

## **Popular Self–Help Resources**

Compiled by Margaret A. Charous, PhD

The beginning of a new year often brings with it a renewed motivation to make changes in one's lifestyle, complete unfinished projects, or to consider a general attempt at self–renewal. For those who appreciate the written word, the following is a list of some popular and well–recommended books to help uplift the spirit, manage stress, rejuvenate your mood, and perhaps lead to greater self–awareness. This list is not meant to be exhaustive and it has selections on a wide range of topics including coping with chronic illness; grief; relaxation, meditation, and stress management; positive thinking and self–talk; women's issues; and spiritual and existential concerns.

Benson, Herbert. *The Relaxation Response*. An influential book that presents a specific strategy to reduce stress and to promote health and wellness.

Benson, Herbert & Stuart, Eileen M. *The Wellness Book: A Comprehensive Guide to Maintaining Health and Treating Stress Related Illness*. A practical and excellent guide to the mind–body interaction.

Benson, Herbert. *Beyond the Relaxation Response*. Describes the power of mental strategies to promote health and healing inspired by observations of Tibetan monks.

Borysenko, Joan. *Minding the Body, Mending the Mind*. How to take control of your physical and emotional well–being.

Bozarth, Alla Renee. *Life is Goodbye, Life is Hello: Grieving Well Through All Kinds of Loss*. How we can become active agents in our own healing process.

Burns, David. *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy*. This book is a self–help classic on using cognitive therapy, the most popular form of psychological treatment, for depression and self–destructive moods.

Burns, David. *The Feeling Good Handbook*. A sequel to *Feeling Good*, that helps people deal with a wide range of mood problems of everyday life.

Covey, Steven. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. How to harness one's potential to achieve your goals.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Finding Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life*. How people can structure their everyday lives in joyful ways.

Davis, Martha, Eschelman, Elizabeth Robbins, & McKay, Matthew. *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*. How to relax and manage stress in a number of environmental settings.

Donoghue, Paul J. & Siegel, Mary E. *Sick and Tired of Feeling Sick and Tired*. Coping with chronic invisible illness.

Ellis, Albert & Harper, Robert. *A New Guide to Rational Living*. A cognitive approach to identify self-defeating irrational beliefs to erase fears of failure, conquer anxiety, and overcome the influence of the past.

Ellis, Albert. *How to Stubbornly Refuse to Make Yourself Miserable about Anything, Yes Anything!* Ellis contends that we create our own feelings and describes how individuals can control their emotional destinies and refuse to become miserable.

Fennell, Patricia A. *The Chronic Illness Workbook: Strategies and Solutions for Taking Back Your Life*. A comprehensive guide to help you learn to live well with a chronic illness.

Frankl, Viktor. *Man's Search for Meaning*. This book is based on the premise that finding a meaning in life is the primary motive for individuals.

Greenberger, Dennis & Padesky, Christine A. *Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think*. Strategies to improve your mood, relationships, self-esteem, and other feelings and events that people experience.

Hartwell, Lori. *Chronically Happy: Joyful Living in Spite of Chronic Illness*. An optimistic approach for living well with a chronic illness.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. *Wherever You Go, There You Are*. A practical guide to meditation that is a reminder to live in the moment.

Kubler–Ross, Elisabeth. *On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief Through the Five Stages of Loss*. An excellent resource on the different stages of loss and how ultimately to find renewed meaning in life.

Kushner, Harold. *When All You Ever Wanted Isn't Enough*. A spiritual message of self–fulfillment that life is its own reward, not the quest for material possessions.

Lerner, Harriet. *The Dance of Anger*. Written mainly for women to help them understand and reduce anger in close relationships.

Lerner, Harriet. *The Dance of Intimacy*. How to strengthen relationships when intimacy is challenged.

Lerner, Harriet. *The Dance of Connection*. Affirming strategies to help you communicate effectively with people you care about.

Lewis, Kathleen. *Celebrate Life: New Attitudes for Living with Chronic Illness*. How individuals with a chronic illness can learn to grieve one's losses and learn to live again.

McKay, Matthew & Sutker, Catharine. *The Self–Esteem Guided Journal*. A 10-week program to build better self–esteem.

Nelson, G. Lynn. *Writing and Being: Embracing Your Life Through Creative Journaling*. Help discover your authentic self with guided journaling.

Peck, M. Scott. *The Road Less Traveled*. A spiritual and psychological approach to self–fulfillment and happiness.

Pitzele, Sefra Kobrin. *We Are Not Alone: Learning to Live with Chronic Illness*. An inspirational book with practical strategies for persons suffering from chronic illness.

Pollin, Irene & Golant, Susan K. *Taking Charge: Overcoming the Challenges of Long–Term Illness*. A guide to master the medical system and your illness.

Prochaska, James O., Norcross, John C., & DiClemente, Carlo C. *Changing for Good*. A scientific approach to self-change.

Sapolsky, Robert M. *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: A Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases and Coping*. A well-researched and humorous approach to the interconnections between emotions and physical well-being.

Selak, Joy H. & Overman, Steven S. *You Don't Look Sick: Living Well With Invisible Chronic Illness*. An interesting chronicle of one individual's journey living with an invisible chronic illness.

Seligman, Martin. *Learned Optimism*. A psychological approach to positive thinking.

Spero, David. *The Art of Getting Well. Maximizing Health and Well-being When You Have a Chronic Illness*. Upbeat and inspiring book for those living with a chronic illness.

Tannen, Deborah. *You Just Don't Understand*. Excellent self-help book of relationships and communication between men and women.

Tatelbaum, Judy. *The Courage to Grieve*. Good resource on all aspects of grief and grief resolution.

Wells, Susan Milstrey. *A Delicate Balance: Living Successfully with Chronic Illness*. Accompany the author on her journey of living with a chronic illness.

**Recommended Websites:** These are primarily a list of national groups; however, there are many other good websites tailored to particular problems and issues.

American Psychological Association

[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

American Psychiatric Association

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)

National Alliance on Mental Illness

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association

[www.ndmda.org](http://www.ndmda.org)

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

National Mental Health Association  
Wisconsin United for Mental Health

[www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)  
[www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org)  
[www.wimentalhealth.org](http://www.wimentalhealth.org)