



# How to Strengthen Your Emotional Health Skills During Times of Uncertainty

*with Nataly Kogan*

## Why uncertainty is so challenging

- Uncertainty causes more stress and anxiety than knowing that a definite negative outcome will take place
- Our brain's job is to protect us from danger and during uncertainty, it works harder to find ways to do this, causing us overwhelming stress
- Because emotions are contagious, as we all struggle with stress of uncertainty we create a pile-on effect, causing our collective anxiety to increase

## Practicing emotional health skills is non-negotiable during uncertainty and change

- Emotional health is a skill you can improve through practice
- Practicing emotional health skills helps to strengthen your Emotional Immune System, which is your source of resilience for getting through challenges
- The chronic stress that comes with uncertainty makes it more difficult to think clearly or make good decisions because we become reactive — practicing emotional health skills helps to mitigate this

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH SKILLS AND PRACTICES

### ACCEPTANCE PRACTICE: How do I best serve this moment?

Take a moment and think about something that is causing you stress or worry or recognize when you're stuck in the "this is not how it should be" Valley of Suffering:

- If you find yourself truly overwhelmed, first take 5 deep breaths (this will help you feel a little more calm and centered)
- Step 1: Witness "what is" with clarity: *This is how it is. This is how I feel. What is a fact vs. what is the story my mind has created?*
- Step 2: Decide what to do next: *What's the best thing I can do right now to serve myself, the situation, and other people involved?*
- You can do this practice together with your team, especially when you feel team members are getting stuck in blame or judgement mindsets

## **GRATITUDE PRACTICES:**

### **Gratitude Antidote**

When you are stressed or dealing with a challenge, acknowledge how you feel and then use your stress as a reminder to practice gratitude.

- Identify something specific you're grateful for and remember that small, tiny moments, comforts, and experiences matter just as much.

### **Gratitude Meeting Bookends**

Begin team meetings with a gratitude moment—either sharing something you appreciate or expressing specific and genuine gratitude towards someone. End the meeting the same way by asking if someone else would like to express their gratitude.

- Another way to infuse gratitude into meetings is with **Gratitude Tag**: Start by sharing something you're grateful for and then tag someone else to go next.
- Remember that you can do both of these practices virtually and consider putting them on the agenda for the meeting.

## **SELF-CARE PRACTICE:**

### **10-Minute Self-Care Reset**

Schedule a regular 10-minute break during your day. Ask yourself: "What is fueling or restful that I can do right now?" and then do that for 10 minutes. Your 10-Minute Reset can be simple, from taking a quick walk outside (or even around your office), closing your eyes and just focusing on your breath for a bit, or grabbing a cup of tea and drinking it without multitasking.

A few suggestions for your practice:

- It's great to schedule your break in the afternoon, when our energy usually slumps
- Consider inviting someone on your team to join you for your break sometimes—you'll have company and encourage others to refuel (you can also do this virtually!)

## 5 Emotional Health Skills



**ACCEPTANCE:** Acknowledging your feelings and the situation with clarity instead of judgment and using that as your starting point for moving forward.

When you actively accept your emotions and challenges, you're able to respond from an elevated place, as an observer, and choose the best next step, rather than reacting from a place of judgment or fear—and you can help your colleagues do the same. Practicing this skill in teams builds a foundation of trust, improves problem-solving, and reduces wasted energy and fear of openly sharing mistakes or failures.

**GRATITUDE:** Making an active choice to notice the small, positive moments in everyday life—even when times are challenging—and sharing your appreciation for other people with them.

When you practice gratitude, you derive more joy and satisfaction from your work, and increase your resilience and ability to be fully present with your colleagues. When you express gratitude towards others, you elevate them by helping them feel valued, you amplify what you want them to do more often, and you boost their enthusiasm, motivation, and resilience.

**INTENTIONAL KINDNESS:** Being actively kind to others with the intent to support or elevate them in some way, without expecting anything in return.

When you do something kind, you and the receiver experience positive emotions and feel less isolated and stressed. You cultivate open communication, civility, empathy, warmth, and helpfulness, while creating a ripple effect of kindness and belonging within your team, company, and customers.

**THE BIGGER WHY:** Regularly connecting with your sense of meaning and purpose by identifying how your daily activities and tasks support bigger goals, help others, or contribute to a cause you believe in.

When you connect to your Bigger Why, you unify and elevate goals, tasks, and projects, which helps you and the people on your team connect to a sense of purpose in your daily work. This increases motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, resilience, and the ability to get through challenges with less stress—for you and everyone around you.

**SELF-CARE:** Actively nurturing a kinder friendship with yourself by practicing self-compassion, learning how to rest and renew, and finding ways to fuel your mind, body, and soul.

Proactive self-care helps you feel and be at your best, and reduces overwhelm and the risk of burnout. When you share how you invest in yourself and encourage your colleagues to make self-care a priority, you amplify each other's ability to reduce stress and significantly improve well-being, resilience, and motivation.



## **Emotional Health @ Work During Challenge and Uncertainty**

*Virtual talk and training for leaders, teams, and companies*

Change is constant in today's workplace, but the Coronavirus has brought about a fundamentally new level of challenge and uncertainty, causing increased stress, anxiety, and fear.

During this difficult time, it is essential that organizations prioritize the emotional health of their employees. While this should always be a priority, empowering employees with tools and practices to manage stress and increase well-being during times of crisis and uncertainty is a non-negotiable.

The great news is that emotional health and happiness are skills that can be improved and cultivated with practice — and they can help your employees not just cope, but even thrive during change and uncertainty.

### **This virtual talk and training session will support your teams now!**

Using the science-backed Happier Method™ and armed with research in neuroscience and psychology, Nataly shares the skills and practices to help employees reduce stress, feel uplifted, boost their resilience, and foster a greater sense of connection with their colleagues (including when working remotely).

In this 60-90-minute practical talk and interactive training session, Nataly will cover:

- Research on uncertainty, happiness, and the human brain
- Proven skills and practices to reduce stress and overwhelm, and find moments of joy and ease during this challenging time
- Strategies to foster a sense of human connection and collaboration with colleagues while working remotely
- Special session for leaders or teams with practices and rituals to help strengthen a culture of openness, kindness, and gratitude

**We would love to bring this virtual talk and training to your company!**  
Please email [debbie@happier.com](mailto:debbie@happier.com) for more details.