



HOW TO KEEP
YOUR SHIT
TOGETHER

HOW TO KEEP YOUR SHIT TOGETHER

(and how to help others)

By

Trevor & Annie Boulton



The Brain Health Education Institute

Maslow's Plan For MENTAL HEALTH



SURVIVE AND THRIVE



Table of Contents

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3. Maslow's Plan | 22. Reactions To Trauma |
| 5. Maslow's Human Needs | 23. Shame Is The Engine |
| 6. Understanding Mental Health | 24. Shame Dashboard |
| 8 The Body | 25 Who Have I Become |
| 9. The Human Brain | 26. Revealing & Healing |
| 10. Water Sustains Life | 27. Connection & Belonging |
| 11. Fuel Quality & Performance | 28. Spirit And Purpose |
| 12. Sleep Is Brain Maintenance | 29. Planning Your Journey |
| 14. Physiological Dashboard | 30. Fit For Purpose |
| 16. Safety And Security | 31. Unique Gifts And Purpose |
| 17, The Mind | 32. Purpose And Self Esteem |
| 18. Safety In A Tribe | 33. Not Built To Travel Alone |
| 19. Connecting Body, Mind Spirit | 34. Self Actualisation |
| 20. The Still Face Experiment | 35. Events Change Purpose |
| 21. Childhood Trauma | 37. Who Am I? |

This book expounds the 5 steps of Maslow's Plan for optimum mental health.

MASLOW'S Order Of Basic Human Needs



Maslow's Order of Basic Human Needs is a motivational theory in psychology dating back more than 70 years, comprising a five tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. The foundational level, Physiological Needs, includes survival needs and deals with our need for food, water and sleep to survive and reproduce. If unmet, the human body struggles to function and all other needs become secondary until these needs are reasonably met.

Boundaries are essential to establishing good routines and sleep patterns. It is advisable to take some time to create boundaries around the type of food we will generally eat. How often will we allow 'sometimes' foods or 'treats'? What are our preferred meal times? Which drinks will we consume? When and how often will we use 'sometimes' drinks?

Small changes to our hydration, nutrition, sleep habits and sugar consumption can radically improve our brain health, and build mental and emotional resilience.

Ensuring that the Maslow's Basement needs are met builds resilience and immunity.

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

Connecting BODY, MIND & SPIRIT



BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT - Becomes car, driver and journey

BODY - A car body may be well polished and look fantastic but without a driver and a purpose for use, it might be simply an ornament.

Our body is the vehicle we inhabit. We must care for our body, as well as our brain which manages everything our body does. BODY begins with an overview of the role and function of our physical brain, what our brain needs in order to function correctly, how to maintain its basic chemistry, and how to know when these needs are not being met.

MIND - Our brain is a physical organ, yet it also houses our mind - where we learn, think, imagine and feel. Our mind is like the driver of a vehicle. We can educate our mind to determine our course in life. Often life happens around us, but rather than letting it happen by chance or through circumstances, we can take responsibility for our choices.

MIND explains our in-built, caveman-like responses to stress and the responses we learn in childhood to relieve that stress or shame; as well as how we carry those same responses into adulthood and how they become the ways we can cope with and deal with our shame.

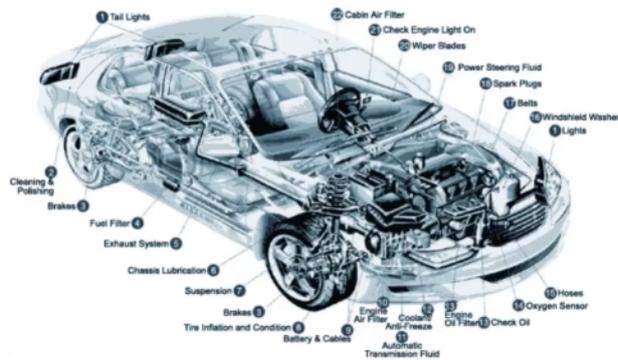
SPIRIT - Purpose is compared to the journey a driver takes in a vehicle. SPIRIT looks at our purpose and meaning in life, as well as their roles in providing fulfilment and happiness; and how to deal with the thinking that can keep us from finding that purpose and ultimate fulfilment.

"Another body, mind and spirit analogy could be a smartphone. The physical body could be Samsung, mind (operating system) could be Android and the spirit (purpose) could be Facebook or YouTube" - Trev



The Body

BOTH ARE AMAZING MACHINES



A vehicle is an amazing piece of engineering, both body and engine.

Finely tuned, it can perform well. However, the human body is of THE most amazing design and balance; and it is surprisingly resilient and flexible. Each cell comprises mainly water and functions harmoniously with all the others. The human bodily organs function in perfect harmony, seemingly automatically.

We continuously breathe to oxygenate our entire body. Our heart beats rhythmically pumping our life's blood around our body. We eat, drink and make waste. We perspire to cool our body and have goosebumps when we feel cold. Our muscles and skeleton hold our body together and upright. Our chemistry and immune system keep us well and functioning.

"I am totally amazed at the complexity and design of our human body. But the most amazing thing is that all of the genetic information and blueprints for all of our body construction, body chemistry and brain design function is encoded in the first (single) cell of what divides and divides to become a human embryo" - Trev

The Human Brain

More Powerful Than
200,000,000 Desktop Computers
(Mainly Made of Water)



THE HUMAN BRAIN

More Powerful than 200 Million Desktop Computers

The average human brain weighs about 1.5kg (3lb) and looks like a big, grey, wrinkly sponge about the size of your two fists put together. It is comprised of 78% water. If the water was removed, 60% of dried brain weight is fat.

