WELCOME TO

Let Go, Forgive, and Set Yourself Free!

WITH DARIAN SLAYTON FLEMING, LCSW,
CERTIFIED HAPPINESS TRAINER

DISCLAIMER

- Does not subscribe to the medical model
- This is not therapy – no diagnosing in the workshop
- Self-help focus workshop
- Consult Workshop Facilitators for Therapy Referrals

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HAPPINESS

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LEARN KEY CONCEPTS

- ✓The Science of Happiness
- ✓Letting Go of Energy That Doesn't Serve You
- ✓What Forgiveness Is and Is Not
- ✓Living At Ease
- ✓Have fun!

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TWO KINDS OF ENERGY

Contraction

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Expansion

PHYSIOLOGY OF ANGER

- Anger triggers fight or flight response
- Body flooded with stress hormones
- Brain shunts blood away from gut toward muscles
- Heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration increase
- Body temperature rises
- Skin perspires
- Mind is sharpened and focused

HEALTH EFFECTS OF ANGER

- Headache
- Digestion problems
- Insomnia
- Increased anxiety
- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Skin problems
- Heart attack
- Stroke

RECOGNIZE ANGER WARNING SIGNS

- Racing heart
- Sweating
- Clammy skin
- Flushed or red face
- Muscle tension
- Tightness in chest
- Shortness of breath
- Stomach ache or butterflies
- Gritting/clenching teeth

KNOW YOUR TRIGGERS

- Loud, busy room
- Clutter, chaos
- Chronic lateness
- Arguing
- Not feeling heard
- Unclear, changing expectations
- Mixed messages
- Financial stress

BEFORE YOU REACT

- Pause
- Breathe
- Assess
- Respond

THE INNER EASE TECHNIQUE

When Feeling Stressed:

1. Acknowledge Your Feelings
   - Notice them
   - Name Them

2. Take a Moment and Do Heart Focused Breathing.

3. Imagine, with each breath that you are infusing your mind and emotions with balance and self-love.

4. When you feel calm, affirm your commitment to maintain ease as you go about your activities.

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PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

- Maintaining moment-to-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, sensations, and surrounding environment.
- Practicing acceptance of these experiences without judgment, meaning we observe what's happening around and within us, without wishing for them to be any different than they are.

- Improved job performance
- Increased job retention
- Closer Interpersonal Relationships
- Enhanced Romantic Relationships
- Fewer behavior problems
- Higher achievement
- Less conflict
- Greater life satisfaction

