



Getting Through the Dark Months

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Overview

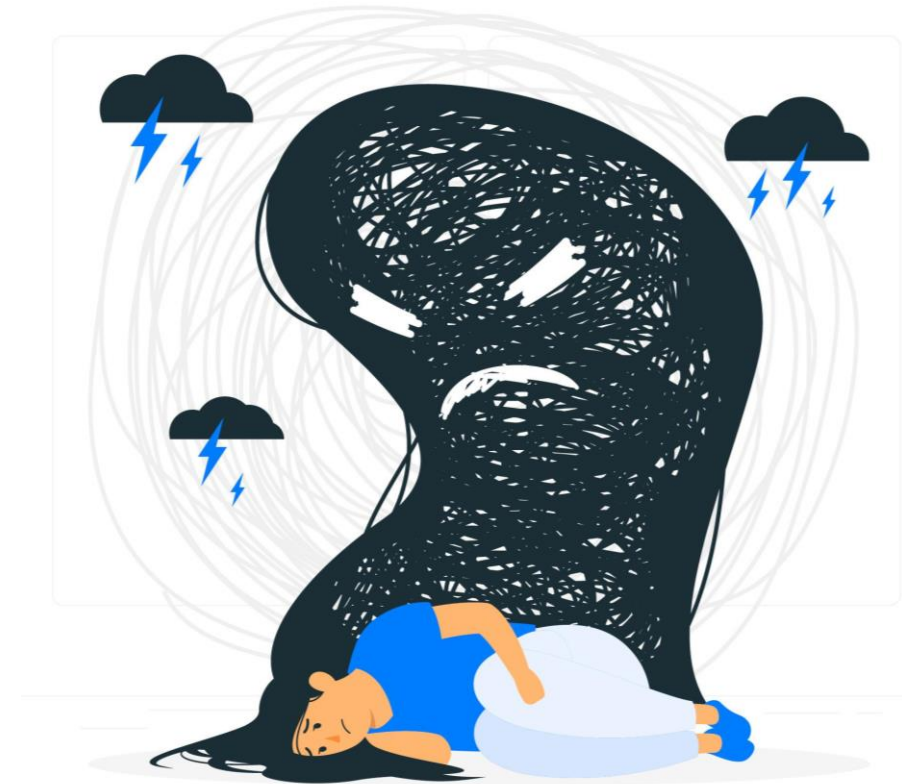
- An introduction to SAD
- Symptoms and causes
- Risk factors
- Treating SAD
- Other ways to help with SAD



What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

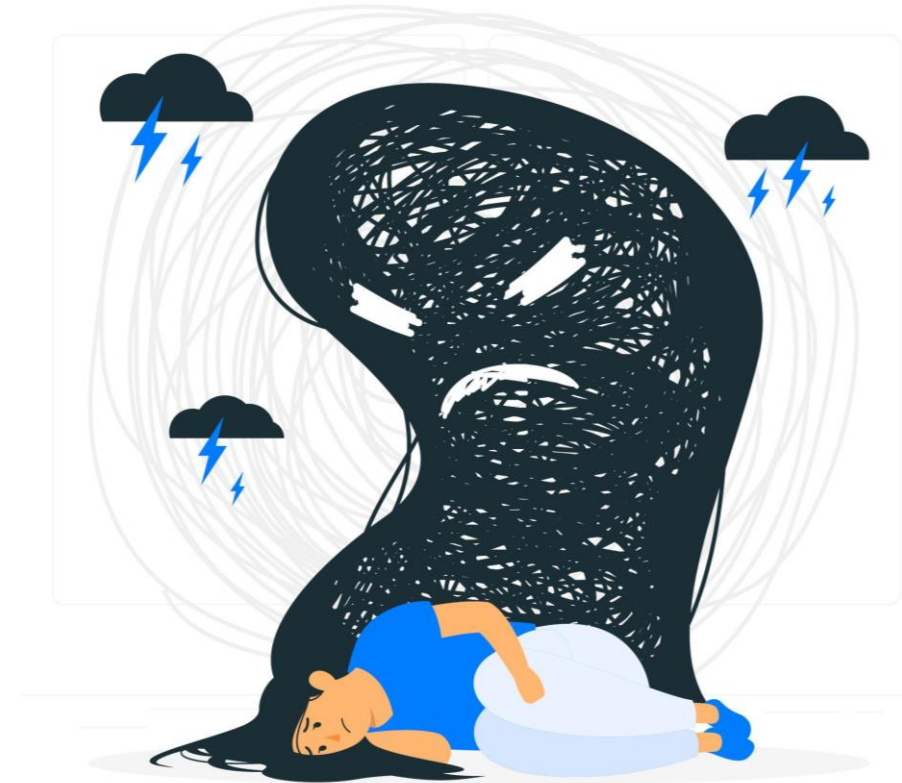
- A condition related to the **shortening of daylight hours**
- A mild to moderate form of **depression** that occurs during the fall and winter months
- Key feature: it's **cyclical**. It appears each year as the seasons change and disappears during spring and summer

