

WORRY

It is reported that over 90% of what we worry about never happens. That means that our negative worries have about 10% chance of being correct. If this is so, isn't it possible that being positive is more realistic than being negative? Think about your own life. I'll wager that most of what you worry about never happens. So are you being realistic when you worry all the time?

~Susan Jeffers, Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway

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HOW THOUGHTS AFFECT OUR MOOD

Session 4 of 4: A Review

- REVIEW: 1. Therapeutic Exercises:
- a. The Daily Mood Scale.
 - b. Thought List and The ABCD Method
2. Have you practiced changes in thinking?

I. More Practice Spotting Depressed Thinking

What is wrong with these statements?

1. "I should be loved and approved of by everyone."
2. "I should always be able to do things all of the time to feel good about myself."
3. "People get what they deserve in life."
4. "Loneliness is just a part of getting older."
5. "Things I cannot change make me unhappy."
6. "I should worry about bad things that could happen."
7. "I can't be happy if I don't have someone to love me."
8. "I can't change the way I am; I was raised this way."
9. "My health will always keep me from being happy."
10. "It will be awful if I don't do the right thing."

II. MORE PRACTICE WITH THE ABCD METHOD.

A. Review:

A is the **A**ctivating event (what happened).

B is the **B**elief (the thoughts you have about what happened).

C is the **C**onsequence (how the thoughts make you feel).

D is the **D**ispute (how you change the thoughts so that you do not feel so bad).

III. Reviewing your progress.

- A. Which strategies (thought stopping, list of thoughts, ABCD method, etc.) worked best for you? Which ones didn't work?
- B. What can you do to remind yourself to make use of what you have learned?
- C. What thoughts do you need to watch out for in the future?

THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES:



1. Continue the Daily Mood Scale.
2. Continue working on your thoughts.
3. Continue practicing the ABCD Method.

DAILY MOOD SCALE

Week Number _____

Name _____ Week Starting: _____

| Day | | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
|--|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| D A I L Y M O O D S C O R E | BEST | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| | | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| | | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| | AVERAGE | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | WORST | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |

Number of thoughts

Positive: _____

Negative: _____

Examples of Positive Thoughts:

1. It will be fun doing such-and-such today.
2. I've gotten good things in life.
3. The weather is great today.
4. I can do better than that.
5. Even though things are bad right now, they are bound to get better.
6. I'll learn to be happier as I live longer.
7. That was probably the best solution to a tough problem.
8. Life is interesting.
9. I deserve credit for trying hard.
10. That was a nice thing for me to do.
11. I really feel great.
12. This is fun.
13. I'm a good person.
14. I can do just about anything if I set my mind to it.
15. I have great hopes for the future.
16. I have good self-control.
17. That's interesting.
18. I really handled that situation well.
19. People are OK once you get to know them.
20. I like to read.
21. I'm easy to get along with.
22. If I can just hold on until such-and-such a date, I'll be OK.
23. A nice, relaxing evening can sure be enjoyable.
24. I have worked long enough--now it's time to have fun.
25. I'm considerate of others.
26. I have time to accomplish most things I want to do.
27. Someday I'll look back on today and smile.
28. I like people.
29. I always find the strength to handle whatever comes up.
30. I'm a good parent/friend/spouse, etc.
31. I'm a sensitive person.
32. I'm honest.
33. I could probably handle a crisis as well as anyone else.
34. I'm pretty lucky.
35. I'm responsible.
36. My experiences have prepared me well for the future.
37. That's funny.
38. I'm pretty smart.
39. I'm physically attractive.
40. I don't want to miss that event.

Examples of Negative Thoughts:

1. I will never be physically healthy.
2. I am confused.
3. There is no love in the world.
4. I have wasted my life.
5. I'm scared.
6. Nobody loves me.
7. I'll end up living all alone
8. People don't consider friendship important anymore.
9. I don't have any patience.
10. What's the use?
11. That was a dumb thing for me to do.
12. I'll probably have to be placed in an institution someday.
13. Anybody who thinks I'm nice doesn't know the real me.
14. Life has no meaning.
15. I am ugly.
16. I can't express my feelings.
17. I'll never find what I really want.
18. I am not capable of loving.
19. I am worthless.
20. It's all my fault.
21. Why do so many bad things happen to me?
22. I can't think of anything that would be fun.
23. I don't have what it takes.
24. Bringing kids into the world is cruel because life isn't worth living.
25. I'll never get over this depression.
26. Things are so messed up that doing anything about them is pointless.
27. I don't have enough willpower.
28. Why even bother getting up?
29. I wish I were dead.
30. I wonder if they are talking about me?
31. Things are just going to get worse.
32. I have a bad temper.
33. No matter how hard I try, people aren't satisfied.
34. Life is unfair.
35. I'll never make good money.
36. I don't dare imagine what my life will be like in ten years.
37. There is something wrong with me.
38. I am selfish.
39. My memory is lousy.
40. I get my feelings hurt easily.