While we are awake, our brain generates up to 25 watts of power; enough to illuminate a light bulb. Our brain has the thinking capacity of more than 200 million iPads. Our brain's hardware has amazing potential. The software, however, is often sadly lacking.

The brain is basically the headquarters of the human body. Electrical currents pass throughout the entire brain and nervous system to perform an incredible number of tasks. It controls body temperature, blood pressure, heart rate and breathing. It handles physical movement such as walking, standing or sitting. It accepts a flood of information about the world around us from our various senses - seeing, hearing, smelling, touch and taste. It thinks, dreams, reasons and experiences emotions.

All this, even when we are sleeping, is coordinated, controlled and regulated by our brain.

WATER SUSTAINS LIFE



WATER
For Body & Blood



WATER + OIL
Cooling & Lubrication

WATER SUSTAINS LIFE. Water is stored all over us. In our brain and our body, in our liver, kidneys, stomach, bladder, spinal fluids - everywhere! However, more than half is actually inside our cells. As a car engine must have water to function, so every single cell in the human body is dependent on water. Humans can only survive a few days without water.

The body needs water to transport water-soluble nutrients to organs in the body, to transport toxins and waste products out of the body via urine, and to send electrical messages between cells. For example, water allows organs to function, muscles to contract and relax, and for eyes to focus on images. Water also controls our body temperature, is necessary to digest food and drink, to lubricate our joints and to keep our tissues healthy and pliable.

Even 1% dehydration is a key factor in the cause of headaches, loss of focus, fatigue and poor mood. Thirst is a poor, early sign of dehydration. Even slight dehydration impacts brain function, mood and energy; and can produce symptoms of memory loss, mental confusion and dissociation.

Water is the BEST energy drink

FUEL QUALITY IMPACTS PERFORMANCE



A car's performance is optimal with the right fuel. Regardless of how good the car looks or its engine size, it won't work without the right fuel. If you were to put diesel in a petrol car, the engine would be in need of a full overhaul.

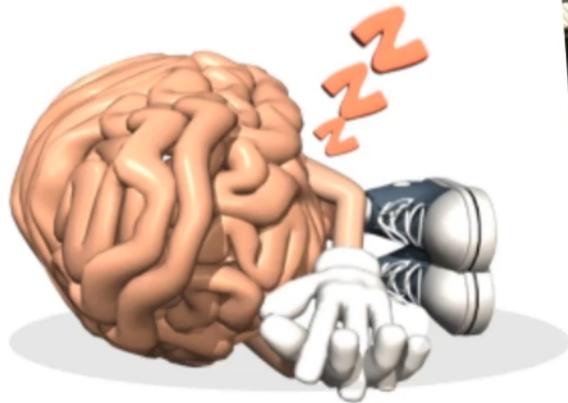
Nutrition - When our stomach sends a hunger message to our brain, our stomach isn't interested in nutrition. Its interest is in satisfying the hunger message. For optimum brain performance eat a variety of coloured vegetables and fruit. A minimum of 3 colours per meal is recommended. Include lean proteins, fish 1-3 times a week is ideal. Use whole-grains instead of white flour foods. Limit the intake of highly processed, high sugared foods and drinks.

Eat regular, balanced meals and snacks to keep blood sugars stable. Every 4-5 hours is ideal. Eat breakfast within 60 mins. of getting out of bed.

Food and Mood - Our brain feeds on stable glucose or blood sugar levels and some people don't maintain these. When we have that low feeling, we have a lot of physiological symptoms. Feeling uncomfortable in our body due to low blood sugar may be interpreted by our brain as anxiety (I feel shaky or scared - I must be anxious) or exhaustion (I can't get up off the couch - I must be depressed). Avoid the urge to eat junk food when feeling depressed as the sugar high is followed by a low.

Poor food choices add to our stress levels and mental confusion.

SLEEP IS BRAIN ^{And Body} MAINTENANCE



If we were to drive a car continuously, the engine wouldn't cope and it would eventually break down. We take our car off the road for maintenance and we need to do the same for our brain and body. Sleep is essential to our brain functioning. After just 2 days without sleep, the brain will start hallucinating.

Sleep and Learning

When we sleep our brain cells shrink to allow toxins to be flushed out. Sleep also gives the brain time for a nightly mental clean-up. When we sleep, our brain takes everything we've seen and done throughout the day and filters through it. It looks for patterns, sifts through what it finds unnecessary and decides what to turn into a memory. This process is called Memory Consolidation.

Sleep and Mental Health

We are more likely to be happier after a good night's sleep. Research reveals we learn better after a good night's sleep and can better cope with stressful situations. A good night's sleep and regular rest helps build positive relationships and ease conflict.

