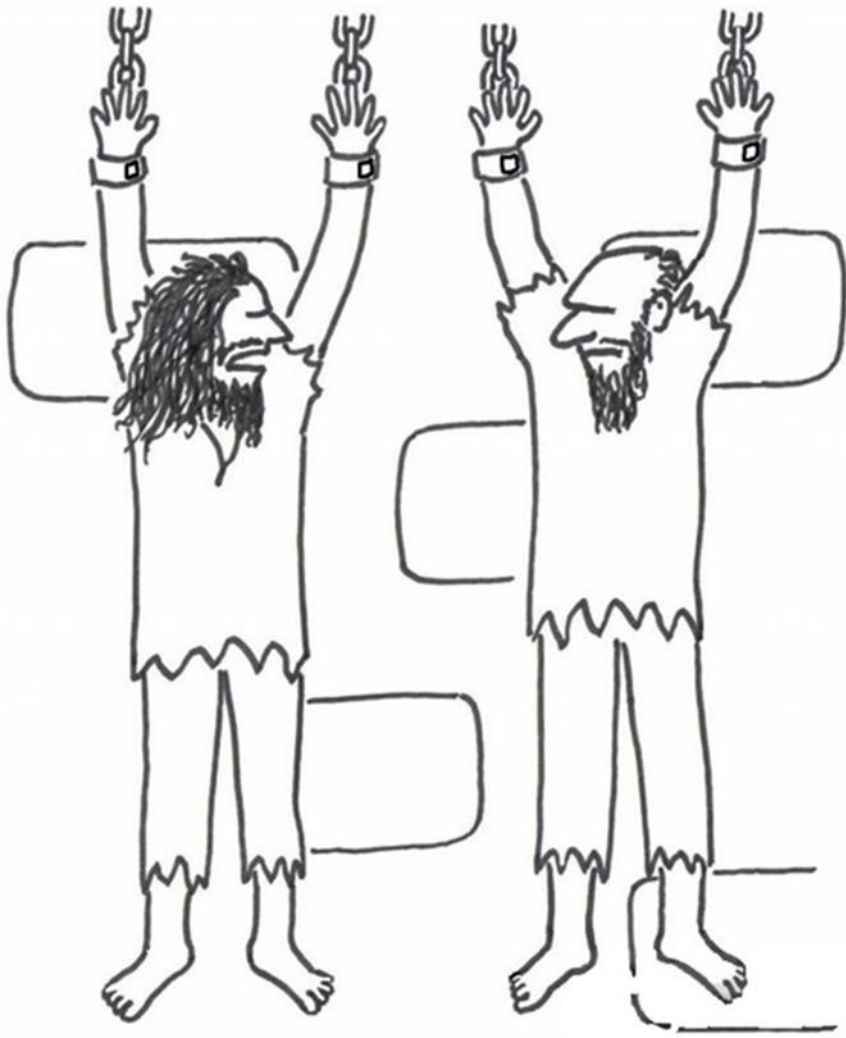


Thriving in the Fast Lane: Evidence-Based Hacks to Support Wellbeing and Reduce Burnout

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"Have you considered
it's just your negative attitude that
makes this place so miserable?"

WHAT THIS TALK IS AND ISN'T

- If you weren't resilient you couldn't do the work you are doing now
- Resilience can be taught
- Resilience is about life and mental habits
- Burnout happens to the vast majority of providers at some point
- How to prevent bad outcomes

Resilience (ri-zil-yn(t)s)

- ▶ An ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change
 - Implies that burnout = lack of resilience
- ▶ The opposite of resilience is
 - ▶ Inflexibility and rigidity
 - ▶ Burnout



Burnout is a whole-
organization problem,
not necessarily an
individual problem

(Panagioti, et al., JAMA Intern Med. 2017;177(2):195-205)

Exponential changes in
overall wellbeing and
reduction of burnout
occurs for every point of
improvement in
individual wellness that
is gained

(Plmer, Ribera, Hoffman, Dankoski, 2013. Enhancing
Vitality in Academic Medicine).

“both individual-focused and structural or organizational
strategies can result in clinically meaningful reductions in
burnout among physicians.”

(West, Drybye, Erwin & Shanafelt, 2016. Lancet, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(16\)31279-X](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31279-X))



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Physician Well-Being: Reciprocity of Practice Efficiency, Culture of Wellness and Personal Resilience.
Bohman, et al. Aug 7, 2017.
<https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.17.0429>

WHAT ARE PERSONAL FACTORS?

