

Respite for Caregiver Health: Strategies to Maximize Benefits, Minimize Stress

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Disclosure

- I have no financial interest related to this presentation.
- Boston Children's Hospital's David S. Weiner award helped to support my work in yoga and wellness at Boston Children's.
- Yoga Reaches Out helps to support Wellness at BCH.





Objectives

1. Understand the impact of caregiving on caregiver health and how respite for self-care can mediate these effects.
2. Be relaxed and comfortable after a session of chair yoga and meditation.
3. Have tools and strategies for maximizing the benefits of respite (formal and informal) on caregiver health.



Overview

- Introduction/Disclosure/Overview
- Brief seated meditation
- Impact of caregiving on caregiver health
- Benefits of mindfulness practice
- Chair yoga and meditation
- Brainstorming, goal-setting
- Discussion
- Closing meditation





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Seated meditations

- Breath focus
- Breathe in 1, breathe out 2, breathe in 3, breathe out 4 . . . breathe out 10 (repeat)
- Eyes, lips, hands, feet
- Single word (e.g. om)
- Two words (“peace, calm”; “here, now”)
- Quick body scan (head to toe)
- Focus on sounds in the room



Impact of Caregiving on Caregivers

- Increased stress levels:

- 38% report high stress
- 25% moderate stress

- National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and the AARP Public Policy Institute Report: *Caregiving in the U.S. 2015* (http://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2015_Caregivinginth eUS_Final-Report-June-4_WEB.pdf)

- Increased stress hormones

- Decreased immune response

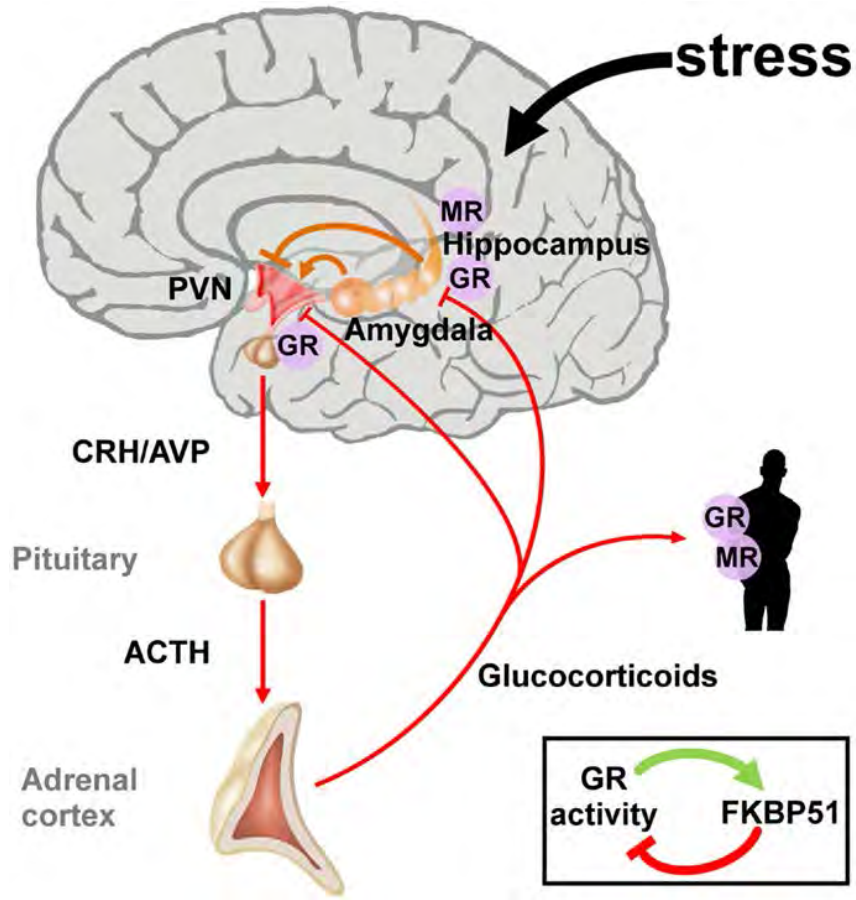
- Vitaliano, P., Zhang, J. & Scanlan, J. (2003). Is caregiving hazardous to one's physical health? A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(6): 946-972.



https://c2.staticflickr.com/6/5050/5242760927_cc8f6ca24d_b.jpg



Stress Response



- Amygdala perceives threat
- Sends signal to hypothalamus which leads to "fight or flight" response
 1. Sympathetic nervous system:
 - Epinephrine (incr. HR, RR, blood sugar)
 2. Hypothalamic-pituitary axis:
 - ACTH -> cortisol (incr. glu)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal_axis.jpg