One of the worst sleep disrupters is technology in the bedroom

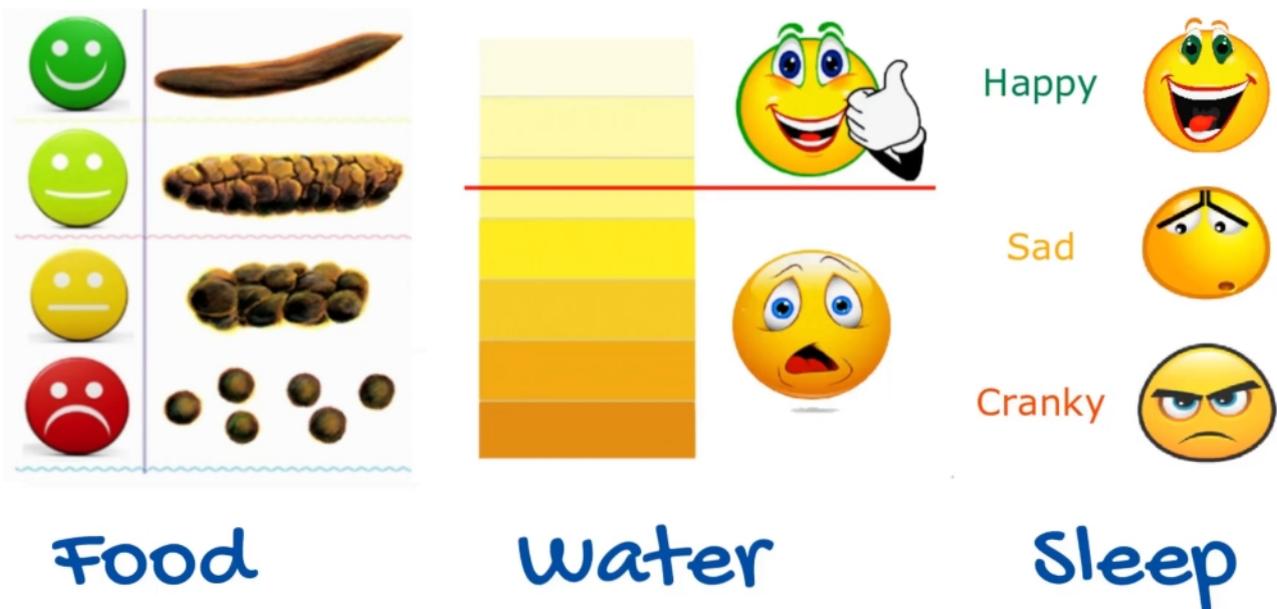
Effects of Sleep deprivation

The diagram shows a human male torso with anatomical details of the brain, heart, lungs, stomach, and muscles. Lines connect these areas to the following effects of sleep deprivation:

- Irritability
- Cognitive impairment
- Memory lapses or loss
- Impaired moral judgement
- Severe yawning
- Hallucinations
- Symptoms similar to ADHD
- Risk of diabetes Type 2
- Impaired immune system
- Increased heart rate variability
- Risk of heart disease
- Decreased reaction time and accuracy
- Tremors
- Aches
- Other:*
 - Growth suppression
 - Risk of obesity
 - Decreased temperature

Age	Recommended	May be appropriate	Not recommended
Newborns <i>0-3 months</i>	14 to 17 hours	11 to 13 hours 18 to 19 hours	Less than 11 hours More than 19 hours
Infants <i>4-11 months</i>	12 to 15 hours	10 to 11 hours 16 to 18 hours	Less than 10 hours More than 18 hours
Toddlers <i>1-2 years</i>	11 to 14 hours	9 to 10 hours 15 to 16 hours	Less than 9 hours More than 16 hours
Preschoolers <i>3-5 years</i>	10 to 13 hours	8 to 9 hours 14 hours	Less than 8 hours More than 14 hours
School-aged Children <i>6-13 years</i>	9 to 11 hours	7 to 8 hours 12 hours	Less than 7 hours More than 12 hours
Teenagers <i>14-17 years</i>	8 to 10 hours	7 hours 11 hours	Less than 7 hours More than 11 hours
Young Adults <i>18-25 years</i>	7 to 9 hours	6 hours 10 to 11 hours	Less than 6 hours More than 11 hours

Physiological Performance Dashboard



These 3 simple feedback loops empower us to manage our health, both physically and mentally. This is the best way to identify changes that could eventually be detrimental to our mental health.

This is our early warning system where a change in sleep patterns could indicate a lack of safety or an issue that could be shameful.

A change in bowel habits or hydration indicates an impending change in moods and behaviour. Small adjustment here can ensure "A Healthy Brain".

Food - Sausage Poo

What we eat and drink affects our toileting. When we eat sufficient vegetables and fruit, and drink sufficient water, we make a sausage poo. When we don't, we struggle to poo regularly and may only produce bunny bullets. Constipation makes us feel unwell and can be quite painful. Research shows more and more children are constipated and medicated for it, when diet will generally rectify the problem. Eating plenty of vegetables and fruit will produce a sausage poo which is easily and regularly expelled, and results in improved mood and behaviour.

Water - White Wee

When we drink enough water to properly hydrate our body, our wee is a pale, wheat colour. We call this white wee for small children. Small children can learn to manage these feedback loops and are very interested in wee and poo, so start early. When we aren't drinking enough water (yellow or orange wee), we may have headaches and feel tired, lethargic and demotivated.

Sleep - Smiley Face

Good or poor sleep shows on our face and through our behaviour. When we wake up and are feeling good, we know we have had sufficient sleep. If we are cranky and whinge a lot, we need extra sleep and rest. Having boundaries around our sleep needs will ensure we go to bed early enough to have good and sufficient sleep. Removing technology from bedrooms and stopping screen use one hour prior to sleep time will assist also.

The Teenage Years

Often when teenagers leave home to do further studies in another city, for the first time they have to start looking after themselves. This is a crucial time for their mental health. So often we see bright students fall into the trap of eating fast food on the fly, neglecting sleep and drinking anything except water. This leads to a lack of mental and emotional resilience. The pressures of working part time, loads of study, paying the bills, doing the housework and an inability to say **NO** to peers, is a recipe for disaster.

Far too often this leads to a trip back home - 'tail between the legs' with all of the associated self doubt, guilt and the shame of failure to meet their own and everyone else's expectations.

When the situation is viewed through the Maslow model, it's obvious that as the foundational physical needs are not met, the ability to learn and to cope emotionally fails. We recognise this as 'Burn-Out'.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Family and Community Connections



SAFETY AND SECURITY - Family and Community Connections

Whilst shelter is essential to safety, in this book, we are predominantly concerned with feeling safe. Safety Needs include our natural desire for our world to be ordered, predictable and within our control. Today, feeling safe would include feeling safe and secure with the people within our home, at school and in the workplace, as well as feeling secure in our job, finances and even our health.