Positive Thoughts

Negative Thoughts

Day 1 _____

Day 2 _____

Day 3 _____

Day 4 _____

Day 5 _____

Day 6 _____

Day 7 _____

PLAY

I do work very hard, and when I finish a project I can party all night. Or I can be happy going somewhere very quiet with my kids and digging holes in the sand.

~Debbie Allen

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WORKING WITH DAILY ACTIVITIES

Session 1 of ~~4~~ An Introduction

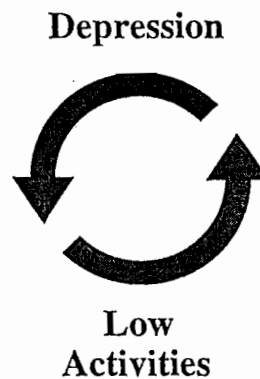
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- I. For the Daily Activities section of our group therapy, we will be working with how your daily activities affect your mood:
- II. Two Big Questions are:
- A. Do you stop doing things because you are depressed?
 - B. Do you get depressed because you stop doing things?
 - C. The answer is: BOTH!!

The less you do, the more depressed you feel.
The more depressed you feel, the less you do.

- III. Certain activities make you feel better because they are rewarding, meaningful, inspiring, relaxing, or fun. We'll call them "pleasant activities."

By doing more pleasant activities, you can break this vicious cycle.




- IV. Pleasant activities DO NOT have to be special activities.
- A. Many of them are everyday activities.

B. Think of the last pleasant activity you did. 

1. What enjoyment did you get from it?
2. How did it affect your mood?

V. Sometimes it is hard to remember the kinds of things that are pleasant for us, especially if we haven't done them in a long time.

- A. When we are depressed, it is even harder to remember pleasant things.
- B. To help each of you come up with your personal list of activities which make you feel good, we use the "LIST OF PLEASANT ACTIVITIES" (page 44-45).

C. Identify 3 activities that you consider pleasant. 

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

VI. Possible obstacles to working with pleasant activities:

A. YOUR THOUGHTS:

1. Are there things you say to yourself which make it less likely that you will work on your activities?

B. PEOPLE:

1. Will it be hard to work on pleasant activities because of other people?

VII. What are pleasant activities?

A. Pleasant activities are those things you can do that make you feel happy and often make you feel relaxed.

B. Pleasant activities are different for different people.

For example, some people find being alone reading a book to be a very pleasant activity. Others may find being in a loud and busy shopping center to be fun.

C. Pleasant activities may be special events, but they don't have to be.

Often they are common activities that bring us pleasure, like watching a sunset, reading a book, talking to a friend.

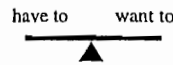
VIII. How pleasant activities can help improve your mood:

A. Just telling yourself to feel better isn't enough.

B. The things that you do will change the way that you are feeling.

C. Just as the body needs an adequate level of nutrition, the mind needs an adequate level of pleasant activities.

IX. Keeping activities balanced.




A. Our mood is at its best when our activities are balanced between things we “have to do” and those we “want to do.”

B. Since we often have more control over the things we want to do, it is important to keep them in mind and do them!

X. Making a contract

- A. When you complete your tasks for the day, it is important to reward yourself.
- B. You can reward yourself by doing something you find pleasant--try something on your List of Pleasant Activities.

Identify an activity that you would enjoy. 

1. _____

THERAPEUTIC EXERCISE:



1. Continue the Daily Mood Scale.
2. Keep track of how many of the activities on the List of Pleasant Activities you do each day. Place a \checkmark next to each activity that you do each day. If you did activities that are not on the list, you can write them in. Keeping track of your activities may be new to you. Many people find it interesting!
3. Carry out your Personal Contract.

DAILY MOOD SCALE

Week Number _____

Name _____ Week Starting: _____

| Day | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D A I L Y | BEST | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| | | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| | | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| M O O D | AVERAGE | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| S C O R E | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | WORST | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Number of
Pleasant
Activities _____

List of Pleasant Activities

Check (✓) what you did today:

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| wear clothes I like | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| listen to the radio | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| watch people | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| look at clouds | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| eat a good meal | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| be outdoors | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| care for a houseplant | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| have people show an interest in what I say | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| see good things happen to family or friends | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| compliment/praise someone | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| talk about sports/ current events | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| see beautiful scenery | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| take a walk | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| make a new friend | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| go to a movie or play | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| go to a museum | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| play cards or chess | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| watch a sunset | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| do artwork or crafts | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| learn to do something new | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| collect things | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| be asked for advice | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| read sacred works | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| spend time with family | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| go to a garage sale | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| help someone | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| rearrange my room or house | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| talk on the telephone | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| do volunteer work | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

PERSONAL CONTRACT

I, _____, make the following agreement with myself:

During this week, I will do the following activity from the LIST OF PLEASANT ACTIVITIES.