Impact of Caregiving on Caregivers

Physical health

- Nearly twice as many family caregivers report fair or poor health status, had a chronic condition, or a disability (60% v. 33%)
- Family caregivers have nearly twice the rate of serious illness (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis) (45% v. 24)
 - Ho et al A Look at Working-age Caregiver Roles . . .2005 Commonwealth Fund)
- Increased mortality (63% increased risk of mortality for spousal caregivers experiencing strain)
 - Schultz and Beach Caregiving as a Risk Factor for Mortality *JAMA*. 1999;282(23):2215-2219



Impact of Caregiving on Caregivers

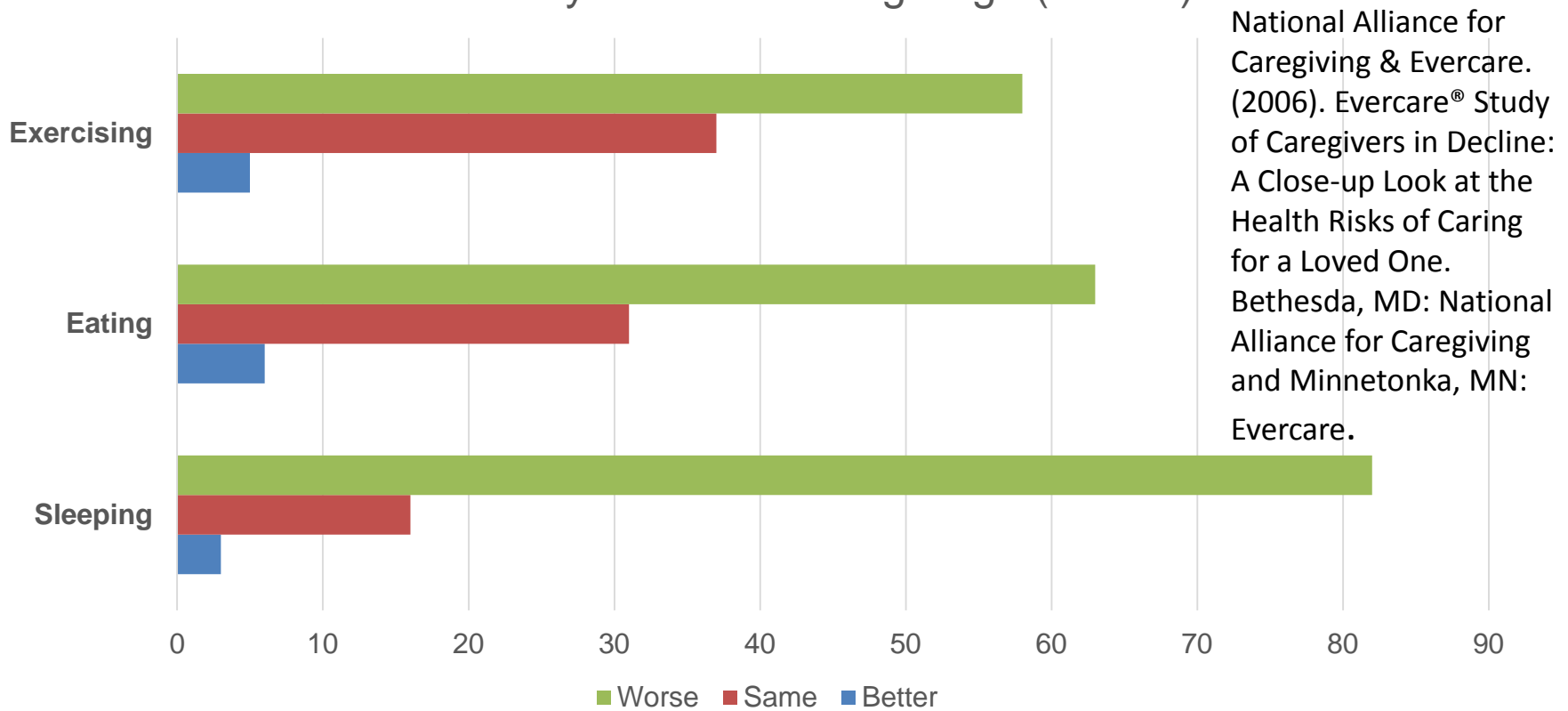
Mental Health

- 40-70% clinically significant symptoms of depression
 - Zarit, S. (2006). *Caregiver Assessment: Voices and Views from the Field*. Report from a National Consensus Development Conference (Vol. II) (pp. 12 – 37). San Francisco: Family Caregiver Alliance.
- Exhaustion
 - Center on Aging Society. (2005). *How Do Family Caregivers Fare?* (Data Profile, Number 3). Washington, DC: Georgetown University.
- Cognitive impact of stress: Short term memory, attention, verbal IQ
 - Vitaliano, et al. *Psychology and Aging*, 20: 402-411.