"When we feel unsafe, we are continually on edge. Our brain chemistry is swamped with stress hormones to the point where we cannot think, learn or socialize normally. Safety feelings can be negatively impacted by marriage problems, workplace insecurity and financial worries. If these issues are not resolved, we cannot move up the Maslow scale to a state of well-being."

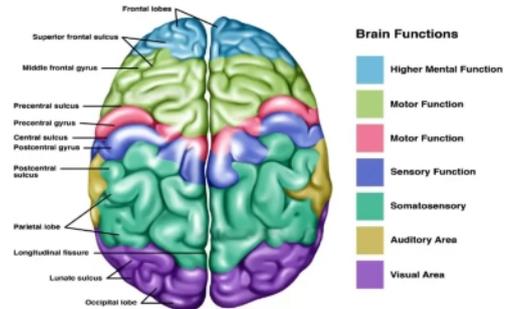
The Mind

PRIMAL OPERATING SYSTEM (DNA)



Pre-programmed to manage body chemistry and physical maintenance, breathe, eat, drink & sleep.

Pre-programmed to fight or flee to survive, belong to a tribe and reproduce the species.



THE MIND - Our Primal Operating System

Every animal has a brain. The human brain however, is unique among the animal kingdom and has the ability to use higher brain function such as thought, analysis, reasoning and action.

Our primal brain's basic programming is to '**Fight or Flee**' when in danger to survive. This is our spontaneous reaction when we sense danger. When we feel threatened in any way or worried, real or imagined, our brain is programmed to release chemicals such as adrenaline and cortisol into our body. These chemicals quickly alter the way we think, feel and behave. They make it difficult to think clearly, to process information or to take in new information. Scientists believe that we relate and learn best when we are happy and relaxed. This is when our brain processes information most efficiently.

When stressed by excessive demands, our brain function is impaired which means new ideas, new concepts, creativity and imagination are stifled. However, we can learn to challenge the thoughts and feelings connected to stress in order to manage our stress. By working out our values - who and what is important to us, our responsibilities, what is real and imagined - we can clear our conscience and give ourselves peace.

WE FEEL SAFE WHEN WE BELONG TO A TRIBE

Family

Team

Hood

School

City

Interest

State

Religion

Country

Occupation



WE FEEL SAFE WHEN WE BELONG TO A TRIBE

A young child relies on its parents to provide for their needs. Children learn to expect and rely on their parent to be a source of warmth, provision and comfort. As the child grows, they learn to trust that their needs will be met.

Our first sense of belonging is with our parents, yet all throughout life we continue to seek belonging. We belong to a kindy or a school. We join a sporting club, craft or music group. We all have an innate need to belong, to 'fit' somewhere. A supportive and well-managed home, school or work environment is good for our mental health. We feel safe where we can grow in autonomy, in learning to do for ourselves, to develop self-control and to understand our limits and responsibilities. In a safe environment, we even feel safe to fail and try again. People who only do as they are told, who are always forced to follow the rules, live in fear and are the ones who end up suffering the most. Our feelings of control, of stress and our ability to perform at our best, are all directly tied to how safe we feel in our tribe. "Feeling unsafe around those we expect to feel safe with - those in our tribes, our carers, our peers - fundamentally violates the laws of nature and how we were designed to live." Simon Sinek

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

Connecting BODY, MIND & SPIRIT



Mind explains our caveman-like responses to stress

The responses we learn in childhood to relieve that stress or shame, how we carry those same responses into adulthood, and ways we can deal with our shame.

"Actually, we are not far removed from our basic 'Survival At Any Cost' caveman programming. As we become socialized, we are taught to modify our initial reactions to stressful situations.

It's when we are 'Running On Empty' that our lower nature is exposed for all to see. When we run out of resilience, we quickly return to 'Survival Mode' and act like tired and hungry toddlers."



THE STILL FACE EXPERIMENT - Building Strong Foundations

We know that healthy relationships between children and caregivers are important for building strong brains. Starting with newborns, a responsive child-caregiver bond builds a strong foundation for development through "serve and return" interactions.

"Serve and return" works like a game of tennis or volleyball between child and caregiver. The child "serves" by reaching out for interaction with eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, babbling or touch. A responsive caregiver will "return the serve" by speaking back, playing peekaboo, or sharing a toy or a laugh. These back and forth exchanges are the building blocks of children's early brain development. They help children learn how to control their emotions, to cope with stress and to learn skills that will serve as a foundation for later development. A caregiver who is sensitive and responsive to a young child's signals will provide an environment rich in "serve and return" experiences.

It is important to build quality time for children and loved ones into our day..

[Scan To Watch The Still Face Video Or Go To www.brainhealtheducation.com.au/still.mp4](http://www.brainhealtheducation.com.au/still.mp4)



TRAUMA



*An overwhelming amount of stress
that exceeds one's ability to cope*

TRAUMA - An Overwhelming Amount of Stress that Exceeds One's Ability to Cope

What happens when a child serves and no one steps up to return the ball? Over time, failing to respond when a child reaches out will weaken brain architecture and impair the development of skills, abilities, behaviour and health. Some children are deprived of "serve-and-return" experiences due to chaotic environments, violence in the home, or caregivers struggling with a mental health problem or addiction.

Because responsive relationships are both expected and essential, their absence is a serious threat to a child's development and well-being. Healthy brain architecture depends on a sturdy foundation built by appropriate input from a child's senses and stable, responsive relationships with caring adults. If an adult's responses to a child are unreliable, inappropriate, or simply absent, the developing architecture of the brain may be disrupted, and subsequent physical, mental, and emotional health may be impaired.

