 2b) From Excessive Exercising to Yogic Vyaayaam
- 2c) From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar
- 3) From Doing Yog to Being in Yog

At the end of this journey, you will have

Well-being
Independence
A healthy community

All profits from the sale of this book go to Swasth Yog Foundation, an initiative of Swasth Foundation, India

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From STRUGGLING WITH EMOTIONS to YOGIC VICHAAR

Garima Gupta Kapila
Geeta Bhansali

"FROM YOGA TO YOG" SERIES

• PART 2C •

From STRUGGLING WITH EMOTIONS to YOGIC VICHAAR

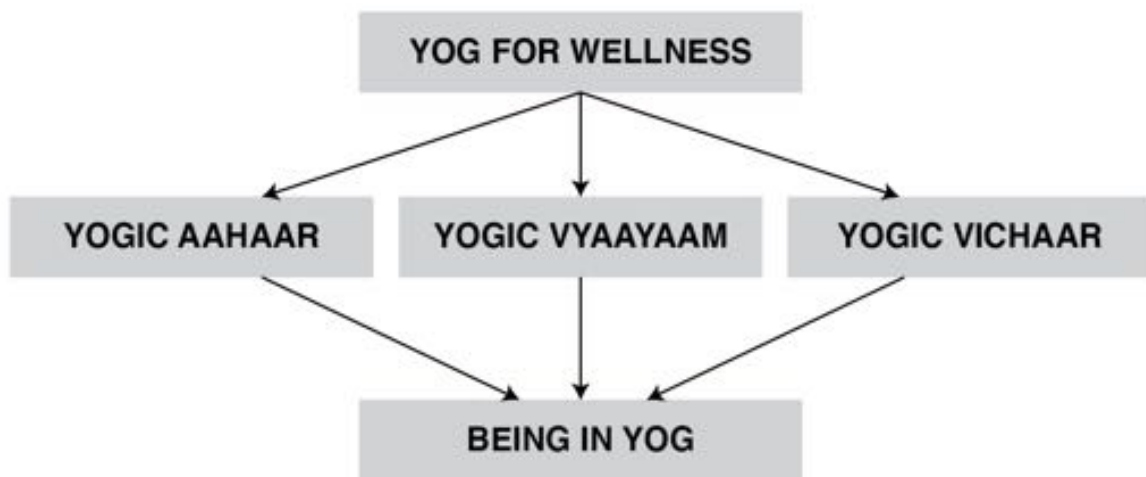
Stop getting tangled in your thoughts and emotions
and start harnessing them
to access peace, love and joy within



Garima Gupta Kapila
Geeta Bhansali



Map to **“FROM YOGA TO YOG”** Series



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You are responsible for your own choices, actions, and results. In the spirit of taking personal responsibility for your decisions, you should seek the services of a competent health care provider before beginning any improvement program

Dedication

Peace, Love, Joy for All

May our body, energy, mind and emotions be in harmony (Yog)
May we be aligned with our true self
May each of us feel – “I’m free to be me”
May we all live fully and freely

This book is dedicated to the countless, selfless Yogis
who undertook the hardest journey of all – the journey inwards –
and shared its fruit - Yog - with the world, for the world.

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
मा कश्चिद्दुः भाग्भवेत् ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah
Sarve Santu Niraamayaah |
Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu
Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet |
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||

Meaning:

- 1: Om, May All be Happy,
- 2: May All be Free from Illness.
- 3: May All See what is Auspicious,
- 4: May no one Suffer.
- 5: Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

Acknowledgements

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Is this Book for me?

Are you at the right place?

- Do you wish to enjoy true health – physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual?
- Do you want your body, energy, mind and emotions to be in harmony? Do you want them to actively support you in living your potential?
- Are you tired of chasing your health ‘goals’ through dieting, gymming, running, reading?
- Do you want well-being to be your default state of being, and not a goal to chase frantically?
- Do you want to cut through the clutter of conflicting wellness ‘tips’ you receive from myriad sources every day?
- Are you ready to stop being taken for a ride, and get in the driver’s set of your journey towards well-being?

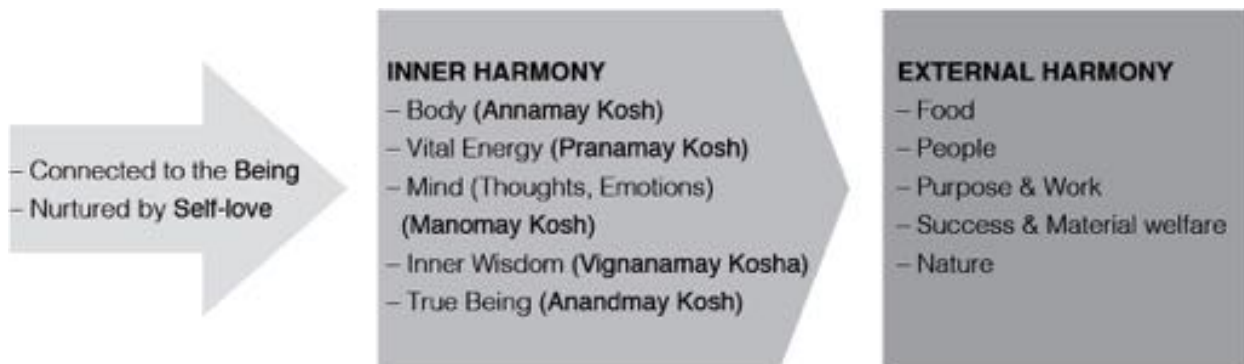
If so, this guidebook is for you. To be your companion as you undertake the journey towards well-being. Your age, background and type of chronic ailment or health issue do not matter. What matters is your intention.

Let’s face it!

- **We have a problem:** Today, we are less healthy than our less ‘advanced’ older generations
- **Unfortunately, the problem is worsening:** Life is becoming longer, but NOT healthier.
- **Fortunately, the problem is reversible:** The miracle of life has given our body the ability to recover and heal itself.
- **But the “right” tools for reversal seem hard to find today:** There is an overload of often conflicting tools and information, retractions of previously accepted “research” after long-term studies leaving people confused.
- **Consequently, we have given our power away:** Powerless, we have outsourced our health to providers (doctors, dieticians, yoga teachers, healers,

therapists) and technology (fit-bits, Google, apps)

- **The “modern” approach to well-being is fundamentally flawed:** Most modern wellness practitioners have a flawed approach - reductionist and silo-ed. Dieticians reduce the food we consume to nutrients and schools of thought fight over the importance of proteins or carbohydrates or fats. Gym instructors work with isolated body parts, in a bid to build out specific muscles. Neither of them addresses the importance of our mind. Dieticians feed us fear and guilt. Gym instructors nurture strong bodies but give rise to inflexible and hyperactive minds.
- **The key to well-being lies with(in) us:** Ancient Indian researchers (Yogis) had given us the science to remove the root cause behind “dis-ease” and make well-being our default state. The “secret sauce” to well-being is Yog. Yog is NOT Yoga. It empowers us to take charge of our health and our life, to reach and live our true potential.



We believe and know, beyond doubt, that

...your body, energy, mind and emotions can be your greatest supporters to reach your potential

...health is your natural state of being, and you can be healthier today than you were a decade ago

...the journey towards well-being can be full of peace, love and joy

SOME TOOLS USED

- Yogaasan, Praanaayaam, Breathing & Loosening Practices
- Yogic Relaxation
- Body Wisdom & Awareness
- Yogic & Ayurvedic Food
- Laughter Yoga
- Mindfulness & Meditation
- Chanting & Sound Resonance
- Affirmations & Mirror Work
- Life Coaching
- Emotion Release Tools
- Creative / Art based therapy

This guidebook will do the following

- **Make well-being attainable:** Enable you to make simple, but profound changes to your life. Provide tools that are feasible for integration in your life in minimal budget and time.
- **Present a bouquet of integrated tools:** Addressing the body, energy, mind and emotions holistically through different tools
- **Bridge the gap between the East & the West:** Present ancient Ayurvedic and Yogic concepts adapted to today's context with modern tools
- **Empower, instead of creating dependencies:** Build knowledge of foundational principles, helping you to choose information presented by various health service providers and technology
- **Make this a joyful journey:** Help you discover your inner child, hidden talents, and dreams in the process...

At the end of this journey, you will have

- **Well-being:** A tangible, measurable difference in health which YOU can perceive. A feeling of well-being.
- **Independence:** The knowledge and motivation to continue your journey to well-being independently.
- **A healthy family:** Tools to impact and influence the health of your friends & family.

Health Issues addressable directly, with a HIGH impact

- Muscular pains & fatigue, especially in the back and neck
- Joint Pains
- Gastro-intestinal disorders such as Acidity, Peptic Ulcers, IBS, Piles, irregularities in Bowel movements & Urination
- Obesity or excessive weight gain
- Headache or Migraine
- Menstrual problems, PCOD/PCOS
- Imbalances in appetite, sleep, energy levels
- Better management and reduction of side effects/complications of chronic ailments
 - Hypertension, Cholesterol
 - Asthma
 - Metabolic disorders such as diabetes
 - Hormonal imbalances such as Thyroid, Acne
 - Arthritis (Osteo and Rheumatoid)
 - Auto-immune disorders

Health Issues addressable indirectly, with SOME impact

- Relief from acute or infectious diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, pain, and tuberculosis
- Neurological disorders (e.g. epilepsy, movement disorders such as Parkinson's disease, Speech and language disorders, Injury to brain, spinal cord and peripheral nerves, Sleep disorders, Behavioural /cognitive syndrome)
- Mental & mood disorders, anxiety & depression, phobias, eating disorders (e.g. anorexia nervosa, bulimia)
- Rehabilitation post accidents, health shock such as cerebrovascular accident/stroke, surgery, geriatric cases
- Problems in external organs such as skin allergies, ENT disorders, Dental issues
- Any other ailments not covered in "addressable section"

Are you the right fit for this journey?

With power comes responsibility. For our health too! If you wish to merely get rid of pain, you can take painkillers or countless therapies available. But if you wish to restore your body's innate healing capacity, and get in the driver's seat of your journey to well-being, you need to commit to some responsibilities:

- Honoring the commitment towards your well-being, by reading!
- Commitment to modifying your lifestyle and habits in line with recommendations
- Taking out 45 minutes every day for self-care
- Completing reflection questions and experimental activities to maximize your learning– such as health status measurement questionnaire, health diary and checklists to track activities

The following questions will help you in determining if you're at the appropriate inner and outer juncture in life to undertake this journey.



Questions for Reflection

- What health challenges am I facing currently?
- How are these health challenges impacting the quality of my life?
- What could happen, if this situation continues for a few years?
- What is my intention behind undertaking this journey to well-being?
- If this happens, what would be the impact on my life?
- To meet my health goal, what am I ready to commit to?

How to use this book?

How is this series structured?

This book is part of a 5-part series book addressing the body, energy, mind and emotions, holistically

- 1: Yog for Wellness (Yogic Philosophy of disease genesis and healing pathway)
- 2a: Yogic Aahaar (what we call Nutrition)
- 2b: Yogic Vyaayaam (what we know as 'Yoga')
- 2c: Yogic Vichaar (approach to Mind & Emotions)
- 3: Being in Yog (how to use the tools, to be in Yog)

How to approach this series?

The first book covers foundational concepts of Yog, and it is highly recommended that you read it, before reading anything else.

Based on this, you can select which Yogic tool(s) – Yogic Aahaar, Yogic Vyaayaam and Yogic Vichaar – you wish to explore for your well-being. Each of the three books has a deep dive into focus Yogic tools for well-being. You may choose one, or two or all three. We suggest choosing the path that is most aligned to your temperament, and which you will be most committed to implementing in life. As without implementation, these ideas will only stay on paper and not translate into your physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual well-being!

The last book makes it easier for you to stay committed to the tool(s) of your choice, and most importantly, to make the journey towards your well-being joyful and therefore, sustainable. This is not a crash dieting or exercising or detox program that you implement once and forget. This is a way of life!

Hence, it is highly recommended, that you read the last book in the series, along with, or after the selected tool(s).

Note on the journey through the series:

The secrets to fully utilizing the benefit of any Yogic tool for well-being are in the first and the last books. Without them, the essence of the tools will be lost. Yogic Aahaar will become the same as obsessive dieting, Yogic Vyaayaam will be mindless exercising. It will be like using a supercomputer as a calculator for addition. You will be able to add, yes, but will not be tapping into the amazing abilities of the supercomputer.

How to make the most of the 3 books on Yogic tools?

Yogis outlined a 3-step process to integrating any new knowledge – Shravan (श्रवण, listening or reading), Manan (मनन, reflection and contemplation) and Nididhyaasan (निदिध्यासन, integration). Modern research on learning is also echoing this approach.

This book has been designed accordingly. For each tool, the book explains overarching principles of each tool, provides activities for self-reflection or experiencing concepts and provides supporting information, checklists and formats to enabling you to get started and stay on track through self-tracking.

The implication for you is that reading this book to build fundamental concepts is only 10% of the impact. To get the other 90% of the impact, we suggest you do the following:

- **Reflect:** Reflect deeply during and at the end of each chapter, before moving to the next. Compare what is written with your past experiences, or your future experiences if you haven't been aware in the past. Use the self-reflection questions and maintain a separate journal to track your responses.
- **Do:** Get started and implement the learnings in your life!
- **Experiment and Experience:** Do the activities or real-life experiments in the book for experiencing concepts. Guided audios for many exercises mentioned are available on our YouTube channel (see Resources at the end). Approach the activities with an open mind and heart. Be aware of the holistic experience of implementing the learnings in your life. Trust your experience more than the words in this book!
- **Persevere:** Stay on track. Implement this for 6 weeks to start with, and ideally

over 3 months. Using self-tracking formats and checklists given in the book and read the last book for troubleshooting advice for commonly faced issues.

- **Enjoy:** Most, most important of all, enjoy the journey! More important than the % of insights you implement, is the % of joy you experience during this journey. After all, everything we do or want in life, is for joy, right? If you implement nothing, but stay joyful throughout your journey, your well-being is guaranteed!

*And remember, the goal is not to finish the book,
but to bring it alive in your life!*

Welcome to the world of peace, love and joy!

Chapter 1

“Building our Emotional Muscle”

Step 1: Awareness

Importance

Emotions are a key dimension that need to be aligned for us
to reach a state of Yog.

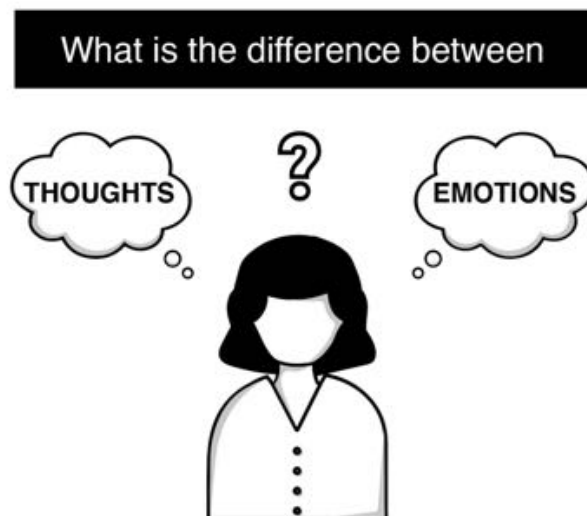
To address the root cause of our dis-ease, we need to learn
how to deal with our emotions

What is an emotion?



The PanchKosh, i.e. the 5 sheaths our existence as articulated in Yog philosophy are expressed to us in various forms. Bodily sensations are the language of the Ann-may Kosh. Life functions such as breathing are the language of the Praan-may Kosh. Likewise, **thoughts and emotions are the language of the Manomay Kosh.**

What is the difference between a thought and an emotion?



As per Sadhguru, thought and emotion are not really different. Thought is dry and logical. Emotion is also rooted in the same logic, but it pretends to be “not logical” to add juice to our life. Simply put, **an emotion is the juicier part of thought.** They

are always together – not separate. If we think a person is wonderful, we will have sweet emotions towards them. We cannot think of someone as a horrible person and have sweet emotions towards them. Or the opposite. Every thought has an associated emotion, but each has different intensity. Thousands of thoughts rise and fall within us all the time, of these, some thoughts are experienced with a higher intensity and impact on us. This is like water, in incessant motion, in an ocean. Of many movements, some have a higher intensity – these are waves.

At the same time, emotions tend to sometimes have a lag with respect to our thoughts. We may have had a history of unpleasant experiences with a person, due to which we think of him/her as a horrible person. With time, the person may undergo changes and make amends, and even though at a thought level, we know the person has changed, we may find our old emotions of resentment or anger coming up in our interactions with the person. This is because emotions are more rooted in the body, and therefore, more gross, compared to thoughts, which are subtle.

What is the impact of the intensity of emotions?

The word “emotion” itself can be seen as two parts “e” and “motion”, i.e. an **emotion is a form of energy in motion**. Emotions are raw energy signals that can be experienced in the body. When we are alive there is a constant flow of this energy happening. One way to know the emotion is also to question “What is my energy in this moment?” and be aware that it changes moment to moment. This points to the immense power of emotions – **they have the capacity to be immensely constructive, as well as destructive!** Think of the love of parents for their children – they endure all sorts of hardships all their life, just to ensure their children live better lives than them, even if their children don’t value them or give anything to them in return. On the other hand, if overcome by anger, greed and jealousy, the same family members can turn against each other, and even kill each other for property.

Waves, too, have a lot of power, they can sweep off the most experienced of swimmers and swallow them up, or they can push back the tonnes of waste thrown by us back onto the land. In the city of Mumbai, this is a common sight. Every year, during Ganpati, massive idols are submerged into the sea, using the power of these waves. But the next morning, the same waves push back these disfigured idols onto the shore. The same waves can take in a lot, as well as give back a lot!



What are the main emotions?

There are many frameworks to look at emotions. Each of them has broad similarities with some differences. Without getting caught up in the minor differences, we can see the following broad families of emotions - (Mad) Anger, (Sad) Sadness, Fear and Anxiety, Guilt, (Glad) Joy, Peace and Love.



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Knowing our emotional energy distribution

- Which is my most experienced emotion - the one which I experience and/or express and live with ease most of the time?

- Which is my least experienced emotion - the one which I rarely experience, or find it hard to allow myself to experience and live?

Which emotions are good, and which are bad for us?

Broadly, we can categorize emotions as unpleasant and pleasant. Note that we are not calling them “positive and negative” or “good and bad”, or “right and wrong”. **Every emotion exists in us for a reason, and it is up to us to understand the message of each emotion. Hence, we are not judging any emotion.** However, at the same time, there is some distinction between pleasant and unpleasant, based on the un-deniable impact that emotions have on our body.

UNPLEASANT EMOTIONS				PLEASANT EMOTIONS		
						
Angry	Sad	Fear/ Anxiety	Guilt/ Shame	Peace	Love	Joy

How do emotions impact our body?

Different emotions produce different chemicals in our body. These chemicals flow through our blood and impact different organs. **Every emotion, “unpleasant” or “pleasant” has a chemical basis in our body.**

- **Unpleasant emotions:** We have examined the impact of the emotion of fear in a dangerous situation, such as when confronted with a wild animal. Adrenaline and cortisol prepare us for a fight/flight response, by increasing our heartbeat, pulse, blood pressure, etc. In emergencies, this is beneficial, as it aids escape or attack. But, over a long period, adrenaline can be very damaging to our body. It suppresses our immune system, impairs digestion, uses up vitamins and minerals, causes pain, stiffness, makes our body acidic resulting in inflammation, and drains vitality
- **Pleasant emotions:** Endorphins, dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin are some of the hormones that are associated with pleasant emotions. They get generated through activities such as exercise, laughter, accomplishing small or big tasks, helping others or being close to others. They boost our immune system, relax

our muscles, elevate our mood, and dampen our pain

We have discussed this profound impact of emotions on our body at the time of introduction to Yogic pathway of diseases. Within these two categories also, each emotion has a different impact on our body chemistry. **Accordingly, we can recognize emotions by tuning into the sensations and body experience.**

Some commonly experienced emotions and their impact is summarized below:

Fear	Anger	Joy	Sadness	Peace
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shivering• Sweating• Going cold• Increase in Heartbeat or Skip of Heartbeat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate rush of energy• Burning heating sensation• Stiffness/ Tightness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High energy• Smile• Fullness• Expansion• Freshness,• Light• Bright• Energetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Down• Low energy• Pain in heart• Numbness• Emptiness• Dull• Body turning inward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Body relaxed• Eyes relaxed

Our body is equipped to deal constructively with all emotions. For instance, fear allows us to take action for our safety. But when the same emotion becomes our default state for long periods of time (as opposed to a wave which rises and merges), the chemical changes produced in our body by pleasant emotions create a state of well-being, and by unpleasant emotions create a state of dis-ease. Hence, the categories - pleasant and unpleasant.

Real-life example

Emotions impact many aspects of our bodily functions, including sleep. The next time we are unable to sleep at night, we can pause and check our emotional state. It is often the case that after a fight, or if we are worried about something, we are unable to sleep. Our thoughts, emotions and the resulting chemicals spreading in our body make us hyperactive. In fact, as it becomes late, we often become more worried about not being able to sleep, and the increased worry makes it even harder to sleep!

What influences our ability to deal with emotions?

It is up to us to harness the energy of emotions. Water, if uncontrolled, can destroy. Water, if not present, can take away life. But water, if harnessed, can produce electricity, water trees, give life. Mahatma Gandhi was thrown out of a train in South Africa because of his race. He learnt to constructively channelize his anger to a freedom movement which mobilized lakhs of people (without the help of social media!), to peacefully get colonists to leave India.

Unpleasant emotions lead to diseases, since we often do not deal with them effectively, and hence the chemical changes in our body are not utilized appropriately by us. Sadly, today, our upbringing, education and social conditioning does not equip us to understand and handle emotions. Emotions have been labelled (as good/bad, right/wrong, positive/negative) and this has not just impacted our relationship with them, but with ourselves as us.

We experience and feel all types of emotions but based on our conditioning, upbringing, and life experiences so far, we have created some “patterns” in the way we deal with them. Some emotions are dominant in us and rule us, some are suppressed or hidden, and some we have learnt to effectively deal with. Due to this, our body has become used to a certain “chemistry”. Have we ever wondered why some people are always angry, or sad, or peaceful or joyful – irrespective of the outside situation? This is because they have become used to transforming the energy of all experiences into a certain emotion.

Right from birth to adulthood, our relationship with emotions is conditioned by many influencers – parents, teachers from kindergarten to higher studies, siblings, friends, neighbours, relatives, co-workers, significant other, our children, books we read, movies we see, music we listen to. Little boys are told not to “cry like a girl” and if they do, they are scolded, made fun of or ignored. This disturbs their relationship with sadness. Little girls are told to be well-mannered, and to not shout. If they do, they are scolded, ignored or ridiculed for being “ill-mannered”. This disturbs their relationship with anger. These messages may have been given explicitly or implicitly to us, and may have been received directly by us, or indirectly through something we observed in our surroundings. Their impact on us is undeniable.



REFLECT & JOURNAL

Knowing the reason behind our patterns. For this, we need to reflect back to when we were children (3-8 years old) and how the people around us responded to our emotions.

- Anger: How often did we experience it as children? What response and messaging did it receive?

- Repeat this for other stages in your life – school, college, work, marriage, parenthood, retirement

- Repeat above two stages for other emotions - sadness, fear and anxiety, guilt, peace, love, joy.

Key Points

- Emotions are a key dimension that need to be aligned for us to reach a state of Yog. In order to address the root cause of our dis-ease, we need to understand emotions and learn how to deal with them
- An emotion is the juicier part of thought. Emotion is an energy in motion. They have immense power, and the capacity to be immensely constructive, as well as destructive
- Every emotion exists in us for a reason, and it is up to us to understand the message of each emotion. Hence, we are not judging any emotion.
- Broadly, we can categorize emotions as unpleasant and pleasant.
- Different emotions produce different chemicals in our body. Every emotion, whether “unpleasant” or “pleasant” has a chemical basis in our body. Our body is equipped to deal constructively with all emotions. However, when the same emotion becomes our default state for long periods of time (as opposed to a wave which comes and merges), the chemical changes produced in our body by some emotions create a state of well-being, and by some create a state of dis-ease. Hence, the categories - pleasant and unpleasant. Given the direct impact of emotions on our body through chemical changes, we can recognize emotions by tuning into the sensations and body experience
- Sadly, today, our upbringing and education does not equip us to understand and handle emotions. Emotions have been labelled (as good/bad, right/wrong, positive/negative) and this has not just impacted our relationship with them, but with ourselves as us.



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Building Emotional Muscle – 1 (Awareness)

Fill this Table for emotions experienced. Not necessarily expressed and/or processed.

The emotion(s) I have felt the MOST in the last few week						
Angry	Sad	Fear/ Anxiety	Guilt/ Shame	Peace	Love	Joy
The emotion(s) I have felt the LEAST in the last few week						
Angry	Sad	Fear/ Anxiety	Guilt/ Shame	Peace	Love	Joy

The emotion(s) I have felt the MOST in my life						
Angry	Sad	Fear/ Anxiety	Guilt/ Shame	Peace	Love	Joy
The emotion(s) I have felt the LEAST in my life						
Angry	Sad	Fear/ Anxiety	Guilt/ Shame	Peace	Love	Joy

What has been the role of these influencers on my relationship with my emotions?

Influencer	Impact on my relationship with emotions
Parents	
Teachers from kindergarten to higher studies	
Siblings, friends	
Neighbours, relatives	
Co-workers	
Significant other and romantic relationships	
Children	
Books, Movies, Music, Media	

How have all these influencers, contributed to patterns with my emotional energy distribution?

<p>Selecting from my reflection sheet – the Emotion which I experience the MOST in life – What is my pattern with this emotion? How did external influencers create the pattern?</p>	
<p>Selecting from my reflection sheet – the Emotion which I experience the LEAST in life – What is my pattern with this emotion? How did external influencers create the pattern?</p>	

Chapter 2

“Building our Emotional Muscle”

Step 2: Power

Importance

Owing to their intensity, sometimes, we may feel choiceless or powerless in front of our emotions, and hence, react in ways that don't serve our long-term well-being. With awareness, we can discover choices that can empower us to deal with our emotions

Our typical reaction to our emotions

Let us start by examining our current relationship with emotions.

Let's answer this for ourselves. At any point in time, have we ...

- pointed out another's mistakes and defended ourselves, but later felt that we had not acknowledged our part in the situation
- ignored an emotion within, and tried to distract ourselves with something else, as otherwise the emotion would have caused disruption in life?
- felt that life would be easier without emotions, as there wouldn't be so many ups/downs
- let the emotion fester within us and a small thing became bigger than it was
- felt helpless when an emotion came and overpowered us?
- felt choiceless when they had no choice but to take a particular action as the emotion was so strong
- felt that life would be easier without emotions, as there wouldn't be so many ups/downs?

Just like when we were physically confronted with dangers in the forest, we would fight/flight/freeze, we tend to do the same with situations, people and the underlying emotions they evoke in us, when we are not in harmony (Yog) with them.



FIGHT



FLIGHT



FREEZE

The Fight reaction- When I engage with the situation, person or emotion with a counterattack. (Let the emotion overtake us and drive our actions)

Behaviour examples:

- Start Fighting/countering/ arguing/finding faults with others
- Immediately disagree or start justifying
- Being upset with ourselves for feeling a certain emotion

The Flight reaction- When I physically/ mentally run away from the situation, person or emotion. (Deny that the emotion arose in us. Distract ourselves).

Behaviour examples:

- Stand up and move out
- Start thinking/talking about something else totally different from what's live
- Mentally push away that thought or emotion and delay dealing with the situation
- Allow ourselves to get distracted by other things in the environment other than what we were engaged in (e.g. checking mobile phone, watching TV)
- Rationalizing and questioning our emotions, telling ourselves that we should feel a certain way

The Freeze reaction- When I take no action with the situation, person or emotion, more so an overwhelming helpless state. (Let the emotion fester within us). Behaviour examples:

- Stuck and confused with no action for long
- Frozen silence with no action for long, going numb
- Dull/ Gloomy/ Crying as a victim, with no action for long

It is important to note that in each of these three situations, we are not responding, but are rather reacting to the situation. We are not truly understanding the situation and making a conscious choice on how to handle it. Another key aspect that we may overlook, is that **underneath our external reaction to a person or event, we have often not internally acknowledged or processed our own emotion fully.** E.g. Many times, when we are in a “fight” reaction, underlying the anger is hurt or sadness. Our response of starting a fight does not address the underlying emotion of hurt or sadness, and is therefore a reaction, instead of a response. When we do choose consciously, we may find that in some cases, a fight is an appropriate response.