Impact on Self-Care

Are the following types of self-care better, the same, or worse than before you started caregiving? (N=528)



Self-care and caregiving

“Love is the capacity to take care, to protect, to nourish. If you are not capable of generating that kind of energy toward yourself—if you are not capable of taking care of yourself, of nourishing yourself, of protecting yourself—it is very difficult to take care of another person.”

-Thich Nhat Hanh

Quoted in **This Is the Buddha's Love** Melvin McLeod interviews Thich Nhat Hanh, Shambala Sun <http://www.shambhalasun.com/>



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Lifestyle Medicine



NUTRITION



EXERCISE



TOBACCO
& ALCOHOL



STRESS
MANAGEMENT



SLEEP



HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF LIFESTYLE MEDICINE

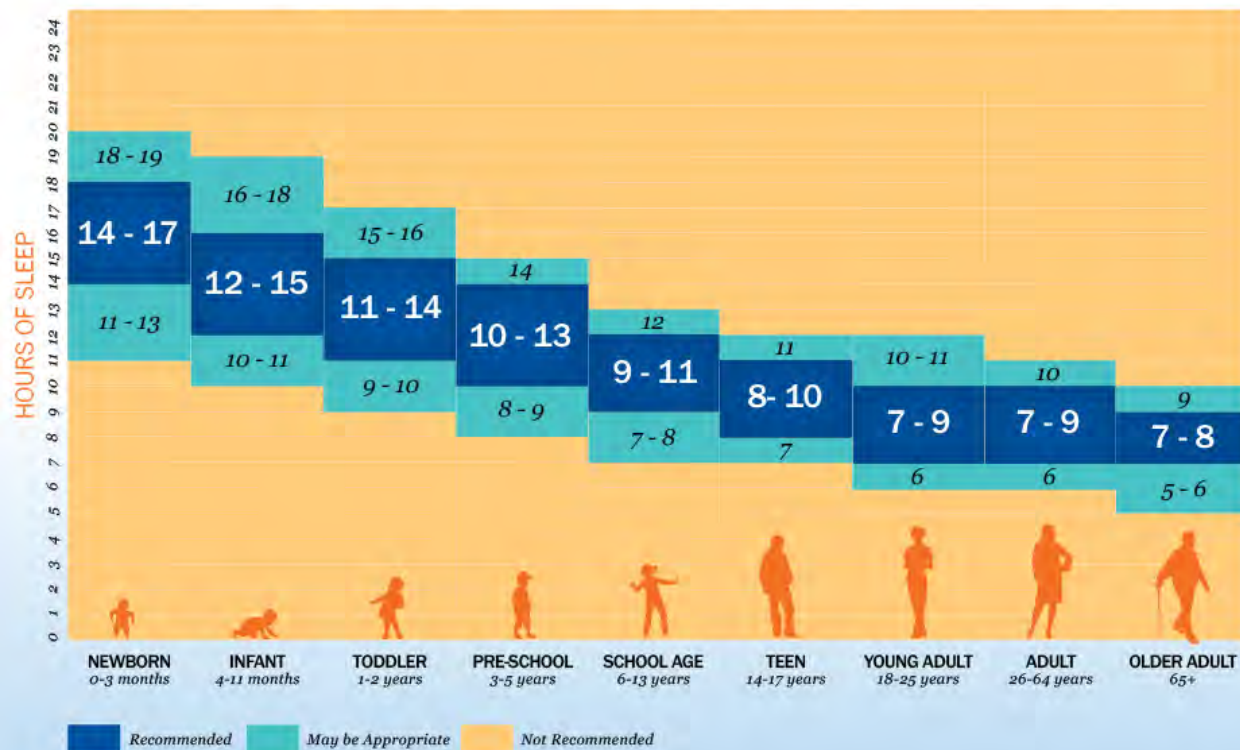


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SLEEP DURATION RECOMMENDATIONS



[SLEEPFOUNDATION.ORG](http://sleepfoundation.org) | [SLEEP.ORG](http://sleep.org)

Hirshkowitz M, The National Sleep Foundation's sleep time duration recommendations: methodology and results summary, Sleep Health (2015), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sleh.2014.12.010>



Sleep habits

- Exercise during the day
- Consistent bed time, wake up time
- Bedtime routine
- Room dark at night, open shades in am
- No TV in bedroom
- No phone in bed
- Address OSA if present
- Consider sleep clinic, medication*

*with MD guidance, after instituting lifestyle recommendations



Nutrition habits

***Eat food, not a lot,
mostly plants.***

– Michael Pollan

- No junk food in the house.
- Drink water.
- Fruit & veg snacks.
- Limit simple carbs.
- Cook together.