DEFINITION: HAPPY FOR NO REASON

An inner state of peace and well-being that doesn't depend on circumstances

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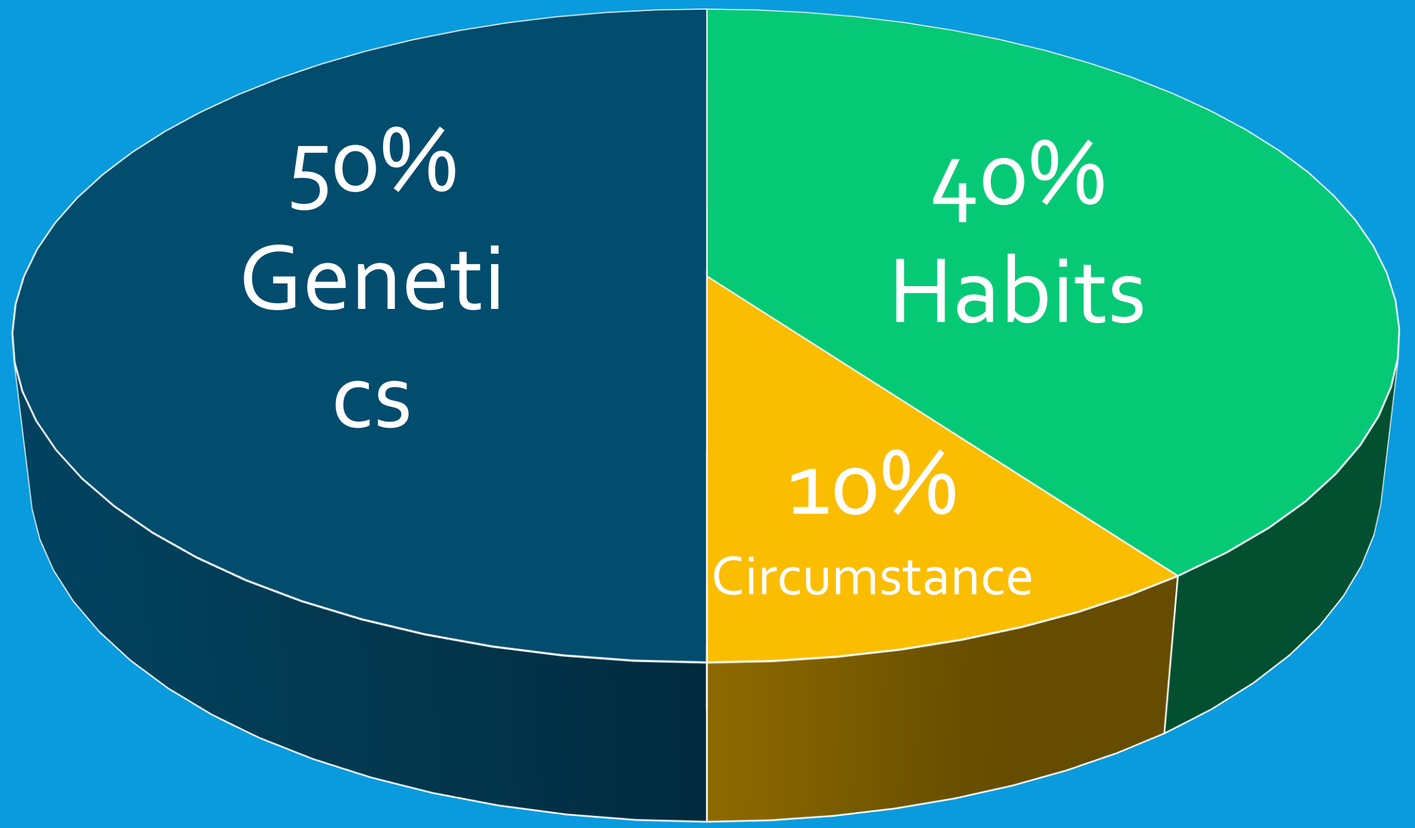
HAPPINESS SET POINT

- Genetic and learned tendency to remain at a certain level of happiness
- Can be adjusted and raised

HAPPINESS SET POINT



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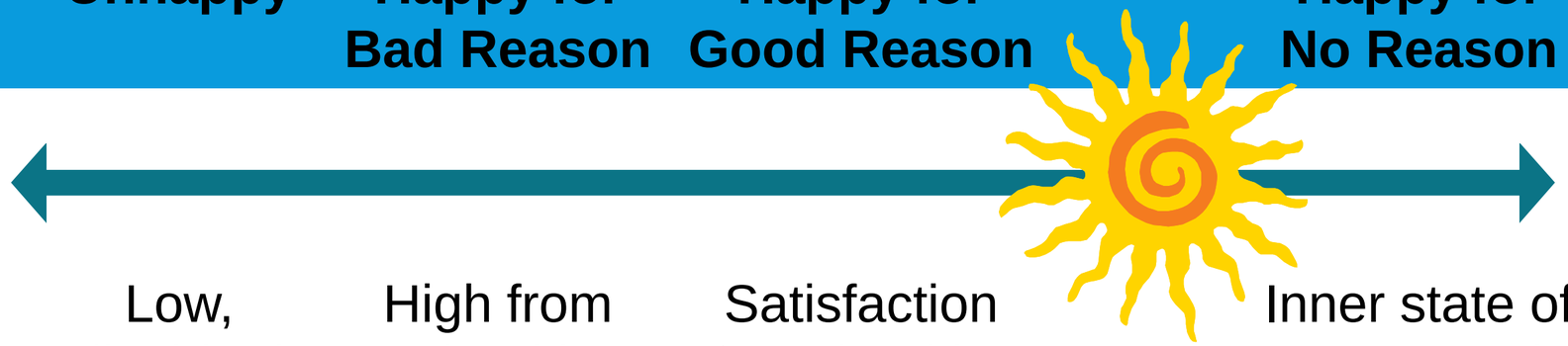
Happiness Continuum

