

My Happier Mind

Cue Cards

71 Tips & Tricks to Better Mental Health

by Anh Oppenheimer *with* Douglas B. Anderson, M.D.

For ages 14 to 114

www.MyHappierMind.com

for

AJ & Moss

my reasons for everything

&

Todd

my shimmering shining universe

thank you

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INTRODUCTION

I have endured the awfulness of depression and anxiety most of my life. According to the World Health Organization, more than 300 million people worldwide have suffered along with me. It's the pits. It's scary. It has, at times, held me back from the better life I deserve.

I have been diagnosed with general anxiety and major depressive disorder. I've also been diagnosed with cyclothymia which I like to call chrysanthemum (a flower) because it makes me laugh. Chrysanthemum is manic depression-lite, kind of like soda-lite but way less delicious. I've also been diagnosed as "somewhere on the spectrum". So, really, who knows? I am not critically ill. But I have absolutely been debilitated by my illness.

Over the many years of trying to wrangle my mental health, I've come up with a few tricks to help build my happiness immune system, prevent the freaky times, and get myself out of the hole of crushing gloom and panic. Cue Cards for My Happier Mind are those tricks. They've helped me. A lot.

I thought these Cue Cards might resonate with you, too. Whether you're someone who occasionally feels socked in or someone who suffers deeply; whether you're a teen, a grandma, or a guy just trying to get by, these tips can act as a guardrail if you feel the ground slipping away.

We all endure seriously tough times. We all struggle. I hope Cue Cards will remind you that you are not alone nor exceedingly rare. I hope, too, that they can help dilute the hurtful stigma that hangs over those of us who struggle with mental illness, including the stigma in our own heads.

I am not a therapist. I am just a gal who's been through it. Cue Cards for My Happier Mind are absolutely no substitute for your health care provider and your therapist. We all need a trained professional to gauge how we're doing and respond appropriately. We need someone to meet with when we're sinking, spinning, or just trying to figure shit out. I hope Cue Cards can be a partial antidote, a crutch on your quest to feeling better.

I send you love on this journey of yours, and all the wishes in the world that you know how worthwhile you are. Even in the darkness. You're not alone. I've been there too.

Anh Oppenheimer

HOW TO USE

Yellow Cue Cards ... when things feel fine

Way back in 300 B.C.E., Greek philosopher Aristotle said, "Happiness is the purpose of life." I'd venture to say that happiness is also the *practice* of life. Yes, you can feel merry and gay when splendid things happen to you from the outside, like winning a hot air balloon ride over the Grand Canyon. But you can more dependably be content because of what's happening on the inside: your habits of mind, spirit, and body. Yellow Cue Cards strengthen your ability to see the glass half full. They build up your happiness immune system, decrease the frequency of feeling bruised and breathless, and equip you so that when the world is wobbling, you are better able to set it right. Yellow Cue Cards help build up your psychological resiliency so you can get back up after hard times with a little more ease.

Blue Cue Cards ... when things begin to tilt

Blue is the color for, well, when you're feeling blue. Or freaked out. Use them when the soggy blanket of despair approaches, when you're nervous, insecure, or unsure. They can prevent the skid from happening or help you find your way out if you've fallen into a deep chasm.

Purple Cue Cards ... when people freak you out

Social anxiety is the mental health challenge I hate the most. I quiver. My words come out wonky. I am convinced that I am a pathetic freak-a-zoid and everyone is in agreement about it. "Nobody Likes Me, Everybody Hates Me, I'm Gonna Go Eat Worms!" The good news is you can mitigate social anxiety. Here are some party tricks that have not only saved my shaking self but have actually made me feel buoyed by being around people. Cuz really, people are awesome. And YOU'RE a person. So ... do the math.

Red Cue Card ... when things feel awful

Red is the color for emergencies, when it all feels like it's TOO MUCH and you need help now. STOP and CALL or TEXT someone for help. Don't for an instant believe that the pits are the real world — they are temporary and fixable. There are a gazillion folks who have been there, gotten out of there, and want YOU to be out of there too. Text or call someone now.

