

Quick Tips to Improve Your Mental Health

The Window of Tolerance

Learning to manage your emotions is the key to the name-claim-tame framework. To better manage our emotions, we can think about emotion regulation using a concept from psychology called the **"Window of Tolerance"**.

First introduced by psychiatrist and Whil master-trainer, **Dr. Dan Siegel**, the Window of Tolerance refers to the optimal amount of emotional arousal that a person is able to comfortably handle.



Each person's Window of Tolerance is different and for those with narrow windows, emotion management may be more difficult. When strengthening your own mental hygiene, it's good to remember that everyone falls out of the window sometimes!

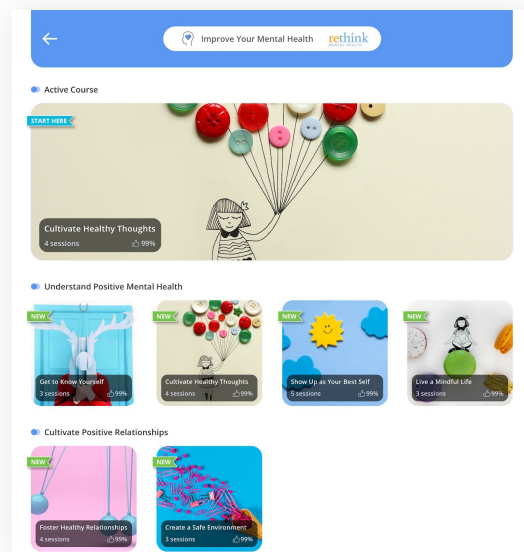
Five Things That Can Help:

- 1. Track it.** Keep track of how often you are in the window and the things, situations, thoughts and triggers that take you outside of the window. Knowing this can help in setting goals (in the window) and problem-solving (outside the window).
- 2. Increase stress management strategies.** Increasing your sense of calm and your ability to deal with stress in more adaptive ways (e.g., quieting your inner critics) can increase your Window of Tolerance. There are many great examples of emotion management strategies to try in the Whil library.
- 3. Challenge negative thinking.** Negative thoughts may intensify emotions and move you outside of your window. Become more aware of your thoughts by writing them down as they come to mind. Actively challenge thoughts by asking yourself "Is there evidence that warrants this particular thought or emotion."
- 4. Practice Mindfulness.** Being present, alert, and in the here and now can help in both managing your thoughts and in reducing their intensity.
- 5. What's the best place to start?**

Our "Improve Your Mental Health" training collection has mini-courses, articles and exercises to improve your mental hygiene.

Try the **Cultivate Healthy Thoughts** mini-course to learn how our managing to positive thoughts and emotions produces more effective actions and results in life.

**Take 5-minutes a day to
Improve Your Mental Health!**



It's About Longevity

These techniques aren't just about our mental health. They can help us physically as well. Research has linked prolonged stress to physical issues including heart disease, insomnia, depression, anxiety and high blood pressure.

Here's A Related Exercise:

Take 5 minutes to think about your own strategies for stress management.

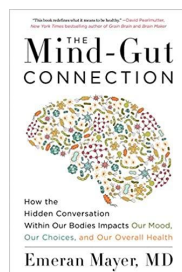
Start with the list below, add your own, and circle strategies that work for you and a few that you are interested in trying. Then, keep the list nearby to remind yourself of strategies to try. Be active in managing your own emotions!

<p>Meditation Walking Jogging Talking with a Friend Travel Hiking Sleeping Poetry</p> <hr/> <p>Track your emotions</p>	<p>Journaling Gratitude Healthy Eating Cooking Talking with Significant Other Talking with Parent Warm Bath</p> <hr/> <p>Get organized</p>	<p>Kickboxing Listening to music Spending time in nature Emotion Tracking Deep Breathing Reading Creative Writing</p> <hr/> <p>Stretching</p>	<p>Running Painting Dancing Prayer Listening to Podcasts Watching TV Massage Remove clutter</p> <hr/> <p>Counselor or Therapist</p>
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References: Written by the mental health experts at Rethink First.

Where can I learn more?

Use the Whil app or read Emeran Mayer's best-selling book, *The Mind-Gut Connection*, to learn how mindfulness can help to **Improve Your Mental Health.**



You're In Control

Mindfulness helps you to build helpful skills - like the ability to read stuff you disagree with on the Internet... and then just go on with your life.