- Inclusion/connectivity
- Family dynamics
- Financial stressors/vitality
- Ability to respond to change
- Engagement to meaning & purpose
- Personality traits, values, ethics
- Physical, mental, spiritual wellbeing
- Relationships & support
- Sense of meaning
- Work-life integration
- Clinical competency
- Communication, coping, delegation
- Empathy, mentorship
- Resilience
- Team work capability

Three Cardinal Indicators of Burnout

1. Emotional Exhaustion
2. Depersonalization
3. Low estimate of professional accomplishment

(Maslach & Jackson, 1981. Journal of Occupational Behavior, 2:99-114)

The Maslach Burnout Inventory

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_08.htm

The slippery slope of burnout

1. **Physical, mental, emotional exhaustion**

(Feel drained; sick; changes in appetite or sleep habits. “Something is wrong with me”)

2. **Shame and doubt**

(Pessimism about the future; discount accomplishments; lack of motivation; isolation; boredom)



3. **Cynicism and callousness**

(Abrasive, compulsive behaviors, affairs, isolating, skipping work)

4. **Failure, helplessness, and crisis**

(Unfit to work, negative consequences if you don't. Emotionally worn down; can't cope with past negative life experiences. Relationships and performance fails)

YOUR OWN VALUES CAN HURT YOU

STRENGTH	VULNERABILITY
Others' needs more important	Poor help-seeking/health in self
Protecting others	Guilt after patient deaths
Ability to endure without complaint	Can't recognize own symptoms or suffering
Internal moral compass: right vs wrong	Anger when others fail
Being the best & most effective	Shame, denial, or minimization

OBSTACLES TO SELF-CARE

- ▶ Working too long by yourself or too much
- ▶ Keeping stress and concerns to yourself
- ▶ Believe you're the only one who can do x, y, z
- ▶ Slavish attention only to what needs to be done next
- ▶ Relying on alcohol/substances to relax



EVIDENCE BASED RESILIENCE HACKS

IN EVERYDAY MEDICAL PRACTICE

Two Kinds of Resilience practices. Both Are Necessary

- ▶ **Short-term strategies to cope with stress in the moment**
 - ▶ Brief, time-limited, on-the-spot practices
 - ▶ Self management skills
- ▶ **Long-term emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual reserve**
 - ▶ Quality of life
 - ▶ Positive life practices



"I understand that yoga helps you face stressful moments, Ms. Daggle, but it's really time for us to get on with the interview."

“It’s getting crazy!” strategies

- ▶ Mini-breaks
- ▶ Hand on the doorknob
- ▶ Visualization
- ▶ Humor
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Monitor your self-awareness
- ▶ A personal “wait for one minute” rule
- ▶ If you have no reserve, short-term strategies have limited efficacy



WELLNESS STARTS AT HOME

- ▶ **Connection between good relationships and mortality are as strong as the relationship between smoking and dying**
- ▶ Increased cortisol levels
- ▶ Couples with poor conflict skills: worse overall health
- ▶ High argument couples (with sarcasm) have lower T-cell counts, lower WBC and increased proinflammatory cytokines
- ▶ Decreased immune effectiveness
- ▶ More likely to have cardiac, weight, and endocrine issues

IDENTIFY A RESILIENCE ROLE MODEL

- ▶ Can be a personal acquaintance
- ▶ Can be a world leader or public servant



EXERCISE OPTIMISM

- ▶ Stop pessimism as soon as you're aware of it
- ▶ Question the rational basis for negative thoughts
- ▶ Take control of whether or not you live in pessimism



DEVELOP YOUR MORAL COMPASS

- ▶ Strengthen your core beliefs
- ▶ Clarify your values
- ▶ Consider how your theology or worldview supports resilience
- ▶ Find a spiritual mentor
- ▶ Speak with clergy or a chaplain



CONSIDER SPIRITUALITY

- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Meditation or mindfulness
- ▶ Yoga
- ▶ 12 minutes of meditation, prayer or mindfulness activities daily:
 - ▶ Decreased depressive symptoms
 - ▶ Greater compassion and love for others
 - ▶ Less anxiety and worry

(How God Changes Your Brain, Newberg & Waldman, 2010. Ballantine Books;

Mindfulness for Beginners. Jon Kabat-Zinn, 2006)

Learn mindfulness skills

- ▶ Even one point reduction in burnout scores linked with meaningful differences in adverse outcomes (medical errors, fatigue, distress, suicidality, work effort)
- ▶ Walking mindfulness practices

