



*"Let the mind calm down and the heart start to open. Then everything will be very obvious."* –Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

**B**ecoming  
**R**elaxed  
**E**nergized  
**A**nd  
**T**hankful  
**H**ealing  
**I**n  
**N**atures  
**G**ifts



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Changing Lives by Creating Pathways for Mental Wellness  
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**Serenity**

is found through

**Acceptance**



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**You know those moments...**  
when everything felt so impossible?

*Somehow you got through.  
Did it make you a better person or a bitter person?*

*So now you get to decide.  
When it happens again, do I need a new plan?*

**Remember What You Want.  
Remember What You Can Do!**



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*"You can't calm the storm...so stop trying. What you CAN do is calm yourself. The storm will pass."* –Timber Hawkeye



*TH Wellness Project's Vision:  
to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.  
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# CREATING CALM & STILLNESS

## WHEN WE'RE DYING TO FREAK-OUT

*"Life goes by fast. Enjoy it. Calm down. It's all funny."* –Joan Rivers

*"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who get burned."* -Budda

### Calm

- Creating perspective and mindfulness while managing emotional reactivity.
- Be slow to respond and quick to think. A panicked response produces more panic and more fear. "Anxiety is extremely contagious, but so is calm." The question becomes "Do we want to infect people with more anxiety, or heal ourselves and the people around us with calm?" If we choose to heal with calm, we have to commit to practicing calm. Small things matter. For example, before we respond we can count to ten or give ourselves permission to say "I'm not sure. I need to think about this some more." It's also extremely effective to identify the emotions that are the most likely to spark your reactivity and then practice non-reactive responses.
- Unless we had calm modeled by our parents and grew up practicing it, it's unlikely that it will be our default response to anxious or emotionally volatile situations.

### Breathing

- Is the best place to start at times... just taking a breath before we respond slows us down and immediately starts spreading calm. Sometimes actually thinking to ourselves, "I'm dying to freak out here! Do I have enough information to freak out? Will freaking out help? The answer is always no.

### Stillness

- From meditation and prayer to regular periods of quiet reflection and alone time, men and women spoke about the necessity of quieting their bodies and minds as a way to feel less anxious and overwhelmed. Stillness is not about focusing on nothingness; it's about creating a clearing. It's about opening up an emotionally clutter-free space and allowing ourselves to feel and think and dream and question.

### Fear

- Once we can let go of our assumptions about what stillness is supposed to look like and find a way to create a clearing that works for us, we stand a better chance of opening ourselves up and confronting the next barrier to stillness: fear. And it can be big, big fear.
- If we stop long enough to create a quiet emotional clearing, the truth of our lives will invariably catch up with us. We convince ourselves that if we stay busy enough and keep moving, reality won't be able to keep up. So we stay in front of the truth about how tired and scared and confused and overwhelmed we sometimes feel. The irony is that the thing that's wearing us down is trying to stay out in front of feeling worn down. This is the self-perpetuation quality of anxiety. It feeds on itself.





### Sorting Through the Mixed Messages

- From very early on in our lives, we get confusing messages about the value of calm and stillness. Parents and teachers scream, “Calm down!” and “Sit still!” rather than actually modeling the behaviors they want to see. So instead of becoming practices that we want to cultivate, calm gives way to perpetuating anxiety, and the idea of stillness makes us feel jumpy.
- In our increasingly complicated and anxious world, we need more time to do less and be less.
- When we first start cultivating calm and stillness in our lives, it can be difficult, especially when we realize how stress and anxiety define so much of our daily lives. But as our practices become stronger, anxiety loses its hold and we gain clarity about what we’re doing, where we’re going, and what holds true meaning for us.

### Wrap Up



*“It’s all about finding the calm in the chaos.” – Donna Karen*



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## Facilitator's Guide:

### FOLLOW UP ON HOMEWORK:

- Questionnaire that would provide yourself and facilitators with useful information to help make this a more meaningful learning experience.
- Start developing your Worthiness List.
- Be mindful... Record the times over the next week when you've been able to be more authentic. How did that impact your sense of well-being?
- Be mindful... When your Perfectionism button is 'pushed,' try a new behavior. Record how it works.
- Develop your own list of Hope Energizing Activities and note how it impacts you.
- Monitor your rest and play. How are you doing? Where can you improve? What changes have you made/are making?
- Create Something!
- Find a new way to practice intentional mindfulness
- Become aware of the role drama triangles play in your social circles
- Work on Wellness Plan

### BREAK UP INTO GROUPS OF 2-3:

1. What do you do to find your Calm?
2. What does 'Be slow to respond and quick to think' mean to you?
3. Define Stillness and why it is important?
4. What are you afraid will happen if you slow down?

### HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

- **DEVELOP AFFIRMING STATEMENTS FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE CLASS — BE PREPARED TO SHARE AT THE FINAL CLASS ON MAY 2**
- **CONTINUE TO WORK ON YOUR WELLNESS PLAN**

