

COPING WITH SURGERY

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'PSYCHOLOGICAL PREHABILITATION'

(LEVITT & GRIMMETT, 2019)

- **PROCEDURAL INFORMATION**
 - SLOWLY AND TO COMFORT LEVEL! MONITOR
 - REPUTABLE SOURCES ONLY
 - FAMILIARIZE WITH TEAM, ENVIRONMENT
- **BEHAVIORAL INSTRUCTIONS**
 - WELLNESS ROUTINES
 - DIET AND EXERCISE
 - "IN TRAINING!"
- **COGNITIVE INTERVENTIONS**
- **MIND/BODY EXERCISES**
- **EMOTION REGULATION**

GOALS:

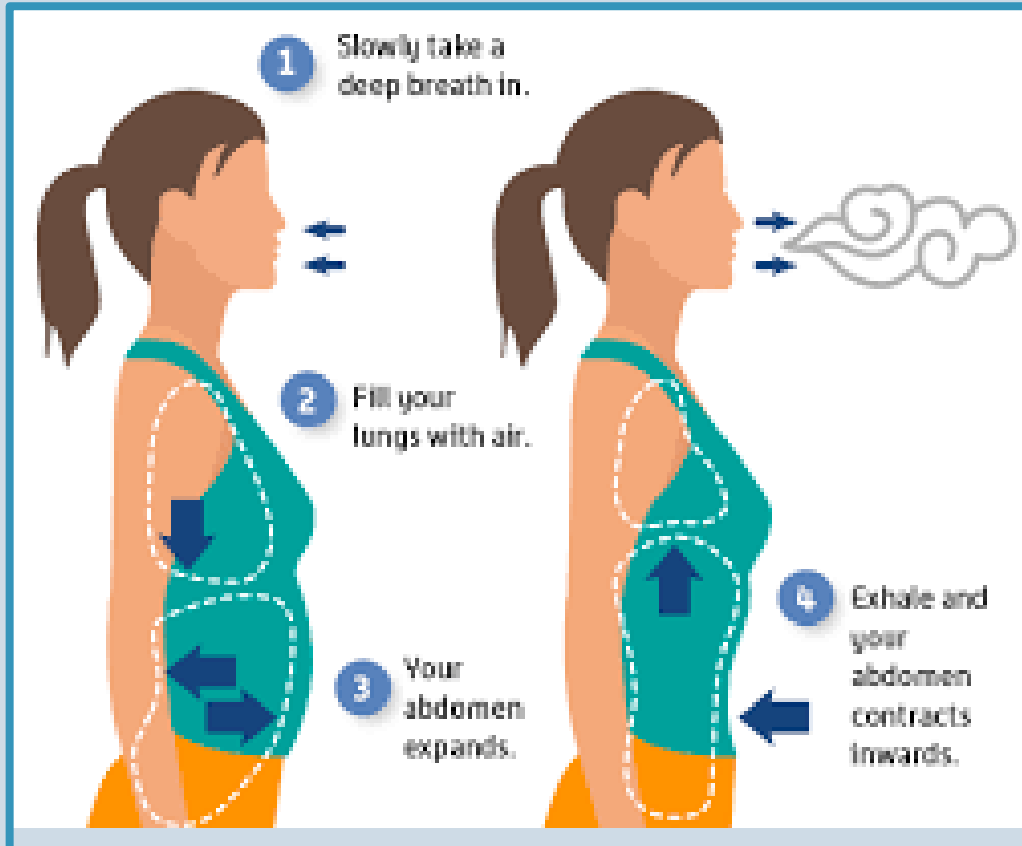
- *ENHANCE SELF-EFFICACY*
- *ENHANCE SENSE OF CONTROL*
- *REDUCE DEPRESSION / ANXIETY*

ENRICHED OUTCOMES

APPLICABLE TO ALL TREATMENTS

- DECREASED POST-SURGICAL PAIN
- LESS EMOTIONAL DISTRESS
- REDUCED NAUSEA
- REDUCED LENGTH OF HOSPITAL STAY
- ENHANCED SHORT-TERM SURGICAL OUTCOMES
- ENHANCED FUNCTIONAL OUTCOMES
- INCREASED SELF-RATINGS OF RECOVERY
- ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE

BREATHING 'BETTER'



- BELLY BREATHING
- “BALLOON”
- PACING/RHYTHM
- “BOX BREATHING”



- “4, 7, 8 BREATH”



Working definition from Jon Kabat Zin

LivingMoreFully.com



Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us or within us



Recognition that event will pass and be replaced by a new experience in the next moment

Something we all naturally possess

More readily available when we practice on a daily basis



Bring awareness to what we are directly experiencing via the senses, or to your state of mind via thoughts and emotions



Helps put some space between ourselves and our reactions, breaking down conditioned responses

MECHANISM TO RELIEVE SUFFERING

- RESTING WITH EXPERIENCES WITHOUT HOLDING ON OR PUSHING AWAY ALLOWS FOR NEW INSIGHTS TO ARISE; PERSONAL DIFFICULTIES BECOME CLEAR AND MORE WORKABLE
- WHEN SELF-CONSCIOUS EFFORT OR DIFFICULT MENTAL EXPERIENCES ARISE

“NOTICE...