Active Body

Health benefits of physical activity:



- Weight control
- Reduce risk of
 - cardiovascular disease
 - type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
 - some cancers
- Strengthen bones and muscles
- Improve mental health and mood
- For older adults, improve ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, Increase chance of living longer

<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm>




For Adults

AEROBIC ACTIVITY

-  150 min/wk moderate intensity
-  75 min/wk vigorous intensity
- OR equivalent mix of moderate and vigorous

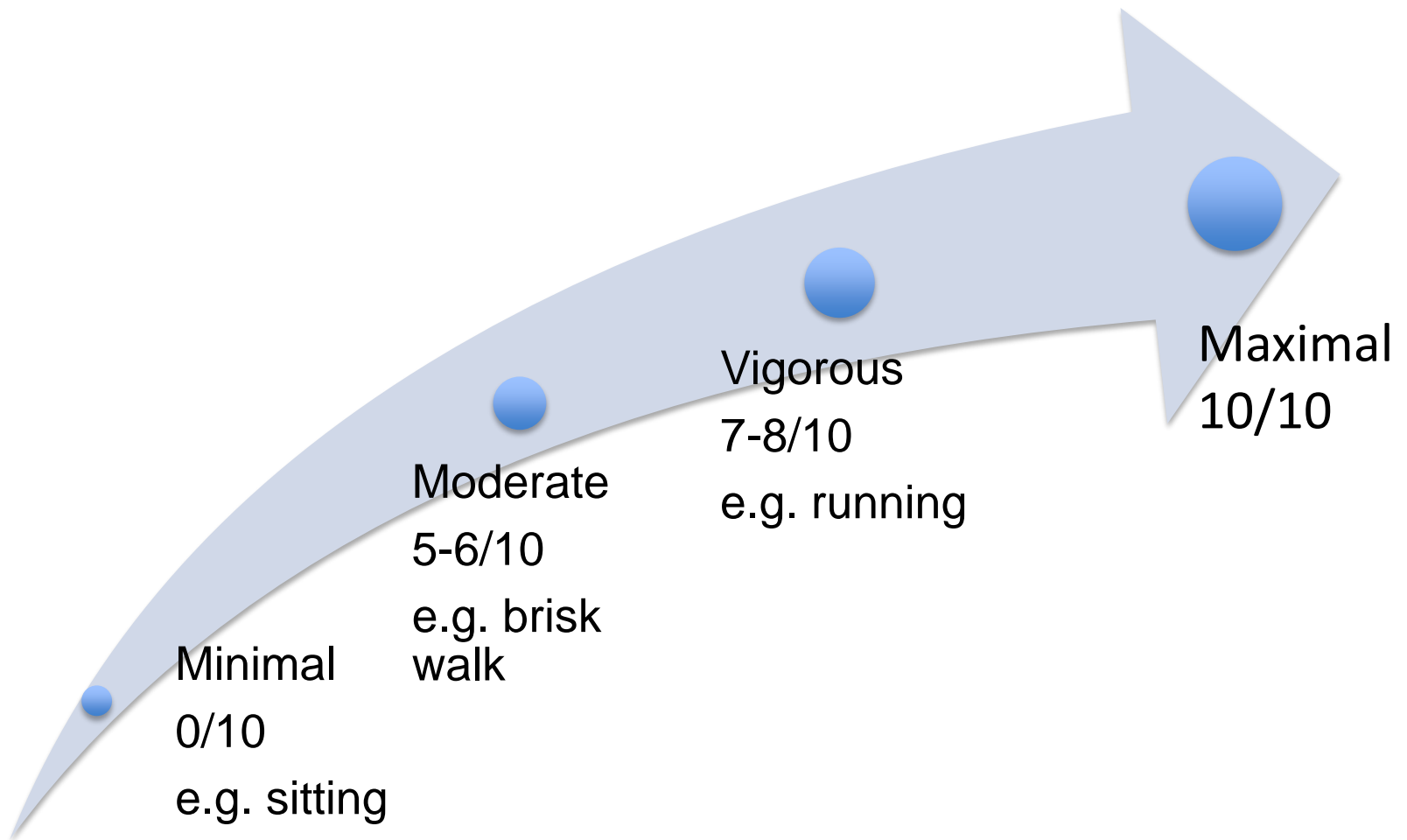
MUSCLE STRENGTHENING

-  ≥ 2 days/wk
- All major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms)

<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics>



Exercise Intensity



Calm Mind

Benefits of mindfulness programs:

- Improvements in
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Pain



- Goyal *JAMA Intern Med.* 2014 Mar;174(3):357-68.