It's not the same as the “winter blues”!



The symptoms of SAD

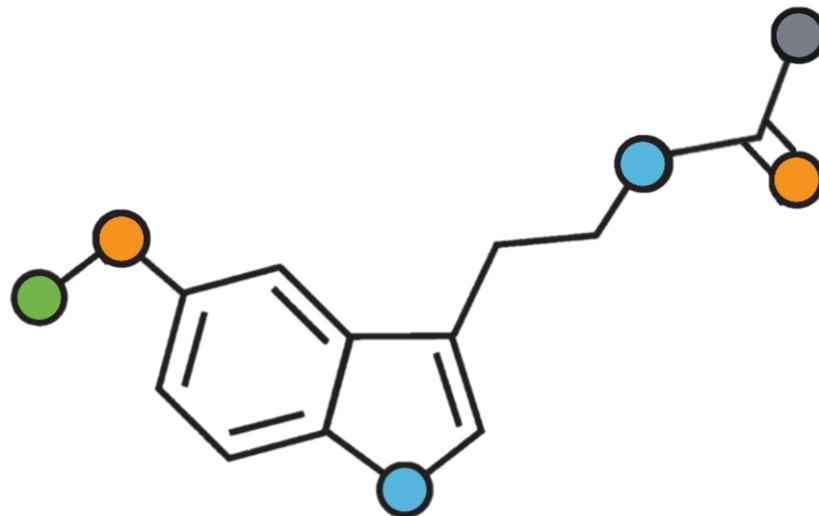
- Incorrectly blaming yourself
- Difficulty doing easy or enjoyable activities
- Difficulty thinking and concentrating
- Feeling more lethargic
- Difficulty getting up when days are shorter
- Oversleeping
- Craving carb-heavy foods



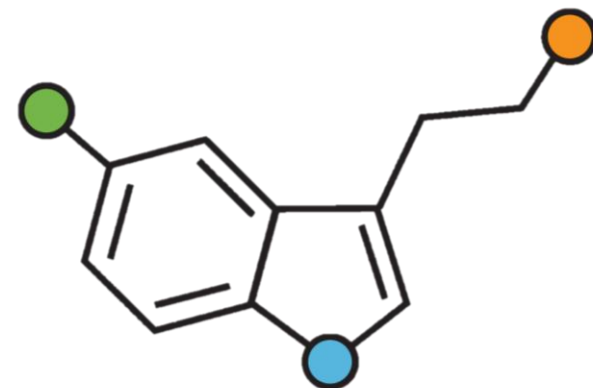
Three main contributors



Circadian
Rhythm



Melatonin



Serotonin

Are you at risk?