RELAX...

LET GO”

- RECALL NO FEELING IS FINAL
- HOWEVER UNBEARABLE ANY DISCOMFORT SEEMS, ULTIMATELY EVERYTHING WE EXPERIENCE IS **TEMPORARY**

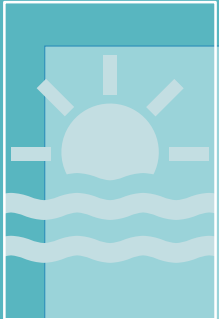


MINDFULNESS AND THE CANCER EXPERIENCE (CARLSON, 2016)

- INSOMNIA/SLEEP QUALITY
- FATIGUE
- STEEPER CORTISOL SLOPES
- BLOOD PRESSURE
- INCREASED TELOMERE LENGTH
- REDUCED STRESS RESPONSE
- REDUCED INFLAMMATION
- IMPROVED NK ACTIVITY
- COGNITIVE BENEFITS
- REDUCTION IN ANGER, ANXIETY, DEPRESSIVE MEASURES

- REDUCED RISK OF DEPRESSIVE RELAPSE
- REDUCED SENSE OF UNCERTAINTY
- LESS FEAR OF RECURRENCE/PROGRESSION
- CONTROL
- LOSS
- GRIEF
- ROLE FUNCTIONING
- SPIRITUALITY
- POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

THE BASICS OF MINDFULNESS PRACTICE



Set aside some time and space. You don't need any special equipment to access your skills



Set a time limit. If you're just beginning, it can help to choose a short time, such as 5 or 10 minutes



Observe the present moment as it is. The aim of mindfulness is not quieting the mind, or attempting to achieve a state of eternal calm

- *Aiming to pay attention to the present moment, without judgement*



We focus on the breath because the physical sensation of breathing is constant and you can use it as an anchor to the present moment

ANCHORING THE MIND



Feel your breath. Bring your attention to the physical sensation of breathing: the air moving through your nose or mouth, the rising and falling of your belly, or your chest.



Bring your attention to feel the sensations of your breathing. Take a few deep breaths to sense where you can feel the breath most easily, as coolness or tingling in the nostrils or throat, as movement of the chest, or rise and fall of the belly. Then let your breath be natural, relaxing into each breath as you feel it.



After a few breaths your mind will probably wander. When you notice this, simply come back to the next. Before you return, mindfully acknowledge where you have gone in the back of your mind, such as “thinking,” “wandering,” “hearing,” “itching.” Then gently and directly return to feel the next breath.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMAGERY

- MENTAL PICTURE OF AREA OF CONCERN (USE SENSES-COLOR, SHAPE, TEXTURE, TEMPERATURE, SOUND)
 - GUIDE BREATH TO THE TISSUE AND GRADUALLY ADJUST
 - STRENGTHEN AND HEAL THAT AREA (E.G., SENDING RICH BLOOD, OXYGEN → IMAGERY CAN ACTUALLY DO THIS!)
- DOCTOR AND MEDICAL TEAM IN WHICH YOU HAVE SUCH CONFIDENCE
 - MASTERFUL, WELL-REHEARSED MOVEMENTS OF HANDS
 - INTUITION
- CREATION OF NEW, HEALTHY CONNECTIONS
- FREEDOM FROM BODILY TISSUE WHICH DOES NOT SERVE YOU

MEDITATIVE SUGGESTIONS

- BREATHING IN HEALING
- BREATHING IN PEACE
- BREATHING IN TRUST (MEDICAL TEAM, BODY'S ABILITIES TO HEAL)
- USE YOUR BREATH TO RELEASE ANY WORRIES WHICH MAY ARISE
- USE YOUR BREATH TO RELEASE ANY DIFFICULT IMAGES OR PREDICTIONS WHICH MAY ARISE
- BREATHING IN FREEDOM, RELEASING ILLNESS AS TISSUE SOON REMOVED

WORKING WITH EATING

- THESE TECHNIQUES ARE ALL HELPFUL; HOWEVER, OVER-FIXATION IS ALSO COUNTERINTUITIVE!
 - ADAPT AS NEEDED
- DISTRACTION ALSO HELPFUL WHEN NEEDED/WARRANTED
 - CASUAL APPROACH (?)
 - 'GRAZE' DURING ACTIVITY
 - INCREASE OTHER STIMULI
 - HAVE OTHERS EAT SAME FOOD/PORTION