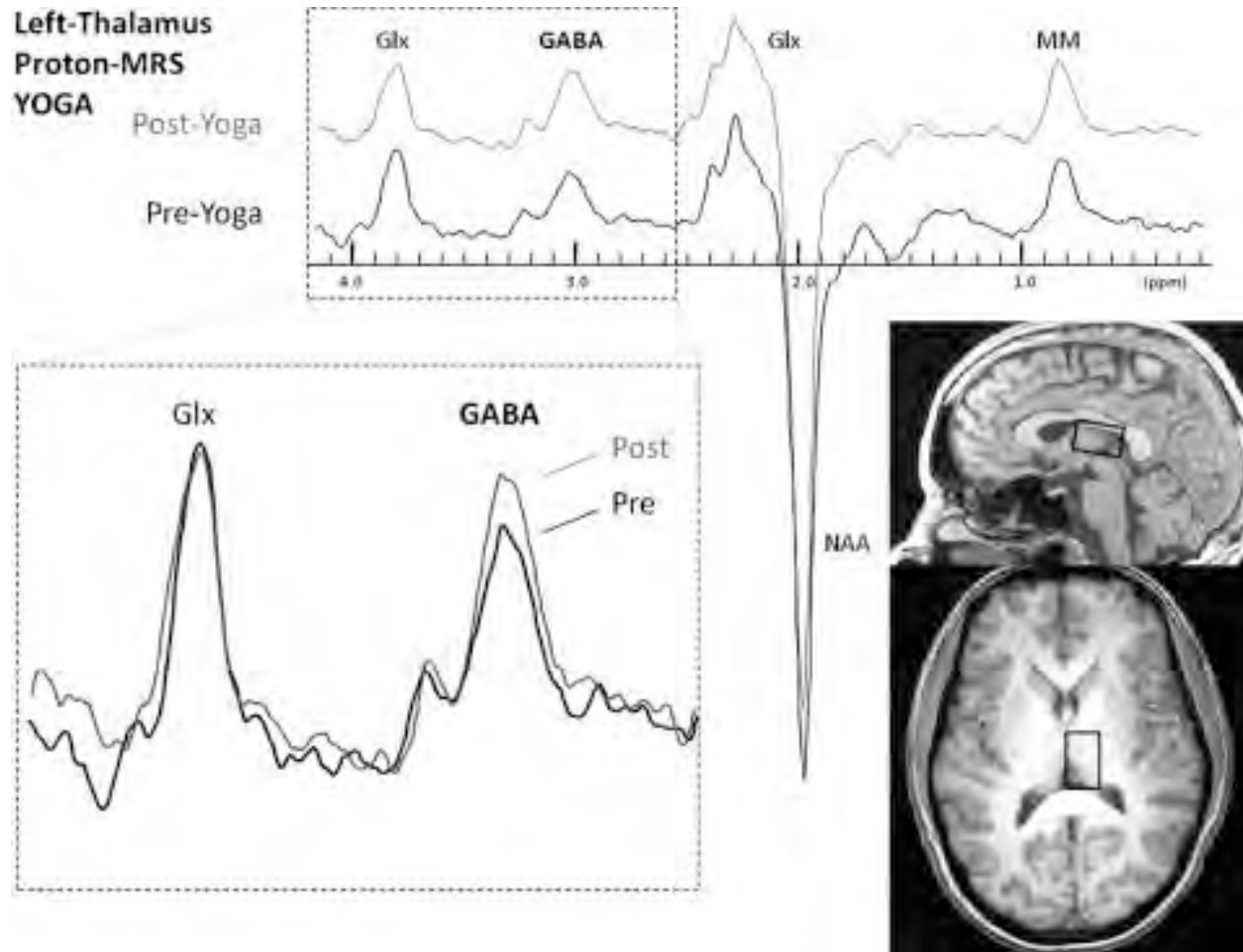


Benefits of meditation and yoga

- Meditation can decrease both physiologic (e.g. cortisol) and cognitive (e.g. memory) effects of stress
 - Mohan et al *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. Mar. 2011, 17(3): 207-212.
- Meditation can improve depression and burden in family caregivers of patients with dementia.
 - Hurley et al (Review). *Aging Ment Health*. 2013 Oct 6.
- Yoga has been shown to decrease depression and anxiety and improve quality of life for families of neurologic inpatients.
 - Umadevi P et al *Indian J Psychiatry*. 2013 Jul;55(Suppl 3):S385-9
- A short course of yogic meditation (12 min daily x 8 weeks) can decrease expression of genes related to inflammation.
 - Black et al Yogic meditation randomized controlled Trial *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. 2013 Mar;38(3):348-55