REWARD:

If I fulfill my contract, I will reward myself with:

I will give myself the above reward no more than two days following the day when I fulfill my contract.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

GOALS

Strive to make something of yourselves; then strive to make the most of yourselves.

~Alexander Crummell

Life is a struggle, and very often we tend to settle for less than our dreams. We do not realize our potential but stop far short of it. As a result, we hear the nagging voice inside ourselves, the guilty voice that tells us we have failed. It's a demoralizing force that makes us question our talents, our ability, our drive - in fact, our very worthiness as human beings.

Realize that it is never, never too late to go for your dreams. Our achievements at fifty-two are as precious as those at twenty-two, if not more precious. We need to appraise our unique abilities and determine how we can best put them to use.

~Eric Copage, Black Pearls: Daily Meditations, Affirmations, and Inspirations for African-Americans.

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WORKING WITH DAILY ACTIVITIES

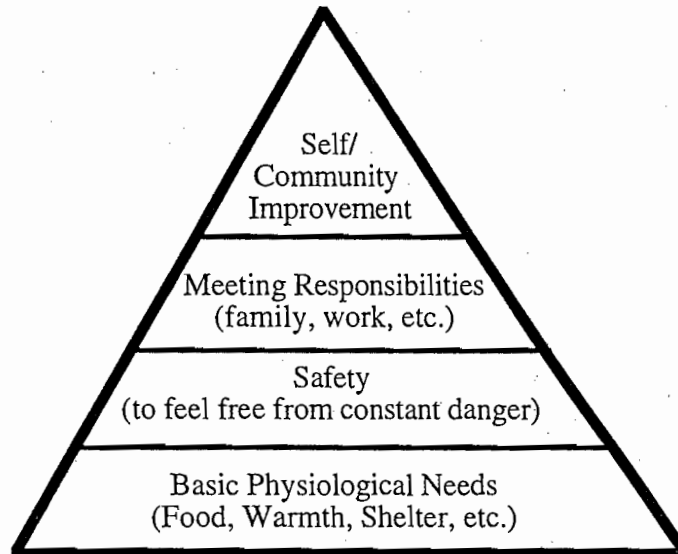
Session 2 of 2: Setting Goals

- REVIEW:
1. The purpose of this section.
 2. Therapeutic Exercises:
 - i. How do activities affect your mood?
 - ii. Did you fulfill your Personal Contract?

I. What are goals?

A. The "Goal Pyramid"

1. We all have a variety of goals to meet in life. Some are more basic than others. Here is a way of thinking about different levels of goals:



A goal on one level will be hard to reach if you haven't met the goals on the levels below it. For example, if your goal is to become more physically fit by taking walks (Self-improvement), it will be hard for you to reach this goal if you don't feel safe leaving your home (Safety).

B. Short-term and Long-term goals.

1. Short-term goals are for things that you would like to do soon (say within 6 months)
2. Long-term goals are for things that you would like to do at some point in the future, or for things that take a long time to achieve

II. Depression and problems with goals

A. When we are depressed, we often lose sight of our goals.

We may:

1. Set our standards so high that our goals are impossible to meet.
2. Have trouble doing the things we need to do to meet our goals.
3. Not give ourselves credit for the positive things that we have done.

B. To overcome depression:

1. Set reasonable and clear goals
2. Plan and manage your time more effectively
3. Notice the accomplishments you make and reward yourself.

III. Setting reasonable goals

A. Setting realistic goals:

1. What is and is not realistic is hard to determine ahead of time. What is unrealistic at one time may be realistic at another.
2. If you find that you cannot meet most of your goals, then chances are that they are unrealistic for you at this time.
3. You can make large goals more manageable if you break them into smaller steps.
 - i. Make each step towards the bigger goal attainable.
 - ii. For example, if your goal is to learn to be a good bowler, you may begin by finding out where the nearest bowling alley is and what the hours are that you may bowl there.

B. Setting clear goals:

1. Make goals concrete so that you can tell when you have reached them. Here are some examples of clear vs. unclear goals:

UNCLEAR GOALSCLEAR GOALS

Be less depressed

Increase pleasant activities
so you feel less depressed

Be a good:
parent
spouse
friend

Spend one hour a week
doing something pleasant
with your:
child
spouse
friend

Be a:
musician
cook
better person

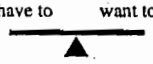
Spend X hours per week:
playing an instrument
cooking
helping others

C. What are your goals?



1. Are they realistic? Have you met the goals lower in the Goal Pyramid? Can you break them down into smaller steps?
2. Are they clear? How will you know when you reach them?