- Women more than men
- Over 20 years of age
- Immediate family members have been affected
- Live in the northern latitudes



Treating SAD

- Light therapy
- Cognitive behavioural therapy
- Medication
- The Optimal Wellness Effect
 - Practicing Self-Care
 - Building Resiliency
 - Finding Happiness

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommends that SAD should be treated in the same way as other types of depression.

Treating SAD with light therapy

- Uses a **light box** that is much brighter than indoor lighting
- Increases **serotonin**, decreases **melatonin**
- Effective for **70%** of participants after a few weeks¹
- Long-term benefits unclear
- Commercially available
- Compliance and consistency is crucial!



¹National Institute of Health, 2013

Treating SAD with CBT

- Cognitive behavioural therapy is based on the idea that the way we **think** and **act** may affect the way we **feel**
- Therapist fosters **behavioural skills** (identify, schedule, doing enjoyable things), and **cognitive skills** (identify and challenge negative thoughts)
- Should counteract the lethargic moods and “hibernation” tendencies



Treating SAD with medication

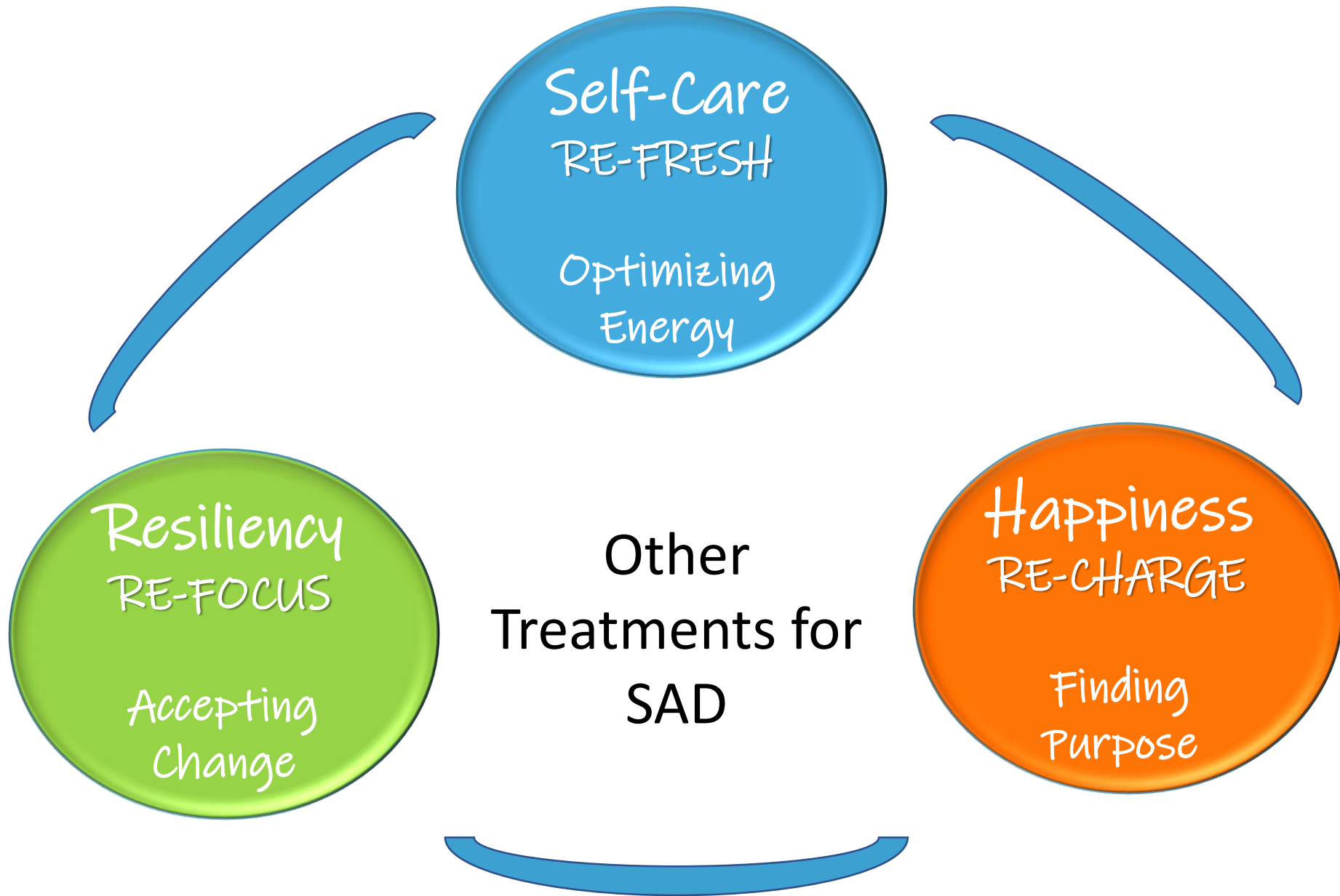
- When severe, SAD can be treated with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)
- Increases serotonin, which lifts mood
- MUST be taken as prescribed and even when you begin to feel better