Beyond Color ... any ole time

Feel free to just pick a card, whatever the color. A yellow card may do just the trick when you're about to go to a party. The red card may speak volumes when your life is soaring. You're the boss.

Create a Morning Ritual

Center yourself during that sacred time before the world begins. Even a teeny act will set a sweet tone for your day.



Ideas for your morning:

- Breathe mindfully
- Set an intention for your day
- Think 5 good thoughts
- Meditate
- Write
- Sip hot chocolate and make a wish
- Put headphones on and have a dance party
- Light a candle

Texting and news come afterwards.



BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND

Meditate

Let those thought-bubbles drift away.

Give your brain some sweet sweet peace.



Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Focus on breathing slowly and softly. When thoughts begin to clutter your mind, acknowledge them and let them drift away. Refocus on your slow, soft breathing.

Don't worry if you fall asleep or think a lot. That still counts as meditating.



BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND

Architect Your Day

Buildings need structure to keep standing, and so do you! Frame your life with routines that empower you.



Researchers at Tel Aviv University found that repetitive, predictable routines decrease anxiety, bring calm, and help you feel in control of your life.

BTW, don't schedule a gazillion things, because you also need free time to roll around the house like a wet noodle and do nothing.



BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND

Exercise

Get breathless.

Dance, swim, run, kickbox 'til you sweat 3+ times a week.



The Mayo Clinic says regular exercise releases feel-good endorphins. Working out can help improve your mood, reduce anxiety, and increase your confidence. What could be better?!!!



BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND

Practice Your Joy

Figure out what makes YOU
(not Aunt Millie or your BFF)
feel content, peaceful, fulfilled,
connected, elated, or in your groove.

Then do it, a little a day.



“A flower blossoms for its own joy.”

– Oscar Wilde,
poet and playwright

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Listen to Music

Whether it's punk rock, hip hop,
17th-century harpsichord, or
elevator jingles that you jam to,
play music as often as you can.
It'll keep you happy or pick you up
when you're feeling down.



“Music has charms to soothe
a savage breast, to soften rocks,
or bend a knotted oak.”

– William Congreve,
poet

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Thank a Lot

Give a nod of thanks to the things
that truly make your heart sing —
from potato chips to your loved ones.

Gratitude transforms.



Gratitude physically affects the
molecular structures in our brains!
Counting our blessings makes us
happier and healthier.

*So says the Mindfulness Awareness
Research Center at the University
of California, Los Angeles*

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Know Thyself

What is going on in that noggin
of yours? Pay attention. You may
find that some of your thoughts
aren't as true or as lovely as
they could and should be.



“A man is what he thinks
about all day long.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson,
essayist, philosopher, poet

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Practice Positivity

When negative-nelly thoughts crop up, shift your attention to funnier, kinder, wiser thoughts.

The bumper ones — eh, not so much.

~
“Choose to be optimistic. It feels better.”

– *The 14th Dalai Lama, monk*

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Notice Beauty

Break out of your jangling mind and soak up the gorgeousness around you. From the design of your high-tops to the inside of a halved apple, beauty is everywhere. Double your pleasure by saying it aloud or writing it down.

~
“Beauty is not optional.”

– *Mindy Washington, actor and teacher*

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



See Love

Add to your feel-good bank account and boost your faith in the human race. Focus on acts of sweetness and care between people — from the barista doing a caffeine jig to a mama smooching her baby.

~
“There is only one science, love; only one riches, love...”

– *Anatol France, poet*

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Practice Kindness

To yourself mostly. Then others. Spread it like peanut butter.

~
“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.”

– *Philo of Alexandria, philosopher*

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Be with Friends

Hanging with your pals adds to your happiness stockpile, gets you out of the house, and builds a posse of people you can rely on when things go haywire.

~
“I would rather walk with a friend in the dark than alone in the light.”

– Helen Keller,
author

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Sleep

This is one of the big kahunas of mood health. Set yourself up for delicious slumber and you'll set yourself up for success.