REFLECT & JOURNAL

Knowing our typical reaction or response pattern to emotions

- How often to do I let the emotion overtake me and drive my actions? (fight)

- How often to do I deny that the emotion arose in me, and distract myself? (flight)

- How often to do I let the emotion fester within me? (freeze)

- How often to do I listen to the message of the emotion, choose how to act on it? (response)

The Impact of Our Choices

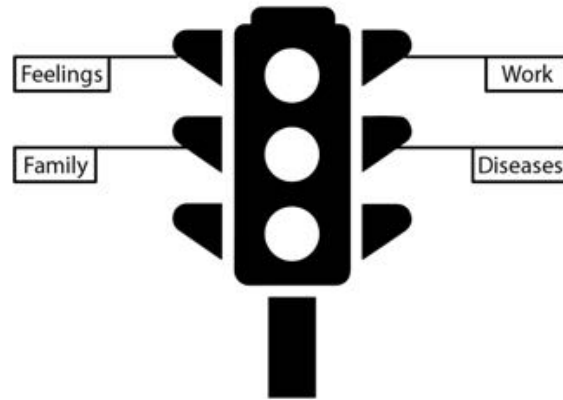
Just like long-standing emotions have two types of impact on us – pleasant and unpleasant, the choices we make in dealing with emotions can make our life pleasant or unpleasant. When we react with either of the Fs (Fight/ Flight/ Freeze), we are controlled by our emotions and we ourselves are not in control or in charge of the situation. Sometime this is conscious, but most of the time, we fall into reacting by either of the ways unconsciously.

Each of these choices, in turn produces an effect.

- **Fight** – The energy of the emotion is expressed to another person, but given the manner in which it is expressed, the energy could cause damage externally to the relationship or person. This, in turn, may create a new emotion within us (e.g. guilt for harming someone, sadness for losing a friend)
- **Flight** – The energy of the emotion stays suppressed in the body, even though externally we are doing something else. Since the underlying need behind the emotion remains met/unmet, the emotion also stays within us, and unknown to us, starts impacting the body
- **Freeze** – The energy of the emotion stays suppressed in the body, and we are often aware of it as the experience of the emotion is alive for us. Since the underlying need behind the emotion remains met/unmet, the emotion also stays within us, and starts impacting the body

Similarity between our response to body's signals and emotions

How we deal with emotions is very similar to how we deal with our body's signals. We often ignore signals till they become disruptive symptoms, and when we try to suppress them through medications, they lead to bigger ailments over time. Likewise, in daily life, various emotions come and go – which we often ignore, and tell ourselves that we are busy with work, family or chores. Then these feelings get pent up – and if we don't address them at the right time or right place, they cause disruption by coming out in the wrong place, at the wrong time, with an unusually high intensity which impacts one of these areas of life. Emotions impact all aspects of our life – body, work, family, relationships, leisure, our lifestyle, and habits. The fight/flight/freeze reaction impacts our own body, by giving birth to dis-ease.



To compound this - our emotional response to our physical dis-eases and ourselves itself seeds a new dis-ease:

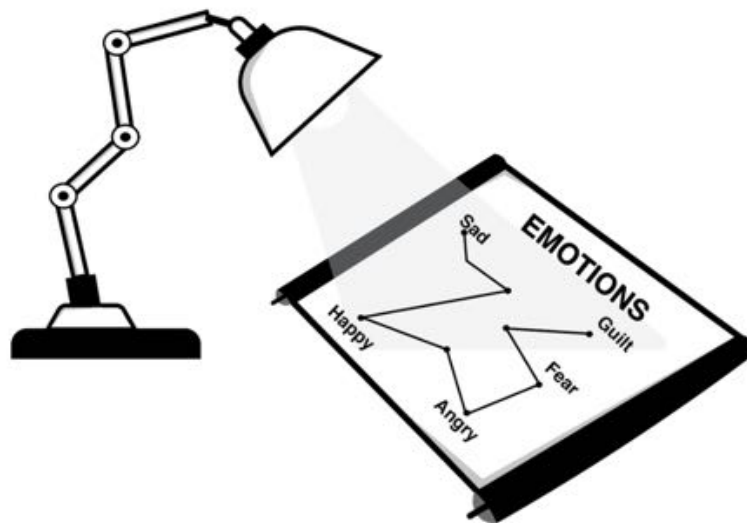
- Sometimes, we hold unpleasant emotions towards our dis-ease/body – e.g. anger that diabetes prevents us from eating tasty sweets, sadness that we have become dependent on medicines.
- Sometimes, we hold holding unpleasant emotions towards ourselves for unhealthy habits – e.g. being angry at ourselves for being addicted to intoxicants or foods, feeling guilty for breaking the healthy rules we have set for ourselves
- Sometimes, we are in denial of a problem, so it stays un-addressed – e.g. a hypertensive saying that the deviation in blood pressure is not a big deal, and undertaking strenuous activities without medicines, or without monitoring blood pressure. This intensifies the issue and it can lead to a stroke or heart attack.

Another ineffective strategy to deal with emotions, as used by modern science is to regulate them through chemicals. Depression and anxiety are addressed through medicines which stimulate or inhibit certain chemical changes within us, to come to a state of chemical balance, and therefore emotional balance. Patients of hypertension are typically given anti-anxiety medicines, without them even knowing! This provides short-term relief, but we become dependent on these external chemicals. Thus, we forget that our body can produce these chemicals itself, through many external actions such as accomplishing something, helping others, giving and receiving love, buying new things, as is being discovered by modern science. The science of Yog has gone one step further by identifying how we can create this chemistry within ourselves irrespective of our external circumstances. Many, many people have healed themselves, even cancer with changes within their emotional state.

A Conscious Response

Given the adverse impact that the choices above may have had on us or our external world, we may wish we didn't have to deal with emotions! This is like wishing one didn't have a tongue, so that there wouldn't be any temptation for fried food and sugary desserts. It's true that not having a tongue would reduce the addiction, but the tongue has been given taste buds for a reason! Removing the tongue would also remove all pleasure and joy out of eating! If we learn to eat healthy AND tasty, the tongue becomes an amazing gift.

Emotions too are there for a reason. **But we have not learnt how to harness emotions.** If we learnt how to be in the state of peace, love and joy most of the time – would we still dislike emotions? No! Emotions would then become an amazing gift. As Sadhguru says, emotions are the juice of our life. They give our life “ras” (juice) and make it worth living. In fact, when we are saying we don't want unpleasant emotions, it essentially means we want pleasant emotions!



Given the intensity of emotions, we often feel powerless in front of them – we feel we have no choice when a certain emotion arises within us. E.g. if someone we love hurts us, there is no choice but to feel angry. Let us examine this more – **it is true that an emotion comes spontaneously in response to a situation. But the power to make the choice is always ours.** Some choices available to us are:

- Let the emotion overtake us and drive our actions (Fight Reaction)
- Deny that the emotion arose in us. Distract ourselves (Flight Reaction)
- Let the emotion fester within us (Freeze Reaction)
- Listen to the message of the emotion, make a choice on how to act on it (Conscious Response)

**Stepping into our Power:
Moving from unconscious reaction to conscious response**

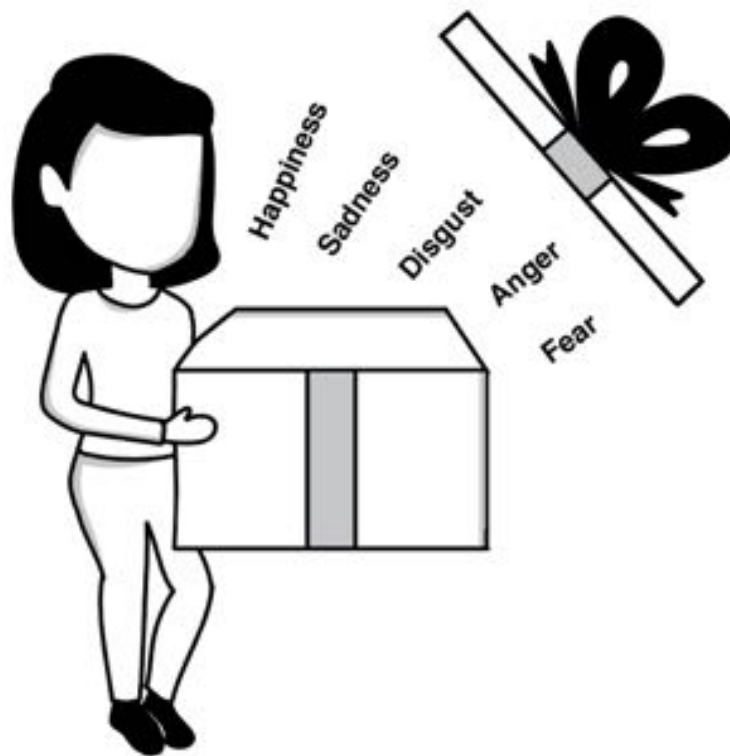
As we become aware of our patterns, let us watch out for additional emotions getting created because of this awareness. How are we feeling towards society, or specific people, which created certain patterns within us? How are we feeling towards ourselves for having unhealthy emotions or reaction patterns? The emotions we feel now could further compound the impact of existing emotions – e.g. being angry at ourselves for getting angry easily, becoming sadder when we recognize we are sad. On the other hand, there is another choice that we can exercise, in the “Ath” (now).

In physics, there is a law that says, Energy can neither be created nor destroyed; it transforms from one form to another. And this is very much applicable to our emotional energy as well. We can transform the energy of emotions, into something that serves us.

Just like we have learnt to re-set our relationship with our body’s signals from a different perspective, we can do the same with emotions. A traffic signal communicates a message to us. Our body’s signals give messages to us. Likewise, each emotion arises within us in order to convey a certain message. **Emotions are not an enemy to be fought or run away from or freeze in front of. They are a friend who is signalling to us that a need of ours is being met or not.** Unpleasant emotions are a message that is telling us all is NOT well. It is a way for PanchKosh to communicate with us, and to draw our attention so that we can take appropriate action towards the underlying need.

To understand the Purpose of emotions, imagine life without emotions:

- **Anger:** People would take advantage of us and overstep their boundaries
- **Sadness:** We would not take care of people we love
- **Fear & Anxiety:** We would take unnecessary risks, such as crossing the road without seeing traffic
- **Guilt:** We would go on hurting others for our purpose
- **Joy:** We would not want to live
- **Peace:** Our inner and external conflicts would drive us mad!






 **Key Points**




- Just like long-standing emotions have two types of impact on us – pleasant and unpleasant, the choices we make in dealing with emotions can make our life pleasant or unpleasant.
- Just like when we were physically confronted with dangers in the forest, we would fight/ flight/ freeze, we tend to do the same with emotions, when we are not in harmony (Yog) with them
 - **The Flight reaction-** When I physically/ mentally run away from the situation. (Deny that the emotion arose in us. Distract ourselves).
 - **The Fight reaction-** When I engage in the situation with a counterattack. (Let the emotion overtake us and drive our actions)
 - **The Freeze reaction-** When I take no action in the situation, more so an overwhelming helpless state.
- These patterns in the way we deal with emotions, are also based on our conditioning, upbringing and life experiences so far.
- When we react with either of the Fs (Fight/ Flight/ Freeze) we are controlled by our emotions and we ourselves are not in control or in charge of the situation. Given the adverse impact that the choices above may have had on us or our external world, our relationship with our emotions may have become one where we wish we didn't have to deal with emotions! This is because we have not learnt how to harness emotions. In physics, there is a law that says, Energy can neither be created nor destroyed; it transforms from one form to another. And this is very much applicable to our emotional energy as well.
- Given the intensity of emotions, we often feel powerless in front of them – we feel we have no choice when a certain emotion arises within us. It is true that an emotion comes spontaneously in response to a situation. But what we do with the emotion is our choice
- Emotions are not an enemy to be fought or run away from or freeze in front of. They are a friend who is signalling to us that a need of ours is being met or not.











REFLECT & JOURNAL

Building Emotional Muscle – 2 (Power)

The <u>MOST COMMON</u> reaction I use, to deal with emotions, people and situations in life		
 FIGHT	 FLIGHT	 FREEZE
<p>Justifying and Defending myself</p> <p>Explaining the reason for my words/actions</p> <p>Showing the other person their mistake</p> <p>Being upset with myself, for feeling an emotion</p>	<p>Move out of the situation</p> <p>Ask for the situation or person to go / be removed</p> <p>Changing the topic, or Denying there is an issue</p> <p>Not thinking about that issue and engaging myself in other distractions (work, TV, hobbies, etc)</p> <p>Rationalizing my emotions, telling myself I should feel a certain way</p> <p>Delay dealing with the situation to the extent possible</p>	<p>Staying stuck in the emotion</p> <p>Not sharing with others</p> <p>Not taking action on it</p> <p>Feeling like a victim</p> <p>Feeling numb, blank</p>

The LEAST COMMON reaction I use, to deal with emotions, people and situations in life		
 FIGHT	 FLIGHT	 FREEZE

My current strategy of dealing with my emotions has the MOST POSITIVE impact on this aspect of my life				
 Work	 Family	 Health & Well-being	 Social Relationships	Anything else
My current strategy of dealing with my emotions has the LEAST POSITIVE (adverse) impact on this aspect of my life				
 Work	 Family	 Health & Well-being	 Social Relationships	Anything else

Explorations from **“Heal Your Life”** by Louise Hay

What could be some emotions underlying my health issues?

<p>Health Issue:</p> <p>Underlying emotion:</p> <p>Corresponding affirmation:</p>	<p>Health Issue:</p> <p>Underlying emotion:</p> <p>Corresponding affirmation:</p>
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<p>Health Issue:</p> <p>Underlying emotion:</p> <p>Corresponding affirmation:</p>	<p>Health Issue:</p> <p>Underlying emotion:</p> <p>Corresponding affirmation:</p>
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INTENTION SETTING: In the time to come...

<p>One emotion, I wish to explore neutrally, without judgements of good or bad</p> 	<p>One change in the way I react to emotions, that I wish to experiment with</p>
--	--

FIGHT REACTION

How does this reaction to emotions, people and situations SUPPORT me?	How does this reaction to emotions, people and situations NOT SUPPORT me?

FLIGHT REACTION

How does this reaction to emotions, people and situations SUPPORT me?	How does this reaction to emotions, people and situations NOT SUPPORT me?

FREEZE REACTION

How does this reaction to emotions, people and situations SUPPORT me?	How does this reaction to emotions, people and situations NOT SUPPORT me?

Chapter 3

“Building our Emotional Muscle”

Step 3: Purpose

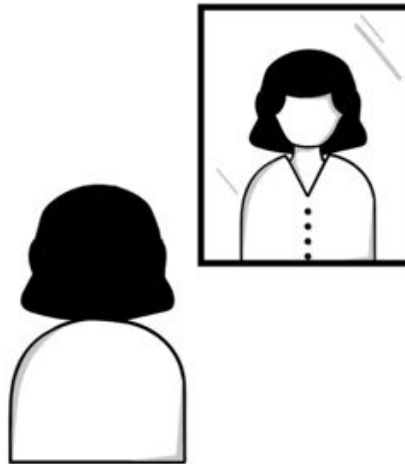
Importance

The conscious choice we make on how to deal with emotions will be driven by our overarching purpose – what relationship do we wish to establish with our emotions, with ourselves, and those around us.

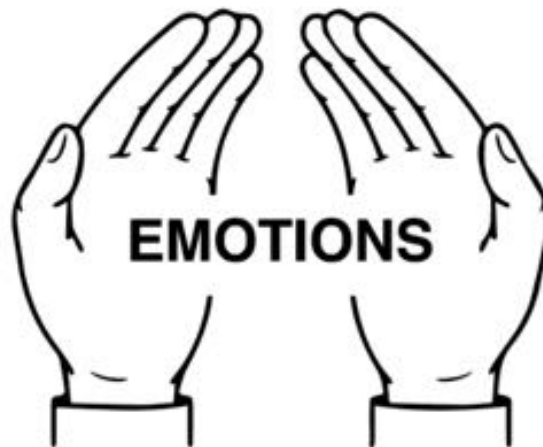
The choices we make are driven by the purpose we want to fulfil. ***What is our purpose – to make our emotions an ally in life? Or to hate and fight them for the challenges they create in our life? In either case, to make an educated decision, we need to develop intelligence about our emotions.***

The first steps for us in starting to build “**emotional intelligence**” are:

- **Awareness:** To understand the importance of dealing with emotions. To be aware of their impact on various aspects of our life – work, family and relationships, body, healthy habits, leisure



- **Power:** To recognize that it is our choice –to be overcome by emotions or to harness the energy



- **Purpose:** To recognize that it is our choice –to be overcome by emotions or to harness the energy. To see emotions objectively, for what they are, instead of judging them (as good/bad, right/wrong, positive/negative), rejecting them and judging ourselves for feeling more or less of certain emotions (e.g. judging ourselves if we feel anger frequently). Once we do this, we will start to see the underlying message of each emotion, the real reason why it arises within us.



Why do emotions arise in us?

Why do emotions arise in us?



As human beings, we all are driven by some needs and values. According to psychologist Marshall Rosenberg, everything we do or say is an attempt to meet our needs. Values are what we hold long-term. **Needs are the immediate driving force in our life. Emotions are indicators of a need being met, or unmet.** Many a time we want to ignore what we feel, or try to change how we feel, without recognizing the need being met or not being met. **Instead of treating emotions as something to get over, we can become open to the energy in motion inside us and harness it constructively**

How to identify our underlying need?

The need underlying our emotion is independent of any external person or situation, including ourselves. It is located within us, without any judgement.

Illustration of Key Human Needs (Source: Coaching for Transformation, by Leadership That Works)	
Expression	celebration, vitality, humour, passion, creativity, imagine, dream, inspiration
Harmony	Peace, security, safety, order, calm, stability, relaxation, comfort, ease, beauty
Autonomy	Independence, dreams, freedom, choice, individuality, space, spontaneity
Integrity	Authenticity, purpose, justice, fairness, honesty, openness, trust, respect, equality
Community	Interdependence, trust, bonding, inclusion, belonging, cooperation, unity, synergy, integration, loyalty, participation, partnership, acceptance
Contribution	Mastery, growth, service, gifts, empowerment, support, acknowledgment, help, nourishment
Connection	Understanding, closeness, appreciation, empathy, support, consideration, love, affection, companionship, mutuality, nurturing, intimacy
Play	Adventure, challenge, daring, risk-taking, thrill, fun, humor, laughter, pleasure
Meaning	Awareness, consciousness, creativity, purpose, effectiveness, growth, discovery
Well-Being	Health, sustenance, safety, shelter, rest, sex, food, clothing

A need is different from a strategy. A strategy is a way to meet a need (e.g. going for a party to feel connected). Most on the time, we end up focussing on changing a strategy, to feel better, without necessarily understanding and identifying the underlying need. This awareness and ability to separate a need from a strategy can enable us to deal better with emotions.

If we are getting focussed on an external change, it is likely that we are focussed on a strategy, instead of the deeper need. E.g. If I feel that want a new job, I can explore further. Maybe my boss is frequently angry at me and doesn't listen to me. My need then is to be valued, and respected.

E.g. If we're feeling – "I can't wait to get out of here". Here, "getting out of here" is the strategy. We can probe the need deeper by asking ourselves

- It seems like I'm deeply disappointed - What am I longing for?
- It seems like I'm really thrilled! What need is alive in me?
- It feels like I'm absolutely furious! What is going on in my heart?

If we are getting focussed on what another person is doing or not doing – let us go deeper within ourselves. E.g. If I'm feeling that someone left me and caused me much pain, I can ask myself

- What's the longing behind that?
- What's missing for me?

If we are judging ourselves in a certain way, we can go deeper and see the unmet need. E.g. If I feel that I'm not smart enough to understand this, I can ask myself:

- What need is connected to my frustration?
- What need is this voice within trying to meet by telling me that I'm not smart enough?



Every emotion exists within us for a reason. An emotion indicates a need – met or not met.

From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar

Emotion	Sentence: “I feel...”	Potential Message	Question to self?	Potential actions
Anger	...angry because I can't do what I want	Focus on something you want	What is in my way?	Attack, push through obstacles
Sadness	...sad because something is being taken away from me.	Help you slow down and recognize what you care about	What, that I love is going away?	Clarify to hold on or recreate later
Fear & Anxiety	...anxious because I am not sure how things will work out	Focus on potential problems	What is at Risk?	Protect, hide (or, with anger, destroy risk)
Guilty	...guilty because I did something wrong	Focus on something that needs correction	What action of mine do I regret?	Clarify, apologize, make up for action
Joy	...joyful because I am getting what I want!	Remind you of what matters most to you	What do I want to continue/ do more?	Approach, re-create, innovate, risk
Peace	...peaceful because the world is as it should be.	Reinforce your sense of connection	What am I connected to?	Stay connected

Chapter 4

“Going Deeper within the Iceberg”

Importance

As we learn to honour and respect our needs, we can start understanding - what makes needs arise?

In Yogic wisdom, the concept of “attachment” has been used with a similar connotation as “need”. We can say that **the stronger our attachment is to a particular object/situation/person, the stronger is the emotion we feel for it.** This is true for both pleasant and unpleasant emotions. To take the example of a child – if a child wants an ice-cream, getting it makes the child happy, and the opposite too. Behind our attachment to an external object/situation/person lies our deeper attachment to our desires/needs/values and belief systems. If a momentary need of ours is not met, we will be less affected, but if someone violates or disrespects a key value of ours, the intensity of emotion is strong.

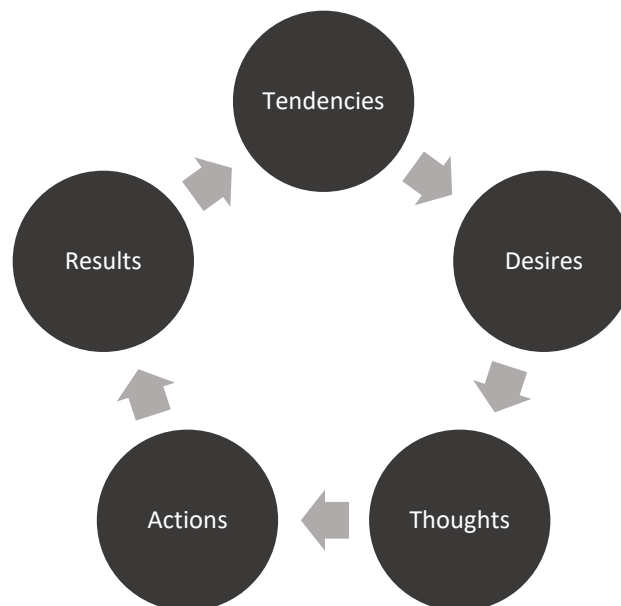
How free-ing would it be, to transcend our needs, too! This is real liberation (“*Mukt*”). The key to being in a state of peace, love and joy. However, the transcend our needs is very deceptive. Often, it leads to us subconsciously denying, ignoring or suppressing our needs. In some ways, one can say that by doing so, we are being driven by the need for freedom, and hence, not truly free!

What if we could acknowledge our needs without judgement? Just like no emotion is good or bad. In this process, we can go deeper down the “iceberg” and uncover the core fears underlying our needs - Am I safe? Am I loved? Am I valuable? Strangely, acknowledging and honouring our needs, and going deeper to our core fears will reduce the hold they have on us. Likewise, looking at our core fears without judgement, will enable us to work with them.

The outcome of this process is what has been referred by Patanjali in Yog Sutras as – “Yogah Chitta Vritti Nirodhah”, i.e. Yog is the cessation of the modifications of the mind. Cessation. Not denial. Not suppression.



This “iceberg” and its resulting bondage has been explained in many ancient Indian texts as a vicious cycle. This cycle is caused by our feeling of “incompleteness”, beneath which is our “Avidya”, i.e. lack of understanding of our true nature.



Lack of Self-Love

Self-Love is perhaps the most important key to creating a constructive relationship with our emotions. Yog is about union, and to start with the union inside, and let it manifest in the world outside. The same can be applied to emotions as well.



Most of our unpleasant emotions are caused due to the action or inaction of an external person or a situation. E.g.

- I get angry when my manager dis-respects me
- I feel sad when my children don't reciprocate the love I shower on them
- I feel anxiety and fear about our finances and ability to cover the monthly expenses
- I feel guilty for not doing what my parents-in-law asked me to do, or if I'm a parent-in-law I feel guilty for having asked my daughter-in-law to do something against her wish

Have we asked ourselves – *why does an external person or situation have such an impact on us?* If we look carefully, we are likely to find that this happens because an external person's words or actions further compound a judgement that we already hold for ourselves. This, in turn, triggers our core fears, and causes us to make choices to manage the fear.

Situation	Possible underlying judgement of ourselves
I get angry when my manager disrespects me	I am not good at my work I am not worthy of my manager's respect I am not smart or good enough.

The reason why someone else's words or actions pierce through us, causing so much pain is that we have already wounded ourselves, by judging ourselves again and again. Many of these judgements are subconscious. We don't actively tell ourselves this, but it's a self-image that we have created a long time ago. Most of the time, this self-image was formed when we were children of a school-going age. Maybe it was the words of a parent, a friend or teacher. It may have been intentional or unintentional, may have been a big incident or a small thing, may have been true or not – that is immaterial.

What is important is realizing that many years after, we have been re-playing that tape so many times, that it has become part of our reality. And it may have become so strong, that we are now subconsciously behaving in that way and further reinforcing the belief. E.g. a child told by her teacher that she is not good at math, may internalize that so much that the very mention of math scares her. When she starts working, she makes mistakes in accounts due to that fear, and is further scolded by her manager, and this further re-iterates the belief that she is not good enough.

The power of self-talk is very, very strong, as it's running as a thought in our subconscious almost all the time. Every small incident is a trigger, which makes the wound deeper. But there is a way out – changing our relationship with ourselves – treating ourselves with Love.

Situation	Possible underlying judgement of ourselves
I feel sad when my children don't reciprocate the love that I shower on them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not a good parent • I am not worthy of my children's love • I am not worthy of love
I feel anxiety and fear about our finances and ability to cover the monthly expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not capable of managing my expenses • I am not capable of earning well • I am not a good caretaker of my family
I feel guilty for not doing what my parents-in-law asked me to do / I feel guilty for having asked my daughter-in-law to do something against her wish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't take care of other's needs • I am not a good person • I am selfish

The Key: Cultivating Self-Love

Many people may judge it to be selfish, as we are taught to love others, not ourselves! But think for a moment – we can give love to others, only when our own vessel is full of love. If our parents, teachers and friends would have loved themselves, along with all their imperfections, they would've loved us too, the way we deserve! Instead of trying to change others, or even change ourselves, we can start by loving ourselves. And we will find that the more we love ourselves, the easier it becomes to change.

This is scientifically proven - Oxytocin, sometimes called the "love hormone," increases when we feel a loving connection to someone or something. When we love, we get softer, and so do our brains. When oxytocin rises, our neural pathways are rendered more receptive to new impressions. Love makes us more receptive to change. Dr Claudia Welch, a famous Ayurveda teacher says *"We need to be willing to fall in love every morning. This could be with a piece of music, a representation of the Divine, a pet, a parent, a child, a spouse, Nature...the object of our love is not as important as the act of loving itself"*

How can we start loving ourselves?



We can take simple steps towards this!

- By using affirmations such as Loving Treatment by Louise Hay, or the Sanjeevani Affirmation (later in this book)
- By making the Mirror our friend – currently when we look at the mirror, we're likely to find all sorts of flaws! Instead, can we look at ourselves in it every day, as if we are our best friend, and talk to ourselves, expressing all our love towards ourselves? Try this for 3 weeks and see the magic...
- Appreciating ourselves – reflecting about small things we did, that make us proud of ourselves
- By hugging ourselves!

 **Key Points**

- The stronger our attachment is to a particular object/situation/person, the stronger is the emotion we feel for it.
- What is our purpose – to make our emotions an ally in life? Or to hate and fight them for the challenges they create in our life? In either case, to make an educated decision, we need to understand how emotions work
- Needs are the immediate driving force in our life. Emotions are indicators of a need being met, or unmet. Instead of treating emotions as something to get over, if we are aware of our emotions, we can become open to the energy that is in motion inside us and harness it constructively.
- The need underlying our emotion is independent of any external person or situation, including ourselves. It is located within us, without any judgement. A need is different from a strategy.
- An emotion is energy in motion. So, the one-word answer to dealing with emotions in a constructive manner is – flow.
- Before learning to create channels for emotions to flow, let us understand the purpose of emotions. Every emotion exists within us for a reason. Just like everybody signal is for a reason

REFLECTION JOURNAL - 1 – YOGIC VICHAAR (21 days)



This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the
malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

- *Jalaluddin Rumi*

I am.....

Welcome to the journey towards peace, love and joy!

As per Wikipedia, “Kintsugi”, also known as Kintsukuroi (金繕い, "golden repair") is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. As a philosophy, it treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object, rather than something to disguise.