Working from home/remote

- Isolation
- Lack of social connection
- Working too many hours
- What are your boundaries?
- Is your work set-up well lit with natural light?





SELF-CARE – RE-FRESH

Assess Your Energy

Assess Your
Energy Levels



Make a List



Determine
Energy Cycles

Time Management vs Energy Management

Energizers (what gives you fulfilment?) vs
Suckers (what destroys your spirit?)

Balance Ener-gizers with Ener-suckers
Time of Day

Treating SAD with a healthy diet



Great Choices
Reduce SAD symptoms

Treating SAD with a healthy diet



Eating
whenever I have
time as long as
it's healthy



Avoiding all
carbs to keep
my glucose
levels down

Not So Great Choices
Increase SAD symptoms

"At last, a book about how to achieve hormonal health that looks at the big picture. This book is a treasure."
Dr. Christiane Northrup,
author of *The Wisdom of Menopause*

#1
NATIONAL
BESTSELLER

THE HORMONE DIET

Lose Fat. Gain Strength.
Live Younger Longer.



DR. NATASHA TURNER
NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR

Prioritize Your Health Mindful Movement



No Movement = Sloth-mode


OXYGEN

do more
of what
makes you
happy ❤️

Take 5, Then Decide

- ✓ Something is better than nothing.
- ✓ Choose movements that offer maximum benefits (try a microburst).
- ✓ Hectic is NOT aerobic.
- ✓ Exercise is NOT a chore.

“It’s deciding that the longevity of your body and mind are important enough.”

Habit Stacking



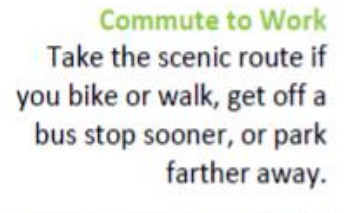
Morning Coffee

Take some deep breaths and stretch between sips.



Morning Routine

Work in some body-conditioning with squats, lunges, and heel raises as you brush.



Commute to Work

Take the scenic route if you bike or walk, get off a bus stop sooner, or park farther away.



Social Media Check

March on the spot as you catch up on posts.



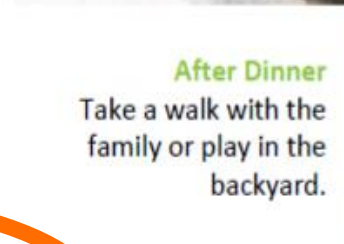
Afternoon Slump

Re-energize your body with a 10-minute microburst.



Dinner Prep

Make dinner prep fun by dancing as you cook.



After Dinner

Take a walk with the family or play in the backyard.



Before Bed

Wrap up the day with 10 minutes of yoga.