~
Sleep hygiene tips:

- Consistent sleep schedule
- At least 7 hours of rest a night
- Relaxing bedtime routine without electronics
- Comfy, quiet, dark bedroom
- Not too much to eat or drink before bedtime
- Plenty of activity in your day

BUILD YOUR HAPPIER MIND



Sock Drawer Lists

~
Jot down 5 answers to these prompts. Toss the lists into your sock drawer or save them on your phone. When life feels wobbly, follow these breadcrumbs back to balance and light.

Memories:

Your absolute faves

People who love you:

On earth and in heaven

Cheerleaders:

Real or fictitious, people who applaud you as you navigate life

What people love about you:

Believe them!

Mantras:

Power phrases like
“I am safe.”, “I’ve got this.”,
“Courage.”

Playlist:

Music that fills you with joy, strength, and release

Things you like about yourself:

Don't be modest!

Things that make you happy:

The color orange, tree forts, your mom ...

Accomplishments:

Big or small, lauded by folks or not noticed at all

Pals:

The true-blue ones you can count on

Invent your own sock drawer lists

PREPARE FOR THE CRUDS



Honor It

Feelings are a vital part of being a great human. They open you up.

Don't think badly of yourself when the tough ones hit.

~

“Crying does not indicate that you are weak. Since birth, it has always been a sign that you are alive.”

– *Charlotte Brontë,*
author Jane Eyre

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Listen to It

That yucky feeling in your head, heart, or gut is a messenger.

It's letting you know something needs attention and adjusting.

What is your current feeling telling you?

~

“There can be no knowledge without emotion.”

– *Arnold Bennett,*
author

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Feel It

It's OK to temporarily sink into your darkness — for a limited time. Go ahead — wallow, snarl, or quiver. Acknowledge your ache like you would the flu. Then gently get out of bed and into the world.

~

“That's the way of feelings: resist them and they grow. Feel them and let them flow through you like weather and they will change.”

– *Anna Agell*
clinical social worker/therapist

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Don't Be Afraid

Your emotion, however distressing, is not all of you and won't last forever. Take away your fear of the fear and you will take a hefty chunk out of your suffering.

~

“We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes to us, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down.”

– *Eleanor Roosevelt,*
former First Lady of the United States

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
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Mind
Cue Cards

Name It

Give your emotion a name:
“sad,” “angry,” “afraid,” “lonely,” ...
The act of labeling your feeling
gives it boundaries so you can
stand back and look at it.

~
“The beginning of wisdom is to
call things by their proper names.”

– Confucius,
philosopher

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
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Mind
Cue Cards

You Are Not It

Practice saying “I feel (emotion)”
rather than “I am (emotion).”
Because you are not the emotion.
You are you with a passing feeling
sitting in your heart.

~
Imagine you are the sky. Your
emotions and thoughts are temporary
weather patterns just passing through.
Sometimes it’s sunny; sometimes it
rains like hell on your head; sometimes
a fog flattens you and takes all the color
out of your world. But tornadoes pass
and fog lifts. And then there you are,
the sky. You’ve been there all along.

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
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Mind
Cue Cards

Express It

Emotions are like burps.
It hurts when you hold them in.
So don’t! Let ’er rip.

~
Cuss like a cowboy because
it is a damn sh*t fest

Sing your heart out because
sound vibrations humming
through your body alter you

Scribble furiously because
dumping the yucks onto a
page will lighten you

Talk because people love you

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
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Mind
Cue Cards

T.L.C. It

Your angst or despair is an
aspect of you, but not all of you.
Imagine your hurting self is a
shivering baby bunny. Bring that
sweet cottontail in from the cold,
listen to it, adore it, stroke its fur ...

~
“I am sorry to say that Peter was
not very well during the evening.
His mother put him to bed,
and made some chamomile tea.”

– Beatrix Potter,
author The Tale of Peter Rabbit

SOOTHE YOUR HEART

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Unearth It

Dig back to the original — and possibly ancient — thought behind your mood. Do a reality check. Does it serve you? Is it even true anymore?

~
“All that we are is the result of what we have thought.”