Unhappy	Happy for Bad Reason	Happy for Good Reason	Happy for No Reason
Low, dispirited	High from unhealthy addictions	Satisfaction from healthy experiences	Inner state of peace and well-being



EXTERNAL **INTERNAL**

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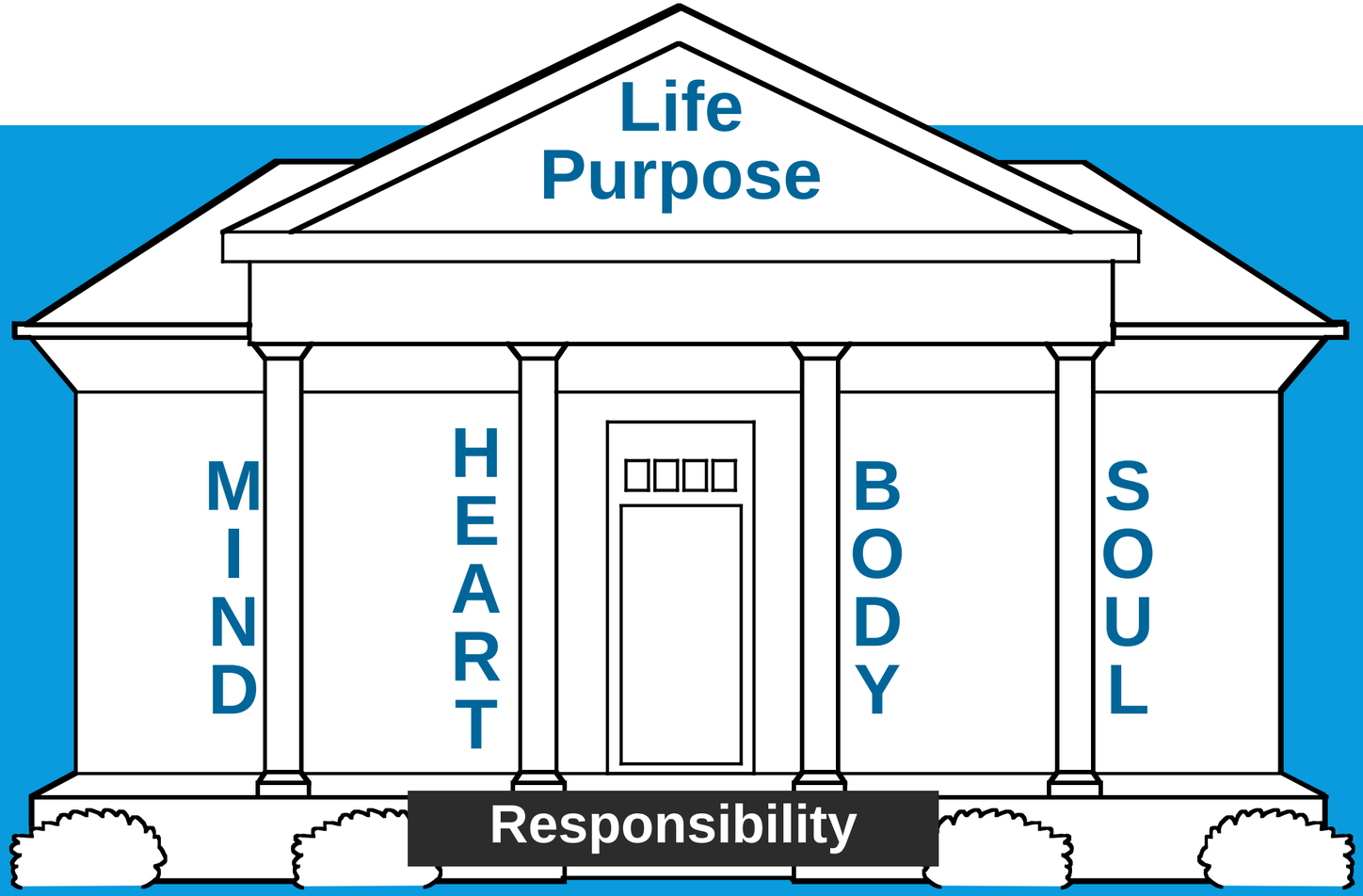
INNER HOME FOR HAPPINESS



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LETTING GO

"Those who have learned to be happy are often those who have suffered most."