(West, et al., 2016. The Lancet, 388;10057, 5-11 Nov. 2272-2281; Shanafelt et al., 2016. Mayo Clin Proc, 91:422-431; Regehr, et al., 2014, J Nerv Ment Dis, 353-359; Oman, et al., 2006: J Consult Clin Psychol, 74:714-719; Moody, et al., 2013; J Peditr Oncol Nurs, 275-284; Salles et al., 2013; J Am Coll Surg, 217, S116; West et al., JAMA Intern Med, 174:527-633); Newberg & Waldman, 2009. How God Changes Your Brain. Ballintine; Rao & Kemper, 2017; Jn Evid Based Comp & Alt Med, 22(2):237-241.)

LAUGH HARD AND OFTEN

- ▶ Improves positive mood
- ▶ Boosts immunity, popularity
- ▶ Lower levels of depression and anxiety
- ▶ “Internal jogging” (Dr. Lee Berk, LLU)

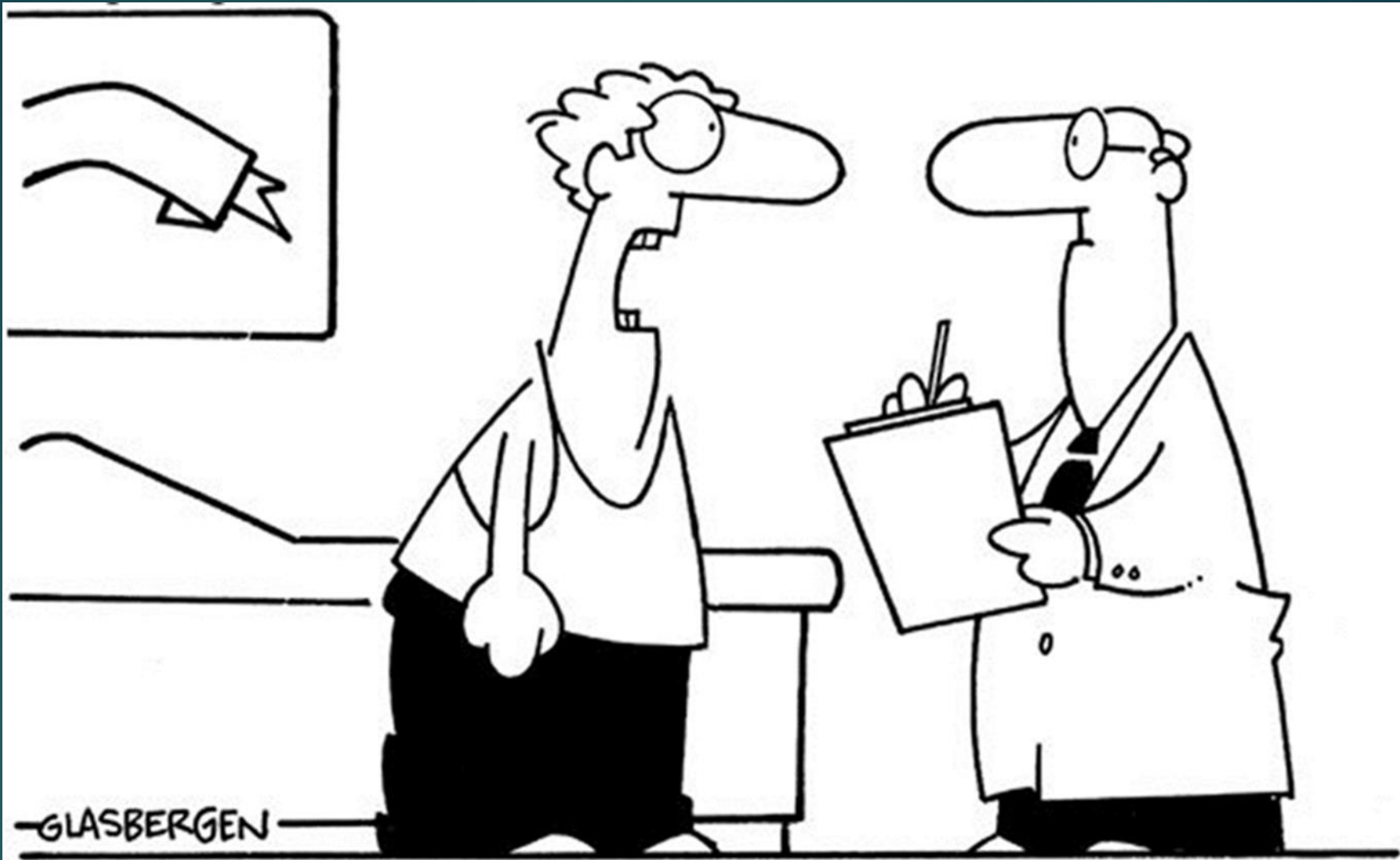
(Proyer & Weber, 2010; McGhee, 2010; Ruch et al., 2011;
Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013)