Screens A caregiver who is interacting with a smartphone may miss a child's cues or "serves". Technology cannot replace a deep, human connection.

REACTIONS TO TRAUMA

BASIC OPERATING SYSTEM (DNA)

Infant Behaviours

Fake Cough
Self Comforting
Loss Of Control
Withdrawal



Adult Behaviours

Sickness
Addictions
Violence
Isolation

Basic Operating System

The four infant behavioural responses identified as a means of seeking the parent's care and attention in the 'Still Face' video were the Fake Cough, Self Comforting, a Loss of Control and Withdrawal. These behaviours develop in varying degrees as we grow and can become Sicknesses, Addictions or Co-dependency, Violence and Isolation. An infant learns to respond in unhealthy ways, hoping for some response or relief from the pain of not connecting in healthy ways. This generally creates a negative self-image and mindset.

The child begins a life that is based on a feeling that nothing can be done, of hopelessness and powerlessness. The child learns the unwritten rules of the dysfunctional family; Don't talk! Don't trust! Don't feel! Don't think! However, many of these children will grow up to be over-achievers and appear quite successful in the early years of their lives; yet, they will struggle with feelings of low self-worth and have difficulty in relationships. They very often find it hard to believe that anyone could love them. They attempt to seek approval by frantically serving their parents, family or community; only to experience "burn out" because they give too much of themselves away. Some will not survive well. They will become addictive or develop some other form of compulsive or rebellious behaviour.

SHAME IS THE ENGINE



THAT DRIVES ADDICTIONS

SHAME IS THE ENGINE THAT DRIVES ADDICTION -

What is Shame?

Shame is a particularly intense, and often incapacitating, negative emotion involving feelings of inferiority, powerlessness and self-consciousness, along with the deep desire to conceal our deficiencies.

Whenever feelings of shame are encountered, they can be reduced by becoming addicted to something.

Healing comes when it is realised that it is not so much the object of addiction that is paramount, but the process that permits the attachment to develop.

Shame-based syndromes can begin in childhood when "normal" development is interrupted and becomes twisted or pathological. The trigger can be sexual or physical abuse or another broadscale trauma. Often it is more discreet, such as when a parent is detached and not providing assurance to the child that he or she is loved, respected, cared for and appreciated.

UNDERLYING SHAME DASHBOARD



There are many people who habitually experience strong, emotional swings which drive them to uncontrolled behaviour which they later regret.

Shame will lay the foundation for emotional insecurity and crippling low self-esteem. The person begins to live his or her life from within a cocoon or prison of shame. Such pain and shame become unbearable. It becomes an identity, the way the growing person views and considers themselves.

This pain must find a balance in pleasure if the pain is to be bearable. The feeling can be released on demand by using a 'substance' like nicotine, alcohol, cannabis, or any one of a number of substances that are readily available where loneliness, fear and insecurity mingle. A "flush of pleasure" can be released by work, pleasing others, gambling, getting angry, the cultivation of 'lust' or engaging in an "activity" with or without friends.

When used for this purpose, these habits will sooner or later promote more shame. There are many addictions that people do not identify as addictive behaviour because there can be dependencies and addictions without a substance such as work or financial success.

BEHAVING CONTRARY TO OUR PERSONAL VALUES LEADS TO SHAME

Extra-Marital Affairs
Domestic Violence
Substance Abuse
Self Harm

Who Have I Become?

BEHAVING CONTRARY TO OUR PERSONAL VALUES LEADS TO SHAME - Who Have I Become?

One day, we awake to find these negative patterns of behaviour have become "normal" and we are behaving contrary to our personal values. We may be trapped in the coping mechanisms of addictions, poor relationships, jobs or people-pleasing. We realise we are out of control and are powerless to change.

We respond to those around us through our primary operating system of fight or flight, or passive compliance. We find ourselves living with a variety of the following: bitterness, resentment, anger, withdrawal, fear, anxiety, sadness and poor concentration. We feel deep pain, guilt and shame.

Most people who have experienced 'Who Have I Become', recognise this as their breaking point. They often called it their breakdown, meltdown or nervous breakdown.