– Buddha

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Spin It

If an ad man can make dandruff shampoo seem marvelous, you can do the same with your downer thoughts. “I’m a lazy bum” can become “I’m a chill dude.” “Mean people suck” can become “Good people rock.”

~
Try this 1-2-3:

Write your current unhappy thought
Write a more realistic thought
Write a radically positive version of the thought

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Bitty Bit It

Break your clamoring thoughts down into tiny morsels. Make each one stand in line and wait its turn for your attention.

You can only think or do one thing at a time.

~
“Hey, take a damn number!!!”

– Deli Guy

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Add an “and” to It

Add a positive to your negative.

“I am collapsing in overwhelm
AND I look super hip today.”

“I am full of anxiety
AND I’m a loyal friend.”

~
“The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts.”

– Marcus Aurelius,
philosopher

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Get Outta Your Navel

Sometimes the dark can be so consuming that it's hard to look up. Try anyway. Take your gaze away from your suffering and see what else is going on. There is color, movement, and joy out there.

~

It's OK to go into the darkness for a tiny bit. Just don't unpack your bags.

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Narrate

Act like a documentary voice-over guy and give words to your story. Getting it out of your mind and into the ether will make it clearer and help loosen some of its grip.

~

“Storytelling gives meaning to our experience. Because of its chronological structure, we can understand how events begin, evolve, and the consequences they have.”

– Todd Oppenheimer,
Editor and Publisher of
Craftsmanship Magazine

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Laugh

Laughter can pierce the spell of fear and sadness in an instant. Call a goofy friend, watch a comedy, or read your Hilarity Sock Drawer List (see yellow Cue Cards).

~

“Laughter is an external expression of joy; it is the most salutary of all bodily movements; for it agitates both the body and the soul at the same time, promotes digestion, circulation, and preparation, and enlivens the vital power of every organ.”

– Hukeland

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
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Mind
Cue Cards

Vocalize

Sound vibrations shift brainwaves. And your glorious voice is sound. By saying things aloud (or singing), you trigger stress-relieving responses in your body.

~

In the 1700s, physicist and musician Ernst Chladni made sound vibration visible on a metal plate. The patterns were symmetrical, geometric, and amazingly gorgeous. Check out “Chladni figures” online and you'll see what your radiant voice is doing to the molecules in your radiant being!

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Pick a Magic Word

Find a power word to use like a talisman. Evoke it when things get hairy. Choose something profound (“wisdom”), boppy (“yellow”), or giggle-worthy (“noodle”).

~
I know nothing in the world that has as much power as a word.”

– *Emily Dickinson,*
poet

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Give It a Hand

Distract your angst by engaging your hands. Draw, sew, whittle, cook, sculpt, fold origami, do card tricks, clean ...

~
“Making art, working with your hands, forces you to focus on the present moment. When you’re focused on the present moment, your mind can take a break from the constant chatter. That’s the definition of true relaxation.”

– *Carrie Leeb,*
artist

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
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Mind
Cue Cards

Be Radically Present

Redirect your monkey mind by diving deep into the now. Engage your five senses. What can you see, hear, feel, taste, and smell in this moment?

~
“Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese monk, describes how to eat an orange with extreme mindfulness. He instructs us to notice the color, feel the shape, smell it. Think of the orange on the tree during the rains and sun, under the night sky. Watch what happens when you peel the orange. Now taste that orange. Suddenly, you’re involved in a miracle and the worrying world has slipped away.”

CHANGE YOUR MIND

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Cherish Yourself Anyway

Feeling low or terrified is not a weakness. Grappling with tricky mental health situations makes you a Warrior.

~
Please: **Forgive yourself**
You’re doing your damn best

BFF yourself
Give you the same care and advice you’d give your bestie

Spoil yourself
A bubble bath, bubble tea, bubble gum ...

Go easy on yourself
Life is hard sometimes

Love yourself sweetly
Like a teddy bear

Believe in yourself
Ardently!

ALLOW LOVE

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Reach Out

Life is not a solo journey. You don't get points for sailing the ship alone. So call a friend or your therapist. They'll be so glad you reached out.