All of us have parts of our personality that are yearning for healing. Disguising these through denial, suppression, or even excessive expression is robbing ourselves of a wonderful opportunity to become truly whole.

This 21-day journey is an opportunity to work with our wounds, and to heal ourselves, by ourselves.

Only one guideline – If you decide to use this, don’t do it for the joylist (as a checklist). Do it for you!

General Flow

Day #	Overview
Day 1	Intention Setting – a baseline for our current understanding of our patterns and intention
Day 2 to 6	Seeing our Iceberg – Working with a “live” situation from the day, to uncover our iceberg. Doing this a couple of times is important, so that we can build this muscle/habit, see a range of external situations and common internal patterns
Day 7	Re-visiting our intention based on insights/patterns from the week. Shifting a paradigm...
Day 8 to 10	Uncovering Our Story. Incidents from a few important times in our lives, especially our childhood, often create fears. These fears may seem irrelevant and/or irrational today, but they were real to us, as children.
Day 11 to 12	Though our context has changed today, those core underlying behaviours have created a Sub-Conscious Bondage to our Present “Choices”. Some of our patterns, personality traits, both the “positive” and “negative” ones as categorized by society, are not true choices. But products of these underlying fears
Day 13 to 14	Just like our present is being shaped by our past, our desire for certain future outcomes, too, is being created by a Sub-Conscious Bondage.
Day 15 to 21	A series of experiments to experiment with, and uncover our innate power. To move from fear and doubt to love and trust.

So far, we’ve discovered our joy through our interests and passions. May we discover joy through seeing and holding our pain!

Perhaps
your pain
is what healing
actually feels like.

Perhaps
your pain
has a job to do
today.

Perhaps
your pain
is not supposed to have
disappeared yet.

Jeff Foster



Day 1 – Intention Setting

What parts of my personality are yearning for healing?

What kind of a relationship do I wish to establish with myself?

What kind of a relationship do I wish to establish with people who matter to me?

What shift do I want to bring in my reaction to people, situations, my emotions and my own self?

What thoughts and emotions are serving me, in life?

What thoughts and emotions do not seem to serve me, in life?

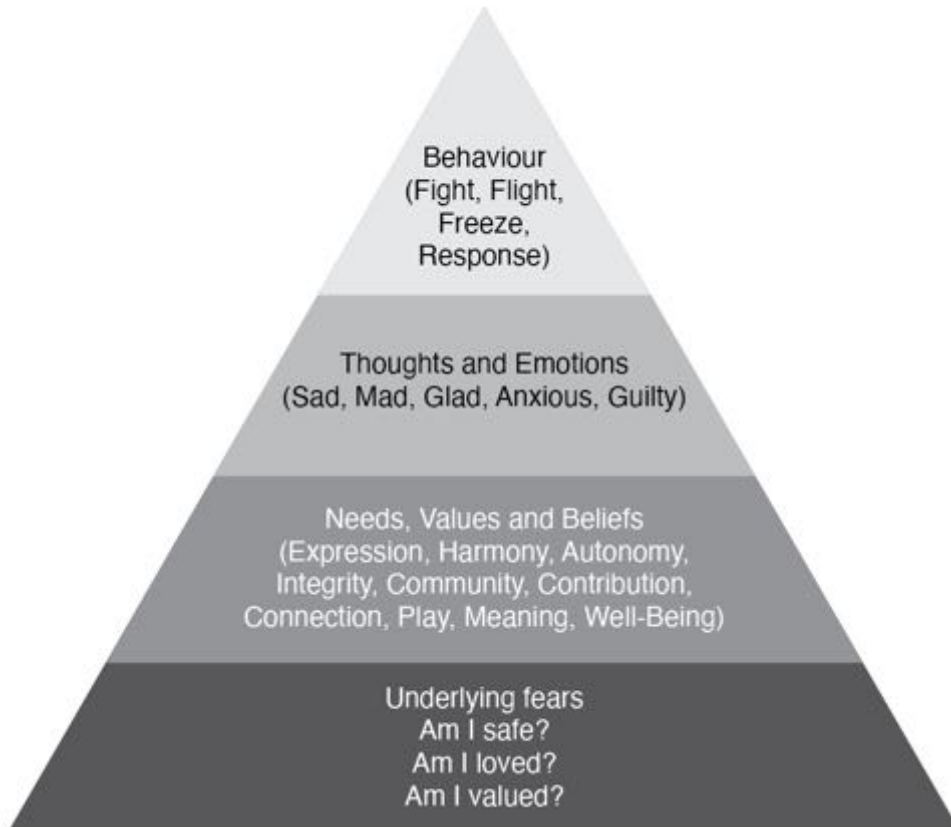
In life, what are my key needs and values?

In life, what are my core, underlying fears?

Day 2 – Seeing our Iceberg

Step 1: Identify 1 lingering situation or emotion from today. Re-live it, and feel the sensations in your body

Step 2: Examine it through this framework, as if standing on a bridge and seeing a river flowing below. Circle the appropriate option, and write more in blank spaces



Step 3: What did you do well to deal with the external stressor (person/situation)?

Step 4: What are you grateful for?

Step 5: What would you want to do differently, if confronted with any similar emotions? Recognizing the external stressor may not be the same.

Congratulations for experimenting with courage, compassion and gratitude!

Day 3 – Seeing our Iceberg

Step 1: Identify 1 lingering situation or emotion from today. Re-live it, and feel the sensations in your body

Step 2: Examine it through this framework, as if standing on a bridge and seeing a river flowing below. Circle the appropriate option, and write more in blank spaces



Step 3: What did you do well to deal with the external stressor (person/situation)?

Step 4: What are you grateful for?

Step 5: What would you want to do differently, if confronted with any similar emotions? Recognizing the external stressor may not be the same.

Celebrate your courage to acknowledge and see yourself, as you are!

Day 4 – Seeing our Iceberg

Step 1: Identify 1 lingering situation or emotion from today. Re-live it, and feel the sensations in your body

Step 2: Examine it through this framework, as if standing on a bridge and seeing a river flowing below. Circle the appropriate option, and write more in blank spaces



Step 3: What did you do well to deal with the external stressor (person/situation)?

Step 4: What are you grateful for?

Step 5: What would you want to do differently, if confronted with any similar emotions? Recognizing the external stressor may not be the same.

Seeing and holding ourselves is compassion in action!

Day 5 – Seeing our Iceberg

Step 1: Identify 1 lingering situation or emotion from today. Re-live it, and feel the sensations in your body

Step 2: Examine it through this framework, as if standing on a bridge and seeing a river flowing below. Circle the appropriate option, and write more in blank spaces



Step 3: What did you do well to deal with the external stressor (person/situation)?

Step 4: What are you grateful for?

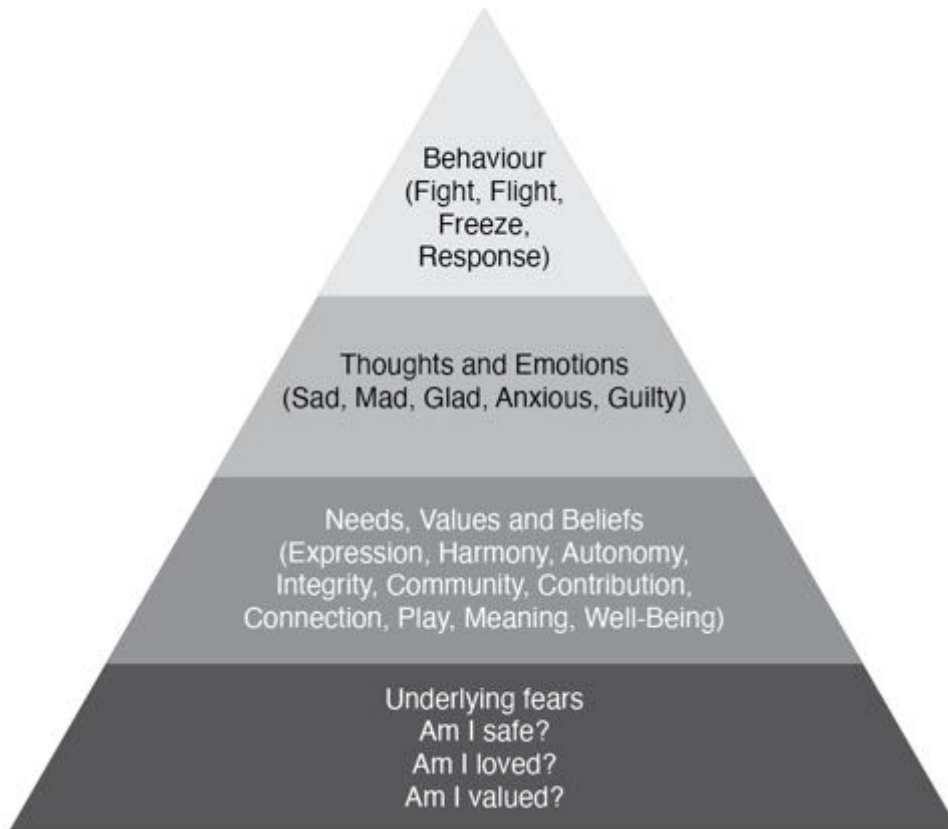
Step 5: What would you want to do differently, if confronted with any similar emotions? Recognizing the external stressor may not be the same.

Every situation and person, especially painful ones are teachers. Be grateful!

Day 6 – Seeing our Iceberg

Step 1: Identify 1 lingering situation or emotion from today. Re-live it, and feel the sensations in your body

Step 2: Examine it through this framework, as if standing on a bridge and seeing a river flowing below. Circle the appropriate option, and write more in blank spaces



Step 3: What did you do well to deal with the external stressor (person/situation)?

Step 4: What are you grateful for?

Step 5: What would you want to do differently, if confronted with any similar emotions? Recognizing the external stressor may not be the same.

And just like this, our Emotional Muscle can get built!

Day 7 – Re-visiting our Intention

What internal patterns have you uncovered by seeing your iceberg for 5 days?

Based on this, rev-visit the intention you set on Day 1. Make edits to that sheet as needed

Think again about this - "What thoughts and emotions do not seem to serve me, in life?"

For a moment, switch your paradigm to one of love, for yourself, and all parts of you. What could be the message of these thoughts and emotions for you?

**With a clearer, deeper intention,
you're one step closer to peace, love and joy!**

Day 8 – Uncovering Our Story

True freedom means freedom from our subconscious patterns, that cause us to react or respond in a certain way. Examining our past is important, so that we can see how it's playing out in the present. Then, we can begin to change our future.

Think of the time when you were 3 to 6 years old.
What was the situation and who were the people in your life?

What significant incident(s) around this time, hurt you, which you can still recollect? Do not try to judge your pain as minor or major. Acknowledge it, for what it is! The memory is there for a reason, it is an unresolved pain. Write down as many!

From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar

What core fear could have been created in you as a result of this –

I'm not safe or I'm alone // I'm not lovable or worthy of love // I'm not valued or respected or I'm not good enough // something else

In what areas of life, does this play out today? (e.g. If I felt I'm not good enough, I feel I haven't accomplished anything in life). Remember, the situations may be different, but your underlying pattern will be similar. Also, it's quite likely that you project the opposite image of your fear (e.g. If I felt I'm not worthy of love, I don't steer away from relationships)

You've shown courage again, by acknowledging your past!

Day 9 – Uncovering Our Story

Incidents from a few important times in our lives, especially childhood, create fears. These fears may seem irrelevant and/or irrational today, but they were real to us, as children.

Think of the time when you were 8 to 12 years old.
What was the situation and who were the people in your life?

What significant incident(s) around this time, hurt you, which you can still recollect? Do not try to judge your pain as minor or major. Acknowledge it, for what it is! The memory is there for a reason, it is an unresolved pain. Write down as many!

From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar

What core fear could have been created in you as a result of this?

Most likely, the previously created fear was reinforced.

I'm not safe or I'm alone // I'm not lovable or worthy of love // I'm not valued or respected or I'm not good enough // something else

In what areas of life, does this play out today? (e.g. If I felt I'm not good enough, I feel I haven't accomplished anything in life). Remember, the situations may be different, but your underlying pattern will be similar. Also, it's quite likely that you project the opposite image of your fear (e.g. If I felt I'm not worthy of love, I don't steer away from relationships)

Recognize how you're holding yourself, and your pain, with compassion

Day 10 – Uncovering Our Story

True freedom means freedom from our subconscious patterns, that cause us to react or respond in a certain way. Examining our past is important, so that we can see how it's playing out in the present. Then, we can begin to change our future.

Think of the time when you were 16 to 21 years old.
What was the situation and who were the people in your life?

What significant incident(s) around this time, hurt you, which you can still recollect? Do not try to judge your pain as minor or major. Acknowledge it, for what it is! The memory is there for a reason, it is an unresolved pain. Write down as many!

From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar

What core fear could have been created in you as a result of this?

Most likely, the previously created fear was reinforced.

I'm not safe or I'm alone // I'm not lovable or worthy of love // I'm not valued or respected or I'm not good enough // something else

In what areas of life, does this play out today? (e.g. If I felt I'm not good enough, I feel I haven't accomplished anything in life). Remember, the situations may be different, but your underlying pattern will be similar. Also, it's quite likely that you project the opposite image of your fear (e.g. If I felt I'm not worthy of love, I don't steer away from relationships)

See your past with Gratitude, as it's provided you a context to evolve

Day 11 – Our Sub-Conscious Bondage to Present “Choices”

Your core fears can play out in multiple patterns in life, presently.

(Source: The Heart of the Soul: Emotional Awareness, by Gary Zukav)

Most people attempt to re-arrange circumstances that trigger painful emotions. They change jobs or careers, friends or significant others, cities, or houses. This does not change their rigid patterns of emotional response. That requires looking at the patterns. Identify as many of the patterns below as applicable, and journal

Behaviour Pattern	Description + An illustration of how it addresses our fear	Is this your pattern?	How does it play out in your life?
Angry Personality	Outburst are painful experiences, not emotional explorations. Beneath the anger lies pain, and beneath it, fear – lack of self-worth		
Workaholic	A flight from emotions. A drug. Pain avoidance. Focus on insignificant projects, not the eternal present		
“Emotional” / Pass-through	Being “emotional”– shouting, crying, laughing. You think you know what you feel, but they don’t understand it truly, and hence, are swept away by your emotions		
Perfectionism	Trying to create perfect external situations. Draws attention away from emotions, instead of relaxing into the present, with all its pain		
Pleasing Personality	Desire to please others. Focus on other people’s feelings. Trying to do or become what the other person wants. Makes you and the other feel better, but distracts from what you’re feeling. You’re tense internally, as your self-worth is placed in the hands of others.		

From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar

Behaviour Pattern	Description + An illustration of how it addresses our fear	Is this your pattern?	How does it play out in your life?
“Day-dreaming” / Vacating	Inability to focus on task at hand. Indulging impulses. Avoiding real emotions. Takes you away from purpose & fulfilment in life.		
Boredom	An avoidance of external circumstances in the name of boredom. Actually, deep-rooted resistance to experiencing emotions, after efforts to distract yourself have been ineffective. Fear of hearing the call of a fuller life.		
Idolizing and Worshipping	Venerating someone. Dominated by an ideal. External subject is actually an internal image of what you think you are, or should be, to be safe, loved, valuable. Includes putting yourself in roles (e.g. parent, good person, leader) & living out notion of the role. Avoids living life fully, as inner emotions ignored and focus is on “shoulds”.		
Impenetrable Optimism	Living in a fantasy. You see yourself as carefree and grateful, but are not! Optimism that “All is for the best” shields you from painful emotions. It’s deceptively similar to optimism that comes from “Swa”		
Entitlement	Appearance of invulnerability. Perception that you’re “superior. Often unaware you’re so! Beneath is fear of ridicule, rejection.		

Behaviour Pattern	Description + An illustration of how it addresses our fear	Is this your pattern?	How does it play out in your life?
Alcohol and Drugs	Cause – intense emotional pain. Dependence on the external. Only you can extinguish the source of your pain.		
Eating	Its not calories you're seeking, but nourishment, and contact with your soul. Diet and exercise will not solve obsessive eating. Food is piled high around and within you, but you starve internally. Nourish yourself with the gift of emotions!		
Frequent change in Romantic Partner / Sex Addiction	It's a defence against internal feeling of powerlessness. Addictive attraction is a signal for purpose and value. It does not mean you're a loving person, and does not give the true intimacy you seek. Get intimate with your painful emotions		
?	Other themes of Saviour Searching, Power Struggles, Judging others...		

Day 12 – Our Sub-Conscious Bondage to Present “Choices”

Pick one of your patterns from the previous page.
Understand it! Explore in any way you want.

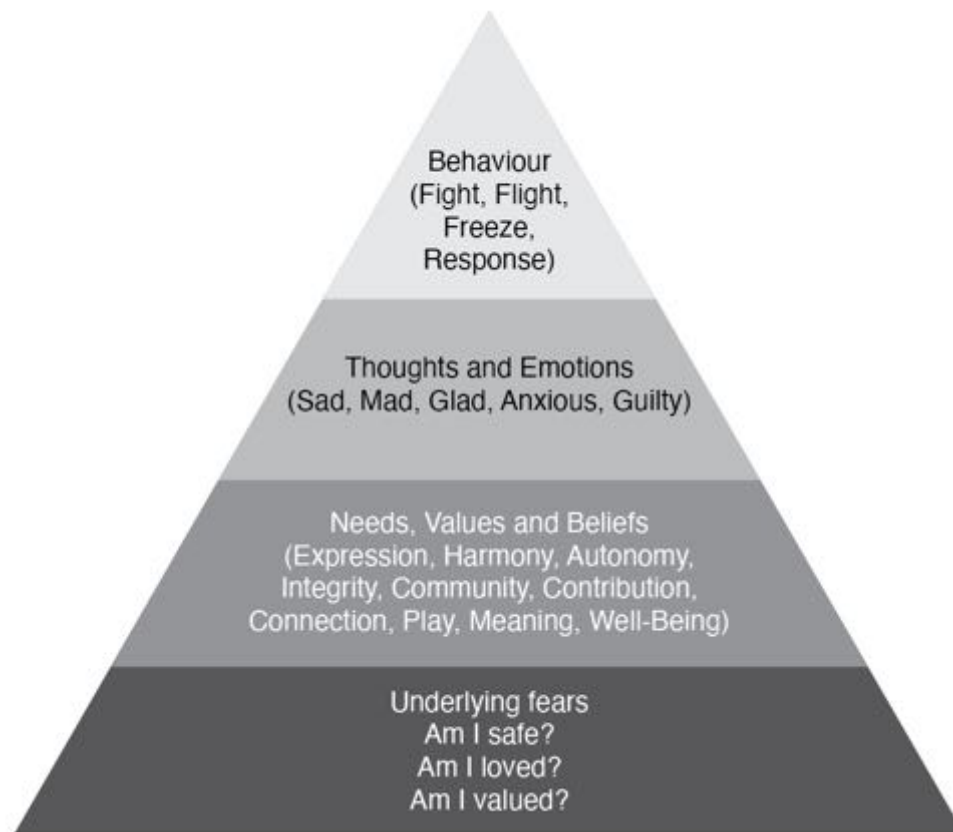
You may use the following states and processes as aids:

Awareness → Power → Purpose
Courage → Compassion → Gratitude

Day 13 – Our Sub-Conscious Bondage to Future Outcomes

Many of our desires, with respect to our relationships with family and/or friends, our definition of success, our aspirations for finances or career progression or personal growth, even the need for leisure play and fun, or whatever it is, that we wish as a future outcome, are likely to be products of the core fears formed in our past, if we are not fully self-aware.

Think of a future outcome, that holds great meaning for you. Become aware of the iceberg underlying it



If you are not aware and don't address your core underlying fear, what challenge could you face, in pursuit of this outcome? What challenges could you face, even after reaching your goal?

Being in the “Ath”, is about freedom from our attachment to future also

Day 14 – Our Sub-Conscious Bondage to Future Outcomes

Many of our desires, with respect to our relationships with family and/or friends, our definition of success, our aspirations for finances or career progression or personal growth, even the need for leisure play and fun, or whatever it is, that we wish as a future outcome, are likely to be products of the core fears formed in our past, if we are not fully self-aware.

Think of another future outcome, that holds great meaning for you.
Become aware of the iceberg underlying it



If you are not aware and don't address your core underlying fear, what challenge could you face, in pursuit of this outcome? What challenges could you face, even after reaching your goal?

Releasing the attachment will actually bring you closer to the outcome.

Day 15 – Finding glimpses of our innate power (Self-Guided Visualization and Experience)

Remember a time from your past when you were in your true, innate power. You were free to be you. Without being overcome by your fears.

Relive the moment fully – in all its details

See how you were. What did it feel like to be truly free, and live a full life?

How was your body? Your energy? Your mind? Your emotions?

Feel the experience in your present body-energy-mind-emotion system.

Day 16 – I have Courage

What are some of the most courageous things you've done in life? A thought pattern you shifted, a habit you broke, something you said, or did.

Recall and write at least 10 incidents. After every point, pause for a moment, and become aware of the sensation in your belly region, and the rest of the body.

What did it feel like, in your belly region? And the rest of your body?

Day 17 – I have Compassion

How have you embodied compassion in your life? Could be towards you or another person, living being or non-living thing. A time when you understood, empathized, forgave...

Recall and write at least 10 incidents. After every point, pause for a moment, and become aware of the sensation in your heart region, and the rest of the body.

What did it feel like, in your heart region? And the rest of your body?

Day 18 – I live in Gratitude

Make a list of people, situations, things that you're grateful for!
List them and write a few words describing the reason for your acknowledging them.

Recall and write at least 10 points. After every point, pause for a moment, and become aware of the sensation in your head region, and the rest of the body.

What did it feel like, in your head region? And the rest of your body?

Day 19 – I discover more courage within ...

As you get glimpses of your innate power, and see that you are always safe, loved and valuable, what opens up for you? What are some crazy, audacious, unimaginable things that you can see yourself doing one day, someday, as you start living truly fully and freely?

Day 20 – I Trust

Just like we can operate from fear and doubt, we can make a switch and operate from trust.

This is a practical exercise!

To do this exercise, sit on a chair, with your back straight, yet touching the back of the chair.

Your feet firmly planted on the ground, putting a platform or rolled yoga mat in case any portion of your feet is off the floor.

Sitting straight, with your back touching the chair and feet firmly grounded

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how your **back** is taking your **weight**.

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how the **chair** is supporting **your back**

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how the **chair** is supporting your **thighs**

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how the **floor** is supporting your **feet**

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how the **floor** is supporting the **chair**

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how the **building** is supporting the **floor**

Take a few deep breaths - in, out....Feel how the **earth** is supporting the **building**

You are supported by the earth. Feel the support.

A passenger in a train need not lift the luggage, as it's supported by the train.

Likewise, you can let go of your fears, as you're supported by the earth.

Trust. Let go.

Let go. Trust.

Feel the energy of the trust in your body. Your energy. Your mind. Your emotions.

From this place of trust, write 10 things about yourself and/or life, that you trust!

Day 21 – I Love

Celebrate! How have you embodied and lived out your qualities in the last 20 days? Give at least 10 ways?

What do you love about yourself even more now?

How do you want to express your love to yourself?

Do it! Don't hold back.

This is a chance to love yourself, exactly like you've wanted to be loved.

Eight intentions for you...

- 1) It is my intention that you feel guided by Source, connected to Source, and experience yourself as an extension of Source. May your inner God / Goddess / Such-ness awaken and awaken more. More and more. That's my first wish for you.
- 2) In the way you live and the choices you make, may you feel you can be truly yourself and express yourself in ways that lead to growth, self-discovery and a sense of aliveness. May you take the time to align with your inner compass so this happens. This is my second wish for you.
- 3) May you experience vibrant health and vitality as a way of life. May you have healthy habits of movement, rest and reflection. This is my third wish for you.
- 4) May you nurture deep friendships that remain strong despite the vicissitudes of time, distance and circumstances. May you be able to bare your heart and soul to your closest friends. May you LOVE the version of you that emerges when you are with such friends. This is my fourth wish for you.
- 5) May you enjoy solitude. May you relish your own undiluted company. May it enable you to find direction, priority, clarity and serenity. This is my fifth wish for you.
- 6) May you find great joy and fulfillment in all your relationships, especially in your most intimate relationship. May it go beyond usual cultural conditioning and stereotypes of what a relationship can be. May your deepest needs of love, security, companionship, support, friendship and inspiration all be met and exceeded. May you abide in awe and wonder. This is my sixth wish for you.
- 7) May you know when to be determined and resolute, and when to allow and let go. May humility and tenacity coexist within you in responsive, harmonious balance. This is my seventh wish for you.
- 8) May you face your fears and say YES to life. May you live and die without resistance and regrets. May your life be a reflection of your favorite song and poem and dance and rhythmns. This is my eighth heartfelt wish for you.

And so it is!
And so it is!
And so it is!

- By ***Nithya Shanti***

Chapter 5

“Emotional Well-being Toolkit”

Importance

In order to deal effectively with emotions, we need to create and nurture channels for the energy of emotions to flow

Outcomes

Given that an emotion is energy in motion, it cannot be destroyed, but only converted from one form to another. We can deal directly with the energy of the unpleasant emotion by experiencing, understanding and listening to it fully, or nurture the opposite pleasant emotion. Using both approaches is helpful

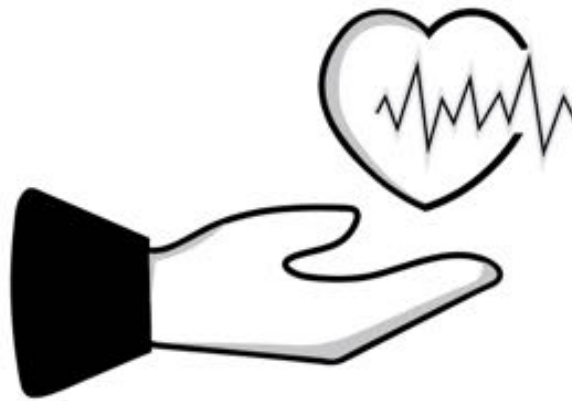
Pre-requisites: Attitudes

- **Courage**



To face the situation and acknowledge our emotions and listen to their message for us, instead of denying and suppressing. Courage is needed not just to share with others, but also to acknowledge this to our own selves. It is also needed to take action to address the situation. Dealing with emotions doesn't mean the other person has to change - many a time, it requires changes within us – which requires courage. In fact, if we want lasting peace and joy, the only way to guarantee that is by changing ourselves rather than trying to change others!

- **Compassion**



Towards ourselves and our emotions, first and foremost. Instead of judging our emotions and ourselves for feeling that emotion, if we understand that every emotion has a message, we can listen to that message with compassion. This is also needed to listen to another's point of view, and understand where they are coming from.

- **Gratitude**



Towards the emotions for sharing their message (the underlying need), so that we could take appropriate action. Towards ourselves, for demonstrating the courage and compassion and walking this path. And towards others, for playing their role in the situation. Gratitude also implies forgiveness for any mistakes made by us, or by others. Forgiveness sets us free from our own prison of self-righteousness and anger.

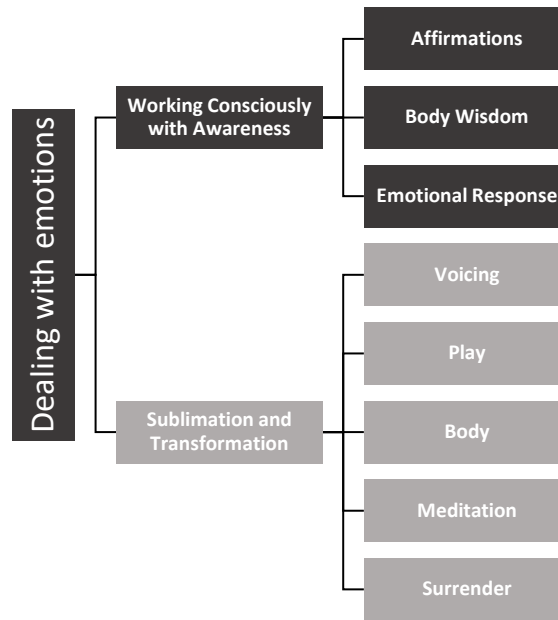
Pathways

Our existence is multi-dimensional – the Panch Koshas. Hence, the way back to our original state of well-being is also multi-dimensional. We can use any of the PanchKoshas to overcome the unpleasant impact of emotions on our well-being, and release the emotions inside us, either explicitly or implicitly.