REVEALING SHAME STARTS THE HEALING



Facing The Pain Brings New Life

REVEALING SHAME STARTS THE HEALING

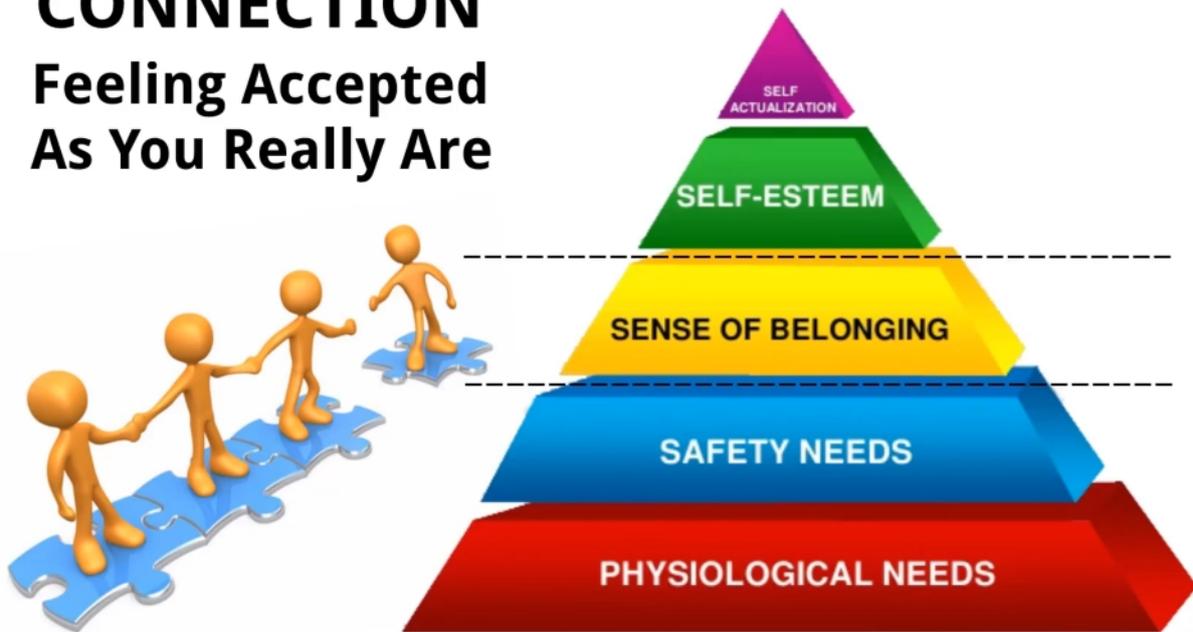
We have learnt to cope by suppressing our emotions and our pain. The healing of shame happens as we learn to appropriately express our feelings and problems. We admit to ourselves, "I have a problem". We become aware of what we do to cope. We talk to another person about it, a counsellor or a safe and trusted friend, in a safe place where we can be honest with ourselves and the other person. This person will listen to us and help us recognise, observe and share our emotions. We realise that feelings do not always require a response. Feelings are not always trustworthy. They will pass and we can let them go. We can grow, live responsibly and have self-worth. We can forgive and be forgiven.

The way we are built to respond to 'wrong doing' is with feelings of guilt and shame. We all have a conscience: something inside that tells us right from wrong. Sometimes wrong is done to us, other times we do wrong and sometimes stuff just happens, but guilt and shame are emotions that we must look at to discover how to heal and live a whole life. What we do with them is what is important. All emotion can be healthy when it is identified and directed appropriately.

When you face the pain, you get the new life!

CONNECTION

Feeling Accepted As You Really Are



CONNECTION

Feeling Accepted as You Really Are - Sense of Belonging

Human connection brings complex values and security to our lives. Relationships give us a sense of belonging; to a parent, to another person, to a group; a sense of identity in contrast to others in that group; an almost therapeutic-support system; and a reason not to feel lonely. We learn from others' experiences and insight and we learn together by pursuing new experiences alongside those we live with and befriend.

And on a very basic level, therapy involves this principle as well. Sitting and reading a book about psychology will rarely be as beneficial as sitting and talking with a therapist or counsellor. It's the interactive exchange that makes all the difference.

Human relationships.

A church or service club's "secret ingredient" for making people happy is the social ties people build when involved in a community. Those who attend and build relationships there, are consistently happier than those who attend and do not build relationships.

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH



UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH - Spirit

Spirit looks at purpose, its role in providing fulfilment and happiness, and how to deal with the thinking that can keep us from finding that purpose and ultimate fulfilment. Emerging research shows that 'meaning in life' predicts better physical health outcomes. Greater meaning has been associated with a reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease, reduced risk of heart attack among individuals with coronary heart disease, reduced risk of stroke, and increased longevity. The British National Health Service recommends a five step plan for mental well-being, based on meaningful lives.

- 1. Connect with our family and community**
- 2. Physical exercise**
- 3. Lifelong learning**
- 4. Giving to others**
- 5. Being aware or mindful of the world around you**

Following these steps leads to fuller engagement in activities, greater contribution to society through utilising one's personal strengths, greater meaning based on investing in something larger than ourselves and improved life satisfaction..

PLANNING YOUR JOURNEY

Having A Great Vehicle

And A Great Driver

Is Pointless Unless

You Are Going Somewhere



PURPOSE



PLANNING YOUR JOURNEY

Purpose - Having a great vehicle and a great driver is pointless unless you are going somewhere.

If I have an accurate map which will enable me to navigate across a strange city and I don't read it, I am unlikely to reach my desired destination. I must locate my present position and my desired destination to be able to navigate.

As we care for ourselves, come to know who we are and become aware of where we are in our relationships; we can take our first steps toward making choices that will enrich our own lives. This will assist us to move toward our purpose which will provide fulfilment and happiness. Only when we know our present position, can we navigate toward a goal.

Always remember: we were each born for a reason, a purpose, for something bigger than just ourselves. We have to 'drive'; no one else is going to do it for us.

It is our own personal responsibility to develop and build ourselves into the person we want to be and to live the kind of life we want to live.

Fit For Purpose



We are all designed differently
- to perfectly fit our PURPOSE

FIT FOR PURPOSE

We are all designed differently to perfectly fit our purpose.

We all have desires and talents to use and develop that will give us our own, unique purpose in life. At different times and different stages in our lives, that purpose may change. Having a purpose or a goal helps us know where we are going in life and helps us work out what to do to get there.

When we have a goal and work on it, it works on us to change and develop us. We become better people in the challenge of pursuing our goals.

"An orchestra can play a great symphony when all of the different instruments play their individual parts and combine as one sound. Just as all of the instruments look and sound different, so it is with human beings. We all have unique gifts to bring to a group, just as all of the above vehicles are designed to fit their purpose."

Look For A **Purpose** That Uses Your Unique Gifts To Serve Others



Your Life's **Journey** Will Then
Be Making A Difference
And Supporting Your
Mental Health And Well-Being

Three questions we can use to help us work out our purpose -

What would I do if I knew I couldn't fail?