Treating SAD by regulating sleep

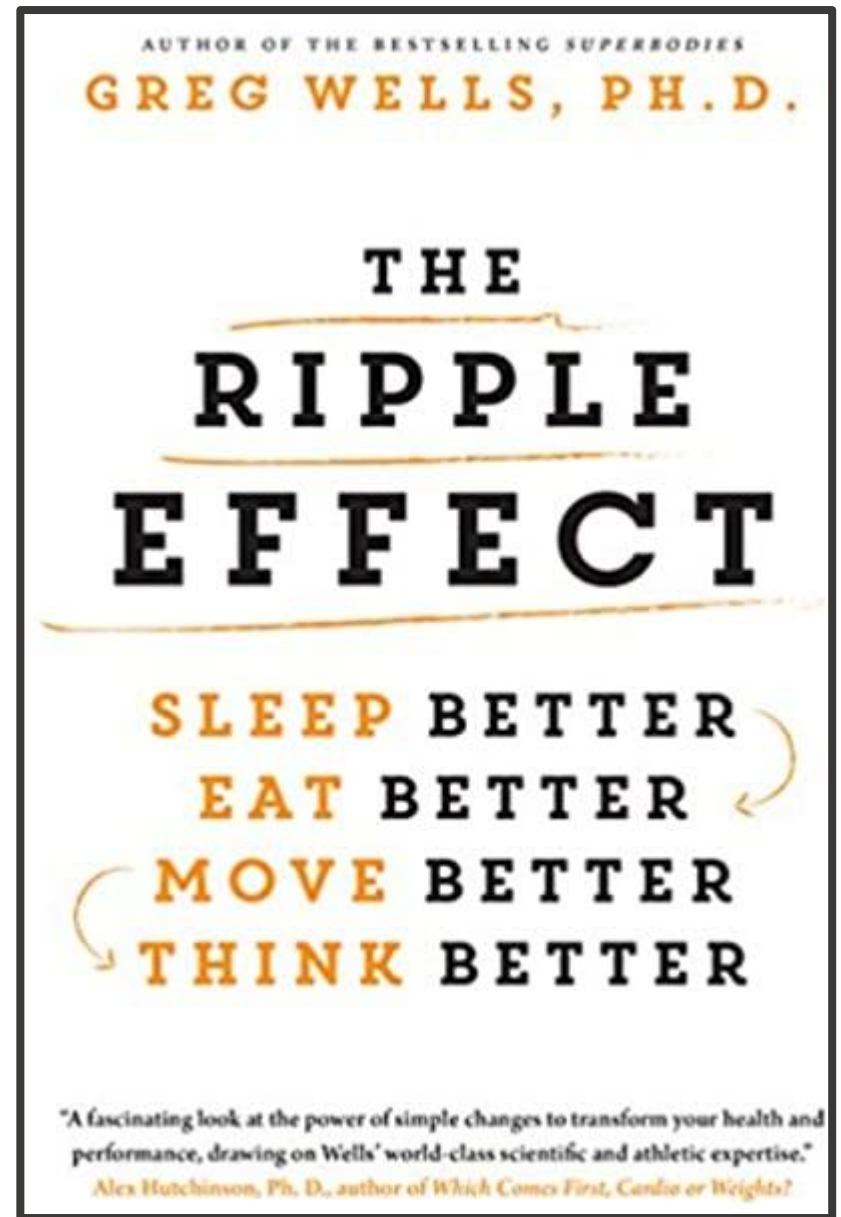
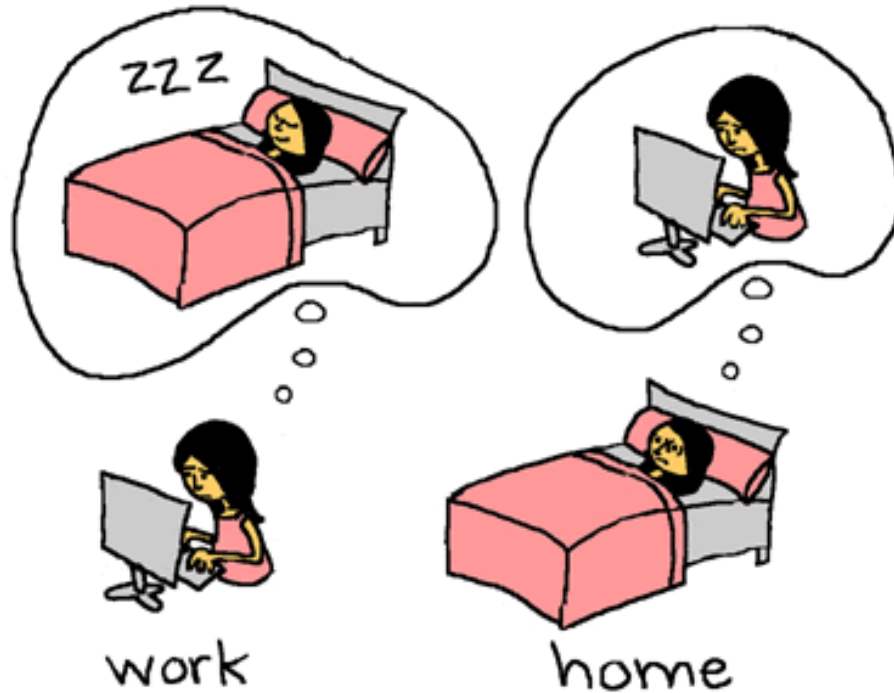
- Set a regular sleep schedule
- Go to bed earlier so you don't oversleep
- Get up after 15 mins!