- Body – through movement, physical release, dance, aasan, exercise, Sports, listening to, connecting with the body, body wisdom etc
- Energy – through breath, sound, Gibberish, Words, Singing, Listening to Music, Creating music
- Mind & Emotions – through meditation, Emotional Response, Affirmations
- (Vigyaanmay) Self – through Prayer, being in Nature
- (Aanandmay) – through Drawing/Painting/Art/Craft, Games – indoor and outdoor, Laughter Yog

Steps

Step	Description	Potential tools
Stillness Or Awareness	To listen to, acknowledge what is happening to us in the situation, the emotion being felt. It's very important to acknowledge before solving (and us being okay to cry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meditation/ Mindfulness • Listening to body and intuition • Journaling
Connection Or Power	To connect with ourselves & source within to understand the deeper need and see the choices available to us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding own iceberg • Understanding another's iceberg
Flow Or Purpose	To take action by making a wise choice from a place of connection. To ensure that we flow towards the outcome that is most aligned to us and the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing strategies to meet the need • Dissolving the need • Voicing • Body • Art, craft, play, laughter • Affirmations • Artwork, Music



Tools for Unconscious Sublimation

Tool	Overview	Types of activities
Voicing	Voicing is using the art that we all possess – giving voice in sound to all that we feel. The idea of using voicing as a tool for working with emotions is to access sounds that give expression to aspects of the self, which are unseen and unheard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gibberish • Words • Sounds • Breath • Singing, Listening to Music, Creating music
Play	Anything that is fun, non-judgemental, brings joy and laughter, involves spontaneity, creativity, no groupism, no winning or losing, can be physical or using imagination or both. It fuels our imagination, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and emotional well-being, connecting with SELF and others, team building, builds confidence, focus. Play is a great stress buster. Laughter, they say is the best medicine! Laughter Yog skilfully combines physical exercise, laughing, clapping (a form of acupressure), breathing and group work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games – indoor and outdoor • Sports • Drawing, Painting, Art, craft • Laughter Yog

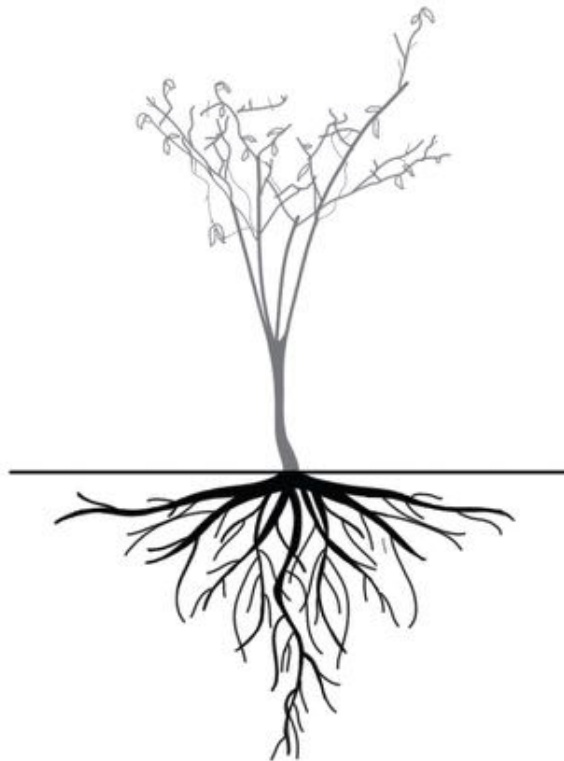
Body	Our existence is multi-dimensional – the Panch Koshas. Hence, the way back to our original state of well-being is also multi-dimensional. We can use any of the PanchKoshas to overcome the negative impact of our mind and emotions on our well-being. Working with the body can release the emotions stored in different external and internal organs, either explicitly or implicitly, through sublimation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aasan • Listening to, connecting with the body • Physical release • Movement & Dance • Nature • Physical exercise
Meditation	Meditation sublimates our thoughts and emotions, and slowly brings us in connection with our true, inner self. It is a very powerful technique. A simple form of meditation essentially involves focus with ease on a point – can be an object, color or picture or yantra, part of the body, breath, sound or mantra, deity or our Being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meditation
Surrender	When it is even difficult to accept the situation, it's time to surrender. Surrender does not mean giving up, it means giving in. It is this knowingness that 'I will be taken care, it is the unconditional faith in the universal/ divine energy / whichever God we believe in. Surrender happens with faith and trust. When we surrender with faith, it's like our eternal parents have taken care of us. Like when we play with our child and throw him/her up, he/she never ever thinks that we will not hold him/her when he comes down (they already have that trust and faith). When we surrender, we stop asking questions, why me, when, how. We start trusting the answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer/ibaadat/pooja • Expressing gratitude

Tools for Working Consciously with Awareness

Tool	Overview
Affirmations	<p>Every word and thought that we think or speak is affirming and creating our life experiences. This is due to the principle that “Our thoughts create our reality”. The good news is that the solution to change our lives also lies in our hands! By using the POWER OF THOUGHTS, we can retrain our thinking and speaking into positive patterns. Words play an important role here, as a gateway to access the mind. A positive affirmation is a “positive present tense statement”. <i>Doing affirmations</i>, is actually consciously choosing words that will either help <i>eliminate</i> something from our life or help <i>create</i> something new in our life.</p>
Body Wisdom	<p>The energy of emotions, if not addressed, is finally stored in some organ of our body, which slowly starts getting di-eased. We can connect to the particular body part, and simulate a conversation with it, and be surprised to know the body talks back to us and communicates it’s needs!</p>
Emotional Response	<p>Using our understanding of emotions to find a strategy which meets our needs and is appropriate to the situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the emotion really want? (need) • Am I getting what I want, with the current way of managing/behaving? • What is the gift this emotion is bringing for this situation? • What are the other Options that will help me use this gift and get me what I really want? • What are the possible outcomes/consequences of each of these options? • Which option is most aligned with my values as well as those of others involved in the situation?

Application

- **Working with the “secondaries”:** We have seen earlier that unhealthy ways of dealing with emotions create secondary emotions, which can often cloud/mask the key underlying emotion. Working through these first is suggested as it is easier and develops our confidence, and also slowly helps us uncover the key underlying emotion. Secondaries include emotions onwards:
 - Our disease/body whose current condition is obstructing our ideal life
 - Our habits which have caused our current condition or are making it persist
 - Our emotions which have caused our disease
 - Our self, for feeling unpleasant emotions
 - Society and people around us, whose behaviour towards us in our early years formed our emotional patterns
- **Work with the underlying root cause:** Once we have worked through the secondaries, and cultivated self-love, it becomes easier to identify the root cause and work with it. This process takes time, and requires courage, compassion and gratitude – towards ourselves and the external people who have a part in the situation. As our emotions get healed, our body does, too.



Chapter 6

“Courage- Hold Intensity with Peace”

Allow, Experience, Acknowledge

So far, we've seen the "iceberg" beneath our behaviour. We've seen how our underlying fears create patterns of behaviour, thus taking away our true freedom to respond to a situation.

Self-Love helps us come out of this cycle. It helps us understand our wholeness and cultivates our ability to stay established in our true nature, to be "Sthit" in "Swa".

What about all our fight-flight-freeze reactions, unpleasant emotions, needy needs, our shadow self? Do we love them too, knowing they are harmful to us and others? Yes!

Another dimension or alternate experience of Love is Peace. Peace with all that lies within us.

Let's look at some wisdom offered by Thicht Nhat Hanh, one of the world's most revered activists for peace, engaged Buddhism and mindful living. Having survived two wars in his native Vietnam, he dedicated his life of working tirelessly to prevent conflict of all kinds – from the internal violence of individual thoughts to interpersonal and international aggression.

An attitude of openness, the willingness to recognize and accept the diversity of human experience and the spiritual values of other traditions and other cultures, is essential to the practice of non-violence. We create true peace when we are inclusive of others. Exclusion, getting caught by our views, is a deep-seated habit that arises from fear and misunderstanding of others.

In some countries, people are educated with force or violently indoctrinated against their wills. Many political regimes forbid their citizens to say or think anything other than government propaganda. In these societies, there is no freedom of thought, expression, or action. This suppression is a kind of psychological violence.

Unfortunately, many families operate in a similar way. For instance, in some cultures, boys are told by their fathers and society – "Men do not cry". They are taught to suppress their feelings, which is another form of violence. As human beings, we suffer, and we should be allowed to acknowledge our feelings and, when we need to, say that we are hurting. We should allow ourselves to cry. Otherwise we may become sick from suppressing our feelings.

When we hold back our feelings and ignore our pain, we are committing violence against ourselves. The practice of non-violence is to be here, to be present, and to

As we reflect, we may find that there is some deep resistance towards our emotions on both ends of the spectrum. We may also find we need to strengthen our love for both types of unpleasant emotions – those that we experience a lot, and those we experience very less.

Many reasons may be responsible for this resistance:

- Judgement, and resistance for some emotions
- Doubts and fears about our capacity to hold and manage their disruptive energy
- Fear about the harmful impact of an outburst on people around us.

Let's move towards how we can work towards dissolving this resistance. Once again, we can look to nature and children for inspiration!

- Dogs and cats often feel emotions such as excitement, anger, sadness, fear. This makes them do different things – e.g. bark furiously, run away in fear, express their love vivaciously, sit silently in a corner, etc. They do not stay stuck in that emotional state for long as they are able to let it flow through them. Studies into animal behaviour have found how they use help from their body to let go the emotion – e.g. shaking off their body after moving from danger to safety.
- Children- One moment they can be crying inconsolably, and the next moment, they are laughing uncontrollably. Children, too are able to let a range of emotions, flow through them.

It is only us as adults, who become stuck in an emotion, long after the situation has passed. We carry the burden of anger, sadness, guilt and fear inside for years, until it manifests into an ailment.

Spiritual Teacher Ram Dass has said the following about using emotions on the spiritual path – *“You learn not to act out your emotions, but to appreciate and allow them... You don't act out your emotions, but just acknowledge them. You don't deny them though. You don't push them down.”*

But what about all the emotions, that we have pushed own, all these years? Emotions whose energy has stayed trapped inside our bodies for long, manifesting as aches/pains, lethargy and illnesses? Like a water tank whose sedimented dirt needs to be shaken up, we can stir up our past, and see what all we carry within us.

An emotion is energy in motion, in flow



Let's take the case of water again. A river is a source of life for millions.

- If the water was blocked, through a dam, life around would start to perish. The dam too needs to be opened regularly to allow flow. If the dam was not opened, one day the amount of water would become so much that it would cause the strong concrete walls to crack and become a destructive flood. If we obstruct the flow of emotions by suppressing (flight) or denying (freeze), one day the emotions would all come out as an outburst and cause damage in our external world. Or they will cause damage to our organs, which are holding the energy of the emotion.
- Alternatively, if a river is not provided any banks, and all the water just flows wherever it wants to, the flow dissipates, and the water doesn't reach all people. Similarly, if we are constantly giving in to our emotions based on external situations – excited one minute and sad the next minute – we will not get anywhere.

The flow and energy of our emotions, if channelized through some boundaries, will create a pathway which can transform this energy into life-giving and nurturing flow.

Guided process for providing flow to trapped emotions

Readiness to Step into process

- A safe, private, undisturbed space, where you cannot be heard or seen.
- Furniture: a table to write on, a chair that allows your feet to be grounded
- Materials: 10 sheets of paper, 2 pens, a few tissue papers, A fruit that's easy to consume (e.g. banana) and bottle of water – you may feel thirsty or hungry
- Keep 30 minutes for mental and physical rest during the day. Avoid a packed day

Overall guidelines for process:

- We drop **judgements** and offer emotions a **safe, compassionate** space to emerge from the depths of our subconscious, so we can see what lies within us
- We focus on **experiencing** the emotion ourselves, not **expressing** it to the external person who triggered it. Hurt people hurt people. Let's hold our pain, and heal our wounds
- We consciously acknowledge our **courage** and our **capacity** to hold emotions

Pre-requisites: States to Cultivate

- **Courage:** To face the situation and acknowledge our emotions and listen to their message for us, instead of denying and suppressing. Courage is needed not just to share with others, but also to acknowledge this to our own selves. It is also needed to take action to address the situation. Dealing with emotions doesn't mean the other has to change - many items, it requires changes within us – which requires courage. In fact, if we want lasting peace and joy, the only way to guarantee that is by changing ourselves rather than trying to change others!
- **Compassion:** Towards ourselves and our emotions, first and foremost. Instead of judging our emotions and ourselves for feeling that emotion, if we understand that every emotion has a message, we can listen to that message with compassion. This is also needed to listen to another's point of view, and understand where they are coming from.
- **Gratitude** – Towards the emotions for sharing their message (the underlying need), so that we could take appropriate action. Towards ourselves, for demonstrating the courage and compassion and walking this path. And towards others, for playing their role in the situation. Gratitude also implies forgiveness for any mistakes made by us, or by others. Forgiveness sets us free from our own prison of self-righteousness and anger.



Activity

Step-wise process

(Inspired by: “Creating True Peace”, by Thich Nhat Hanh)

Step 1: Stir up, Stimulate, Amplify: Move from “I feel _____” to “I am _____”

- Recall all people, situations and triggers for the emotion. Allow channel for **thoughts and emotions** to **flow** - Write, speak out, scribble, use gibberish
- Move from I feel _____ to I am _____.
- Create a channel to **embody** the emotion, usually by holding and amplifying a posture
 - o Anger – Push the floor/wall, air punch, compressing and tightening the face
 - o Guilt – Feeling the weight on the shoulders and letting them sink
 - o Sadness – Moaning – Aaaaaaaa / Mmmmmmmm, Tears
 - o Fear – Trembling
 - o Resistance – Hold up hands in front, as if creating an invisible wall

Step 2: Hold with Ease: Move back from “I am _____ to, I feel _____”

- Breathing in, I am aware of the pain in my body. Breathing out, I smile to the pain in my body
- Breathing in, I am aware of the pain in my mind. Breathing out, I smile to the pain in my mind
- Breathing in, I am aware of the feeling of _____ in me. Breathing out, I smile to the feeling of _____ in me

Step 3: Grounding, Release, Relax: Move from “I feel _____” to “I felt _____ then. I am in the Ath”

- Breathing in, I am aware of my capacity to hold the pain of _____ in my body, energy, mind and emotions. Breathing out, I release resistance for _____
- Looking at the roots of the pain in my body, I breathe in. Smiling to the roots of the pain in my body, I breathe out
- Looking at the roots of the pain in my mind, I breathe in. Smiling to the roots of the pain in my mind, I breathe out
- Looking at the roots of _____, I breathe in. Smiling to the roots of _____, I breathe out
- (if needed) Body or breathwork to cultivate the opposite, pleasant emotion

Full Relaxation at the end – Supine Position

- Shavaasan
- Deep breaths – AA, UU, MM
- Slow, subtle breaths
- Quick Relaxation Technique
- Let go of the weight. Let go of the past. It's over. I'm in the Ath. The past is over. I live in the Ath. I live fully and freely.
- Massage, press release different body parts

Post exercise

- Drink water and eat afterwards, through the day
- Various aches and pains may come up in various parts of the body, and that it's part of the process. As they release, the pains will go
- Keep time for Rest
- Emotions can and may come up. Give yourself the space to experience them
- There may be an urge to speak to people and change situations triggering the emotions. Avoid the temptation. Stay focused on the inner landscape

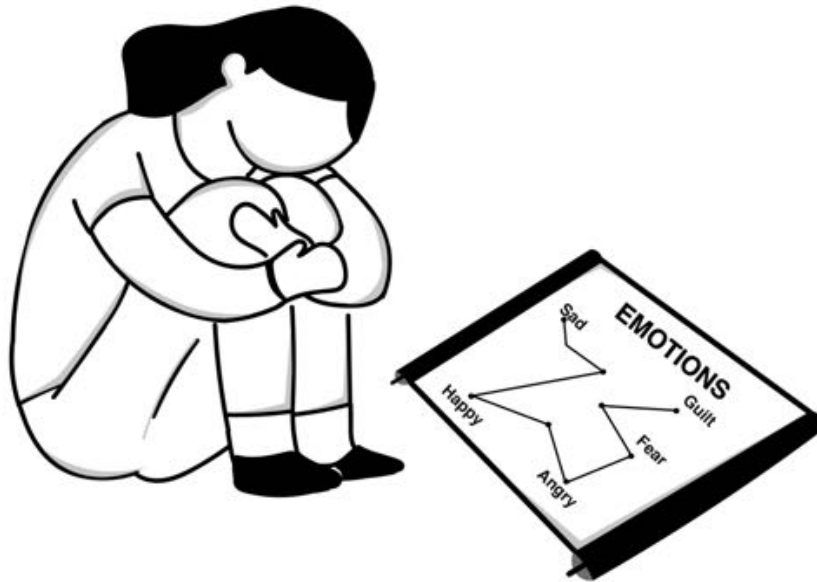
Chapter 7

“Compassion: for Self and Others”

Importance

After having worked through our emotions with courage, comes the second stage - looking at other people, situations and ourselves in a new light, with compassion. By understanding the true message of our emotions and take appropriate decisions, while being centred in ourselves.

Context



So far, we've seen our "iceberg", and our typical patterns, i.e. what we do less of and/or more of:

- Behaviour: Reactions to external stimuli (people and situations)
- Emotions: What we experience
- Needs, Values, Beliefs
- Underlying, core fears (for safety, worth/value and love)

By delving into our past, we have also seen

- How many of these patterns got created in the process of growing up, or socialization
- Subsequent external situations and people, whose words or actions produced unpleasant emotions within us

Gary Zukav, in his book, *The Heart of the Soul: Emotional Awareness*, talks of how most people attempt to re-arrange circumstances that trigger painful emotions. They change jobs or careers, friends or significant others, cities or houses.

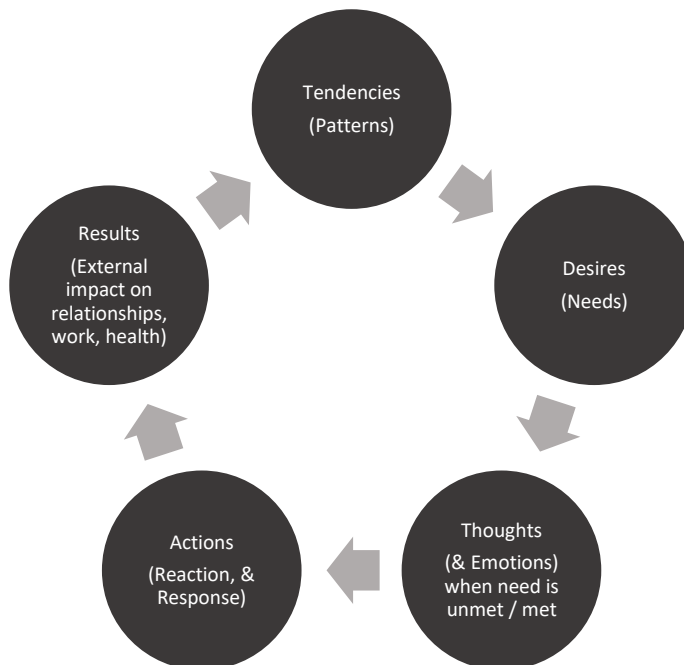
This does not change their rigid patterns of emotional response. Some patterns are:

Angry Personality	Workaholic	Boredom	Perfectionism	Frequent change in Romantic Partner / Sex Addiction
Pleasing Personality	“Day-dreaming” / Vacating	“Emotional” / Pass-through	Idolizing & Worshipping	
Impenetrable Optimism	Entitlement	Eating	Alcohol and Drugs	

Also, as we begin to see our patterns in emotions, and behaviours, we will recognize that we hold many polarities and dualities within us. There are many names, frameworks for this – our Shadow self, parts or personalities. We can often hold conflicting emotions or points of view. E.g. We may want to be by ourselves, and at the same time, not like to miss the company of friends.

This helps us construct a mental model of ourselves, thereby increasing our self-awareness. Just like a mechanic needs to understand any equipment to be repaired, we need to understand ourselves as well, so that we can heal ourselves.

As we identify our fears, we are also beginning to see how these underlying fears create patterns of behaviour, thus taking away our true freedom to respond to a situation. This has been summarized in ancient Indian texts as the following vicious cycle, arising out of our feeling of incompleteness.



This model recognizes that we are not a static machine operating in isolation, but a dynamic organism operating in a world with external stimuli. It suggests strongly, how our perceived sense of freedom is false, as we are driven by our fears. E.g. Perfectionists may believe they are choosing to do well in whatever they do, but at a deep level, their actions are being driven by their tendency, and they will find it very hard to not be perfect! Living in the “Ath”, the present requires true freedom to respond to the needs of the situation, with us in the driver’s seat of our life.

This model also explains that unless we are aware, our tendencies will create a reality where the external results reinforce our tendencies. This phenomenon has also been explained in recent times as the law of attraction – that our being attracts experiences that reinforce the being.

E.g. To deal with their fear of not being loved

- Some personalities handle this fear by constantly pleasing others.
 - This may win other people’s hearts, and to get more love, they will push themselves beyond their comfort zone. Finally, they will find themselves exhausted after taking care of other’s needs and not attending to themselves
 - They may come across people who are ungrateful and insensitive to their needs. The harder they try to take care of other’s needs, the more aloof others become to their needs!

- Some personalities handle this fear by becoming fiercely independent and self-sufficient.
 - This may make them strong and successful in the external world, but takes a toll on their relationships. This increases their sense of exclusion even more.
 - Even when people try to include them, they may reject the presence of others or sabotage relationships. This further adds to their fear of not being loved.

These 4 situations look different on the surface, but they all adds to the fear of not being loved!

Compassion for Ourselves



So, what's the way out of this cycle?! Spiritual teacher Ram Dass talks of the importance of first appreciating ourselves as we are, before trying to change or break this cycle. Instead of trying to remove the “bad”, or increase the “good”, to first acknowledge ourselves, with our good AND bad, our divinity AND our humanity. In other words, overcoming our patterns requires that we first accept and embrace them – even the dysfunctional ones!

Paradoxically, this appreciation fastens the process of change! This is applicable both for the process of working with ourselves, and with others.

Another word for appreciation and acceptance is love. This is scientifically proven - Oxytocin, sometimes called the “love hormone,” increases when we feel a loving connection to someone or something. When we love, we get softer, and so do our brains. When oxytocin rises, our neural pathways are rendered more receptive to new impressions. Love makes us receptive to change.

Another word is compassion - seeing ourselves fully, without judgement. Compassion is a wonderful tool to transform our relationship with our patterns, our parts. It helps us understand the needs and deep fears that they are born out of. It helps us listen to them, their wishes, dreams and aspirations for us. For each part, each pattern, however dysfunctional, ultimately wishes for us to live our lives fully, and freely.

The Mother, who worked tirelessly with Aurobindo on the gift of Integral Yoga for the world said – *“If you look at yourself carefully, you will see that one always carries in*

oneself, the opposite of the virtue one has to realize (I use “virtue” in its widest and highest sense). You have a special aim, a special mission, a special realization, which is your very own, each one individually, and you carry in yourself, all the obstacles necessary to make your realization perfect. Always you will see that within you, the shadow and the light are equal.

In modern times, the Internal Family Systems work is a beautiful framework that explains we how with our multiplicities, have an “internal family” of these parts / personalities / patterns within us – e.g. our inner critic, protector, firefighters, managers. Each of these parts got created to serve a particular need, to take care of a deep underlying fear. Coming into our Wholeness through Compassion asks that we embrace all these parts within us, even those that don’t serve us.

Compassion for Another

Courage to face our own emotions, will help us see the unpleasant emotions we hold for other people in our life, whose words, actions or inactions brought us pain in the past. It is natural for us to feel angry, hurt, bitter as these old, suppressed emotions come up. Before resolving these suppressed emotions within us, and in our relationships, it’s important to see create a paradigm for relationships, by extending what we have learnt thus far.

STEP 1: AWARENESS:

What happens to us, also happens to another!

As we understand that our parts have needs and underlying fears, which sometimes result in dysfunctional behaviours, we begin to see this is true for other people as well. They are also bound by their patterns. An aggressive perpetrator is deeply fearful inside. *“Hurt people hurt people”*

We have an “iceberg” underneath our reactions. Similarly, for others other’s words and actions trigger us by hitting our underlying fears. We affect others similarly. Despite wanting to change, we can get caught up in a cycle unintentionally. So can others.

This complex interaction of others impacting us, and us impacting the other often creates invisible cycles/patterns. Whether two individuals have similar personality

traits or opposite, both will find challenges in their relationship, if they operate from their patterns. E.g.

- 1) Both people take up space and don't understand the other's needs: Likely to fight a lot
- 2) Both people give up space and don't understand their needs: Likely to appear loving and caring, but have resentment for the other, as they haven't expressed their needs clearly
- 3) One person takes up space and the other gives up space: Likely to fall into a "victim – perpetrator" trap, due to an "unequal" relationship.

Sometimes, in an attempt to change the unpleasant outcome, we try to change our patterns, but without addressing the underlying core fears, we will likely fall into another dysfunctional pattern.

STEP 2: POWER:

We have the power to step out of dysfunctional tendencies and results

Changing the other person seems to be the most obvious solution, but it often results in even more explicit clashes, or internal building of resentment. What is really in our hands is this:

- 1) (Receiving another) Changing how we respond to another person's reaction: Not getting shaken up by an external person's words, judgements, actions, and fearing our ability to be safe, worthy and loved. As discussed above, compassion towards ourselves helps to change our patterns.

*Once Buddha was abused by someone and he responded by staying quiet. One of his disciples listening to the abuse was horrified and asked Buddha's permission to retaliate. Buddha was unperturbed and said you can only give back something that you may have taken. It is the other person's prerogative to give but its acceptance depends on us. People give both nectar and poison. We are at liberty to accept the nectar and refuse the poison. So do not **react**, instead **respond** to the world.*

The Art of Forgiveness, Swami Nikhilananda, Chinmaya Mission

- 2) (Giving to another) Changing how we look at, and react to another person. Accepting them, dropping our judgements, being compassionate, and loving. What we would like to be given!

In a healing technique called Hooponono (in Hawaii), the healer meditates, and using his mind, simply accessing data pertaining to the patient's disease and erases it (with love and compassion, and not with contempt); as a result, the sickness of the patient vanishes! In recent times, an entire ward of mentally ill criminals was treated with this technique and brought back to normalcy by a man named Dr Hew Len in Hawaii.

- *"Yoga Philosophy and Health", MSc (Yoga) Textbook, SVYASA*

A barrier to doing this is the fear that our compassion means WE are WRONG. This is not about right/wrong! The biggest gift of compassion is actually to ourselves. It makes us healthy and happy.

STEP 3: PURPOSE: We can use the challenges presented in every relationship towards growth

Just like our patterns have a purpose to play in our lives, painful relationships are opportunities to heal, too! They show us our dysfunctional patterns, and provide an opportunity for growth, for true freedom, provided we embrace the challenges with an open heart and mind.

Also, it is important to note that these shifts need to happen within us. Most times, we need not even discuss or take action with person concerned. Simply by shifting our internal "energy", we will find that the other person responds to us differently.

The phenomenon of quantum entanglement shows that between twin subatomic particles created from the same source, there exists a mysterious instant communication. Even if they are separated by thousands of miles, a change in one is immediately reflected in the other (Einstein called it "spooky action at a distance). Within physicality, nothing moves faster than the speed of light. But apparently information does; because it is not travelling in the normal sense and is not bound by the limits that energy has.

"Yoga Philosophy and Health", MSc (Yoga) Textbook, SVYASA

Forgiveness – An outcome of Compassion

In our world we blame someone or the other for being the cause of our sorrow. The corollary of blame-pinning leads to anger, or dislike for the individual. When there is anger there is a need to respond to that anger. The mind plans ways and means of giving pain to the person responsible for the sorrow.

For anger to be eliminated it must be resolved, otherwise it remains in the subconscious in a dormant form. Anger does not remain in the conscious mind all the time. We notice, that incident producing angry reactions against someone, with time are lost in memory. The memory becomes weaker and we even forget the incident but unless the anger is resolved it remains within us as an emotion. It is somewhat similar to toxins of our body. The toxins come out in the form of disease – a rash on the body, white heads, constipation, sore throat. Unresolved issues create constipation in the body. When we are not ready to give up old habits and emotions, it causes constipation leads to physical constipation.

The response to anger is what is called revenge. The feeling of revenge leads to other emotions as well. Jealousy is also a form of anger or non-forgiveness. Jealousy also expresses as anger and we have a need to pull down the other person. We can be angry by the results accruing to the other person. We are angry with the laws governing the lives of others. Sometimes we are angry with the system. For example, of the ten people applying for a job only one can get selected. But in certain cases this is enough cause to make us angry with the system. At a deeper level, non-forgiveness of ourselves, our parents, god, society, the system of the world, or the result of our actions. All our negative emotions are derivatives of this non-forgiveness.