What would I do even if nobody paid me to do it?

What makes me come alive?

Learn to be curious! Ask questions! Look around for people and organisations to journey with. Look for those who share our values and ideals. Look for those who appreciate us and our unique talents. Our life's journey will then be making a difference and will also support our mental health and well-being.

Like anything else in the journey of life, a particular purpose will not be a fixed point that we arrive at and stay at forever. The world changes too often. We change too often. It is the constant search for staying connected to our ongoing purpose that keeps us on target, curious, developing, growing and giving.

Finding A Purpose Greater Than Ourselves

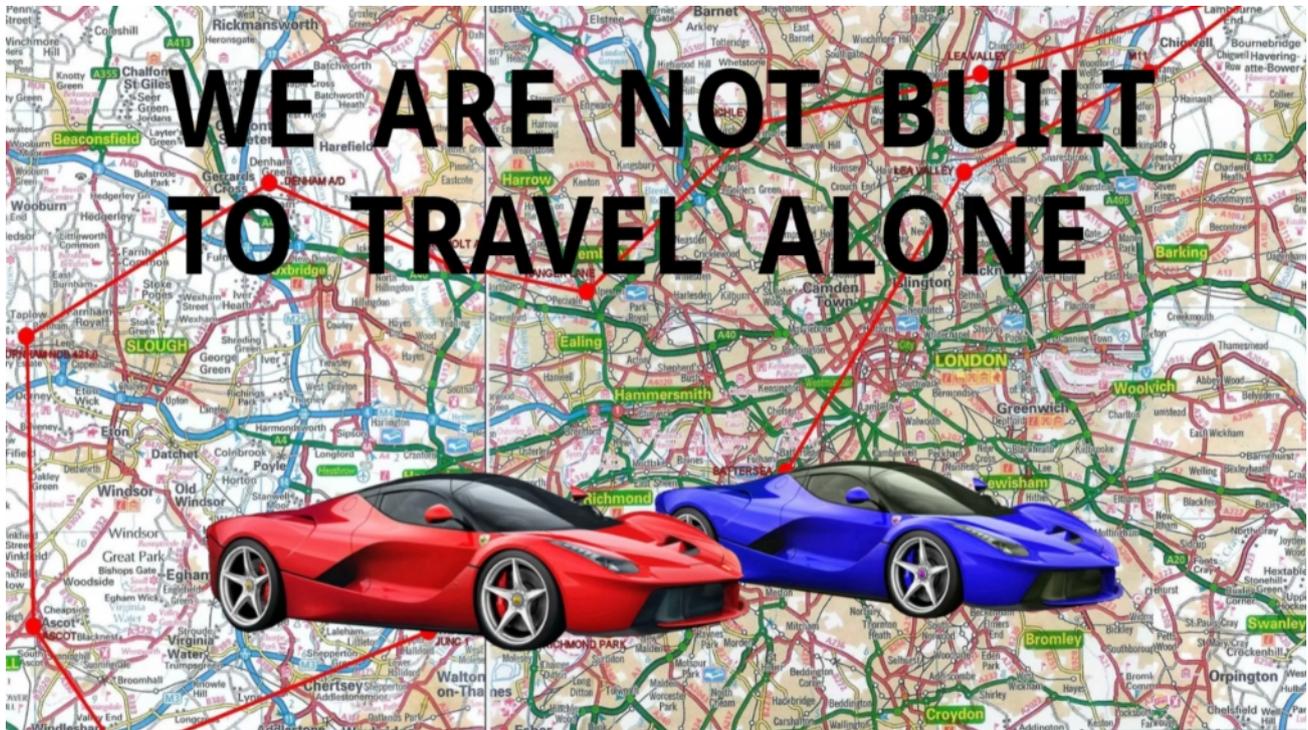


As we become aware, learn about ourselves, and care for ourselves and others, we find self worth. We find we are not only able to do good, we want to do good; we want to give and to be kind to those around us.

We may also find purpose and fulfilment in planning and achieving something that is important to us. If we feel too pressured to have a goal or a plan for our own future, we may be better suited to joining in with another person's vision or purpose. There are many organisations who need volunteers to provide a variety of services to our communities and beyond.

Another purpose could be in the way we decide to rear our children and the way we treat our friends and peers. Intentional random acts of kindness may be our purpose. We are wired to need each other. We thrive on the feedback that we receive when we do something beneficial to another, especially when there is no return. This kind act releases our positive brain chemical: serotonin.

Looking for ways to be grateful everyday and ways to share our gratitude will beneficially change who we are and how we view life.