Increased GABA in thalamus after 12 weeks of 3x60 min/wk yoga intervention



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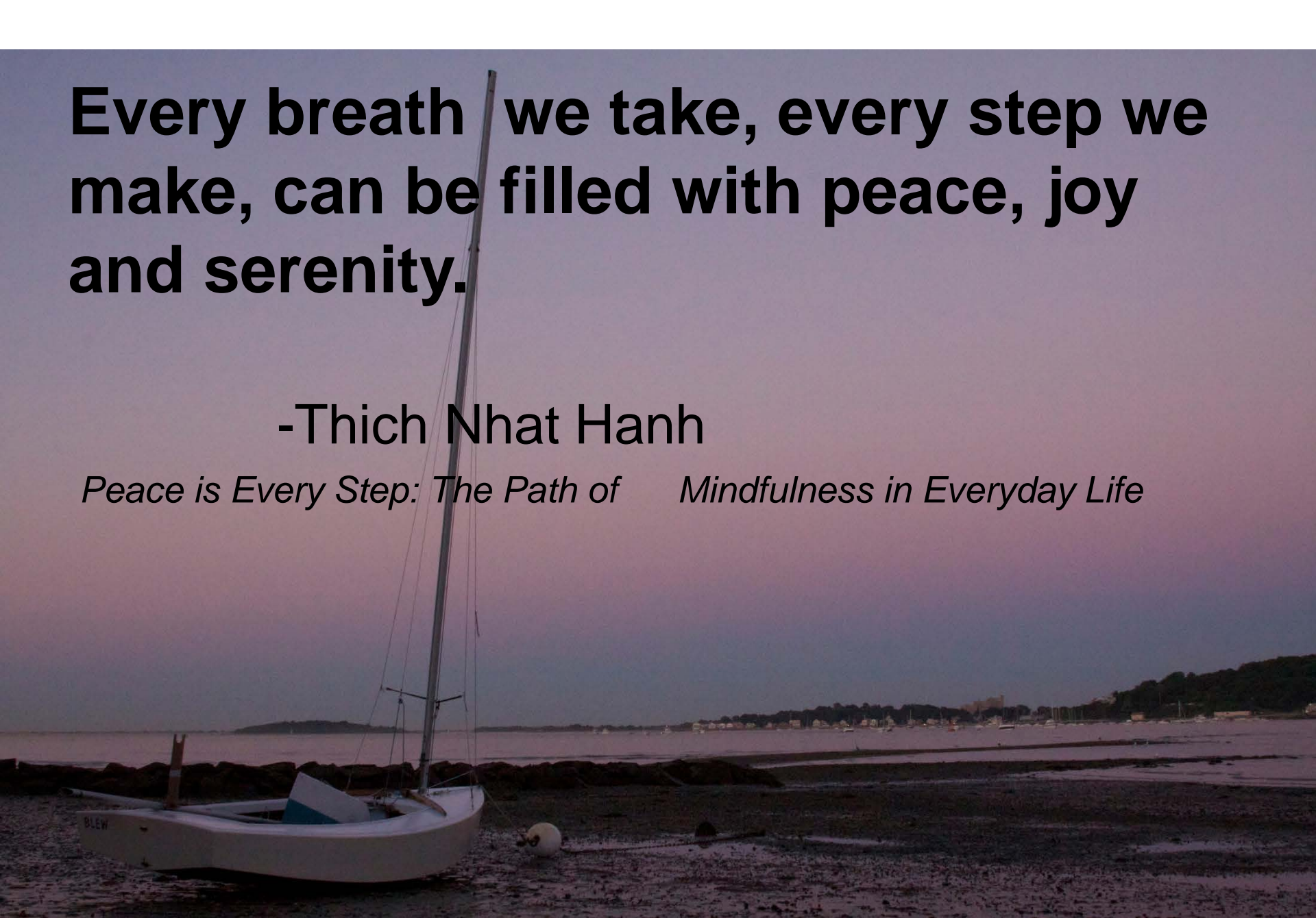
Mindfulness

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.

-Jon Kabat-Zinn

*Wherever You Go,
There You Are*



A photograph of a white sailboat with a tall mast, beached on a dark, wet shore at dusk. The sky is a soft purple and pink. In the background, a distant shoreline with buildings and trees is visible across the water.

Every breath we take, every step we
make, can be filled with peace, joy
and serenity.

