

Ingredients for Lifestyle Management as a result of Grief & Loss

Deep Breathing

Taking in more oxygen is good for the blood as it expels more carbon dioxide. Deep breathing, which is a component of physical exercise helps to give the heart a good workout too; helps the muscular system, and pumps a quick jolt of oxygen through your cells, even those that may have been operating at reduced capacity.

Shallow breathing (or chest breathing) causes a constriction of the chest and lung tissue over time, decreasing oxygen flow and delivery to your tissues. Deep, rhythmic breathing expands the diaphragm muscle, the cone-shaped muscle under your lungs, expanding the lung's air pockets, invoking the relaxation response, and massaging the lymphatic system. The lymphatic system is essential for good health in that it helps the immune system by removing and destroying waste, debris, dead blood cells, pathogens, toxins, and cancer cells. We don't often think about our lymph nodes unless we hear about someone with cancer, which is surprising, because we have twice as much lymphatic fluid as blood in our bodies.

Breath is the fastest medium by which these systems can communicate, flicking the switch from high alert to low in a matter of seconds. Many Eastern cultures have long recognized the importance of breathing to cultivate a positive relationship between the body and the mind, one that results in a more tranquil state of being and a more resilient physiology. Yoga, qi gong and t'ai chi are such healthy practices in large part because they combine deep breathing and movement to support a steady central nervous response.

5 Reasons to Practice Deep Breathing

1. It's FREE! There is no cost for you to learn or apply this technique and it is an excellent tool for stress and anger management.
2. It tricks your body into thinking it is in a calm state (as opposed to the fight or flight state). When we are in a state of stress, our bodies are in a "fight or flight" response, meaning it is reacting as if there is a threat present and we either need to stay and fight the threat or run away. When our bodies are in this state, our heart rate rises and our breathing becomes rapid and shallow.
3. Deep Breathing gives you energy! The act of breathing deeply helps to deliver nutrient rich oxygen throughout your body.
4. This delivery of oxygen also helps to eliminate waste in the body and help maintain healthy cells.
5. It's a useful technique to have ready when the time comes. Practice now so when you are feeling angry, anxious, etc., you will be prepared to use it!

When To Use Deep Breathing

- * If you are nervous about an important meeting, public speaking engagement, or personal situation you are about to face.
- * When you feel angry. You may notice your heart beating faster, face getting hot, and an urge to react to the source of your anger.
- * If you are feeling an urge to do something you don't want to do.
- * Anytime you feel the need to relax and de-stress.

Visual imagery

Many people are familiar with the idea of *visual imagery*; they might think of it as the *imagination*. *Imagination* is one's ability to form sensations, (i.e., smell, touch, sound, etc.) that allows one to experience the reality without having to physically be removed from the present. The mind is used to scheme, contrive, fantasize and remember. Visual Imagery is a way to open the mind through imagination in order to better manage anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, any unwanted feelings that result from our thoughts and moods.

Guided imagery has also been used in meditation by many cultures for centuries. Meditation is a practice especially associated with Asian religious traditions, but in fact people in all cultures have a history of meditation. Some devout Catholics, for example, visualize during prayer to help God get the message, while meditation and the imagination are also harnessed in Native American prayer ceremonies. The *Guided Imagery* is a way to help lead an individual(s) through suggestions designed to help induce a stress-free moment in time in order to be rejuvenated, refreshed and re-energized.

Mental Imagery is visualization and mental rehearsal, is defined as experience that resembles perceptual experience, but which occurs in the absence of the appropriate stimuli for the relevant perception.

BENEFITS

Grounding

Spiritual Calming

Clarity

Renewal w/ Purpose

Lower Blood Pressure

Rejuvenation