Remember... increased melatonin may lead to increased feelings of depression



Prioritize Your Health

Restful Sleep



RESILIENCY – RE-FOCUS

Accepting Change

Time to Adjust



Control the
Controllable



What is the
Opportunity?

Accept what you can't change; Keep an open mind; Communicate; Self-Compassion

Focus on the present; Acknowledge negative story; Disrupt the pattern (options of 3, not 1)

New beginning; Goal setting; Positive mindset; Tapping into meaningful purpose

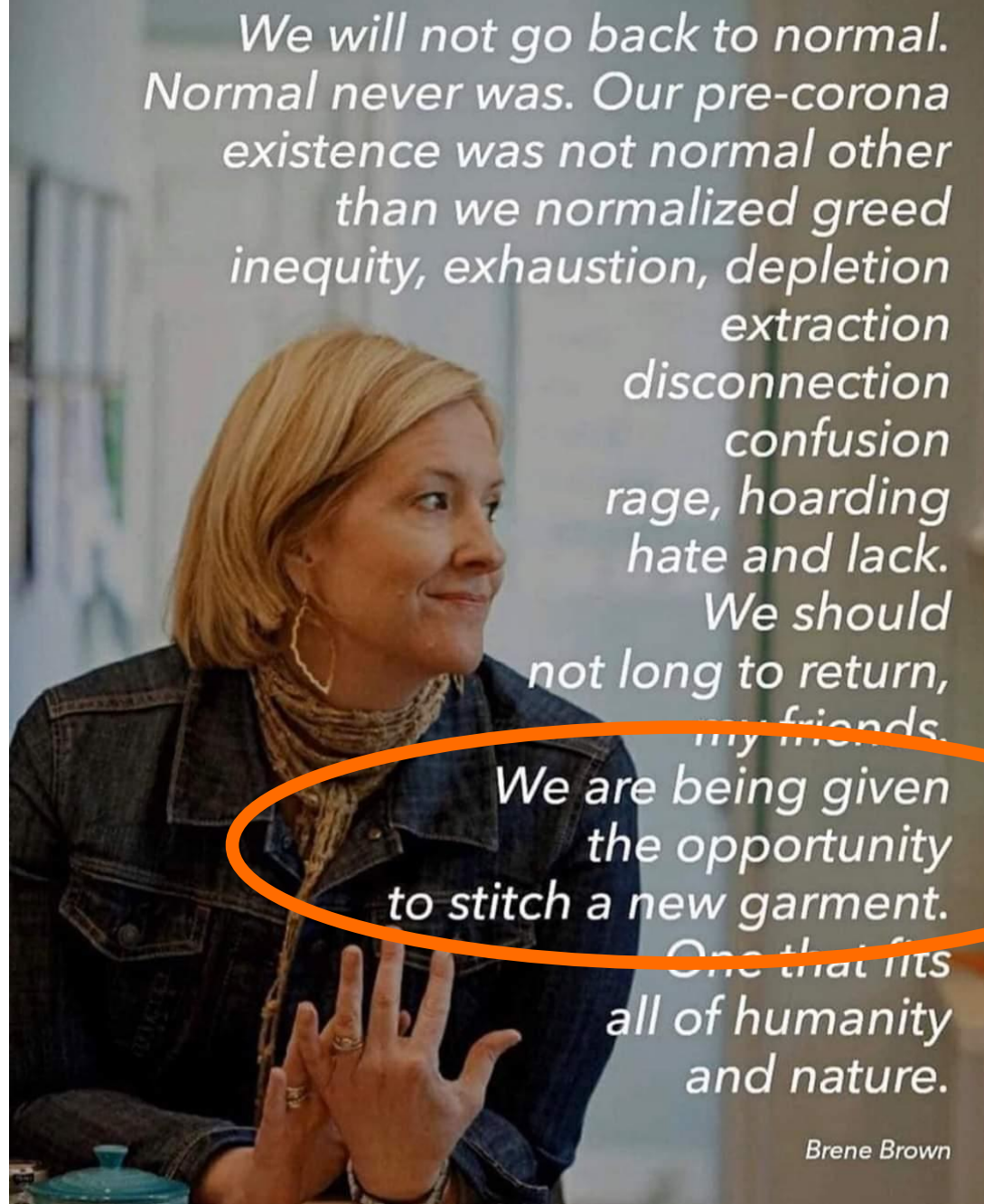
*We will not go back to normal.
Normal never was. Our pre-corona
existence was not normal other
than we normalized greed
inequity, exhaustion, depletion
extraction
disconnection
confusion
rage, hoarding
hate and lack.*

*We should
not long to return,
my friends.*

*We are being given
the opportunity
to stitch a new garment.*

*One that fits
all of humanity
and nature.*

Brene Brown



RELAX to Reflect

**Deep Breathing – 10 times,
2x/day**
Meditation – calm.com
Self-Development



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HAPPINESS – RE-CHARGE

Finding Meaningful Purpose

Connection



Empowerment



What's your Purpose?

Meaningful relationships. Meaningful work.
What brings you joy?

What drives you? What motivates you?
What balances you? Positive mindset.

Who are you, truly? What fills your cup?
What fulfills you?