~

Bonus:

Showing friends or family your vulnerability and pain will encourage them to do the same with you when they are feeling walloped.

ALLOW LOVE

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Consider a Therapist

Your brain is yet another of your miraculous body parts. Nurture it when it's feeling off-kilter. See your doctor when there's pain. If you'd do it for your big toe, you can do it for your mind too.

~

To find a therapist:

- Ask your primary doctor
- Ask a friend for a recommendation
- Visit your school's mental health office
- See if your job has an Employee Assistance Program
- Visit www.psychologytoday.com

ALLOW LOVE

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Open Your Sock Drawer

Remember those lists you made when all felt dandy? (see yellow Cue Card) Read them now. Let them remind you of the happy, funny, rockstar you and the wondrous things of life. Tuck a few in your back pocket and let them ride with you like little guardian angels.

~

"Make friends with the angels, who though invisible are always with you."

– Saint Francis de Sales,
Catholic bishop

ALLOW LOVE

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Remember the Monks

Right now someone is praying for your well-being. Soak it up.

~

In every moment and every nook of this planet, there are congregations, prayer circles, and good souls who are chanting, singing, praying, and wishing to ease human suffering. Bask in that when you're feeling alone, scared, or weird.

ALLOW LOVE

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Pray

Whether you're religious, spiritual, or none of the above, get into a sense of reverence. Then put words to your deepest wishes and needs.

~

Dr. Masaru Emoto is an internationally renowned Japanese scientist and author of *The Hidden Messages in Water*. He did an experiment exposing water droplets to various words, music, and environments. He then froze each droplet for three hours.

Viewing the frozen crystal formations under a microscope, Dr. Emoto found that the water droplets which had been prayed over formed into snowflake-like patterns, as did those exposed to classical and folk dance music. The droplets exposed to negative thoughts looked like oozing, melted metal.

USE YOUR SOUL

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Be Radically Hopeful

In the face of the sh*ts, be ferociously defiant in your belief in the remarkable you, a favorable outcome, and the wondrous world.

~

Let unshakable hope be the David who stands up to the roaring cruds of Goliath.

USE YOUR SOUL

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Throw It Up to the Divine

If you can't figure it all out, that's OK. Take a giant step back.

Let go and, for a little while, believe in miracles.

~

Palms up!

USE YOUR SOUL

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Slow ... the ... F*** ... Down ...

Force your body into crazy slo-mo.

Your mind will follow.

Think sloth.

~

“At a fire scene we try to make only very deliberate movements: grab axe, pull hose, walk to fire. Yelling, running — all that makes the adrenalin go through the roof, and that in turn impairs judgment. Slowing down your physiology increases your situational awareness, allowing you to be open to all that's going on so that you do the right thing.”

— Caroline Paul,
former firefighter, author

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Eat Something Good

Bobbing and weaving through life takes fuel! Fill that belly with nourishment.

~

Try:

Grilled cheese
Soup with noodles
Apple with peanut butter
Fried chicken
Egg burrito
Oatmeal with brown sugar
Berry smoothie

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
Mind
Que Cards

Make Your Bed & Brush Your Hair

Physical sanity and beauty on the outside will bring it to your inside.

~

“Tidying up your space can give you a fresh perspective and restore peace of mind.”

– Dana Bjornsen,
Clutter Chick

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
Mind
Que Cards

Get Your Ya-Yas Out

Shake out the sh*ts & dance out the demons. Even something tiny, like wagging your pinky finger, will help. Move your body and you'll move your mind.

~

“The least movement is of importance to all nature. The entire ocean is affected by a pebble.”

– Blaise Pascal,
philosopher

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
Mind
Que Cards

Get Grounded

Feeling physically rooted is hugely helpful when your mental world starts to tilt and spin. If you feel like you're floating outside of yourself, try the tips on the back of this card.

~

Picture bringing your whole ethereal self into your rib cage

Imagine your body as super heavy and firmly on the earth

Squeeze and release every part of your body from your feet to your eyebrows

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
Mind
Que Cards

Grin

Make like a Cheshire Cat and smile from ear to ear. It will literally send a signal to your brain that all is dandy. You may even feel ridiculous enough to crack yourself up.

