

DISTRESS OR DE-STRESS?

THERE'S VALUE IN THE VALLEY



We often think of peaks and valleys as good and bad times that happen to you. They also include the feelings to experience and your response to outside events.

PEAKS are moments when you appreciate what you have.

VALLEYS are moments when you long for what you feel is missing.

Your personal peaks and valleys are an essential part of a normal and healthy life! The errors you make in today's good times create tomorrow's bad times. Similarly, the wise things that you do in today's bad times create tomorrow's good times. Valuable lessons can be learned in the valleys. Looking at the bigger picture can help you to concentrate on what matters most. (Johnson, 2009)

THE VALUE IN THE VALLEY

- The pain you feel in a valley can wake you up to a **truth** that you have been ignoring.
- How you manage your valley determines how soon you reach your next peak.
- If you do not learn in the valley, you can become **bitter**. If you learn something valuable, you can become **better**.
- Getting out of a valley occurs when you **choose** to see things differently.



NAVIGATING THE VALLEY

- **EXERCISE** is proven to reduce anxiety and depression. It increases blood flow to the brain and influences our response to stress.
 - Thirty minutes at least 3 times a week is all you need!
- **HEALTHY EATING** can keep your mood and energy levels steady.
 - Try incorporating unsalted nuts, fish, fruit, and vegetables into your diet.
- **DECAFFEINATE!** Caffeinated drinks like coffee, tea, and cola can temporarily give you more energy, but can also make you feel nervous, irritable, or restless.
 - Drink water instead!
- **GOOD QUALITY SLEEP** resets the brain and repairs and replenishes brain cells. This helps our mood, our decision-making, and social relationships. Too little sleep can make you feel anxious, sad, or stressed.
 - Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.

Sources: Callagan, P. (2004). Exercise: A neglected intervention in mental health care? *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*. 11(4), 476-483.
Canadian Mental Health Association. (2012). Improving Mental Health. Retrieved from <http://www.cmha.bc.ca/>
Johnson, Spencer. (2009). Peaks and valleys: *Making good and bad times work for you - At work and in life*. New York: Atria Books