If we are able to imbibe this value of forgiveness, we will gain release from our negative emotions, and also instantly become peaceful and tranquil. When we are non-forgiving we blame someone, but at the same time, we hurt ourselves. Non-forgiveness leads to self-hurt. When we are angry or jealous, we can neither eat or nor sleep properly. So, whom are we hurting – only ourselves! The person towards whom our anger or pride is directed may not be affected

*If we retaliate with anger with anger – we give it a fresh lease of life. It changes bodies but continues to live. When we respond to anger with forgiveness, the cycle is broken and the anger returns or goes back to its source. The good things about this reversal, is that ultimately, it leaves the source as well. This is in the interest of everyone concerned. So, in forgiveness, one is really being kind to oneself. – **Art of Forgiveness, Swami Nikhilananda, Chinmaya Mission***

What is Forgiveness



- The reality of true forgiveness lies in setting ourselves free from the pain. It's simply an act of releasing ourselves from the negative energy that we've chosen to hold on to.
- **Forgiveness means letting go.** It means releasing the past, releasing old guilt, shame, anger, pain, resentment
- When we feel stuck in some situation, it usually means that there's more forgiveness work to be done. When we don't flow freely with life in the present moment, it usually means that we're holding on to a past moment. It can be regret, sadness, hurt, fear, guilt, blame, anger, resentment, or sometimes even a desire for revenge. Each one of these states comes from a space of unforgiveness, a refusal to let go and come in to the present moment. Only in the present moment can we create our future.
- Forgiveness is a tricky and confusing concept for many people - we need to know that there's a difference between forgiveness and acceptance. **Forgiving someone doesn't mean that we approve of their behaviour!** The act of forgiveness takes place in our own mind. It really has nothing to do with the other person. Also, forgiveness doesn't mean allowing the painful behaviours or actions of another to continue in our life.
- Forgiveness and love go hand in hand, forgiveness is the pathway to love
- It is the relationship glue; we can use as much as we want

Why do we need to forgive?

- **To free ourselves**
- **To release ourselves from the past and stay in the present moment**
- **To release ourselves from the prison of self-righteous resentment**
- **To be able to move forward**
- **To see ourselves and the other person with compassion**
- E.g. The daughter was very angry with her mother for not taking care of her, she was raised by her aunt as her mother had to travel a lot for work. Hence, she thought no one cares for her, she started dominating people to get their love and care. She was always angry at everyone including her own children. When she realised that her anger stemmed from being angry with her mother, she started forgiving her. She was then able to stop dominating others and have meaningful relations with others

Whom do we need to forgive:

- Anyone who has been the cause of pain in our life - sadness, anger, fear
- Us – we often reserve the harshest resentment and guilt for ourselves!

Difference between forget and forgive

- Forgetting just clears the memory temporarily but forgiveness releases the emotional charge attached to the memory
- Eg. my boss says to me “you are an idiot”, and I am deeply hurt by that
 - I could forget about it: the feelings of hurt are still in my body, so every time someone calls me an idiot, I could get angry.
 - However, if I forgive my boss, I release those feelings of hurt and then if someone calls me an idiot, there is no anger, as I know that it is the opinion of the other person about me and that’s ok

How often and for how much time I need to forgive

- That depends on how deep the hurt and pain is
- We will know for ourselves
- Sometimes it is a never-ending journey and that’s ok
- Eg. Person A has been beaten several times by his uncle for no fault of his. Now A is so angry with his uncle that initially he is revengeful. A starts with a lot of letting go exercises for anger. Then he has some compassion for himself, he then starts forgiving himself for taking all the beatings, eventually he starts forgiving his uncle. Yes, it does take several years for him to even say hello to his uncle

Why can't I forgive at times?

- Because the pain attached to the memory of the past is too much
- At such times just say "I am willing to let go of the past and move towards forgiveness"
- **It is only human if we can't forgive**, if so, we should just forgive ourselves for allowing ourselves to take all the pain



Exercise for Forgiveness

- Make a list of people you need to forgive
- Now start saying 'I forgive you(name of the person whom you want to forgive), for...(state the reasons)
- You can do this exercise by writing it down, verbally saying it loudly or saying it in the mirror
- After doing this exercise, relax for a while and take some nice deep breaths

Once we build our "muscle" for forgiveness, we can learn to engage in compassionate communication – speaking and listening – in our relationships

Today communication between individuals, families and nations has become very difficult. However, there are concrete ways to train ourselves to communicate non-violently so that compassion for one another is awakened and mutual understanding becomes possible again. Speaking and listening with compassion are the essential practices of nonviolent communication. Mindful communication means to be aware of what we are saying and to use conscious, loving speech. It also means listening deeply to the other person to hear what is being said and what is not being said.

For our body to be healthy, our heart must pump a constant flow of blood. For our relationships to be healthy, we need a constant flow of mindful communication. Yet many people find it difficult to communicate effectively because they have so much frustration and anger built up inside. Even when we come to another person with sincere goodwill and the intention to listen, if we are unable to use calm, loving speech, there is no hope that the other person will hear us and understand what we are trying to say. We may intend to use calm and loving speech, but often as we start speaking, our pain, despair, and fear emerge. In spite of our best intentions, we start to blame, complain, and judge harshly. Our speech begins to reverberate with the kind of energy that turns people against us because they cannot bear to hear what we are saying. Communication breaks down. When this happens, we need to learn, or to relearn, how to communicate.

How then do we reach the point where we are able to listen deeply to one another and to use loving speech? To do this, we first have to practice taking care of our own pain and anger. By practicing mindful breathing and mindful walking, we strengthen the energy of mindfulness within us. We may need to practice and train ourselves for several weeks, or even several months, before we can overcome our pain and use loving speech.

When our mindfulness is strong, it is much easier to look deeply into a situation and to give rise to understanding and compassion. With the energy and mindfulness, we can overcome our pain and use loving speech.

The same is true about our ability to listen deeply. If we have not been able to embrace and transform our own hurt and anger, it will be difficult to listen to another person's suffering, especially if the other person's speech is full of negative judgments, misperceptions, and blaming. In our heart, we know that listening is what we should do, and not doubt we have often tried our best. Yet frequently after a few minutes, we no longer can bear to listen to even one more word. We feel overwhelmed. Even though we have vowed that, regardless of the provocations or unjust assertions, we would stay and listen with compassion, we

just cannot do it. Our good intentions evaporate because we are unable to handle the pain welling up within ourselves.

Yet if we can prevail and listen for only one hour, the other person will obtain a great deal of relief. Listening with an open heart, we are able to keep compassion alive. Then we give the other person a real chance to express his or her feelings.

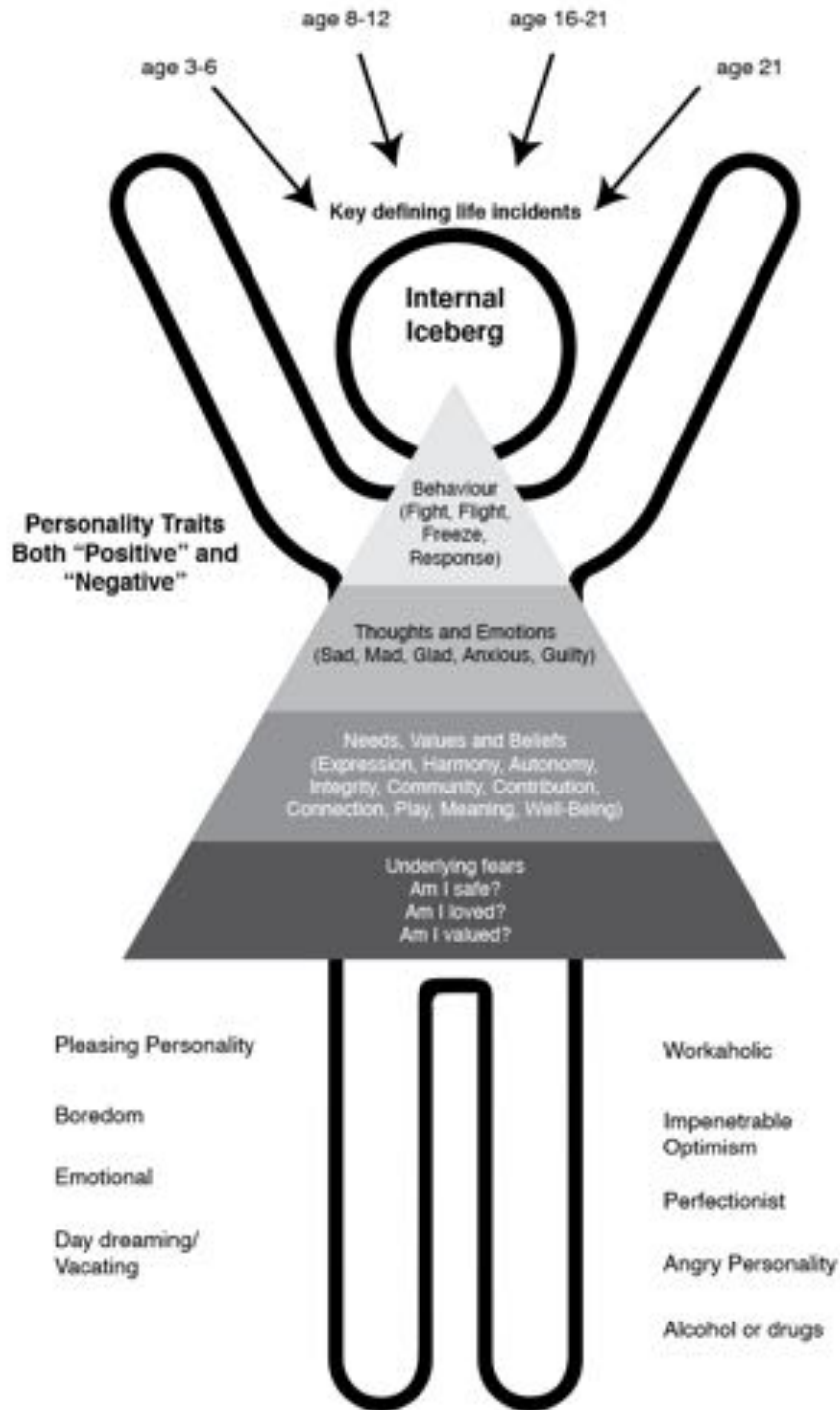
--“Creating True Peace”, by Thicht Nhat Hanh

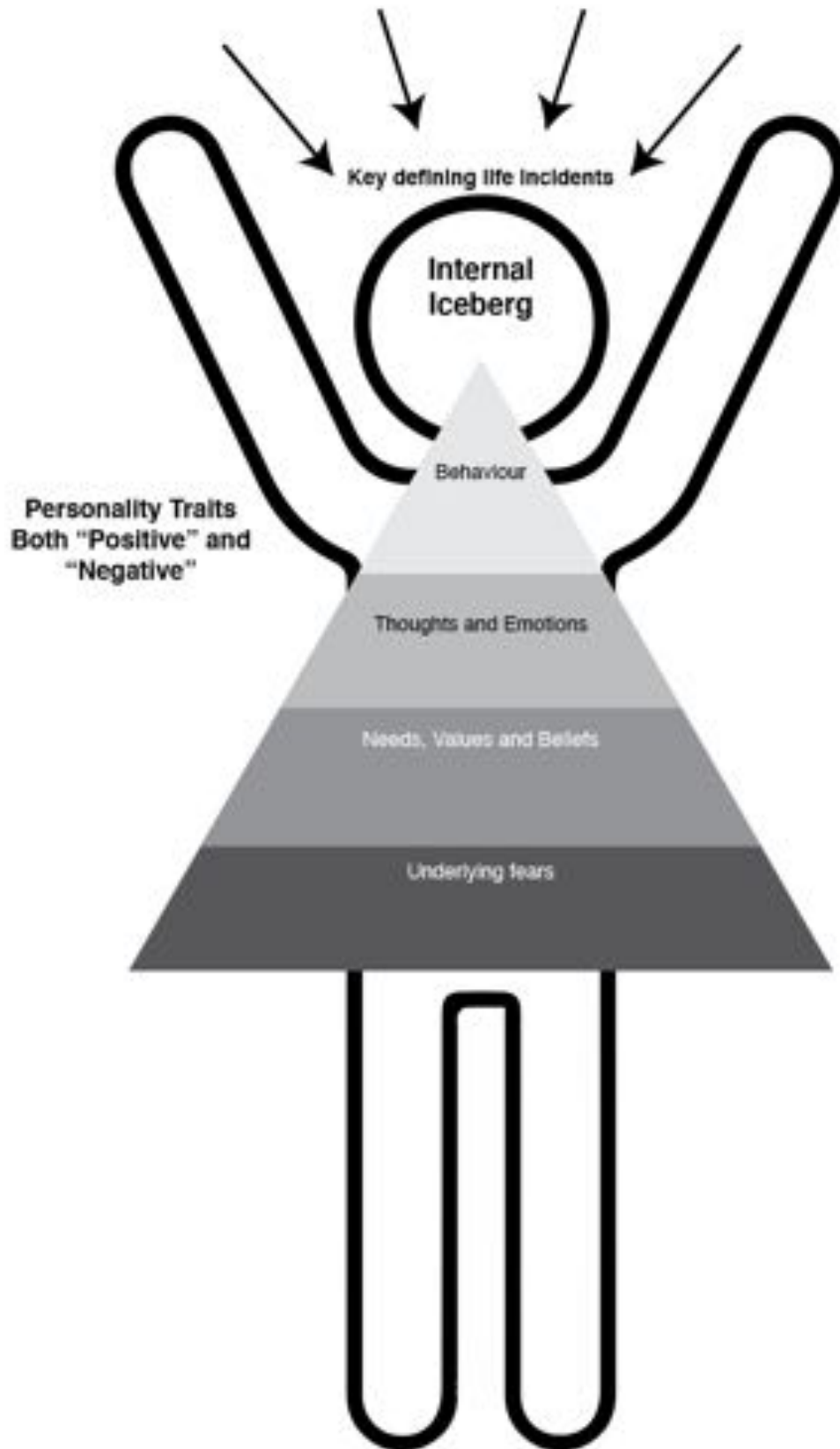
To start work, through the process below, we can start with an affirmation e.g. for compassion for self - *I have compassion. I have compassion for myself for feeling what I feel. I have compassion for my emotions. I have compassion for my needs. I have compassion for my patterns. I have compassion for my parts.* We can also tune into our physical heart, finding and amplifying love.



REFLECTION JOURNAL – 2 – COMPASSION CULTIVATION (7 days)

Day 1 - Compassion for Self A Model of Me

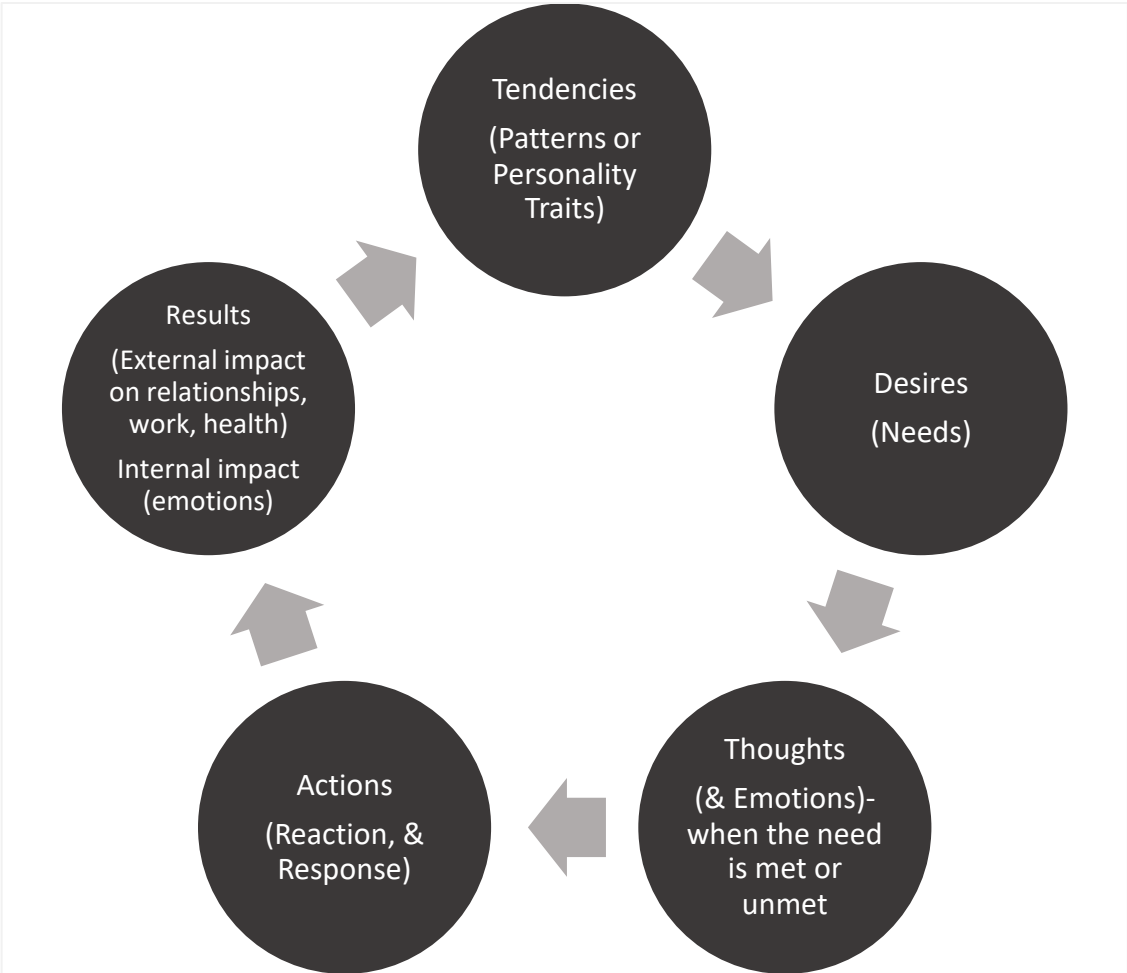




Courage to See the Cycle

Step 1: Pick any 1 personality trait that strongly defines you

Step 2: Fill this cycle for yourself



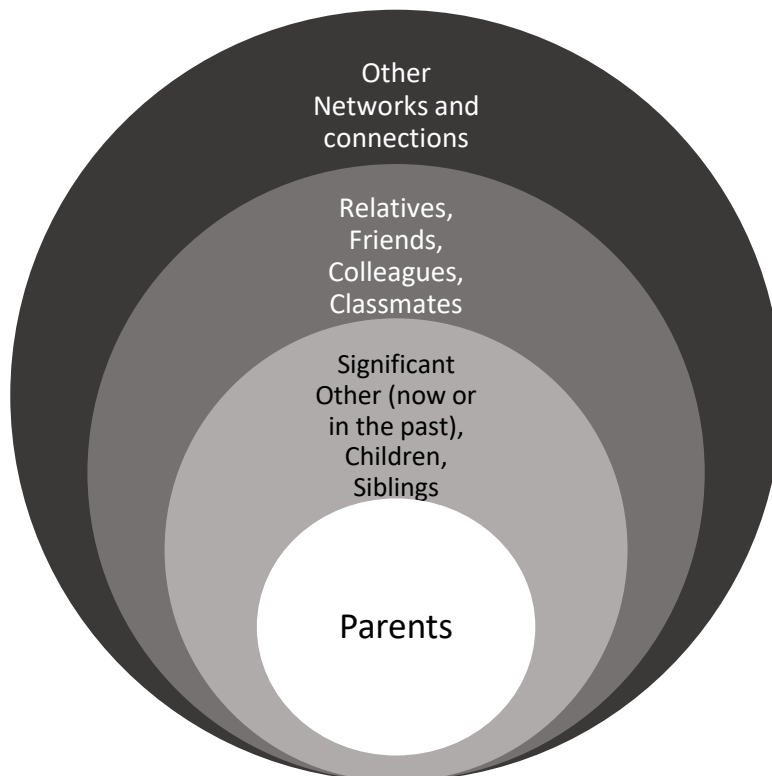
Day 2 - Compassion for Another

Relationships in Yog – Intention Setting

Identify 10 relationships in life, that could be in Yog, and healthier.
Based on how the memory of that relationship impacts you today, or has impacted
in the past.

Whether or not the person is in your life, or alive

Choose at least 3 relationships from the first two circles



From these, identify 1 relationship you would like to work with, primarily:

DAY 3 - Building Compassion for our self and others

(Based on: "Creating True Peace", by Thicht Nhat Hanh + Nithya Shanti)

(can be done aloud, as an auto-writing activity, a silent conversation)

Compassion to self:

Breathing in, I know that I've suffered. Breathing out, I smile with compassion to my suffering. My suffering. Compassionate smile <Tell the part how you've suffered>

Compassion to the part / another:

Breathing in, I know you have suffered. Breathing out, I smile with compassion....Your suffering, Compassionate smile <Acknowledge how the part has suffered>

Compassion to both:

Breathing in, I know we both suffer. Breathing out, I want us both to have a new chance

Courage to speak and listen

Breathing in, I speak out. Breathing out, I share....Speaking, sharing <Tapping into your courage, say what is hard for you to share >

Listening to another: Breathing in, I listen out. Breathing out, I hear....Listening, hearing <Tapping into your courage, listen to what is hard for you to hear>

Compassion & Forgiveness to part / another

Breathing in, I hear your bitterness. Breathing out, I embrace you in my heart...Bitterness, embrace you

Breathing in, I hear your wrong perception. Breathing out, I do not burn with anger...Wrong perception, not burning

Compassion & Forgiveness from part / another:

Breathing in, I know I have made you suffer. Breathing out, I am sorry....You suffered, I am sorry

Compassion & Forgiveness to part / another:

Breathing in, I know you have made me suffer. Breathing out, I forgive you....I suffered, I forgive you

Breathing in, I open my heart. Breathing out, in my heart, there is room for you...Opening my heart, room for you.

Breathing in, I take compassion for myself. Breathing out, I am compassionate to you. Compassion to self, compassion to you...

Gratitude

Express your appreciation.

Courage

Share innermost feelings and intentions.
Make fresh new commitments that resonate.

Compassion

Keep talking until the love feels strong, concentrated and complete.

Day 4 - STEP 1: AWARENESS: What happens to us, also happens to another!

We have an “iceberg” underneath our reactions. Similarly, for others^[SEP] Others’ words and actions trigger us by hitting our underlying fears. We affect others similarly. Despite wanting to change, we can get caught up in a cycle unintentionally. So can others.

Step 1: Pick an action/words of this person that hurt you a lot.

Step 2: For this exercise, try to go into their reality, and see – what was their iceberg, underneath their behaviour? Write it in the graphic below

Note: If you wish to challenge yourself and feel ready, you can try to pick something that would be identified socially as a clear “wrong” – e.g. hitting, not protecting, breaking trust



**DAY 5 - STEP 2: POWER:
We have the power to step out of dysfunctional tendencies and results**

Changing the other person seems to be the most obvious solution, but it often results in even more explicit clashes, or internal building of resentment. What is really in our hands is this:

- 1) (Receiving another) Changing how we respond to another person's reaction
- 2) (Giving to another) Changing how we look at, and react to another person

1: (Receiving Another)

What core underlying fear did the other person's words or actions trigger in you?

What would it look like, if you did not fear your ability to be safe, worthy and loved? How could you take care of your own needs? E.g. If the person is your significant other who you feel should take care of your needs, what would you taking care of your needs look like?

How would you respond to the other person from this place of safety, worth and love for self?

2: (Giving to another)

How can you change the way you look at the other person? What would it look like, to accept the other, drop your judgements, and be compassionate?

What need do you have from that relationship? What would it look like, if you gave to the other person, that which you wish to receive from them?

**DAY 6 - STEP 3: PURPOSE:
We can use the challenges presented in every relationship
towards growth**

Painful relationships are opportunities to heal, too!
They show us our dysfunctional patterns, and provide an opportunity for growth,
for true freedom, provided we embrace the challenges with an open heart and
mind.

How have you used this painful relationship as a growth opportunity so far?

**As you move into your next round of resolving the unhealed pain from the
relationship, what possible growth opportunity lies ahead?**

DAY 7 - Compassion for Another – Part 2

Forgiveness – Intention Setting

Go back to the Go back to the list of relationships you would like to be healed.

Identify people you would like to forgive in the time ahead

Set an intention to forgive “X for doing/saying/not doing/not saying y....”

I want to forgive...

Person Name	for doing/saying/not doing/not saying....

How will forgiving these people benefit you?

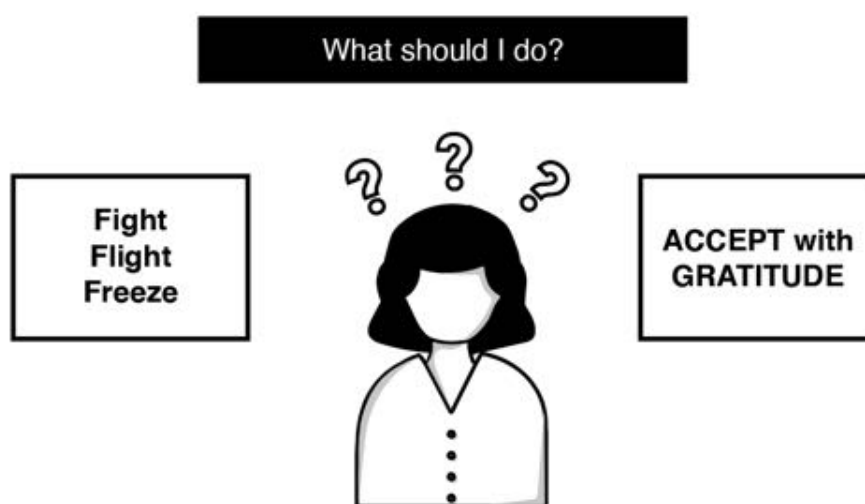
Chapter 8

“Stage #3: Gratitude”

It is, what it is

Through courage and compassion, we can start letting go of past emotional burdens, which were taking up a lot of space inside. And as we do that, we free up space to let the new in. Through Gratitude, we can start filling up with space with our new life, a life of peace, love and joy – which has silently been waiting for us to give it a home.

All situations in our lives are not happy. Not everything is just the way we want it to be. **All learnings and wisdoms are needed the most in our toughest situations. The toughest situations are most often the unexpected ones, ones which happen suddenly, we are not prepared for it. That's when we have a choice to freeze, flee, fight or ACCEPT with Gratitude.**



Examples of toughest unexpected unprepared situations: Break ups, Divorce, Separation, Death, Loss of a relationship or valuable thing, Accidents, Terminal disease, Failures

During or after a particularly challenging situation, we may find ourselves asking – Why me? Many a times, there may not be a logical answer to this question, and hence, we are unable to get closure. But there are two others perspective with which to approach this

- If one believes in something beyond our five-sensory world, such as an outer or inner God or universal energy - trusting that everything happens for a reason, and every person or situation (especially the challenging ones) teach us a lesson.
- If one does not believe in something beyond our five-sensory world – seeing that an attitude of gratitude will help us make the most of what has happened, and to take appropriate action/inaction in the “*Ath*”, i.e. the present. Till the time we are not accepting, part of our energy will stay stuck in resisting the truth of our reality.

If we look back at the toughest people or situations in our past, we are likely to find that many of our qualities today, were developed as a result of those situations. Hence, the process of expressing gratitude.

With acceptance, trust and even practicality, comes gratitude. When we accept, we stop asking questions, why me, when, how. This puts us in a state of stillness, ease, courage and awareness – through which we can look for or create solutions. Being grateful can convert our tough times, difficult situations, difficult relations into our biggest teachers.

Being aware of our jealousy, judgments, and fear is already a positive step towards acceptance. When we accept ourselves as we are, we do not any longer need to fight to change ourselves. The moment we become aware that we are being too critical of ourselves and we accept our negative seeds, we are already making progress. People who are unaware of their negative energies will have difficulty making progress. Even so, striving to increase our compassion does not mean that instantly there are only positive elements in us. If this were the case, there would be no need to practice. It is exactly because we have the seeds of negative energies in us that we continue to practice. The practice is easy: just because aware of our negative energies and in just cultivating this awareness, we will make steady steps on the path. Conflict is not necessary.

We practice like the lotus flower and the mud. The lotus flower does not think, “I do not want the mud.” The lotus knows that it can bloom beautifully only because of the mud. For us, the same is true. We have negative seeds within us, the element of mud; if we know how to accept this, we accept ourselves. The lotus flower does not need to get rid of the mud. Without mud, it will die. Unless we have garbage, we cannot have flowers. We should judge ourselves or others. We only need to practice acceptance and there will be progress without struggle. The process of transformation and healing requires ongoing practice. We produce garbage every day, so we need to practice continuously to take care of or garbage in order to make it into flowers.