TAKE TIME TO RELAX



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EubuphQ79z4>



**"I'm learning how to relax, doctor —
but I want to relax *better* and *faster*!
I want to be on the cutting edge of relaxation!"**

Shinrin yoku: “Forest Bathing”

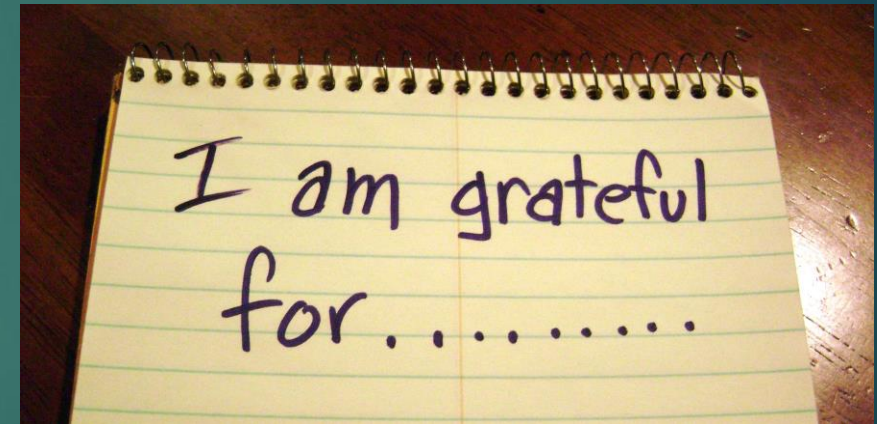
▶ 65 studies support this practice

- ▶ Decreased salivary cortisol
- ▶ Decreased blood pressure, HR
- ▶ Improved sleep
- ▶ Improved immunity
- ▶ Greater satisfaction
- ▶ Subjective relaxation
- ▶ Decreased anxiety, depressive symptoms, & anger



Practice gratitude

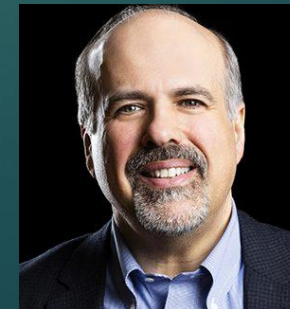
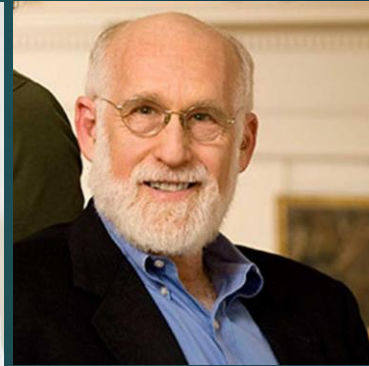
- ▶ Feel better about their lives.
 - Were more optimistic.
 - Were more energetic.
 - Were more enthusiastic.
 - Were more determined.
 - Were more interested.
 - Were more joyful.
 - Exercised more.
 - Had fewer illnesses.
 - Got more sleep.
 - Were more likely to have helped someone else



PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS: CREATIVITY

- ▶ Offset to work stress
- ▶ Encourages expression
- ▶ Uses other brain functions
- ▶ Offers new lens to view life
- ▶ Encourages reflection
- ▶ Emotional consolidation

(Csikszentmihali, 1996; Carruthers, 2002; de Bono, 2008; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009)



EXPRESS YOURSELF MEANINGFULLY

Thursday last week
I cut down the large birch tree
behind the house...
to allow more light to get
through.

Today, I returned
to finish the clean-up.
I found the stump
bathed in tears, weeping.

I am not making it up.

The stump was
soaking wet, drops of water
running down the side
into the ground.

It is spring time,
life asserting itself,
bursting forth once more,
in the large birch, too.

But it is weeping,
bleeding almost.
A life cut off
in its prime.

And I think of you,
my patient,
who also feels cut off
in your prime.