- ANXIETY CYCLE CAN OFTEN DEVELOP
- SCHEDULE – MONITOR IF IT IS HELPING
- CHALLENGE OVERLY PREDICTIVE THOUGHTS
- RELAXATION TECHNIQUES BEFORE MEALTIMES
 - THROAT-OPENING BREATHS (FEELS LIKE A YAWN)
- IMAGERY
 - SMOOTH PASSAGE-SLIDING
 - RELAXING DIGESTIVE SYSTEM (GENTLE STRETCH, EXPANSION, HEAT, COLOR)
- TIMING/RHYTHM OF BITES
 - MUSIC?!
- FOCUS ON NOURISHMENT
 - EVEN TO THE CELLULAR LEVEL
- ENHANCE PRESENTATION IF ABLE

WORKING WITH THOUGHTS

- **REFRAMING:** ACCEPTING THAT NOT ALL YOUR THOUGHTS ARE TRUE JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE THEM
 - FACT-CHECKING
 - *REALISTIC, NOT OVERLY POSITIVE*
- IT CAN BE HELPFUL TO THINK OF WORST CASE, AND THEN BEST CASE SCENARIOS, AND SETTLE ON SOMETHING IN BETWEEN
 - *IS THIS TRUE → IS THIS HELPFUL?*
- BALANCED THINKING



WORKING WITH CHALLENGING THOUGHTS

Challenging	Adaptive
I'm not safe	The world can be dangerous but there are things I'm doing to enhance my safety
	I can trust:
	Feeling unsafe isn't the same as being unsafe
Things will never be the same again	No feelings are permanent
	Not everything will be the same as before, but some things are the same now
	Even though things may never be exactly the same, I can grow and adapt

Challenging	Adaptive
I have no control over anything	I can control some things about my future
	Doing things gives me more control
	Talking to someone about what I'm feeling shows I have some control
This is a huge setback	There are many things I can do, so I'll focus on those instead of what is outside of my control
	There have been many setbacks but focusing only on them gets in the way of my bigger priorities and/or values
	I can use this time to strengthen my faith/values/practice

ADDING MORE STRUCTURE LEADING UP TO EVENT

Plan a realistic number of events or tasks for each day

Decisions are mentally taxing; having routines reduces the number of decisions we make each day

Set eating schedule-helps to regulate blood sugar/insulin/hormones, mental and physical energy, digestive health, sleep

- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, inhalants (avoidance coping, but also reduces immunity)

Exercise (anxiety/depression research)

Open blinds, get outside if able

Make a plan for dealing with feelings of being overwhelmed or overly distressed

Gratitude practices

Set boundaries (tasks, phone, social media)

Treat yourself!

SLEEPING BETTER



Avoid daytime napping

Better to keep short and before 2 p.m.



Establish a standard wake-up time → adhere regardless of night before

Can't force sleep but can control wake-up time- will eventually begin to get sleepy at an appropriate time



Natural light throughout the day, avoid bright light and screens hour before bed



Last caffeine 4-6 hours, last meal 2-3 hours before bedtime



Establish soothing routine, start one hour before bedtime



Use bed only for sleeping

SLEEPING BETTER

Never spend long periods of time awake in bed

20 minute rule! Go to another room, occupy self with something boring/gently stimulating. Return when immediately tired. Repeat if needed!
Prolonged periods of wakefulness in bed lead to tossing and turning, frustration, worrying

Avoid worrying, thinking, planning, etc., in bed

If such mental activities come on automatically in bed, then get up and go to another room (as above)
Jot down to address in morning
Set time during the day

Don't look at the clock-**quality** not **quantity**!

Sleep deprivation experiments proved that after staying awake continuously for over 72 hours, only 12 hours of sleep were needed to return to normal

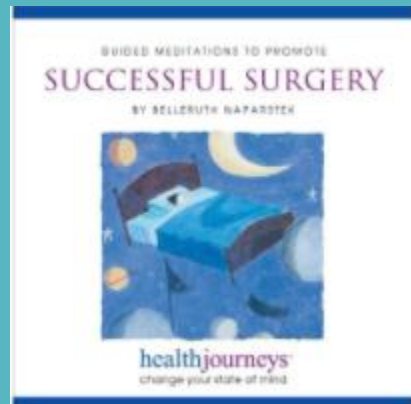
Reframe Insomnia

"I'm in a really comfortable place, it's quiet, no one is calling or texting me, I'm relaxing in the dark"


RESOURCES

GUIDED IMAGERY

BELLARUTH NAPARSTEK, et al
www.healthjourneys.com; iTUNES




MEDITATION APPS



Calm
age 7+ ★★★★★
Appealing meditation and relaxation for all ages.
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