There may be friends around us who seem to practice better than we do, but it is important to accept who we are and not reject ourselves or our efforts. If we have within us only 10 percent flowers and 90 percent garbage, we may wish we had 90 percent flowers and only 10 percent garbage, but this kind of thinking does not help. We have to accept the 90 percent garbage in us in order to be able to increase the 10 percent flowers to 12 percent and then 14 percent and then 20 percent. This acceptance will bring us peace, and then we will not be caught in an

inner struggle. Even those who produce many flowers daily have garbage and must practice continuously. It is okay for us to have the mud of suffering if we know how to practice. The Buddha said, “You cannot grow lotus on marble. You have to grow in in mud.”



“Creating True Peace”, by Thicht Nhat Hanh

**Like with everything else, it’s important to be grateful to our own self –
We are the beginning and the end, so always be grateful to what we do,
where and who we are.**

REFLECTION JOURNAL – 3 RELATIONSHIPS in YOG (14 days)



Our evolution has taken a new path, and our relationships are changing in unexpected and dramatic ways. We are evolving beyond the limits of our five senses and encountering more expanded experiences of ourselves and our world than were previously possible. Our evolution now presents us at each moment with a profound choice: we can pretend that our lives and the world are not changing and continue to relate to another as before, or we can use our relationships to transform individuals into authentically powerful, loving individuals.

- Gary Zukav, *Spiritual Partnerships*

Welcome to the journey towards peace, love and joy in relationships!

The 2 Key Relationships that I will take steps towards bringing into Yog, over the next 1 month are

*Person and Relationship:
What would the relationship being in Yog look like?*

*Person and Relationship:
What would the relationship being in Yog look like?*

As we learn to heal ourselves, we also have an opportunity to heal the relationships around us, for the wellbeing of both – us and the other.

This journal provides some tools to work with the wounds in our relationships. Only one guideline – If you decide to use this, don't do it for the joylist. Do it for you!

A choice of methods is provided, to transform your relationships. We suggest trying all methods! Each template is provided twice, so that you can try this for 2 relationships

Method 1 – Courage, Compassion, Gratitude (with inputs from Guidelines for Creating Authentic Power, from the Seat of the Soul Institute)

Step #	Overview
Step 1	Courage to see our Iceberg – seeing how the other impacts us Courage to see the other's Iceberg – seeing how we impact the other
Step 2	Compassion for ourselves – towards our fearful parts, trying to do their best Compassion for the other – towards their fearful parts, trying to do their best
Step 3	Gratitude – for the learning opportunity provided by the situation and person Completing the cycle – Compassion and Courage – To set a fresh set of courageous intentions and actions for the relationship

Method 2 – Auto-Writing

Use the format and guided reflection sheet to write in an auto-pilot mode

Method 3 – Transforming Judgement

Reflect in the template, and try an experiment provided!

Method 1, Step 1 – Courage

Part 1 – How is the other person’s behaviour (actions and words) impacting me?

What emotions am I really feeling? What pain is hard for me to experience here?



Part 2 – How is my person’s behaviour (actions and words) impacting the other person?

What is my responsibility in the situation? What's difficult for me to acknowledge here?



Method 1, Step 2 – Compassion

Part 1- A fearful part of my personality is active. I can stop judging it, and see it for what it is. I can understand its message, even though its behaviour doesn't help the situation. I can try to understand the intention of this part - taking care of my underlying fears.

Part 2 - A fearful part of the other is active. I can stop judging it, and see it for what it is.

I can understand its message, even though its behaviour doesn't help the situation. I can try to understand the intention of this part - taking care of the other's underlying fears.

Method 1, Step 3 – Gratitude & Completing the Cycle

Gratitude – for the learning opportunity provided by the situation and person

How has this person's presence and patterns helped me grow in the past?

What's the new learning opportunity created by this situation in the present?

Completing the Cycle - Compassion:

What happens, as I change my perspective from doubt and fear to love (compassion, acceptance, appreciation) and trust?

From this space, what intention do I want to set for this relationship?

Completing the Cycle – Courage

What action can I take from my "Swa" (self)? What is the guidance from my intuition (Vigyaanmay Kosh) and body (AnnaMay Kosh)?

Method 2 – Auto-write - Building Compassion for ourselves and others
(Based on: “Creating True Peace”, by Thicht Nhat Hanh + Nithya Shanti)
(can be done aloud, as an auto-writing activity, a silent conversation)

Compassion to self:

Breathing in, I know that I've suffered. Breathing out, I smile with compassion to my suffering. My suffering. Compassionate smile <Tell the part how you've suffered>

Compassion to the part / another:

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Compassion to both:

Breathing in, I know we both suffer. Breathing out, I want us both to have a new chance

=== *Courage to speak and listen*

Breathing in, I speak out. Breathing out, I share....Speaking, sharing <Tapping into your courage, say what is hard for you to share >

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Breathing in, I take compassion for myself. Breathing out, I am compassionate to you. Compassion to self, compassion to you...

==== **Gratitude**

Express your appreciation.

=== **Courage**

Share innermost feelings and intentions.

Make fresh new commitments that resonate.

=== **Compassion**

Keep talking until the love feels strong, concentrated and complete.

Method 3 - Transforming Judgement

List all judgements the other holds about you, that don't serve you or the relationship.

Looking at all judgements, remind yourself of how the OPPOSITE is also true, for you. (e.g. If someone judges you as insensitive, write why you believe you're sensitive)

List all judgements you hold about the other, that don't serve the other or the relationship.

Looking at all judgements, remind yourself of how the OPPOSITE is also true. (e.g. If you judge someone as untrustworthy, write how they've also been trustworthy)

Experiment: For a few moments, really, really believe that the person is the opposite of the judgments with which you've seen them so far. Shift the way you see them internally. Now, do a 3-5 minute interaction with the other, not on anything intense, but a regular interaction. Continuously see them with the new perspective in those 3-5minutes. Record what feels different. Do this at least 3 times!

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Chapter 9

“Affirmations”

Affirmations

Thoughts are an expression of the working of our mind. Words are the “language” of thought. Words, and their sound have the force of creation.

This has been recognized by multiple religions -

- In Indian culture, *AUM*, the sound symbol of Parmatman (Supreme Reality), is considered to be the first vibration/sound emanating at the beginning of creation.
- In Christianity, “*In the beginning was the word....*”(John 1:10)

Affirmations are one of the simplest and most powerful things we can do to change the quality of our lives, and to create the things we want.

What is an Affirmation

To affirm means to make firm. An affirmation is simply a declaration, in the present tense, which creates a desired reality. There is very little mystery about how and why affirmations work, once the principle is understood.

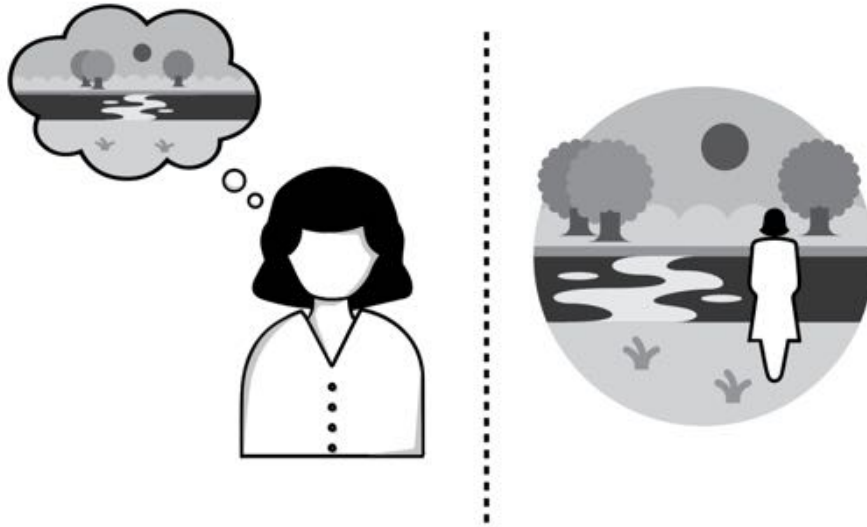
An affirmation is really anything we think or speak, whether to others or ourselves. **Every thought we think and every word we speak is an affirmation. Thus, all of our self-talk, our internal dialogue, is a stream of affirmations.**

Every complaint is an affirmation of something we think we don't want in our life. Feelings are also affirmations

- Every time we get angry, we're affirming that we want more anger in our life.
 - Every time we feel happy, we're affirming that we want to *continue* to feel happy
- It is clear that we're using affirmations every moment whether we know it or not.

Every word and thought that we think or speak is affirming and creating our life experiences.

This is due to the principle that “Our thoughts create our reality”.



To understand the power of affirmations to create, let us understand this principle: How is it possible for another person to know what idea or thought I have in my mind? Is it possible for me to make that idea come out of my mind and make it enter the mind of another person? To do that, I will have to summon the help of speech or the written word to communicate. This power or Shakti when combined with the static thought, makes it possible for the thought or idea to travel. In ancient India, this power was personified Mother Saraswati (Vak Devi)- goddess of speech, and learning.

This is a miraculous power or shakti. If I am speaking to an audience of fifty people, this power multiplies and enters the minds of all fifty people. If my talk is broadcast via satellite and if there are a million listeners, this shakti becomes million-fold. Its capacity is unlimited. This combination of the product of human consciousness (thought) with Shakti manifests things.

The chairperson of a big corporation conceives of an idea that a 50-storey skyscraper building should be built. He/she conveys this idea, using his power (shakti) of speech, to the board of directors who approve it. The idea is then conveyed with the aid of Mother Saraswati (speech or written words) to the financiers, to the architect, to the contractors, to the labourers on site. The result is a 50-storey building manifested.

Thus, thought became reality. Everything, before it is created on the physical plane, is at first a spiritual impulse, then a thought, then a feeling. The clothes we wear, the chair on which we seat, the books we read, the computers we use; all these were first conceived as ideas in the human mind.

Why are Affirmations important: What is their impact in our life?

Our mind is a powerful instrument. Through our words and the thoughts behind them, we are continually giving our bodies operating instructions. What we think about ourselves becomes the truth for us.



The thoughts we think and the words we speak also create our experiences.

“People are out to get me”
“Everyone is always helpful”

Each of these beliefs will create very different experiences. The experience will then re-enforce the particular belief and plant it deeper within our subconscious. After several repetitions, our reality becomes a manifestation of these beliefs and we stop questioning them.

We can understand the power of affirmations through a practical experiment:

We can listen to a guided audio for this experiment. Alternatively, we first read these instructions, and then carry them out ourselves.

- Close your eyes, take some nice deep breaths...keep your left hand outstretched, without any support
- Now imagine half a kg of potatoes in your hand. Feel the weight of the potatoes.. slowly this weight is increasing.... Keep feeling the weight of the potatoes....now imagine the weight of potatoes is 2kgs and slowly it is increased even more and it is 5 kgs.. Feel the weight of the bag in your hand
- Now open your eyes and see the position of your hand – very often, most often its much below than the original position. Further, see how your arms feel. It is likely that we have shoulder pain or your arms feel very heavy

Why was there pain even though there were no potatoes, no weight?

Explanation: There was a transfer of thought. And thoughts have power

Utilizing the power of Affirmations to change the quality of our life

'This is really making me sick,' or 'This job is killing me,' or 'He is a pain in the neck,' or 'I hate my body' or 'I can't do it.' These words are affirmations, just like any other words. We have unconsciously affirmed a lot of things, which we could do better without. No wonder we are getting sick, dying too young at jobs we hate, getting headaches, going crazy, and failing in life. **The good news is that the solution to change our lives also lies in our hands! By using the POWER OF THOUGHTS, we can retrain our thinking and speaking into positive patterns. Words play an important role here, as a gateway to access the mind.**

Below is a three-step process we can use:

- Awareness: Becoming aware of the affirmations to ourselves
- Freedom: Becoming free of our past, blame and our compulsive patterns.
- Purpose: Using our freedom to create a new reality towards our life purpose

Step 1 – Awareness

Through awareness, we can realize that we have been giving ourselves affirmations all our lives. And others have been giving us affirmations all our lives.

- **Affirmations given by us to ourselves:** Anything you say or think to yourself is an affirmation. Experts estimate that the mind thinks between 60,000 – 80,000 thoughts a day. That's an average of 2,500 – 3,300 thoughts per hour! By being observant, we can become aware of this process.

However, most of the time, we are unaware of what is going on in the mind. If we

examine our thoughts carefully, we will become aware that a lot of what we think is “negative” and doesn’t create good experiences for us. This negative mental “chatter”, in turn, becomes our reality.

- **Affirmations given by others to us:** Anything anyone else says to you is an affirmation, if we accept it. Our subconscious minds accept it all – whether for better or worse. Many of us grew up in environments, which may not have been totally supportive. Most of us had parents, families, friends, and other peers who may have given us a lot of terrible affirmations, which were destructive to our self-image. Children often tell each other that they are stupid or ugly or unable to do something. Brothers or sisters often say unflattering things to each other. These are unfortunate, negative affirmations.

Most people are still carrying with them, in their basic core beliefs, the non-supportive things they heard when they were so young that they didn’t have the awareness to question or ignore. And these affirmations have an especially powerful effect when there is a strong emotion behind them- those moments when Mommy is deeply upset, and yells: “You never do anything for me!” give the child a deep affirmation of his or her own selfishness and worthlessness.

Let us look at our life – clearly and honestly – to become aware of what we have been affirming to ourselves.

Step 2 – Power

As we become acutely aware of our compulsive affirmations, we may have an impulse to find whom we can blame. No person, no place, and no thing has any power over us, for “we” are the only thinkers in our mind

Fortunately, affirmations are so powerful that a few minutes of conscious, deep, positive ones repeated daily for a few weeks could do years of unconscious, deep, negative ones. This is especially true because the positive affirmations have the greatest power in the universe behind them: the power of truth. Because the truth is that you are a free being. You are not limited or restricted. And your life is worthwhile. And you are good person –not a bad one. And you are really loving – even though that love may be buried under years of unexpressed anger and guilt and frustration.

How do Positive Affirmations work

A positive affirmation is a **“positive present tense statement”**

Doing affirmations, is actually consciously choosing words that will either help **eliminate** something from our life or help **create** something new in our life. In essence, we’re saying to our subconscious mind: **“I am taking responsibility. I am aware that there is something I can do to change.”**

Metaphors to illustrate affirmations

- Affirmations are like planting seeds in the ground
 - First, they germinate
 - Then they sprout roots
 - They poke their first shoots up through the ground
 - It takes some time to go from seed to a full-grown plant with fruits and flowers
- It takes sometime from the first declaration to the final demonstration
- An affirmation opens the door. It's a beginning point on the path to change

Positive Affirmations (called “affirmations” henceforth, for simplicity) can be used:

- to create new experiences/possibilities we want
- to clearly declare our desires
- to have a focussed direction
- to have a positive attitude/mindset
- to create a happy, positive environment
- to be able to focus more on solution and not the problem

How to use affirmations

There is actually no right or wrong way to use affirmations. It has to be YOUR WAY, as long as you are able to delete the old pattern and create a new one

Usually this is what can be done:

- Say your affirmations first thing when you get up and last thing before you sleep (because the subconscious mind is most active and receptive that that time)
- Say them when you are most disturbed
- Say them as often as possible
- You can record your affirmations and hear them
- Draw your affirmations and stick them at strategic places
- Write your affirmations
- Create a song out of it and sing them
- Dance with your affirmations
- Use them as passwords
- Make your affirmations like mantras
- Say your affirmations in the mirror
- **PERSISTENCE, PATIENCE and FAITH** is the key to fructify affirmations

How to NOT use affirmations

This is not a tool for repression – allow yourself to have any thoughts and feelings you have – don't reject them – and yet, give yourself the time and energy to affirm a more desirable reality after you have experienced and explored your so-called 'negative' feelings.

We may find affirmations not working for us, because...

- We don't trust our affirmations
- We are saying irrelevant affirmations
- Our general attitude overpowers our affirmations
- Some people say that "affirmations don't work" (which is an affirmation in itself), when what they mean is that they don't know how to use them correctly. They may say, "*My prosperity is growing,*" but then think, *Oh, this is stupid, I know it won't work.* Which affirmation do you think will win out? The latter one, of course, because it's part of a long-standing, habitual way of looking at life.
- Sometimes we will affirmations once a day and complain the rest of the time. The complaining affirmations will always win, because there are more of them and they're usually said with great feeling. *Saying* affirmations is only part of the process. What we do the rest of the day and night is even more important
- We may feel undeserving for what we are affirming

Annexure – Affirmations in Cultures

Explanation of the power of affirmations and their impact - in Vedanta

VASANAS are subtle impressions which the individual soul will carry with when the soul separates itself from the physical body upon the death of a person.

To understand this term VASANA, first think of ice, which is gross. It is solid and it can be touched or felt and can be cut into different shapes. Water is subtler than ice. Water cannot be cut into shape, although it will assume the shape of its container. Water is liquid and not solid like ice. Steam is subtler than water. We cannot hold steam in our hand as we can hold water. Steam is visible for a while and then it becomes invisible. Humidity in the air is subtler than steam. Presence of humidity in the air cannot be seen. Vasanas are like the humidity in the air, subtlest of all. Vasanas undergo transformation at the level of the intellect into thoughts. The thoughts in turn undergo transformation at the level of the mind into desires; and the desires undergo transformation at the level of the physical body into actions.

Affirmations in ancient cultures

Affirmations can be considered to be a simplified version of a very potent tool embedded deeply in ancient Indian culture – Mantras. As per Deepak Chopra, Mantras can be viewed as ancient power words with subtle intentions that help us connect to spirit, the source of everything in the universe. The science of mantras is complex, subtle and powerful, and works at many layers. It considers aspects such as the “vibration” associated to the sound and meaning, and hence, a proper initiation into Mantras, for correct pronunciation, understanding and usage is essential.

“Every thought has a counterpart in a word or sound; the word and the thought are inseparable. The external part of a thing is what we may call the thought. The same thought may be expressed by different words or sounds. Though the sounds vary, yet the relation between the sound and the thoughts is a natural one”.

- **Swami Nikhilananda Sri Ramakrishna Math**

The power of affirmations can be stated very simply: Affirmations are the force of creation. For AUM being the sound symbol of Parmatman (Supreme Reality), it is considered to be the first vibration as sound emanating at the beginning of creation.

“In the beginning was the word....”(John 1:10)

Guidelines for making and using affirmations

Principle #1

- YOU NEED TO DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT.
 - Have clarity of what exactly you want
 - If you're not clear, you can't create what you want
 - Be SPECIFIC about what you want

Principle #2

- POSITIVE, PRESENT TENSE, AND PERSONAL.
 - Always state affirmations in the positive, stating what you DO, want, not what you DON'T eg. If you say I don't want to do well, the Universe doesn't know what you want
 - State your affirmations as though they have already happened. If you state them in the future, they will stay in the
 - Use affirmations for self. Start with 'I ...'

Principle #3

- INCLUDE WORDS THAT CONVEY POSITIVE, ENERGETIC FEELINGS.
 - It feels wonderful that..... I am so happy and excited to be.... It is fantastic to....
 - The more positive energy you can generate with your affirmations, the more quickly they tend to manifest.
 - Right now, think about something you want in your life. Open your arms
 - and say with enthusiasm "I have..... (a fabulous relationship, a great new job..etc.)"

Principle #4

- TRUST THE TIMING OF DELIVERY. LET GO OF YOUR TIMELINE.
 - Allow the Universe to bring things together at the right moment for you.
 - The stronger the feeling of trust, the more quickly the affirmation becomes true

Principle #5

- LET THE UNIVERSE DECIDE HOW YOU RECEIVE YOUR
- ORDER.
 - You don't need to know how
 - All you need is trust the Universe

Principle #6

- ALLOW YOUR INNER WISDOM TO GUIDE YOU IN THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN ACTION AND ALLOWING.
 - Listen to that Inner Wisdom.
 - If something feels forced, back off.
 - Affirm that you are perfectly guided in ALL your activities.

Principle #7

- BELIEVE THAT YOU DESERVE TO HAVE A WONDERFUL LIFE.
 - Many people feel they are not entitled to health, wealth, happiness, and a
 - wonderful relationship and hence can't create using their affirmations
 - Add the word.. "I deserve..." in your affirmations if you think you are low on deserve-ability

Principle #8

- FEEL GRATITUDE TO THE UNIVERSE
 - Gratitude is a wonderful feeling at the heart level.
 - It not only sends out positive energy around your affirmations, it also helps you with feeling the trust that it is already being taken care of.
 - Every day take some time to make a gratitude list, either mentally or on paper. Cultivating the "attitude of gratitude" will create wonderful miracles in your life.

Annexure – Our Relationship with Ourselves

- Relationships mirror everything we feel about ourselves. When you've had a bad day, the people around you seem difficult. When you're not happy with yourself, your relationships seem to be lacking.
- The most important relationship that you have is with your own SELF
 - Check how authentic you are to your own feelings, needs
 - Do you love and care for yourself?
 - Check your beliefs
 - Relations hurt
 - Everybody leaves me
 - I fear rejection
 - I am insecure
 - I compare myself
 - I have to please others to be accepted
 - I am not good enough
 - Every relation is for money/selfish reason
- Every belief that you carry, your relationships will just reflect that belief
 - Eg. If I believe, everyone just blames me for everything, then my boss will blame me, my kids, spouse, even the neighbour and house help will end up blaming you
 - The way to deal with this is to change your belief and relation with SELF
 - Tell yourself, I release the need to be blamed
- Anytime you are faced with a difficult relationship, sit back and look at what is in you that others are reflecting?
 - Eg. If you have insecure people around you, ask yourself, 'am I feeling insecure about something'
- We attract relations to teach us lessons that we need to learn, once we have learnt our lessons, these relations change on their own
 - Eg if my you are someone who doesn't stand up for yourself, like you want to get up late but your mother in law forces you to get up early to cook for others, the lesson you need to learn is 'I respect myself'... Hence you will attract relations that dominate you and force you to stand up for yourself. Once you learn to stand up for yourself, the dominance disappears

Words of Self-Love (Sanjeevani)

Below is a set of affirmations that we have designed and use at Swasth Yog Institute. You can use these daily as a “prescription” for well-being.

And also add your own!

I am at **ease** and experience **stillness** within my Self.

I am **aware** and draw **courage** from my Self.

I am **strong** and feel **connection** with my Self.

I am in my **power** and discover **compassion** within my Self.

I am responsible to **act** in **flow** from my Self.

I am blessed with a **purpose**, for which my Self is in **gratitude**

I am established in my Self. I am **Swasth**.

I am **free** to be my Self. I live my **life fully and freely**.

My body, energies, mind and emotions are in **Yog**.

My home, finances, work and relationships are in **Yog**.

I accept the **past**.

I embrace the **future**.

I live in the **now**.

Every moment brings me **peace, love and joy**.

I allow myself to fully experience **peace, love and joy**.

I free myself to fully express **peace, love and joy**.

I receive **peace, love and joy**.

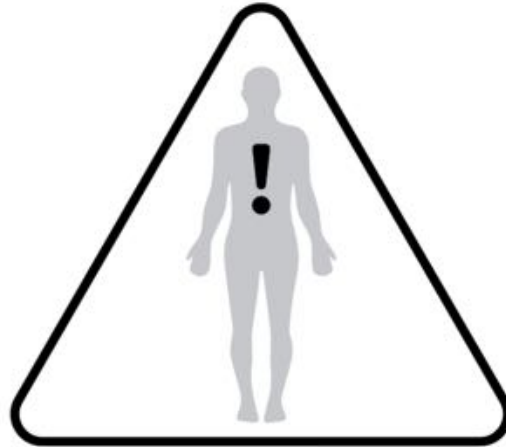
I am **peace, love and joy**.

I am **Swasth** at all levels –
physical, mental, social, spiritual and universal.

Chapter 10

“Understanding Mind Body Connect”

Understanding Mind Body Connect



- **Our role in illness:** We contribute to every “illness” in our body. The body, as with everything else in life, is a mirror of our inner thoughts and beliefs. Our body is always talking to us, if we will only take the time to listen. Every cell within our bodies responds to every single thought we think
- **The role of illness:** When we discover what the mental pattern is behind an illness, we have a chance to change the pattern and, therefore, the dis-ease. Most people don’t want to be sick at a conscious level, yet every dis-ease that we have is a teacher. Illness is the body’s way of telling us that there’s a false idea in our consciousness. Something that we’re believing, saying, doing, or thinking is not for our highest good. We can picture the body tugging at us saying, “Please—pay attention!”
- **Overcoming an illness:** We can take full responsibility of our health by changing our mental patterns and thinking. In order to permanently eliminate a condition, we must first work to dissolve the mental cause. The mental thought patterns that cause the most dis-ease in the body are **criticism, fear, anger, resentment, guilt**. For eg.
 - Long held criticism leads to arthritis
 - Resentment leads to tumours and cancer
 - Anger –boils and ulcers
 - Guilt seeks punishment, so if we are in constant pain, let’s find where we feel guilty
 - Fears are related to stomach issues

Real life example

I had a client, staying in Pune, with allergic asthma and Doctors advised him to shift to another city. When he came to me, we figured that his parents used to fight a lot and he studied in a boarding school. In the session he realised that he didn't feel free to cry or emote and which is why he had Asthma. After working on his past issues and letting them go and using affirmations like " I am free to speak, feel.." he didn't have to shift to another city, his medicines reduced considerably

-Shared by Geeta Bhansali

Using the body to work with emotions

Our existence is multi-dimensional – the Panch Koshas. Hence, the way back to our original state of well-being is also multi-dimensional. We can use any of the PanchKoshas to overcome the negative impact of our mind and emotions on our well-being.



Working with the body can release the emotions stored in different external and internal organs, either explicitly or implicitly, through sublimation.

This is very natural and in children and animals:

- We will note that a child is involved in anger with the full body – the body tightening, hitting or throwing objects, shouting or abusing loudly to express the anger. And hence, none of it remains in the body in an unexpressed form. A few moments later, the child will be happy and fully engaged with the joy in that moment.
- Animals (especially **cats/dogs**), shake themselves vigorously, after an actual or perceived predator has gone away. This act of shaking the body removes the residual fear stored in the body. The same principle is used in many somatic movements being developed now.

As adults, on the other hand, we do not engage with the emotion fully, for various reasons such as following acceptable social norms, not wanting to hurt others, many emotions directed at ourselves (such as self-doubt).

We are not recommending resorting to strategies used by children, to deal with our emotions. However, we can learn the general principle of not obstructing the flow of an emotion. Of letting the body be involved fully, while experiencing the emotion, and also afterwards, as a means of processing it. for e.g. Aasans work on this principle.

Below is a list of other such tools involving the use of the body to address emotions:

Tools	Description (what it includes, how it works)
Listening to, connecting with the body	Listening to body messages and acting on it, feeling the emotions stored in the body fully, when we listen and feel fully the body starts responding –what we feed in(thoughts, feelings, food), body feeds out
Physical release	Shaking off all the stuck patterns, emotions, toxicity and allowing the natural flow to happen
Movement & Dance	Letting every part to respond through movement and express-tuning into the body wisdom without using any logical mind
Nature	Connecting to all 5 elements of nature, which is us, we are part of the whole, the nature has all answers and remedies
Aasan	By bringing our body into a specific alignment in an Aasan, we can sublimate trapped emotions. Many practitioners have observed that chest opening aasans, add to confidence, aasans which flex the spine and joints also release stubborn-ness and increase flexibility in thinking
Physical exercise	Physical exercise, brisk walk, skipping, jumping and sports release endorphins and other chemicals, producing a positive chemistry in the body

 **Activities**

Body - Listening to, and connecting with our body

Our body belongs to us and hence it is our responsibility to take care of our body.

These exercises below are very short, they take 5-10 minutes to do, yet they are extremely powerful. They are like injections with powerful dosage to actually cure us from all dis-eases. We just need to do them consistently. Let us create a healthy bond with your body.

Exercise	Instructions
Guided meditation to listen to body messages	Take a few deep breaths and allow your body to relax, now let your attention flow from top to bottom and become aware, which part of your body feels, uneasy or there is discomfort. Gently let all your attention go there and ask this body part 'what is the discomfort all about' ..wait for the answer. Then ask this body part 'what can I do to ease the discomfort?'...again wait for the answer. Then very gently come back and open your eyes
Gratitude to body	Sit comfortably and start touching and talking to your entire body, starting from toes and going to head, talk to every part as someone you love, feeling, observing the sensations. Just acknowledge the bond, love and care you share with every body part (internal and external) – e.g. thank the soles of your feet for taking your weight, thank your heart for beating continuously, day in and day out
Universal, motherly loving touch to body	Sit comfortably with your eyes closed and connected to yourself. Stretch out your hands and feel them getting infused with all the love the universe has to offer. Let your hands soak in all this love. And now they become transmitters of this love, giving it to your body. The selfless, giving love you have always wanted. Starting from toes and going to head, gradually, touch and gently hold each part. Let your hands convey the love for part. Cover every part of your body, let any part not miss your love and attention – like the back of your neck, your scalp. Love fully!