Sigve Tonstad, MD, PhD

BEHAVIORS

- Creativity
- Altruism and service
- Laughter
- Music
- Emotional consolidation
- Aerobic exercise
- Integrating life outside medicine with work





ADDRESSING OUR RESPONSES DURING CRISIS

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

PHYSICIANS AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Receive poorer quality mental health care than patients
(Gold KJ, Sen A, Schwenk TL. Details on suicide among US physicians: data from the National Violent Death Reporting System. *Gen Hosp Psychiatry*. 2013;35:45-49)
- Receive “special” care (i.e., less penetrating intake evaluations)
(Austin AE, van den Heuvel C, Byard RW. Physician suicide. *J Forensic Sci*. 2013;58(Suppl 1):S91-S93.)
- Physicians pathologized for mental health issues and treatment
(Gerkin DG. Struggling in silence: physician suicide. *Tenn Med*. 2013;106(2):7-8.)
- Stigma prevents early identification and treatment
- Late stage symptoms stymie help-seeking
- Untreated mental health highly associated with completed suicides

(Gold KJ, Sen A, Schwenk TL. Details on suicide among US physicians: data from the National Violent Death Reporting System. *Gen Hosp Psychiatry*. 2013;35:45-49)

READY (Green)

DEFINITION

- Optimal functioning
- Adaptive growth
- Wellness

FEATURES

- At one's best
- Well trained and prepared
- In control
- Physically, mentally, and spiritually fit
- Mission focused
- Motivated
- Calm and steady
- Behaving ethically
- Having fun

REACTING (Yellow)

DEFINITION

- Mild and transient distress or loss of functioning
- Always goes away
- Low risk for illness

CAUSES

- Any Stressor

FEATURES

- Feeling irritable, anxious, or down
- Loss of motivation
- Loss of focus
- Difficulty sleeping
- Muscle tension or other physical changes
- Not having fun

INJURED (Orange)

DEFINITION

- More severe and persistent distress or loss of function
- Leaves a "scar"
- Higher risk for illness

CAUSES

- Life Threat
- Loss
- Inner Conflict
- Wear and Tear

FEATURES

- Loss of control
- Panic, rage, or depressed mood
- Substance Abuse
- Not feeling like normal self
- Excessive guilt, shame, or blame
- Diminished sense of purpose, meaning, or hope in the future

ILL (Red)

DEFINITION

- Unhealed stress injury causing life impairment
- Clinical mental disorder

TYPES

- PTSD
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance Dependence

FEATURES

- Symptoms persist and worsen over time
- Severe distress, social or occupational impairment

REQUIREMENTS FOR STRESS RECOVERY

COVER

Safety and protection

CALM

Skills to reduce anxiety, relax

CONNECT

Relationships, social integration and sense of belonging

COMPETENCE

Internal and external resources

CONFIDENCE

Hope, meaning org support

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:

- ▶ What is my early warning sign that I'm not doing well? Is it happening now?
- ▶ How has this pandemic affected my sense of safety?
- ▶ Can I sleep? Am I able to keep calm?
- ▶ What is the impact of this on my relationships? Have I asked what my significant other thinks?
- ▶ How is my sense of confidence?
- ▶ Am I worried about being able to cope right now?
- ▶ Do I have a world view, life philosophy, or theology that helps me understand what is happening?

CALMING ACTIONS

- ▶ Get some quiet
 - ▶ Be still and relax
- ▶ Compose yourself
 - ▶ Distract to obtain an off-set to current stressors
- ▶ Foster rest
 - ▶ Sleep, rest, take a time out
- ▶ Soothe
 - ▶ Listen
 - ▶ Reduce emotional intensity



SUPPORT CONNECTION

- ▶ The “1 + 2” daily practice
- ▶ Active listening skills
- ▶ Empathize
- ▶ Encourage contact with others
- ▶ Be trustworthy
- ▶ Accept what is being said as the experience of the other
- ▶ Suspend relationship conflicts and focus on support

DON'T LET SADNESS ACCUMULATE



Covering Over, Over-Reflecting

(Addison, R. 1989. In M. Little, et al., (Eds.), *Becoming a Family Physician*. Springer-Verlag)