- Marianne Williamson -

LOOSEN YOUR GRIP

The Monkey Trap Story

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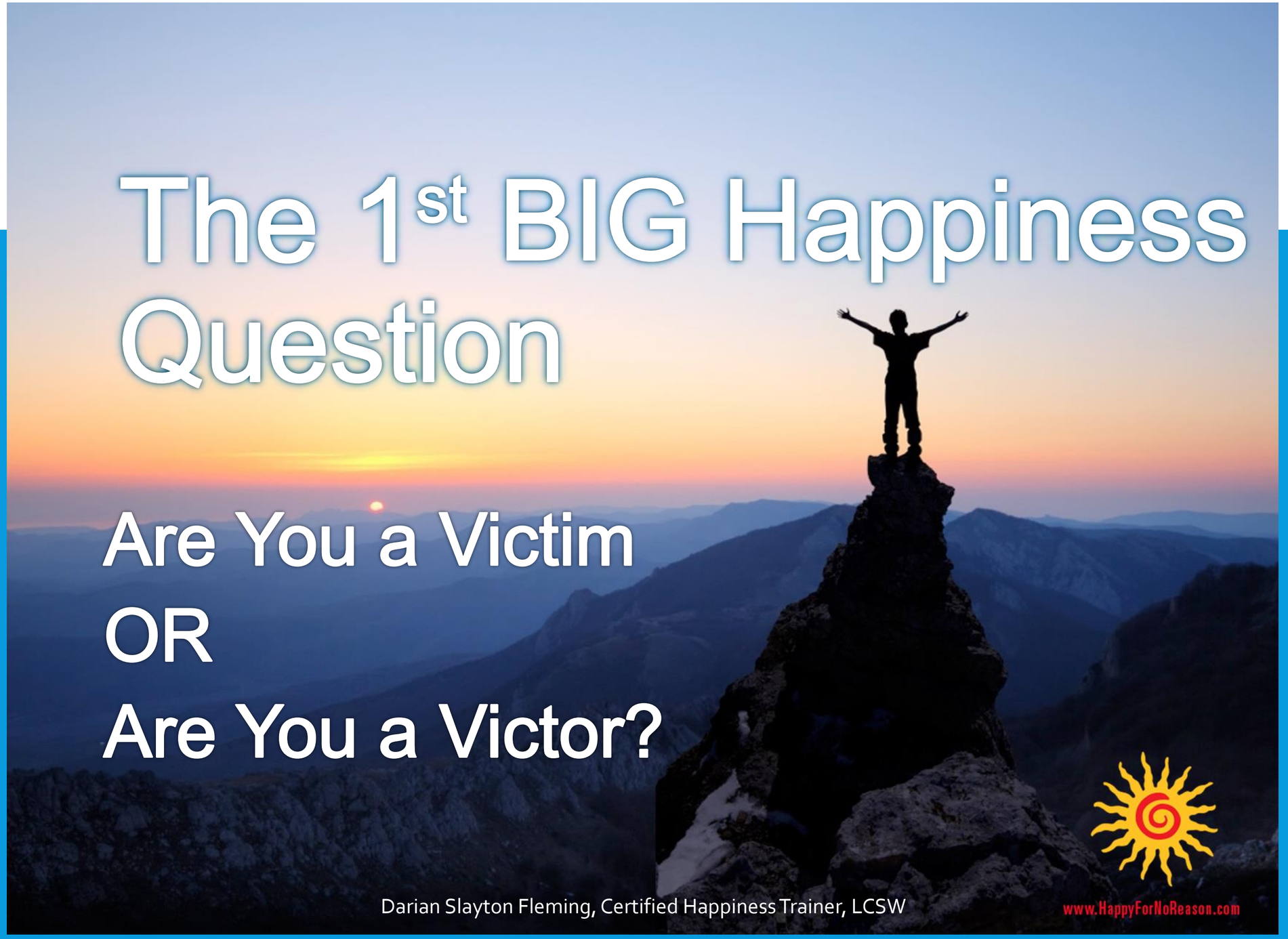