 **Activities****Body - Movement****Points to remember**

- Be aware of your body sensations
- Take self-responsibility (don't push, pull, careful of walls, don't stretch beyond your capacity and get body pains)
- Cover the entire space of the room
- Cover all levels (top to bottom)
- Cover all sides (left right front back)

Method

- These are all group exercises
- The facilitator can switch from one option to the other
- The facilitator can use various sound tracks/songs and use instructions accordingly
- At times ask the participants to close their eyes and do the movements (especially the slow ones)
- No demo is required as this will make the participants become more conscious
- It's more of free flow

Category	Activities
Options:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk on heels• Walk on toes• Sides of feet• Slow• Fast• Backwards• Movement with eyes shut• Walk in straight line• Diagonal• Hop• Skip• Swing• Crawl• Stomp• Animal walk

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Props	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balloon• Dupattas of different colours• Ribbons• Rings
Forms of movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whirling• Free flow• Merry go round (phugdi)• Cover yourself completely with cloth and dance• Become a bird• A tree• Water, waves• Wind• Butterfly• Flower
Music (preferably instrumental)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dhol• Bhangra• Garba• Soft gentle• Fast and slow• Kids
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mirror dance• Blindfold• Palm• Finger• Rhythmic dancing, led by facilitator



Activities

Body - Nature

Being in nature is very therapeutic as nature has all the healing powers

- Nature is dependable and all giving
- Nature is all expansive - it can hold us and our problems unconditionally
- Nature is beauty and grace personified
- Nature connects us to the 5 fundamental elements from which all creation is made – the Pancha Bhutas – air, water, space, earth and fire.

Purpose	Name	Activity Description
Awareness	Labyrinth walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a maze with various objects, in nature and a group or you can walk alone• While walking observe, what it brings up...are you confused, can you trust, is there fear, are you rushing, is there comparison
Awareness	Blindfold in a garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go to a place in a garden where there is a secure 10 metre radius around you. Be blindfolded by someone, who is watching out for your safety. Spend 15 minutes by yourself, moving around and exploring – noticing what is happening within you, and the heightened sense of awareness of the stimuli outside – sunlight, shade, breeze, slopes, etc.• Afterwards, you can journal/discuss and become aware of how you navigate new terrains in personal life or work.
Connection	Hug a tree	Just put your arms around your tree and become one with it
Connection	Down on the grass, one with the sky	Lie down with your back on the grass, looking at the sky, the birds flying, the branches of trees rising up, clouds moving, letting yourself merge with infinity
Connection	Walking barefoot on grass	This has multiple benefits and cures dis-eases too due to many factors - The colour green and chlorophyll, grounding through connection with earth

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Energization	Looking at the Sunrise	Sun has many powers, we can derive energy from rising Sun
Expression	Talking to the waves	Waves come and go, and so do our problems, so talk to the waves
Expression	Tree Talk	Speak what is in your heart to the trees
Problem solving through surrender	Problem solving with nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think of your problem, write it on a sheet of paper • Now start walking, in silence, then observe and listen • Take in the guidance that nature gives you through signs..and those are your solutions <p>Eg. Problem: "shall I start this new project or no", I started walking and heard some people saying NO, saw a sign board with NO written on it, saw a tree in the shape of N; obviously there were enough signs for me to not start the project</p>
Letting go	Looking at the sunset	Talking to the setting Sun, and saying 'I let go of all my problems'
Letting go	Surrender to earth	Write all your problems down, you can then tear those sheets and dig a hole and let it go
Letting go	Shout out	Shout out all your problems on top of a mountain, or sea shore
Build Trust - Welcome the new	Arms wide open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simply stand with arms wide open on the sea shore or just in the open, under the sky and breathe deeply • Or say your affirmations the same way

Chapter 11

“Play”



The why, what, how

- **What:** Anything that is fun, non-judgemental, brings joy and laughter, involves spontaneity, creativity, no groupism, no winning or losing, can be physical or using imagination or both
- **Why:** fuels your imagination, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and emotional well-being, connecting with SELF and others, team building, builds confidence, focus. Play is a great stress buster

Dr. Stuart Brown from the National Institute of Play defines play is something that is voluntary, pleasurable, “offers a sense of engagement, it takes you out of time” and the act itself “is more important than the outcome.” Another aspect of play is that it is purposeless

Play is serious learning

Play is the highest form of research

- **How:** there is no how as long as it is fun and non-judgemental

Play needs to be an integral part of all sessions and word. It helps to lighten oneself and gives a happy fun break. It is also has a great recall value. We have all heard the saying, ‘all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy’ and it is true

Real life example

This person had lost his mother in a tragic incident and had become like a rock for almost 3 years, only when he started playing cricket he could connect with himself and others again

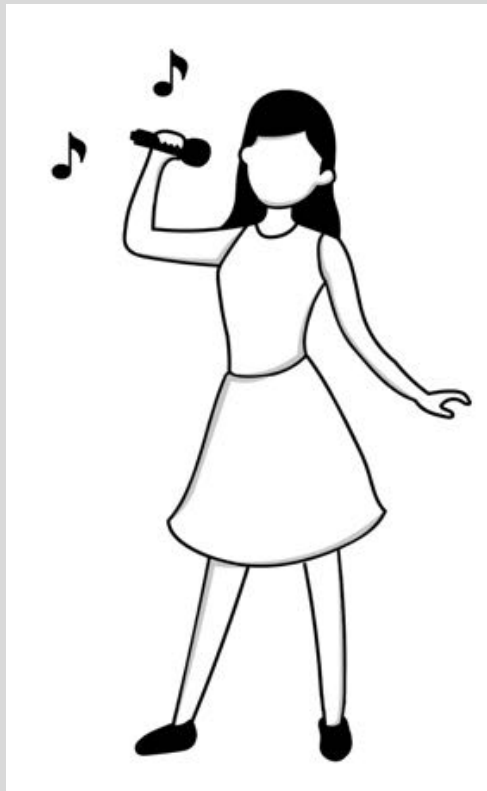
I have used play for visually impaired and children who can't hear and speak and it has brought a lot of laughter and joy to them

Play is used a therapy for autistic children and for various mental health patients.

-by Geeta Bhansali

Chapter 12

“Voice”



The why, what, how

- **What:** Voicing is using the art that we all possess – giving voice in sound to all that we feel.
- **Why:** The idea of using voicing as a tool for working with emotions is to access sounds that give expression to aspects of the self, which are unseen and unheard
- **Why use voicing in addition to words:**
 - It is said in our scriptures that all of universe started from a sound. The modern concept of “Big Bang” explosion also had a sound associated with it.
 - Babies use sounds to express. As babies, there only have the tool of sounds
 - In various native cultures, people used to come together for sound/song circles, sing their native traditional songs(for various occasions like marriages, birth death, entertainment, rains etc).
 - There are many emotions for which there are no words, these need to be voiced

Voicing is like opening the lid of the closed box. It helps sharing and decode our stories as our Biography is in our Biology

Benefits of Voicing

- **Express:** Finding our own voice. To befriend fear, judgment and vulnerability, often associated with being heard.
- **Confidence:** Let go of fear. Build self-esteem. Reduce performance anxiety. Clarity, focus
- **Release:** Release of energy blocks. Release of emotional and physical pain. De-stress
- **A new grounding:** Grounding in the body
- **Voice:** Expanding the range of voice accessing a richer palette for expression
- **Connect with self:** Building relation with self, shadow selves, with own voice. Integrating of hidden parts of ourselves
- **Joy:** Feel light, have fun, enhance creativity, connect with others

Guidelines for voicing activities:

- The work of voicing is more therapeutic rather than aesthetic. It is not necessary that the sounds be musical and beautiful. Voicing is not about beauty, it's about being REAL
- People can make sounds of every shape, density, hue and pigment
- With voicing space is important (voice needs space to travel)
- After every voicing, give rest to your vocal cords by deep breathing, yawning, sighing, stretching, relaxing
- It is important for the facilitator to be 100 percent present to each participant, using words like 'YES I SEE YOU, YES I HEAR YOU" throughout the activity
- Facilitator should encourage a lot of deep breathing

Types of Voicing exercises:

Type of exercise	Description
Gibberish	Gibberish means using various sounds and un-understood words (like a foreign /funny/own made up language). It helps most as the participant can use it with partnering exercises, without the other getting to know what we are saying (content does not get disclosed)
Words	We have different parts of ourselves, hidden, wanting to be heard and seen, we need to give a voice to these different selves else they become our hidden triggers and control towers. These activities can be used to enhance self-awareness.
Sounds	Using various sounds without words help in deeper understanding of self, actually giving an expression to what we feel, accessing various unheard, untouched parts of self(most often sounds speak louder than words, even silence is a sound)
Breath	These activities involve breathing in various postures. Breathing is very important while voicing as where the breath travels, the voice travels
Singing, Listening to Music, Creating music	Expressing through poems, favourite songs or creating your own rhythm or song and singing or hearing it over and over again-either by yourself or in group jamming session create huge shifts(feeling more alive, more creative, finding oneself)

Voicing Exercises - Gibberish

Gibberish means using various sounds and un-understood words (like a foreign /funny/own made up language). Gibberish helps most as the participant can use it with partnering exercises, without the other getting to know what we are saying (content does not get disclosed). When: Can be used anytime when alone (like in the shower, driving the car, alone in the room etc), to vent out feelings



Exercises

Note: In the below exercises,

- You can use gibberish sounds or words too, with variations in tones and voices that are relevant to the example). E.g. voices (highs and lows, words, sounds).
- Also, levels can be added with actions and songs eg everyone stands in a circle and one person start a sound with action and the next person takes the cue and follows with his own sound and action ; the group can simply sing songs that have no meaning (like dimpa dappa dimpa dappa; chikki chiki chik chak)

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Type of exercise	Ideas
With partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dialogue with your partner telling each other about your day• Tell your partner about any relation that bothers you• Tell your partner about any loving relation
In larger group	<p>Talk as if you are...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A politician (authoritative voice)• telephone operator (monotone)• train announcer• baby (giggly or crying)• complain (nasality)• cricket commentator• weather forecast/news channel speaker <p>Pass the sounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One person starts with a gibberish sound, the next one picks up the essence of the previous gibberish sound, develops it and pass to next person and it goes on in the circle



Activities

Voicing - Words

We have different parts of ourselves, hidden, wanting to be heard and seen, we need to give a voice to these different selves else they become our hidden triggers and control towers. The activities below can be used to enhance self-awareness.

Activity	Format	Instructions
A part of me	Moving Partner exercise	<p>Move from one partner to another, doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eg. A says to B a part of me thinks, I am beautiful • B repeats to A a part of you thinks, you are beautiful • Again A says to B and another part of me thinks, I am so ugly • B repeats again to B and another part of you thinks you are ugly • Vice versa <p>Then move to the next partner and say something else</p>
Script writing	Individual exercise	<p>Give contrast topics (eg loudness and softness). Participants to write the script for our different contrasting parts. Eg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write where you experience loudness and softness in your life • Write dialogue between loudness and softness <p>Other examples of topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highs and lows • Light and dark • Ups and downs • Activity and Laziness • Sadness and Joy • Anger and forgiveness • Control and Freedom
I can talk about	Group exercise or partner exercise	<p>Purpose: To become subtly aware of what is running in your mind and to give it a voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A starts: I can talk about (anything that comes to their mind) • B continues: and I can talk about (anything that

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		<p>comes to their mind)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It continues like that for about 5 rounds <p>Either do multiple rounds with 1 partner, or keep walking around, changing your partner</p>
Poem writing	Individual	<p>Note: This activity should be done when participants are more connected with themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A topic can be given (relevant) to the participants - Eg. Breath, life, friendship, happiness, sadness, pain, love, opening, end, hope, trust, ME, why • They need to write a poem on it in about 5 to 7 minutes • Each participant can share with partner or with the entire group • They can also add a melody to their poem (initially they are hesitant, they need to be encouraged) • Each line can be sung and then others repeat it (this is profound)



Activities

Voicing – Sound

- Various exercises: **After every voicing, give rest to your vocal cords by deep breathing, yawning, sighing, stretching, relaxing**

Activity	Description
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round 1-Each participant says their name and says one word that describes them • Round 2- adds a voice to their name • Round 3- adds an action to their name • Others can repeat their previous person’s name, word, voice, action and then add their own <p>Alternate formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name + Word + Voice + Action (one or some of these) said in one go by each participant. Next participant repeats for one or all previous
Relationship with voice	<p>This can be used to establish connection with your own voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What: Explore one or more: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Metaphor for your voice (e.g. choked drainage pipe or flying bird) ◦ Relationship with your voice (e.g. (hide and seek, best friends etc) • How to explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Write and draw ◦ Share with a partner or in a group

<p>Body balancing tones</p>	<p>We will work with key parts of our body one by one. For this, we keep our hands on each part, hum into our hands, and open into a sound</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="451 317 1300 779"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="451 317 695 373">Hand on...</th> <th data-bbox="695 317 883 373">Open into</th> <th data-bbox="883 317 1300 373">For</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 373 695 464">Thighs, pelvis, legs, feet</td> <td data-bbox="695 373 883 464">'oooo'</td> <td data-bbox="883 373 1300 464">Grounding, stability, anchor, land</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 464 695 527">below navel</td> <td data-bbox="695 464 883 527">'ohhhhh'</td> <td data-bbox="883 464 1300 527">Flow, water</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 527 695 590">above navel</td> <td data-bbox="695 527 883 590">'awe'</td> <td data-bbox="883 527 1300 590">Respect for self</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 590 695 653">on heart</td> <td data-bbox="695 590 883 653">'ahhhh'</td> <td data-bbox="883 590 1300 653">Give and receive, love</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 653 695 716">on throat</td> <td data-bbox="695 653 883 716">'aie'</td> <td data-bbox="883 653 1300 716">expression</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 716 695 779">on head</td> <td data-bbox="695 716 883 779">'eeeeee'</td> <td data-bbox="883 716 1300 779">Connection with higher self</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Hand on...	Open into	For	Thighs, pelvis, legs, feet	'oooo'	Grounding, stability, anchor, land	below navel	'ohhhhh'	Flow, water	above navel	'awe'	Respect for self	on heart	'ahhhh'	Give and receive, love	on throat	'aie'	expression	on head	'eeeeee'	Connection with higher self
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<p>Well of Emotions</p>	<p>Articulate your joy and pain (there's a well of emotions inside us, if we don't use the well it dries, the more you use it, the more it fills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ You can ask participants to do anything with actions and sounds to express their joy ◦ You can ask participants to do anything with actions and sounds to express their pain 																					
<p>Expression of anger</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertical plane: push the wall and scream, blah blah, blah • Horizontal plane: stomp feet on the ground and scream, blah blah blah 																					
<p>Throwing voice over the mountain</p>	<p>Note: This helps in projecting the voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagine you are standing on top of the mountain • Imagine you are swinging an object and say words like ha, hey ho (you can add more words-this is exactly like what you would do if you were on top of a mountain(screaming out loud for someone to hear)) 																					
<p>Echo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each individual contributes a sound and movement, the whole group echoes • Each person takes turns like that 																					
<p>Call and response-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make simple call and response sounds eg ya ya yya, cooee, oooaahhh etc • Add movement to each sound- -eg. Everyone stands in a circle; A sends a call to B (saying ya ya yaaa) B responds with the same sound and then sends out a call to another person with another sound- it is like playing catch and catch with sounds 																					

<p>Energy circle Music</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass the ha clap in a circle(everyone stands in a circle, A starts with passing a clap and saying HA to B, B receives the clap and passes the clap and HA to C and so on...) • Pass various sounds like ha ho haha hoho in a circle or randomly • Singing, Listening to Music, creating music-you can listen to your favourite music and draw what comes to your mind, sing your favourite song, create your own music(create music can be done in groups of 4 or 6 too or individual)
<p>Various Sounds</p>	<p>You can play with your voice, use various tones, pitches, loudness softness</p> <p>This each one does in a big group (taking out various sounds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiss (like a snake) • Swing like a child (hee haa) • Picking a star (oo ii) • Calling (coo wee) • Shifting gears (siren).. like an ambulance, use 'ng' like the end of the word sing, starting low and moving up and then down again • Wobbling • Laugh and cry with jaw open <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Allow your jaw to drop ◦ Wobble ◦ Drop your shoulders and back ◦ Voice from your belly ◦ Use your full voice ◦ Give enough time to experience and feel this • Nasal voice (complaining and whining)
<p>Loudness</p>	<p>Note: Exploring the complete spectrum from extreme loudness to extreme quietness helps in exploring the healing voice. This activity can be done by all people in a group – each singing their own song</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loud voice can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Expression of joy, celebration, delight ◦ Anger, claiming space ◦ Wanting to be heard ◦ Dominance/control

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soft voice can be:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Meditative, wisdom, not driven to prove anything◦ Emotionally bruised◦ Not able to claim space, can't express• Exercise:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Stand comfortably and breathe in and out through your mouth◦ Hum from softness to loudness◦ Think of a simple song and sing in the entire range of extreme softness, moderate loudness and then as loud as you can
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Activities

Voicing - Breath

- Breathing is very important while voicing as where the breath travels, the voice travels

Exercises:

Exercise	Description
Om Chanting	<p>Om Chanting: Symbolically, the three letters embody the divine energy. AUM represents all languages and the universal energy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: We hum to.. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Centre ourselves ◦ To bring our scattered energies back ◦ To energise ourselves ◦ For focus and concentration ◦ To build immunity • Method: how <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ First take a few deep breaths (breathe in and out-say this 3 times very gently and slowly) ◦ Allow your body to relax ◦ Now start humming the mantra “AUM” ◦ Hum loudly ◦ Slowly-slowly make the hum soft ◦ Now put your fingers in your ears and hum “AUM” (hum for 10 seconds) ◦ Now remove your fingers and sit in silence for 15 seconds ◦ Very gently come back and very slowly open your eyes • When to do it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ When you get up ◦ Before sleeping ◦ When stressed

From Struggling with Emotions to Yogic Vichaar

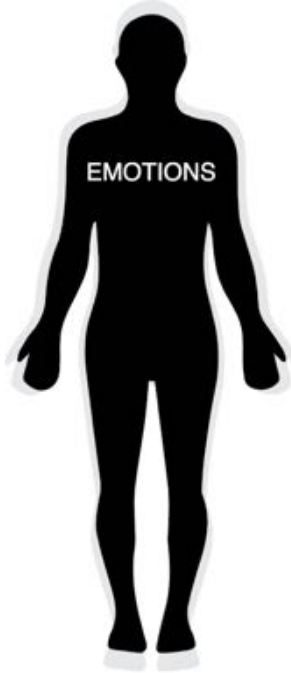
Whale's mouth (breathe from the mouth)	Imagine you are the mouth of the whale, your sides are the mouth of a whale, stretch each time and open each side like a whale's mouth, stretch to the front, back, sides, above and below
Belly breath	Lie on the belly Surrender to mother earth and breathe This gives deep relaxation
Tiger breath	Come on all fours and breathe

Chapter 13

“Emotion Release”

Emotion Release

Our body is our storehouse of all thoughts and emotions. It's important to release all toxic thoughts and emotions before they manifest as dis-eases.



Sometimes, before we can respond to emotions and their underlying message, we need to release them, to reduce their intensity and their hold on us. One can do this themselves, or with the help of a facilitator. We will find that after our emotions have found a release (it may happen in one go, or need many rounds of release), the millions of thoughts in our head get emptied out, and the space created within us, allows us to think fresh, so that we can move on.

Purpose	Activity	Instructions
Express, Release	Speak into a bottle	Take any used plastic bottle and clean its lid with a tissue paper or cloth. Close your eyes and speak inside the empty bottle. Say all the things you wish to express (this ensures privacy as people next to us can't hear the words). Then crush the bottle and throw it in the bin
Express, Release	Speaking out loud	Imagine the person towards whom you are feeling the particular emotion is in front of you. With your eyes closed, address the person by his/her name and say whatever you want to say to say. State their action as well as its impact on you

Express, Release	Writing or Scribble on paper	Take plain sheets of paper and write out all the feelings or else scribble continuously on paper. You can use force too, it's ok if the paper tears (it's important to express the intensity of emotion through intensity in scribbling). You can babble or say whatever is surfacing up while scribbling. Afterwards, tear up the paper and throw or burn it
Express, Release	Tear paper	Take lots of old newspapers. Start tearing them, you can use force too. You can babble or say whatever is surfacing up while tearing
Express, Release	Throw pebbles	Take small pebbles and throw each pebble. You can throw the pebble into the sea or in the bin. While throwing, speak whatever you wish to let go
Expansion	Becoming a tree	Allow yourself to become a tree (you can choose to close your eyes), feet firmly on the ground, tree with deep roots going right below the earth, holding you firmly, with branches spreading out. Then you realise your roots are interwoven and interconnected with roots of other trees. This allows you to feel expansive and at the same time feel supported, you are nurtured and a nurturer
Grounding & Energization	Shaking down	Shake every part of your body (head, shoulder, hands, fingers, back, chest, belly, legs, knees, hips, feet) and breathe Application: To cope with depression, lethargy
Rejuvenation and detox	Psychic shower	Rub off all the stuck, blocked dirt, energies from every part of your body (just like applying soap all over your body). Imagine standing under a clean pure waterfall, to clean away all the dirt Application: Good if you are in a toxic environment, toxic abusive relationship, lot of negativity. Helps release all negativity, toxins, lethargy. Brings in newness, positive energy, freshness.

Important points for a Facilitator (if facilitating such activities)

Stage	Guidelines
Before exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is serious work, create a base of courage, compassion and gratitude with participants before this exercise • Each participant trusting the facilitator and the group is critical
Setting up activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promise confidentiality • Instruct participants to not use logic, justify, go with their heart • Close their eyes and do this exercise (much more effective, as participants think less and express more) • Participants need to speak as loudly as possible (their voice gets drowned out in the noise and intense emotion gets a release) • It's ok to cry, use bad words, scream or nothing • Participants can sit facing the wall, and far away from each other so they are comfortable • Prepare participants that during the exercise, various aches and pains may come up in various parts of the body, and that it's part of the process. After the release, the pains will go • Have food supplies handy and encourage participants to keep sipping water, or eating (bananas)
During activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-assure participants constantly by saying – “its ok to feel, express and release your emotions”, “no emotion is right or wrong” • Keep encouraging the participant to do this • Play loud instrumental music so no one can hear each other • Offer full presence to every participant. Many times words don't need to be said. Our presence itself is enough • This exercise can bring up a lot of past, suppressed emotions, so the facilitator needs to be very mindful • Make participants do deep breathing in gaps
Post activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the activity gets transitioned out, and a positive environment of lightness, and moving forward is created post the release. • Play soft gentle music • Participants can lie down, sit with eyes closed, do a lot of deep breathing. Encourage participants to drink water and eat afterwards, through the day • Ensure that all participants are in a physically and mentally stable position when they leave. This is like an operation, it's important to sew up the patient before they leave. Do not let the participant leave alone, if not in such a state.

Additional Resources and About Us

About Swasth Yog Institute

Our Vision:

For all to live fully and freely

Our Mission:

To create an ecosystem
which enables a state of internal harmony (Yog)
within each individual's body, vital energies, mind and emotions, thus freeing them
to be their true, full Self,
and reach their potential.

Current reality

A state of internal harmony within our body, vital energies, mind and emotions, enables us to be our true self, and reach our potential. Today, one or more of these are misaligned, within many of us. e.g. we are great problem solvers, but our ability to deal with emotions is limited. We are focused on creating a conducive external environment for us, but our inner landscape gets lesser attention. The result of this widespread internal misalignment is visible in the form of “dis-eases” across individuals, families, organizations and society.

Some indicators of “dis-eases”, i.e. absence of natural ease are: Increasing incidence of mental and psychosomatic (“stress-born”) chronic ailments in individuals, strain in relations in families, depression amongst youth resulting in suicides, disengagement and attrition in organizations, damage to the environment, and increasing crimes rates and inequities in society (such as income and gender)

What makes the situation persist?

An individual is directly touched by a range of other individuals and institutions across one's lifecycle – parents, school, college, employers, media, healthcare and wellness providers, to name a few. A conducive ecosystem with many pieces in the puzzle – education, professional growth, organizational development, healthcare and wellness – can enable harmony over the entire lifecycle of an individual.

Sadly, the ecosystem today is far from its potential. Our education includes language, science and math, but does not teach us how to handle ourselves.

Employers invest more resources on strategies and skill-building than culture building, role-modeling and supporting staff to be their best. Incentives of healthcare providers are not aligned to health. There is limited formal support for life changing transitions such as starting work, getting married, becoming a parent, and retiring.

Many issues prevent stakeholders in the ecosystem from contributing effectively – settling to address symptoms rather than the root cause, silo-ed approach with little cross-sectoral collaboration, misaligned incentives, to name a few.

How will we create a new ecosystem?

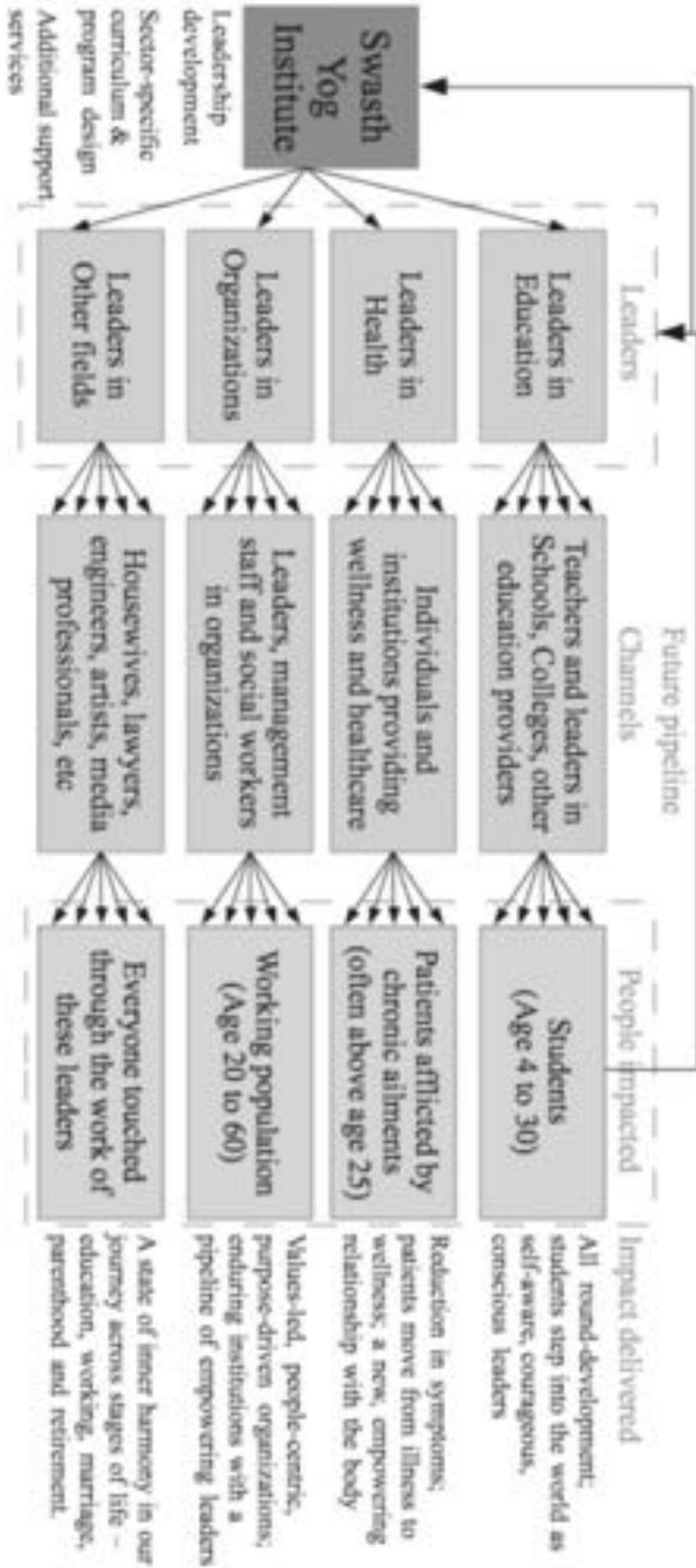
We will build and nurture a community of leaders, who can support a range of individuals, institutions and communities to reach their potential, living their own potential in the process.

Based on a harmony-centered approach (Yog), the leaders will operate with

- Internal harmony (with our true 'self' by aligning all dimensions of our being)
- External harmony: Driving social transformation in a way that allows us to stay true to ourselves while also bringing forth the potential in others

This will be achieved through

- **Leadership Development programs** to build self-led leaders who embody being the change they wish to see in the world. We will focus primarily for 3 sectors – health and wellness, education and running organizations especially in the development sector. The programs will be customized to meet leaders of leaders with varying contexts and skill-level, catering to management as well as grassroots leaders.
- **Sector-specific Curriculum & Program design** to enable leaders to tangibly integrate the learnings in the sector of their work. The in-house curriculum will support practical application of Yog in the above sectors. Leaders will be certified to conduct these programs for social transformation
- **Additional support services** such as consulting, research, quality monitoring and entrepreneur incubation to establish new enterprises.