-Thich Nhat Hanh

Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life



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Yoga: Guidelines

- ❖ Anybody (any body) can do yoga.
- ❖ “If you can breathe, you can do yoga.”
- ❖ Unite breath and body
- ❖ If you need help, ask
- ❖ Listen to your body
- ❖ If anything hurts, stop
- ❖ Tell me any restrictions
- ❖ Be here, now





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Chair Yoga Sequence: Seated poses

1. Grounding – press feet into floor, align hips, spine, head
2. Breath work – ujjayi; in and out to count of 4
3. Sun salutation arms (together up, out and down)
4. Finger stretches, wrist stretches and circles
5. Head tilts with opposite arm extended (use hand to push up head).
6. Cow face pose (R arm pats back; left comes around)
7. Seated Eagle pose (R leg over L; R arm under L, connect palms or backs of hands touch)
8. Seated forward fold
9. Transition to standing



Standing Poses (or sitting)

1. Tadasana (mountain pose)
2. Urdva hastasana (raised hands pose)
3. Side bends
4. Stretch chest at the wall
5. Half suns (reach up breathing in, fold forward breathing out, half-way up with flat back breathing in, fold down breathing out, unfurl to standing breathing in & reaching up, bring hands to heart and to the sides while breathing out). Can be done with chair or without.



Flow sequence

1. Warrior 2 (front leg bent to 90 degrees toes pointing forward, back leg straight toes angled inward, arms out to the sides)
2. Reverse warrior (back arm reaches toward straight leg, front arm reaches toward ceiling)

**** each side then half sun flow ***

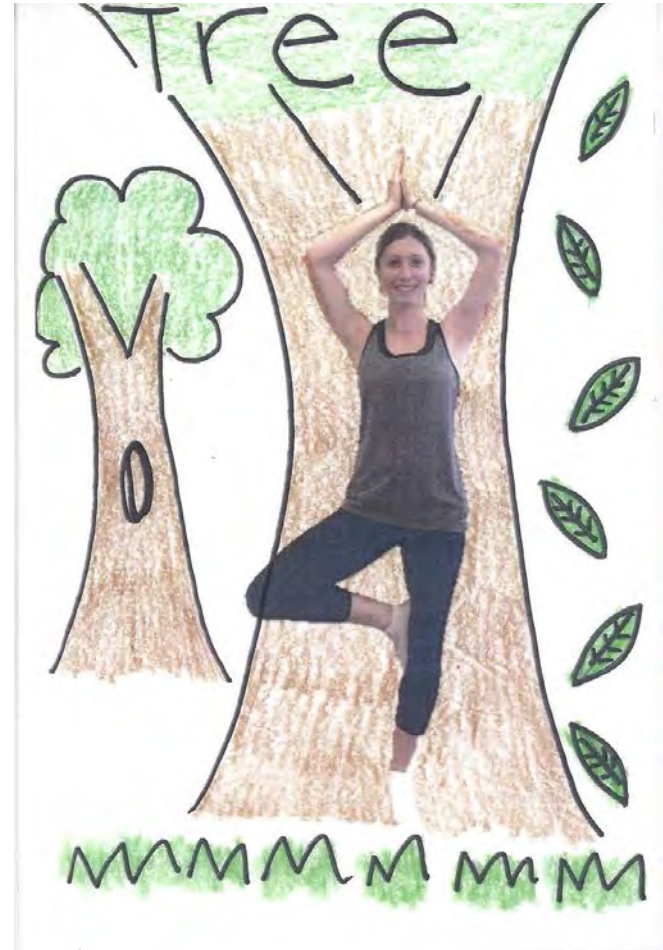
1. Warrrior 2
2. Extended side angle front arm reaches forward then front elbow rests on bent knee, back arm stretches over head with straight line from foot to fingertips)
3. Triangle (straighten front leg and reach arms straight up and down)
4. Warrior 2

**** Repeat on other side, half sun flow ***



Balancing and cool down

1. Tree pose
2. Dancer pose
3. Down dog with chair
4. Forward fold with arms out, head on seat of chair (or leaning against folded arms on wall)



Final Seated Poses

1. Seated twist with chair handles or back)
2. Seated pigeon (place ankle of right leg resting on left knee, keep right ankle flexed at 90 degrees, sit up very straight then start to hinge at the hips straight forward, possibly starting to reach hands down toward floor; repeat on opposite side)
3. Knee squeeze (squeeze each knee into the chest)
4. Relaxation (at least 5 min)
 1. Seated on chair or seated on floor, head on chair
 2. On floor with calves supported by chair or savasana (lying on floor)



Meditation



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Discussion: Goal setting

***Whether you believe
you can do a thing or
not, you are right.***

— Henry Ford





Habits

- We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.

