

## ***Three ways to keep Life In Balance: Be Present, Open Up, Do What Matters***

***Balance is a process; not a state.***

These three elements are central to a method called **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**. Learning to be present, open up, and do what matters is a dynamic process that happens day-by-day and moment-by-moment. Here are some resources that help you to learn or access information about mind-body skills to help you find more ease and balance in all three areas, and to learn more about ACT if you are interested.

### **Core Skills for Practice: BE PRESENT**

- Breathing (deep, abdominal, diaphragmatic)
- Mindful Meditation
- Mindful Awareness
- Yoga/Tai Chi
- Gratitude journal

**WEBSITES/APPs** where you can find information and guided practice:

[HDPsychology.com](http://HDPsychology.com)

Head Space

[Tarabrach.com](http://Tarabrach.com)

Pranayama Breathing

[Calm.com](http://Calm.com)

Tenpercent.com

Google-“UCLA Mindfulness”

### **These techniques have the following benefits**

- Feeling less stressed
- Acting with more compassion
- Quieting your body
- Decreased “fight or flight”
- Greater ability to focus
- Improved emotion regulation
- Releasing physical tension
- Autonomic NS Balance
- Lowered pain levels

## Core Skills for Practice: OPEN UP

- Noticing unhelpful thoughts and seek to shift perspective
- Willingness to be uncomfortable / acceptance of difficult emotions
- Self-Compassion - see Kristen Neff's website <https://self-compassion.org/>
- BREATHING to deal with stress-
  - In, Out
  - Deep, Slow
  - Calm, Ease
  - Nourish, Cleanse
  - Here, Now

*-Modified version of poem by Thich Nhat Hanh*
- Helpful Postures/Movements
  - Place one hand on belly, one on chest and follow movement.
  - Place hands behind head to open up space for the breath.
  - Place one hand on your heart and the other on top of it-feel your breath and offer compassion.
  - Gently lift arms as you breath in, lower as you breath out.
  - Gently open arms as you breath in, close/bring together as you breath out.

## Core Skills for Practice: DO WHAT MATTERS

- Identify core values
- Daily Intention/Review
  - Morning Commit to take 1 action that fits with 1 value
  - Daily Accept / notice what shows up
  - Evening Review to find a moment of meaning, connection, engagement, or joy

## Books

<u>Full Catastrophe Living</u>	Jon Kabat-Zinn ( <i>Mindfulness-several other books</i> )
<u>10% Happier</u>	Dan Harris ( <i>Mindfulness-also a Podcast and APP</i> )
<u>Self-Compassion</u>	Kristen Neff ( <i>Self-Compassion.org</i> )
<u>The Reality Slap</u>	Russ Harris ( <i>Acceptance &amp; Commitment Therapy: Thehappinesstrap.com</i> )
<u>The Happiness Trap</u>	
<u>Finding Freedom in Illness</u>	Peter Fernando ( <i>Mindfulness/Self-compassion</i> )
<u>Into the Magic Shop</u>	James Doty ( <i>Mindfulness</i> )

***To Affect the Quality of the Day, that is the Highest of Arts***

*-Henry David Thoreau*