Key principles behind program design and resulting decisions

Affordable: Developing our Intellectual Property (IP) instead of using expensive existing IPs; disruptively affordable pricing; range of price points to meet the needs of various segments

Accessible: Offered in regional languages; usable across sectors (e.g. organization development, education, wellness); Open source model for IP; modular programs to suit participant need

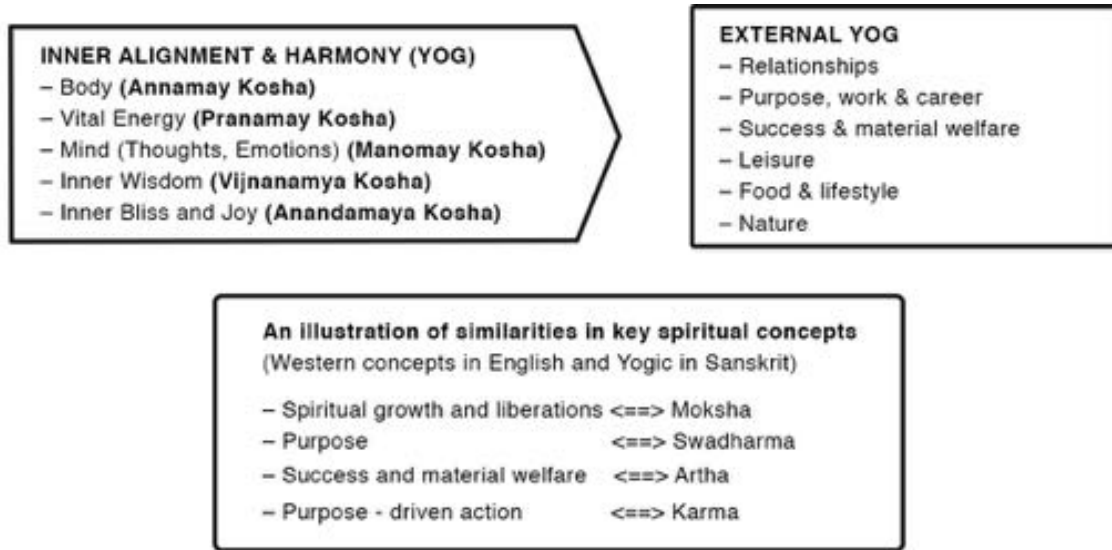
Sustainable: Fee-based delivery; cross subsidization models; remuneration for staff; expanding internal talent pipeline; based on time-tested Yogic wisdom of inside-out transformation

Our Secret Sauce – Yog

The Potential: History is replete with examples of luminaries realizing their potential as individuals and as leaders of social transformation - Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekaananda, Albert Einstein, Maya Angelou...We believe this potential lies in people from all walks of life - managers and entrepreneurs, teachers, social workers, doctors, housewives, artists, media professionals, lawyers and engineers.

The “secret sauce” to build stronger ecosystems enabling us to thrive and reach our potential is Yog. Yog is the science to restore internal harmony within all dimension of existence – our Body, Vital Energy, Mind & Emotions, Inner Wisdom and Joy. Yog is a system for living. Its power can be compounded with aligned modern tools such as mindfulness, life coaching, body wisdom, somatics, affirmations, art-based therapy, non-violent communication, to name a few.

Adapted to today's context with aligned modern tools, Yog can make us achieve far more than reversal of dis-eases. Yog can bring us closer to our true potential – as individuals, organizations, and societies. This is a universally applicable approach needing minor local customizations.



First area of focus – health and wellness

Our focus post conception in 2017 has been to establish a solid proof of concept in one sector – health and wellness. We are building Swasth Yog Institute as an action research center focused on building a community empowering health eco-system that integrates the knowledge of the west and the wisdom of the east.

This is enabled through the following key activities:

- Knowledge building and research
- Integration of knowledge into standards & processes (SOPs)
- Conducting training
- Monitoring quality of health and healthcare services and service providers to build accountability
- Providing Certifications

Highlights of first two years

- **Well-being Curriculum Design:** We designed “Sanjeevani”, a 55-hour course for patients suffering from various chronic conditions. ~100 participants across 8 cohorts underwent the program and experienced an average 67% reduction in symptoms over an 8-week period. The multi-disciplinary research resulted in a documented standardized curriculum and program design which is modular, customized and scalable with quality audio-visual content.

- **Clinic-in-a-box Design:** Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) to deliver accountable primary care services, piloted through our network of 24+ Swasth India Medical Centers.
- **Training of Health Professionals:** Primary care physicians certified to treat key non-communicable diseases – hypertension and diabetes. A pilot undertaken to develop a new cadre of health coaches who can deliver the Wellness Curriculum, enabling communities to take charge of their well-being.
- **Early pilots of Leadership building:** Emotional intelligence workshops facilitated and personal coaching delivered to ~75 leaders across levels in Swasth with a panel of 20 life coaches over a 3-6-month period. The program received satisfaction ratings of 88%, and 92% of leaders reported an increased sense of their leadership potential – increase in confidence, better interpersonal relationships and clarity on vision for themselves.
- **Quality Monitoring:** An accountability system designed for ongoing measurement of quality of service delivery by a health system. The system was piloted with over 200 staff members of Swasth Foundation, simulating a range of players in the health ecosystem – medical professionals, clinical assistants, health coaches, warehouse, pathology lab, back-end services.
- **Certification and Key partnerships:** Affiliation from VYASA (mother organization of India's only Yoga University) to offer Yoga Instructor Certification courses.

Journey ahead

From 2019 onwards, we intend to build on the foundation in health through the following areas of focus:

- **Research & Knowledge Building:** A Randomized Control Trial (RCT) to assess and establish impact of the wellness program “Sanjeevani” on chronic ailments. Knowledge Building in additional domains such as women’s health, dentistry, acute diseases, child health, other chronic diseases, cancer.
- **Development of Integrated standards:** Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) integrating Allopathic & Ayurvedic drugs. Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) for various players of a health system (simulated internally at the mother organization, Swasth Foundation)
- **Community Empowerment:** Development of additional consumer warranty products and designing other interventions to enable communities to hold healthcare providers accountable

- **Training a wide range of leaders:** Building self-led leaders equipped with key skills to Lead from the Self - coaching, training, partnering and management. This will maximize their potential and enable them to create a multiplier effect at their workplace. Various programs will be designed and offered, such as building the first cadre of Health Coaches with women from low-income communities, and training doctors on self-leadership and prevention modalities
- **Quality Monitoring:** Develop a comprehensive accountability system to measure quality of processes and medical protocols
- **Additional Partnerships to offer certifications** to Life Coaches, Trainers and in Nutrition

Additionally, we will take our first steps in education and organization building by

- Training middle level managers and supervisory staff in a non-profit
- Piloting a leadership building intervention with school leaders in education

The Dream: As Vivekaananda said, each soul is potentially divine. We believe these seekers are everywhere – as teachers, housewives, social workers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, artists, media professionals, managers and entrepreneurs. We aim to ultimately be accessible to anyone who wishes to access their divinity to reach their potential, and enable others to do the same.

About our Well-being Programs

Programs to support our journey to Well-being

The flagship program conducted by Swasth Yog Institute is “Sanjeevani” - a 55-hour course over a 7 week period for anyone suffering from conditions such as Diabetes, HTN, Arthritis, PCOD, Thyroid, Back pain, Chronic Acidity. Well-being is addressed through a group course and personalized health coaching.

SOME TOOLS USED

- Ayurvedic & Yogic Food
- Body Wisdom & Awareness
- Mindfulness & Self-awareness
- Aasans & Praanaayaam
- Creative / Art based therapy
- Life & Health Coaching
- Sound Resonance
- Affirmations & Mirror Work
- Emotional release & handling

RANGE OF INTERVENTIONS

- Group Sessions
- Health level measurement
- Self-learning resources
- Personal consultation
- Diet & Lifestyle assessment
- Assessment of Learning
- Whatsapp Support Group
- Cooking demos & pot-lucks
- Participant-led celebrations at end!

What does the course offer?

- **“Swaasthya” (Wellness):** A tangible, measurable difference in health which YOU can perceive. A feeling of well-being, being active and energetic.
- **“Swaraaj” (Independence):** All the knowledge, motivation and skills you need to be able to continue on your journey to reversing your ailment independently, over time
- **“Sah-Parivaar” (With family):** Tools to impact and influence the health of your

family, friends and larger community

Impact of intervention

Batches covering a wide range of participants – age groups, ailments, levels of severity, geography and cultural backgrounds have undergone the course and experienced the following results:

- **High engagement** - 98% satisfaction, 85% attendance, 85% successful completion rate ($\geq 70\%$ marks in theory & practical assessments).
- **60% reduction in symptoms** on a self-reported scale covering over 50 parameters.
- 95% of the participants reported **feeling empowered** to take charge of their health.
- **Reversal of many ailments** such as PCOD, Infertility and Hypertension post the course.
- In a **long-term impact** survey administered 6-12 months post course completion, 95% participants reported to be in a better state of well-being than a year ago, and 56% felt that the course had made a significant impact on their life.

What makes the program unique?

- **Sustainable solution** for long-term health – addresses the root cause of ailments
- Interventions at **multiple levels** – body, mind, vital energy, inner wisdom & being
- Grounded in a **holistic understanding** of Yog & Ayurveda, but adapted to today's context, using relevant modern tools
- Meets the needs of a **wide range** of participants – age groups and background, type of ailments and levels of severity
- In-depth understanding of concepts through a **combination of theoretical and experiential learning** and practice
- Extended course duration, so that participants can **experience measurable changes** in state of health (previous batches of participants have experienced a 30-50% reduction in their symptoms)
- **Empowers participants** to take health in their hands, and walk their path independently after program completion

- A **joyful journey!** Participants discover their inner child, hidden talents, and dreams in the process...

Innovations in the delivery of program

- **Use of a Wellness curriculum:** The curriculum is **holistic, modular** (deliverable in a range of formats, levels and modules), **customized** (to target conditions) and **scalable** with quality (audio-visual content).
- **Financially sustainable model for course delivery:** The program has been primarily delivered to low-income communities served by Swasth Foundation. A user-fee based model can ensure recover ongoing operating costs of conducting courses (rent, trainer salaries, marketing, learning material)
- **Course Delivery:** Multiple formats can be created to suit the needs and interests of participants. People can choose from a variety of **modules** as per interest or relevance for their health **condition**. Each Module can be broken down into **levels**, making it easier to integrate changes gradually, and also building motivation to move up levels over time.

Illustrative formats of modular courses which can be derived from the main course

- **Module-wise:** E.g. Nutrition, Healthy Cooking Alternatives, Understanding Diabetes, Yogic Aasan and Praanaayaam, Emotional release techniques, Art-based therapy (e.g. Performing arts)
- **Condition-wise:** Diabetes, Child Nutrition, Hypertension
- **Timing formats:** Daily, Bi-weekly, Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly
- **Duration of engagement:** 1 Day, 1 week, 6-8 week, ongoing wellness journey

Note: These are “courses”, not workshops. Courses follow best practices of teaching to maximize engagement and learning outcomes for the participants, facilitate in-depth understanding of concepts through theoretical and experiential learning, consist of rigorous theoretical and practical assessments, and ultimately equip participants to continue walking their path independently post the intervention.

Why does this approach work?

1. **Multi-dimensional** approach to well-being

2. **Addresses root cause of ailments**
3. **Measurable** impact on health outcomes
4. **Cuts through the clutter of conflicting “tips”** by integrating traditional and modern sciences
5. **Participant-centric** intervention design

Key success factors and how they manifest in program design

Multi-dimensional approach to well-being –

The program integrates interventions for the PanchaKoshs, the 5 Yogic sheaths of existence - Body (Ann-may Kosh), Vital Energy (Praanaamay Kosh), Mind (Thoughts, Emotions) (Mano-may Kosh), Inner Wisdom (Vignanamay Kosh), Inner Bliss and Joy (Aanand-may Kosh)

Addresses root cause of ailments –

Takes an “inside out” approach by addressing underlying stress/emotions, which are the root cause of ailments. This has been established by Yogic sciences. The field of Psycho-endo-neuro-immunology too, has established the link between emotions and health, for chronic ailments.

Measurable impact on health –

Over 50 parameters are tracked regularly, enabling participants and health coaches to see progress, and course correct accordingly.

Cuts through the clutter of “tips” –

Integrates time-tested traditional wisdom (such as Yog, Ayurveda) with modern sciences (such as Allopathy, Psychology, Mindfulness, Nutrition)

Participant-centric design –

- Focus on simplification and practical application of knowledge
- Participants empowered to take health in their hands, and walk their path independently
- Wide variety of offerings and formats available
- Personalized lifestyle modification planning, individual prescriptions for Aasan/ Praanaayaam
- A joyful journey! Participants discover their inner child, hidden talents and dreams along the way...

About our mother organization – Swasth Foundation

Swasth Foundation (www.swasth.org) is a not-for-profit social enterprise founded in 2009 and committed to health and joy for all. Swasth's mission is to build and demonstrate a sustainable and accountable health eco-system with joy. Towards this mission, Swasth Foundation operates 2 programs in addition to Swasth Yog Institute:

Swasth India Medical Center: India's largest non-governmental clinic network comprising 24 neighborhood one-stop-shop primary health centers offering comprehensive health services in 2 departments – family medicine and dentistry. Each as a one-stop-shop, each clinic treats infectious diseases like fever, malaria, dengue and also manages chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes. The clinic also performs dental procedures from extractions and root canal, to oral surgeries and dentures. Swasth's clinics offer innovations, the first of the kind in the healthcare space - like the lowest price guarantee and reporting time guarantee on Pathology Lab Services; 3-year warranty on dental treatment and a safety warranty on family health treatments. Each of these, is an enforceable quality assurance, designed to deliver a patient-centric experience.

Aanand Aalaya (“Abode of Joy”): A wellness center operated by a health coach – a new cadre of health professionals who harmonise the wellness disciplines of Yog and Life Coaching, thus empowering the community to take charge of their own health.

The center conducts various workshops and screening camps in the community and offers wellness services like yoga classes, yoga courses, nutrition courses, etc at the center.

At Swasth, our impact and outcome metrics reflect our commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centric, affordable services at scale to the urban poor. Our programs are designed to deliver high-quality at low cost (half of market rates), in a scalable and self-sustaining manner. As of 2019, Swasth has served 800,000+ patient visits, delivering direct savings of ~INR 10 crore of patients, with a 4.2-star rating.

At Swasth Foundation, we aim for all to be in Self and experience health and joy. This is reflected in our motto - ‘Swasth Raho, Aanandit Raho’ (Be in Self, Be in Joy)

My Journey

by Garima Gupta Kapila, Founder of Swasth Yog Institute

Garima graduated from IIT Delhi in 2005 and started her career as a management consultant at McKinsey & Company's India practice. She joined Teach For India (TFI)'s core start-up team in October 2008 and setup operations in Mumbai and managed its subsequent scale-up. She moved to Swasth in 2012, heading multiple verticals over the next 3 years focusing on improving performance & productivity, institutionalizing systems & processes as well as training staff for scale. In 2015, she took up the role as the COO of Swasth, overseeing Operations & Quality Improvement.

Garima has an avid interest in Yoga, and established the Swasth Yog Institute, after obtaining a Post Graduate Diploma in Yoga Therapy (and Yoga Instructor's course) from S-VYASA, India's only Yoga University. She is also a Certified Professional Coach from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and completed her ACC accreditation from ICF in 2018. Additionally, she obtained a Plant-Based Nutrition Certificate with a scholarship from the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies in 2019. A life-long learner Garima is currently pursuing an MS in Yoga from SVYASA, studying Integral Somatic Psychology and has commenced her journey in research as a Lown Scholar selected by the Harvard School of Public Health

I have a deep desire for seeing a world where we can all live fully and freely, where each of us can feel – “I'm free to be me”. A world where all of us can reach our highest potential, with the full support of our body, in our endeavors.

This is my belief: The human body is an advanced machine, designed to last for over a hundred years, and support us in our quest to achieve our highest potential, to be the best we can be. The miracle of life has given our body the ability to recover and heal itself. Ailments can be reversed, health restored, immunity built for future well-being. It IS possible to reverse the effects of aging, and to be healthier than we were 10 years ago!

This belief is not born out of reading books and having intellectual conversations, but by living this truth. As I look back, I see three distinct chapters unfolding simultaneously in my life.

Chapter one – From Yoga to Yog

At the age of 23, while living my professional dream, as a consultant in India's premier management consultant firm, I had to reluctantly go to a Yoga ashram for a month, due to a debilitating back-pain, not solvable through any form of western or a range of alternative treatments including Ayurvedic massages, Yoga Aasanas and even Hypnotherapy. It was here that I discovered "Yog" (now known as Yoga) preserved in its true form. I learnt that Yog (literally meaning "union" or "harmony") is not bodily postures & contortions – but being connected to the body, vital energies, emotions, thoughts and inner joy. This connection took me to the root cause of my ailment – misalignment between my corporate work and my interest in the social sector. The way my body responded as I connected with this underlying cause was nothing short of miraculous. Since that time in 2007, my backpain has never returned, whether I'm swimming, running, trekking or working late. In the process, I also discovered a way to dissolve the conflict between my skills and interests – becoming a consultant in the social sector practice of the Firm where I worked.

I also got to know of thousands of cases of successful disease reversal through Yogic practices, documented & validated by modern scientific research. Over the next 10 years, this interest in well-being led me to dozens of explorations and readings. I also got trained formally and completed my Yoga Instructor's Course, followed by a Post Graduate Diploma in Yoga Therapy from S-VYASA, India's only Yoga University.

Chapter two – From Diets to Ayurvedic & Yogic Aahaar

Along the way, I also discovered the importance of Yogic Aahaar (food) in today's context. All around – there were so many diets being proposed – high-carb, low-card, high-protein, low-protein, paleo, keto, fruit, vegan... While these diets looked at the body's need for nutrients, it was rare to find practitioners who saw Aahaar in a yogic manner – i.e. considering the food's vital energies, the effect of combining foods in a meal, the role of our mind and emotions in Aahaar. I found the answer in Ayurvedic principles, with some tweaks in application, given our context today.

Applying these in my life led to gradually shedding the excess weight I had put on, my skin clearing up, and a feeling of freshness and lightness through the day. The result - today, I feel 10 years younger and 10 times happier! My belief became rock solid when I found my family members also reversing many health issues they had come to accepted as part of life, by applying the learnings. There was a gradual reduction in medications for hypothyroid, high blood pressure, diabetes and nutrient deficiencies which being taken for several years by my mother-in-law (our first patient, who whom I'm forever grateful!).

Also, I understood the failures of prevalent approaches towards well-being - traditional sciences have been oversimplified today – yog has become “yoga” and Ayurved has become “Ayurveda”. Yoga is understood as a series of asanas and praanaayaams, and Ayurveda is associated with Panchakarma massages and medications. Further, pure practitioners of these sciences have sometimes failed to adapt their “language” and practices to the modern context, or have retreated into secrecy to preserve the purity of their practice. On the other hand, “modern” western science suffers from an overload of information, conflicting research, mounting evidence on the damaging “side” effects of medications and surgical interventions and multiple retractions of widely accepted “modern” research after being disproved by long-term studies.

Chapter three – Harmony within Mind and Emotions

One more piece in my journey needed to be aligned – my personality led by my mind and emotions

The story of the first 33 years of my life had been a struggle of finding, and trying to attain my highest potential. For the longest time, I believed the way to do that was to become free and perfect. This quest for perfection drove me to become an over achiever at a young age – top 100 All India Rank in IIT, get the dream job as a management consultant, and head teams of 100+ people in my 20s. At a personal level, my desire was always to be “strong, confident, independent”, unlike the stereotypical women. This made me rise above “feminine” looks and emotions, take charge of my life, live life at my own terms and not as per societal norms.

Until I realized, that even after doing and getting all the above, I wasn't happy. The more I achieved, the more worthless I felt. The more I fought norms, the more I felt imprisoned. Externally, I had all the freedom and validations I needed – supportive parents, spouse, in-laws, friends, colleagues as well as resume value achievements

to die for. But none of it made me feel perfect and free. As I cut needs, desires, relationships and external measures of success, by giving up the corporate sector and transitioning to a simpler life in the development sector, I was healthier and happier, but still felt imprisoned and unworthy. Until I realized the person holding myself back was me. And then I started fighting myself. Trying to change myself. Become a better human being. I meditated, travelled, attended workshops, read, tried to give importance to relationships, did whatever I could to “find myself”. The process was tough! It was so hard to become a yogi – the more I tried, the harder it seemed!

And then I realized, where these 2 intense needs were coming from:

- The need for freedom, was actually the need to be free from my self-limiting beliefs, and to step into my Being, like a child. But I did not recognize that my need for freedom had become so intense, that I had become bound by it!
- The need to achieve my highest potential, which often manifested in a manic drive for perfection, stemmed from the insecurities I had developed myself, in my early childhood years and reinforced to myself throughout life.

I realized that to break this vicious cycle of wanting freedom and to be perfect – I had to step away from “wanting” to “being”. I am, right here, right now, free and the best I can be. I have that choice at every instant. The free child I want to find again, lives inside me. To access it, the place to start is LOVE. Love and acceptance for myself – my mistakes, wrong-doings, shortcomings, life choices, past, present, future.

Chapter four - Domino effect

Suddenly, the pieces started fitting together. I was doing the same activities, but the feeling and therefore the outcome changed. Writing became a way to facilitate a dialogue between my inner child and critic, workshops became an avenue to test out small changes in my being, work became a means to be connected to my fellow human beings, meeting family and friends became an avenue to share and exchange ideas, music a means to access and express the whole range of my emotions, reading a way to receive messages from the universe.

And then small changes in outcomes began to emerge – prose changed to poetry, restricted movements to freely dancing, doing to being, later to now. In the process, I re-discovered many parts inside me – the innocent inner child, my feminine part, my masculine strength, the parental critic who actually wants the best for me.

I began to feel things I had forgotten –

- Love for all parts of me, and others
- Joy at the lightness of being, externalized through creative expression
- Harmony within (mind, body, soul, emotions, masculine-feminine) and outside (relationships, nature)
- Freedom from myself
- Gratitude

Most of all, I learnt to get truly connected to the source of answers to all questions – my inner self / voice / wisdom / intuition. I was no longer alone, I always had a companion inside!

Chapter five - Unravelling the mystery

With this being, I could unlock the secret which I had almost given up on being able to understand! Yes, I found the purpose of my life. *Ma raison-d-etre*. The reason for the birth of this earth-bound visitor, I. The most liberating part of this knowledge, was that I was but an instrument in the hands of God.

It started as designing a well-being program based on the principles of Yog and Ayurved, but adapted correctly in today's context, combined with relevant modern tools & research. In doing so, I feel blessed to have been able to combine all the skills in my palette – engineering a well-being program, delivering measurable impact through management principles, incorporating best practices in adult learning techniques, knowledge of yog therapy, nutrition and life coaching. This led me to Swasth Yog Institute.

Now the goal for me has shifted. I'm no longer looking to be perfect, and free. Because I AM perfect. I am a child of God. And knowing that has made me free. Knowing my purpose, which seemed burdensome for a while, doesn't seem so anymore. My purpose exists, with or without me knowing it. My purpose, like my life, is not mine! I am an instrument of God or whatever other name we wish to give to the universal force that creates, sustains and destroys us. If I can enable the universe to meet its will through me, then I will have lived fully and freely, and also reached my highest potential.

About Geeta Bhansali

(<http://geetabhansali.com/>)

Geeta Bhansali practises holistic approach to wellbeing through integrated therapeutic sessions, workshops and trainings. She believes that true freedom is when you can be yourself. And she facilitates people to be themselves.

Geeta – having gone through her journey and still moving on... has realised, that all is in the perfect order. It was meant to be. In her words.. 'I HAVE DISCOVERED ME & I LOVE BEING ME'

She has been into Healing field for more than 15 years and is actively practising various healing modalities and therapies. Geeta believes that everybody has an innate ability to heal itself and hence provides holistic health care through an integrated approach.

Through her personalized sessions, she promotes Optimal wellness, Holistic Health Care, Guidance, Counselling, Emotional Support, Personal Growth, Empowerment. She practises a host of therapies like...

- Theta Healing®
- Bowen Technique
- Louise Hay Philosophy
- Reiki
- EFT
- Body Talk Access
- Emotional Healing
- Power of Subconscious mind
- Voice Movement Therapy
- Compassionate Communication
- Art Based Facilitation
- Play Back Theatre
- Singing Bowl therapy

Geeta is an Internationally certified trainer for "Heal your Life" workshop, "Heal your Life Coach and "Heal your Life" Teen Playshop

She practices in Mumbai, Pune, Goa, Surat & Dubai & her healing work includes workshops, seminars, practice groups, voluntary work & personalised sessions. Some of her recent associations include working with visually impaired children of National Association of Blind-Goa and Surat, hearing and speech impaired children, international school children and teachers (Fazlani L'academie globale), teachers of Educo, special needs children (SETU), Swasth Foundation – Swasth Yog Institute (www.swasthyog.org) and students of Entrepreneurship- VIIT Pune.

Resource People and Institutions

Sharing, not hoarding is the spirit of yog, of union. In this spirit, we have created the following YouTube channel with resources for well-being: <https://tinyurl.com/swasth-yog-institute>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzP_q2xogzk4Zf7J56Mkn_g

The channel contains videos of recipes as per Yogic Aahaar guidelines, Yogic practices (such as Praanaayaam, Aasan, Loosening Practices, Dynamic Practices), Guided Audios for Meditations, Talks on Spirituality, to name a few. All are welcome to use and refer these resources. Also, feel free to email us to get access to the templates and checklists used in the book.

Following organizations and people could be potential resources for you, as you chart out your journey. Their work has been a great support to us in re-discovering Yog, and we are forever indebted to them.

Yog, Ayurved & Body Wisdom

- Isha Foundation
- Kaivalyadhama (Lonavala)
- The Yoga Institute (Santacruz, Mumbai)
- Swami Vivekaananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana
- Dr Robert Svoboda
- Dr Claudia Welch
- Suzanne Scurlock-Durana

Life Purpose Work

- Mission Impossible Leadership Program

Emotional development

- Leadership That Works (LTW)
- Indian Society for Applied Sciences & Behaviour (ISABS)
- Dr Wasundhara Joshi (Changeworks)
- Louise Hay
- Manav Sadhana
- Sukhvinder Sircar (Joyous Woman)
- Vikram Bhatt (Leadership That Works)

Yogic Aahaar - Food, Nutrition

- Vaidya Atreya Smith
- Dr Vasant Lad
- PHC Clinic and Nutrition Science (Bengaluru)
- Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM)
- Sanctuary for Health and Reconnection to Animals and Nature (SHARAN)
- The Health Awareness Center (THAC)
- T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies

Spirituality

- Art of Living
- Chinmaya Mission
- Isha Foundation
- Mukeshaanand (<http://www.mukeshaanand.org/>)
- Ramana Maharshi Ashram
- Vipassana

References

- Emotions, by Sadhguru
- Emotional Intelligence, by Nikita Yogi Ganatra
- Coaching For Transformation, by Leadership That Works
- Emotional Intelligence, by Nikita Yogi Ganatra
- Emotoscope www.6seconds.org/feel | by Joshua Freedman & Marilyn Jorgensen
- Falling into Grace, by Adhyashanti
- Emotions, by Sadhguru
- <https://www.kindspring.org/story/view.php?sid=63753>
- <http://www.enlightenedfeelings.com/body.html>
- <https://www.ramdass.org/using-emotions-on-the-spiritual-path/>
- “Creating True Peace”, by Thich Nhat Hanh
- www.drpatriciacrane.com
- <https://www.louisehay.com/101-best-louise-hay-positive-affirmations/>
- <https://www.healyourlife.com/main-topic/affirmations>
- <http://www.orderingfromthecosmickitchen.com/>
- <http://www.hinduism.co.za/mind.htm>
- Heal your Body by Louise Hay
- Louise Hay | Love Your Body | Listen to 400+ Affirmations to Heal Your Body
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47mxpGW0iJQ>
- Heal your body in Hindi - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7HsWlwHBft0>
- <https://www.healyourlife.com/take-good-care-of-your-body>
- <https://www.louisehay.com/wisdom-from-louise/topics/healing/>
- <https://www.louisehay.com/health/>
- <http://lovehonourandrespect.org/emotional-health/louise-hay-affirmations-for-illnesses/>
- Labyrinth walk - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNM93EEs7WI>
- The Healing Voice by Paul Newham