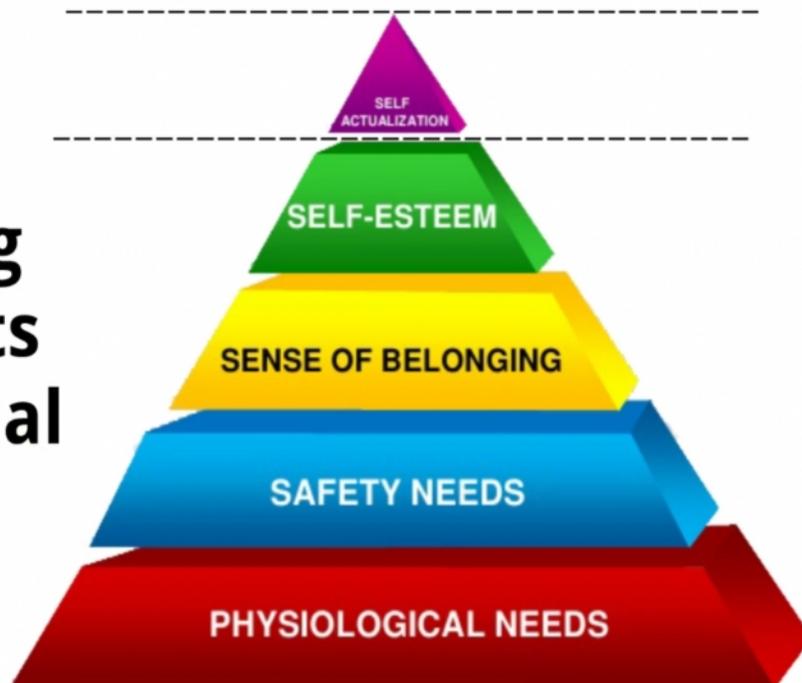
WE ARE NOT BUILT TO TRAVEL ALONE

Life is meant to be shared. This is why helping others is so important to us. The one thing we all have in common is the need for human interaction, not in a superficial 'social media' way, but in a genuine, heart-to-heart, authentic way. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are all great ways of 'sharing' important life events. However, status updates and clever posts are by no means a substitute for real interaction and intimacy. Authentic relationships also boost our happy brain chemical: serotonin.

Real relationships and intimacy require us to share our deepest feelings, hurts, failures, doubts and fears, as well as acknowledging our weaknesses. It means trusting others enough to take off the mask; to be real and ask for help when needed.

True authenticity requires courage and humility. It is risky, but we only grow by taking risks. In strong, solid relationships we experience mutuality: the art of giving and receiving. It is depending on each other, building reciprocal relationships, sharing responsibilities and helping each other.

Maximizing Your Talents And Potential



Self-actualized people are those who are fulfilled and doing all they are capable of. The growth of self-actualization, coined by Maslow in 1962, refers to the need for personal growth and discovery that is present throughout a person's life. For Maslow, a person is always 'becoming' and never remains static in these terms.

Maximizing Your Talents and Potential

Learn the art of being present and celebrate the small wins. Be kind and remember the importance of what we achieve everyday, rather than being too focused on achieving massive goals. Having a daily checklist and ticking off what we do accomplish, can be an act of celebration. Find positive ways to reward ourselves as we move forward, develop and achieve. One step forward will usually generate a second step forward.

As we learn about who we are and what is important to us, we may find our circle of people will change. It is helpful to seek out like-minded travel companions for our journeys. People who will encourage us. People who will love and support us. People who will speak words that give us life and build us up, rather than tear us down. People who will challenge us and be honest with us, so we can stay on track. People who will see the potential we have and allow us opportunities to grow into that potential.

EVENTS CAN CHANGE YOUR PURPOSE

Redundancy

Accident

Divorce

Illness

Retirement

Fire

Empty Nest

Flood

Bankruptcy

Earthquake



There is one thing we can be sure of in life and that is change. We all grow and move on to different things at different times. Some things we know are coming, others take us by surprise and others come as a shock. When a disaster occurs or relationships end, whether they be personal, work or family relationships, we all need time to learn to cope, adjust and heal.

Below is a 7 stage adjustment process for how we deal with and process, loss and the associated grief:

- 1. Shock and Denial:** We generally react to learning of loss with numbed disbelief.
- 2. Pain and Guilt:** As the shock wears off, it is replaced with the suffering of unbelievable pain.
- 3. Anger and Bargaining:** Frustration gives way to anger. We may lash out and lay blame.
- 4. Depression:** Reflection and Loneliness: A period of sad reflection and loneliness.
- 5. The Upward Turn:** We start to adjust and life becomes calmer and more organised.

6. Reconstruction and Working Through: We become more functional and practical.

7. Acceptance and Hope: We learn to accept and deal with the reality of the situation.

We are all unique and have different expectations of ourselves and life. Some are normal but others are unrealistic. We view life from our own perspective and sometimes this perspective or perception needs adjustment. Be kind to yourself and take time to heal. Live one day at a time, some will be good and some not so good, but you will move on.

Life will always present challenges, it's how we respond to and deal with those challenges that impact our lives. Fear is a natural part of life. Fear of failing often prevents people from any form of change, whether that change is of our choosing or is forced upon us. Fear stands for False Evidence Appearing Real. Often our obstacles are simply that: false evidence that we think is real. Never be afraid to ask for help. If the first person you ask is not the right person to help you, ask another, and another, until you find the right help. Support and help is always there if you look and persist.

This is also the time to be aware of the moods and attitudes of friends or associates who may be experiencing life-changing events.

This is when we see the greatest risk of self-harm.

WHO AM I?

I live in my body, but I am not just my body

I have a mind, but I can observe my mind
and override my thoughts and feelings

SO, WHO AM I?



We learn from all of our experiences. We build a bank of information and store it in our memory, both conscious and unconscious. This becomes our belief system which determines our attitudes; that is, how we view the world, how we think, feel and behave. Often, we share the same standards and values as our parents and those closest to us.

Anyone without standards and values is at the mercy of everybody else's values. It is important to know and understand our own values as this helps us to think for ourselves and to gain confidence. As we become aware of our inherited standards and values, we may challenge them or disagree with them as we discover who WE are.

TEN MINUTES TO MENTAL HEALTH

Spending ten minutes each day reading a new chapter of this book will greatly improve your mental health.

After reading each chapter, answer these two questions -

**What new knowledge did I gain from this chapter?
Now that I know this, how can I apply it in my life?**

HOW ARE YOU GOING?

BODY

What Foods Are You Eating?

Are You Drinking Much Water?

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

MIND

What Are You Feeding Your Mind?

Exercise? Relaxation? Reflection?

What Thoughts Keep You Awake?

SPIRIT

How Are Your Relationships?

What Is Your Current Goal?

How's Your Progress?