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THE FOUNDATION SENTENCE COMPLETIONS

Something I complain about is. . .

Something I blame is. . .

A way I shame myself is. . .

If I were to take a little more responsibility for my happiness, I would. . .

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THE FOUNDATION:
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR HAPPINESS

- **Blame**
- **Shame**
- **Complain Game**

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MANAGE YOUR SELF-TALK

- Explore and reframe Your Thoughts

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EXAMPLES OF COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

- Automatic negative thoughts
- Thinking errors
- Unproductive thoughts
- Thoughts that keep us stuck
- Thoughts that produce the same undesirable results

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ALL OR NOTHING THINKING

Things are seen in black or white categories:

- If you make a mistake, you might think that you "failed" and or are a "failure"!
- If your project or assignment isn't perfect you might think it's not good enough to submit.
- If you make mistakes as a parent you might think you're not a good parent.

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OVERGENERALIZATION

- You generalize from a specific
- You think in absolutes, like “always” “never”
- You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern

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MAGNIFICATION OR MINIMIZATION

- You blow things out of proportion
- You deny something is a problem when it is
- Examples: “I am the worst mother ever”
- “It’s nothing - Not a big deal (when it really is to you)

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MENTAL FILTER

- You pick out a negative, single event and dwell on it, like a drop of ink that discolors a whole beaker of water.

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SHOULD STATEMENTS

- You have pre-conditions on how you and other people "should" be.
- You are judgmental and unforgiving.
- You have expectations that create a lot of anxiety.

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PERSONALIZATION

- You are self-conscious and think things are about you when they are just interpretations.
- You think if someone is angry or negative it is in response to you, and you blame yourself.

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PLAYING THE COMPARISON GAME

- Comparing yourself to others.
- The need to keep up with or outshine others to feel good about yourself.
- “He is so much smarter than I am."
- "I’m stupid.”

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FORTUNE TELLING

- You think that you can predict the future, and convince yourself that bad things will happen.
- "I will always have these problems!"

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LABELING

- You assign names or values to yourself as if they are facts.
- A label becomes an evaluation of self-worth.
  - Lazy
  - Fat
  - Stupid
  - Loser
  - Jerk

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IDENTIFY YOUR THINKING ERRORS

- Automatic thought?
- Cognitive distortion (thinking error)

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DISPUTING IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS

- Automatic Thought: I'll never be good enough.
- Cognitive Distortion: Overgeneralization
- Rational Response:
  - I go to work every day and rarely call in sick.
  - I bring home a good paycheck and we can pay our bills.
  - I take my kids for bike rides on the weekend to encourage exercise.
  - I make sure the lawn is mowed every weekend and keep up with the weeding.

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ABCDE DIARY

- Activating Event: My wife accused me of being lazy again.
- Belief: I'm never going to be good enough.
- Consequences: Frustration, mad, tired
- Dispute the Belief: I work really hard at work and help take care of our kids and home.
- I see the results of my hard work.

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THOUGHT STOPPING

When you have an automatic negative thought, say out loud or think to yourself:

- Stop that
- Cancel that
- The truth today is . . .
- I have people who do care about me

Turn down the volume of your negative inner voice and create a nurturing inner voice to take its place. When you make a mistake, forgive yourself, learn from it, and move on instead of obsessing about it. Equally important, don't allow anyone else to dwell on your mistakes or shortcomings or to expect perfection.

~ Beverly Engel, *The Nice Girl Syndrome*

DEDICATED TIME

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CELEBRATE

In closing…

Thank you for making space for this work with me today

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