-Aristotle





Put it on the Calendar

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
6:00	meditate	meditate	meditate	meditate	meditate		
6:30		Yoga class				meditate	meditate
7:30	0.9 mi walk		0.9 mi walk	0.9 mi walk		Yoga class	
...							
...							
2:00				Teach chair yoga			
4:30	Teach kids yoga				Teach kids yoga		



SMART Goals

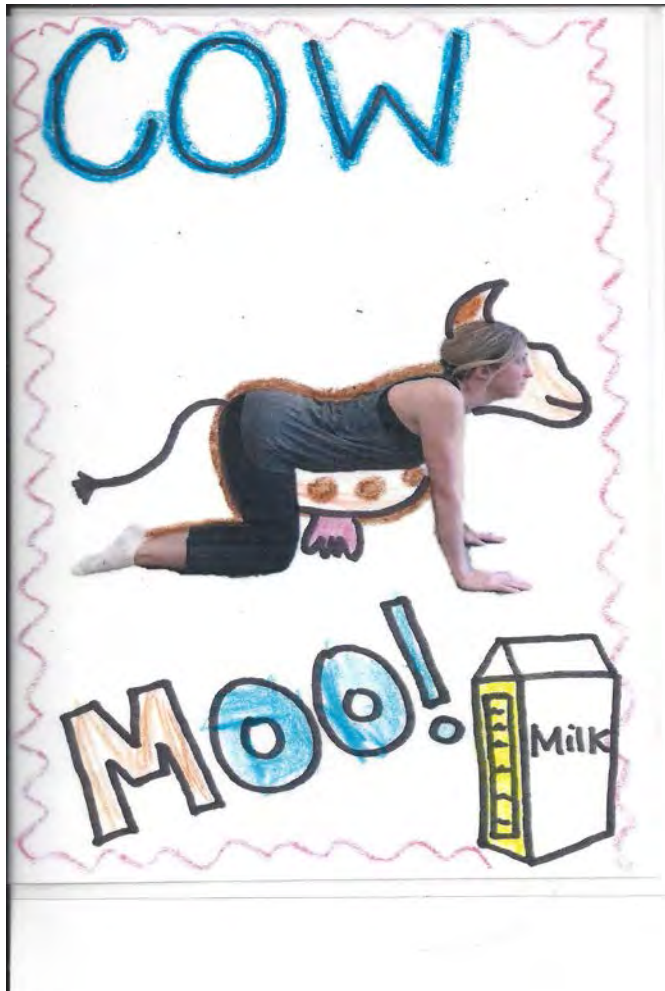
- *Specific*
- *Measurable*
- *Assignable (or Achievable)*
- *Realistic*
- *Time-related (or Time-bound)*



Original concept from Doran, G. T. (1981). "There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives" As quoted in Management Review (AMA FORUM) 70 (11): 35–36



Have fun!



- Use visuals (cards, books, and modeling)
- Practice together.



Metta Meditation

- May I be happy. May I be free from pain and suffering. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease.
- May you be happy. May you be free from pain and suffering. May you be safe. May you be peaceful and at ease.
- May all beings be happy. May all beings be free from pain and suffering. May all beings be safe. May all beings be peaceful and at ease.

– (Adapted from the Metta Institute)

– <http://www.mettainstitute.org/mettameditation.html>



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Adventure Challenge ([Download yoga coloring cards at our website](#))

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Caregiver Health Resources

- <http://www.caregiving.org/resources/caregiver-health/>
- <https://www.alz.org/care/alzheimers-dementia-healthy-caregiver.asp>
- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/caregiving-stress-and-burnout.htm>



Websites

- <http://www.mettainstitute.org/mettameditation.html>
- <http://www.relaxationresponse.org/>
- <http://www.flylady.net/> (pamper mission)
- <https://caregiver.org/national-center-caregiving>
- <http://www.caregiving.org/>
- <http://www.sharonsalzberg.com/books-audio/7947>
- http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_gratitude_is_good
- http://www.caregiver.va.gov/pdfs/Caregiver_Workbook_V3_Module_1.pdf
- <http://www.childrenshospital.org/centers-and-services/departments-and-divisions/division-of-general-pediatrics/programs-and-services/adventurechallenge> [Download yoga cards here]



Apps & Videos

Apps

- Headspace
- OmVana
- Smiling Mind
- Simply Being
- Insight Timer
- One minute meditation

Videos

- MindBody Solutions
- Gaia yoga videos
 - Rodney Yee
 - Colleen Saidman



Books

- Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*
- Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Miracle of Mindfulness: A Manual on Meditation*, Beacon Press, 1999
- Herbert Benson, *The Wellness Book: The Comprehensive Guide to Maintaining Health and Treating Stress-Related Illness* by Herbert Benson and Eileen M. Stuart (Oct 1, 1993)