Human and artificial cognition expert Dr. Fernando Marmolejo-Ramos found that the physical act of smiling stimulates the amygdala (emotional center of the brain) to release neurotransmitters that boost positive feelings. Even when the smile was faked, the brain responded with a little leap of glee.

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Breathe

Inhale and exhale through your nose slowly and softly in a rhythmic pattern.
Repeat.

“The deeper and more softly we breathe in, and the longer we make our exhales, the calmer we become. Breathing through the nose rather than the mouth also increases our oxygen absorption by 18% and leads to better circulation, immune function, and cognitive performance.”

– James Nestor,
author of *Breathe: The New Science of a Lost Art*

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
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Cue Cards

Beware the “A.S.S.s”

Alcohol, Sugar, Substances. These are temporary soothers, but when overused, they will drop you lower than they ever raise you up.

There is nothing evil or weak about you if you’re struggling with substance overuse. Please don’t demonize yourself. Instead, get some support:

www.samhsa.gov
1-800-662-HELP (4357)
(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
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Cue Cards

Get Real

Ditch the screen. Go outside. See real people and real things.

“Screens provide superficial happiness. The real world provides real happiness.”

– Moss Oppenheimer,
outdoor adventurer

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
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Cue Cards

Go Natural

Get into nature. Hear it,
smell it, breath it ...
Let its magnificence
sink into you.

~

“The healing forces of nature
are abundant: a gentle breeze
clears the cluttered mind; sunlight
on the water calms the frantic
heart; eagle’s flight above blue
mountains — stronghold of the
ancestors — consoles the
longing spirit.”

– RoseMary Diaz,
Santa Clara Pueblo

USE YOUR BODY

My
Happier
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Cue Cards

For Every Problem There Is an Answer

Even if it isn’t clear yet,
even if it’s some surprising
adaptation, the answer is there.
You will find it. Ask.

~

“No preocupación. (Don’t worry).”

– Sylvia Wence,
babysitter & housekeeper

KNOW THIS

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

It’s Just Practice

Perfection doesn’t exist.
Like a pro athlete, you just
get out there, keep trying,
and give it your best shot.

~

“Have no fear of perfection;
you’ll never reach it.”

– Marie Curie, physicist,
chemist, Nobel Prize winner

KNOW THIS

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

It’s OK to Be a Little Broken

In the 15th century, a Japanese
Shogun broke his favorite tea cup.

The shattered pieces were
reassembled with glittering,
golden glue. This process is called
kintsugi. It celebrates the notion
that embracing flaws rather than
disguising them will create a
stronger and more beautiful piece
of art. Same goes for you.

~

“The wound is where the
light enters.”

– Rumi,
13th-century Persian poet

KNOW THIS

My
Happier
Mind
Cue Cards

Remember Your Super Powers

Before you walk into the social fray, fill yourself to the brim with reminders of your awesomeness.

~

“Keys? Check!

Jacket? Check!

Mental list of accomplishments? Check!

BUILD YOUR CONFIDENT SELF



Apples to Apples

Comparing yourself to others (especially on social media) is kinda like poking yourself with a sharp stick.

We are each so complex that really, the only way to gauge yourself is by measuring who you have been to who you are today to who you'd like to be.

~

You are beyond compare.

BUILD YOUR CONFIDENT SELF



Check Yer Vitals

Hungry? Tired? Need to pee? Chilly? Before you walk out your door, tend to your body. You'll feel more grounded.

~

“Full stomach, happy heart.”

– Spanish proverb

BUILD YOUR CONFIDENT SELF



3+3

Come up with three questions to ask and three ideas to bring up in conversation. They can be quirky, fascinating, or just plain ole.

~

“Prepare the umbrella before it rains.”

– Malay proverb

BUILD YOUR CONFIDENT SELF



Wear It

Wear something that makes you feel so bold you're ready for the ultimate slow-motion montage. I know you have just the thing.