TELL THE NEGATIVE
COMMITTEE THAT MEETS
INSIDE YOUR HEAD TO
SIT DOWN AND
SHUT UP

- Ann Bradford

Can I control?
Options of 3, not 1

Create a buffer
10 minutes



Name Your Worries



brother





GOAL BOARD

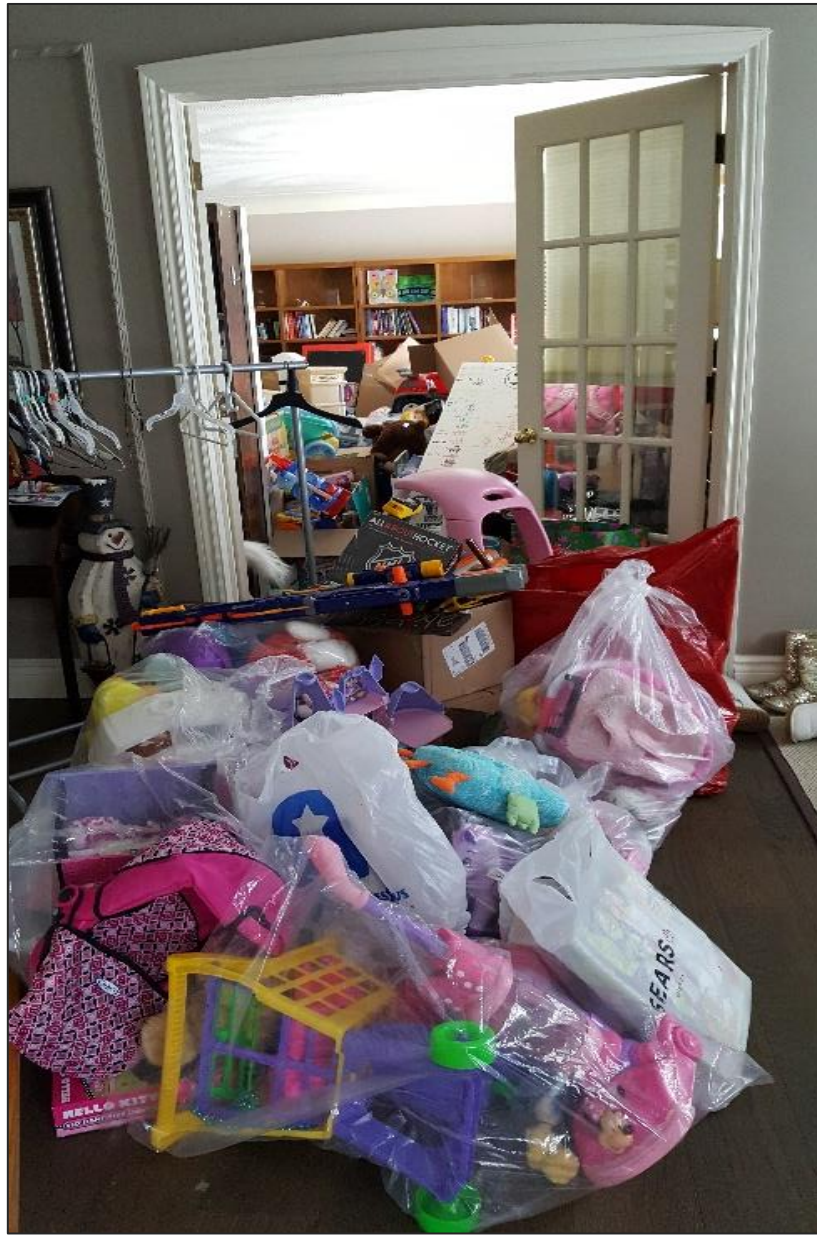
Don't look for
Happiness
create it.

SOMEDAY YOU'LL
LOOK BACK &
UNDERSTAND
WHY IT ALL
HAPPENED
THE WAY
IT DID.

**TODAY I WILL
BE HAPPIER
THAN A BIRD
WITH A
FRENCH FRY**



**Do More of What
Makes You Happy**



My name is Jacob Jansen. I am in your child's class. I helped out at my church this week organizing presents for kids who don't have much money. I went right home and went up to my room and picked out toy and books I didn't want or need any more. I wanted to do more! I talked to my mommy and daddy I wondered if I could run a program that gives toy to other kids. I think it would be cool if all my class brought in what they could to add to the presents but (under ten though because my daddy's truck is only so big!) My dad is going to help me take the from school to the church next Thursday. Thank you for helping out and have a Merry Christmas
By Jacob Jansen



Happiness Jar

Write down something that made you happy every day for a year, then open the jar and read about all the amazing things that happened.



Health Coaches here for **YOU!**

Laura Holt Perrier
Rose Koldenhof

EFAP



Resources

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