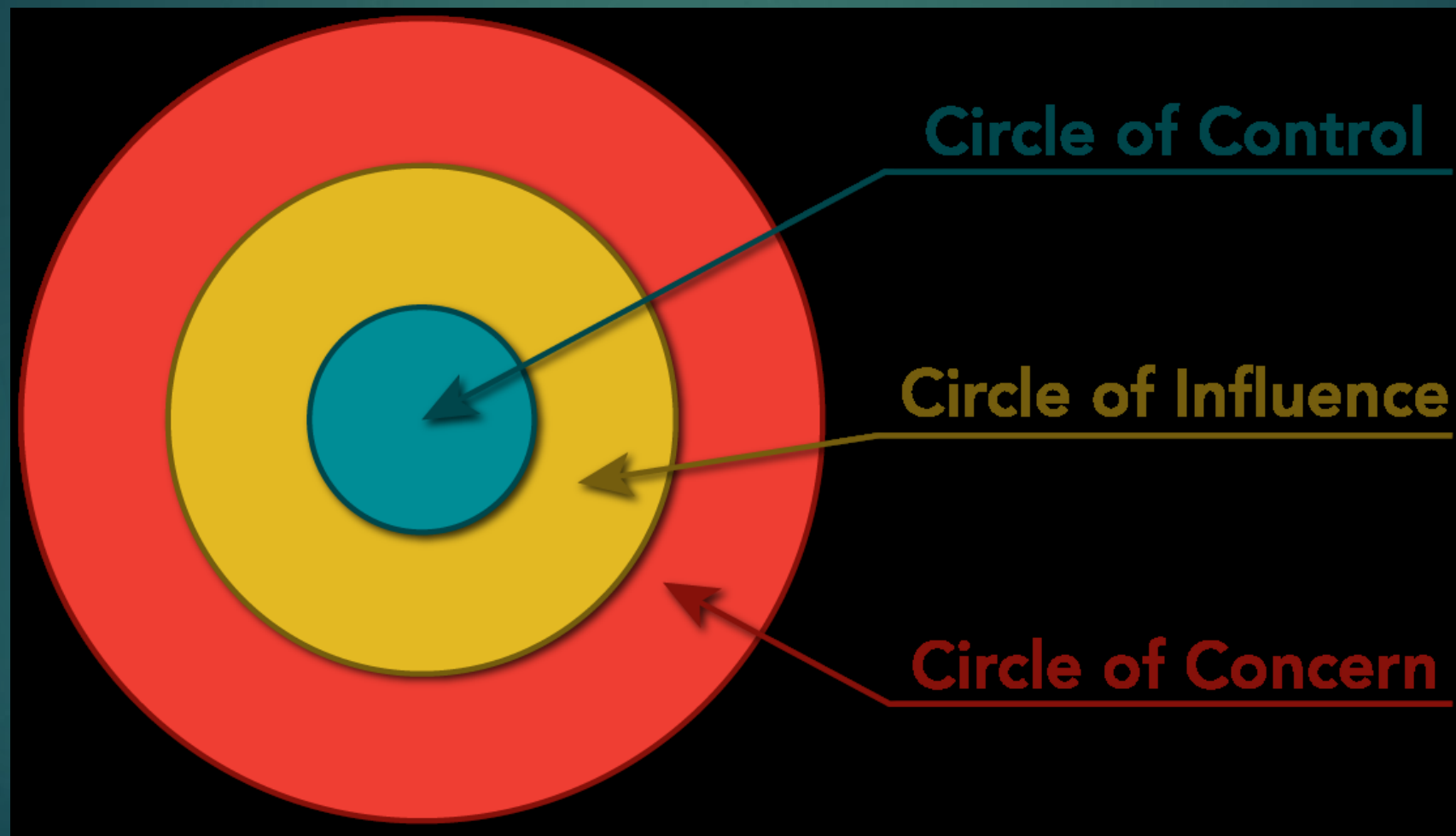


A good cry is a
normal human
response

But crying feels
like this...



INVEST IN WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL



RESOURCES

- ▶ **Southern California Confidential Line: (213) 383-2691 for any physician or dentists who need to talk**
- ▶ Head Space is free with NPI number
- ▶ Abide is a Christian app for Bible meditation
- ▶ Soultime is another Christian meditation app
- ▶ Pray offers daily prayer and Bible audio resources
- ▶ Calm is Apple's 2017 App of the Year; helps promote relaxation and sleep
- ▶ Reimagining the Examen app: Catholic reflections on St. Ignatius' prayer
- ▶ Laudate, Catholic app with a variety of prayers and mass offered
- ▶ Jon Kabat-Zinn's three meditation apps. Jon is the mindfulness scientist at Harvard who has demonstrated the value of meditation for physicians
- ▶ Three Good Things gratitude app

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- ▶ Thanks to Patricia Watson and the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Care for the use of their webinar materials in this presentation