~

"Just looking at the sleeve of your new jacket or the shiny tips of your favorite shoes will give you the little tingle of joy you need to keep that party going."

– A.J. Oppenheimer,
sharp dresser

BUILD YOUR CONFIDENT SELF



Stand Tall

Let your super hero posture trick your brain into feeling courageous and powerful.

~

Our studies show that when people stand up straight, they feel more hopeful, more confident, and empowered. This isn't just psychological. Slouching, or walking around in 'cell-phone position,' compresses the upper spine, reduces energy, and increases depressive thoughts and feelings."

– Dr. Erik Peper,
Professor of Holistic Health,
San Francisco State University

BUILD YOUR CONFIDENT SELF



Bubble Up

Feeling exposed? Imagine a bullet-proof bubble of plexiglass around you. You're protected. Nothing can hurt you.

~

According to Dr. Elaine Aron, 15-20% of us are "highly sensitive people" (HSPs) — folks who often feel like there is WAY too much info cascading into our minds and bodies. Since social gatherings are chock full of stimulation, sometimes we HSPs wig out just cuz our cup runneth over.

IF YOUR KNEES START TO BUCKLE



Even the Playing Field

Don't assume you're less-than. Think: "The regular schmo in me sees the regular schmo in you." Or "The God(dess) in me sees the God(dess) in you."

~

Level playing field, n.:
a state in which conditions are fair for everyone, where all have an equal chance at succeeding

IF YOUR KNEES START TO BUCKLE



Remember, Everybody's Weird

You're not the only one.
You're surrounded by oddballs.
Plus, weird is cool.

~
"You are not alone."

*National Alliance on Mental Illness
(NAMI)*

IF YOUR KNEES START TO BUCKLE



Shift Your Focus

Pull your attention away from
your wriggling self-doubt and
shine your light on the other guy.
Your keen interest in them will
keep you in the present and take
you out of your own hot seat.

~
When you feel conspicuous or
uncomfortable, remind yourself
that these are likely your thoughts —
not those of others — that you
are projecting. So take a breath.
It's all right."

– Douglas B. Anderson, M.D.

IF YOUR KNEES START TO BUCKLE



Channel Someone

Who do you know
(real or fictitious) that would feel
at ease or in control right now?
Pretend you're that person.

~
Fake it 'til you make it.

IF YOUR KNEES START TO BUCKLE



Channel Them

Think of a few people
who adore you and help you
feel at ease. Pretend everyone
at the party is them!

~
"Imagination is everything."

– Albert Einstein, physicist

IF YOUR KNEES START TO BUCKLE



IF SOMEONE THROWS YOU OFF YOUR GAME

It's Not Personal

If a partygoer's words hit you the wrong way, please remember it's their crud, not you, that is leading them to be less than kind.

~

"We're all broken and beautiful."

– Rowen Willingham-Nowlan,
actor



IF SOMEONE THROWS YOU OFF YOUR GAME

You Rock Anyway

So maybe your light is under a bushel basket right now. Pat yourself on the back for being brave enough to attend the event.

~

"What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?"

– Vincent Van Gogh,
painter



IF SOMEONE THROWS YOU OFF YOUR GAME

Thank the Butt Head

They are the challenge that will make you a better, stronger, cooler you. We all encounter Butt Heads sometimes.

~

Mao Tse Tung was an autocratic leader of China whose army invaded the nation of Tibet in 1950. The leader of Tibet (and all-around fabulous guy), His Holiness the Dalai Lama, was forced to flee and hasn't been able to return to his country since. Amazingly, The Dalai Lama has credited Mao with being his greatest teacher. Mao helped him practice one of his main tenets — freeing oneself from hatefulness.



IF THINGS FEEL REALLY AWFUL

Need Help Now? CALL or TEXT 9-8-8

Call or Text 9-8-8 for 24/7 kindness & support from a trained mental wellness crisis counselor

Text "NAMI" to 741741 to reach a trained crisis counselor

Call your therapist

Call someone, anyone

~

This feeling is temporary.
You matter.