III. Developing a plan to achieve your goals.

1. Set priorities: Take your list of goals and decide which one(s) you want to work on this week.
2. Think of obstacles that might come up--how can you overcome them?
3. Make time for pleasant activities in your week.
 - a. Is there a balance between what you ^{have to} HAVE to do and what you ^{want to} WANT to do? 

IV. Rewarding yourself for meeting your goals.

- A. Take the time to notice the things that you have done, not just the things that you haven't done. This will help motivate you.

THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES:



1. The Daily Mood Scale
2. The List of Activities
3. Complete Worksheet for Setting and Meeting Goals.

DAILY MOOD SCALE

Week Number _____

Name _____ Week Starting: _____

| Day | | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| D A I L Y | BEST | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| | | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| | | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| M O O D | AVERAGE | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| S C O R E | WORST | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Number of Pleasant Activities _____

Worksheet for Setting and Meeting Goals

One goal that I would like to work this week is (remember to be specific): _____

The small steps I can take to reach my goals are:

I will review my progress for the week on: _____
day

If I have reached my goals (or most of the steps) by this day, I will reward myself with this pleasant activity:

MOODINESS

Did you ever wonder why so many sisters look so angry? Why we walk like we've got bricks in our bags and will slash and curse you at the drop of a hat? It's because stress is hemmed into our dresses, pressed into our hair, mixed into our perfume and painted on our fingers. Stress from the deferred dreams, the dreams not voiced; stress from the broken promises, the blatant lies; stress from always being at the bottom, from never being thought beautiful, from always being taken for granted, taken advantage of; stress from being a Black woman in White America. Much of this stress is caused by how the world outside us relates to us. We cannot control that world, at times we can change it but we can assert agency in our own lives so that the outside world cannot over-determine our responses, cannot make our lives a dumping ground for stress.

~Opal Palmer Adisa, "Rocking in the Sunlight: Stress and Black Women" in The Black Women's Health Book

HOW CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE AFFECT MOOD

Session 1 of 2: An Introduction

- I. For the Contacts With People section of the group, we will be working on how contacts with people affect our mood.
 - A. Higher levels of depression are related to:
 - 1. Less contact with people.
 - 2. Feeling uncomfortable with people.
 - 3. Being more quiet, talking less.
 - 4. Being less assertive, that is, not expressing your likes or dislikes.
 - 5. Being more sensitive to being ignored, criticized or rejected.

- II. Does depression cause people to be less sociable, or does being less sociable cause depression?
 - A. The answer is “probably both”.
 - 1. When we feel down, we are less likely to want to socialize.
 - 2. However, not having contact with people takes away from us a source of happiness, so we become more depressed.
 - 3. When we feel more depressed, we do even fewer things with people.
 - 4. This continues until we are so depressed that we spend most of our time alone.

- III. The importance of SOCIAL SUPPORT.
 - A. By social support system, we mean the people who are near you and with whom you share moments of your life.

This includes your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and acquaintances.

 - B. In general, the stronger your social support system, the better you will be able to face tough situations.

IV. Two principles we will focus on in this section:

- A. If your social support system is small, enlarge it.
- B. If your social support system is of a good size, appreciate it and keep it going.

V. Making your support system bigger: Meeting people

- A. The easiest way to meet people without feeling too self-conscious is to do something that you really like doing, in the company of other people.
- B. When you are doing something you like, you are more likely to be in a better mood and it will be easier to be friendlier to others.
- C. Even if you don't find anyone in particular whom you would like to get to know better, you will still have been doing something pleasant, and you will be less likely to feel that you wasted your time.
- D. Since the main focus is the activity you are doing, and not just meeting others, there will be less pressure on you than in a setting where the whole purpose is to meet people.
- E. If you do meet people you would like to know better, they are likely to be people with whom you share at least one interest that brought you together.

VI. Keeping your social support system going.

- A. Contact is important: by phone or in person.
- B. Suggest an activity to share with others.
 1. Thoughts that get in the way:
 - “They will say 'no'.”
 - “They'll say 'yes' just to be nice.”
 - “They won't want to go out with me again.”

VII. We will also work on improving relationships.

- A. Focusing on your thoughts, behavior, and feelings.
- B. Learning about truth telling and communicating openly and honestly.

THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES:



1. The Daily Mood Scale.
2. Weekly Contact Schedule. Keep track of contacts with people. Use a “+” if positive and a “-” if negative. Write the total number of positive and negative contacts for each day at the bottom of the Daily Mood Scale.

DAILY MOOD SCALE

Week Number _____

Name _____ Week Starting: _____

| Day | | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
|---|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| D A I L Y M O O D S C O R E E | BEST | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| | | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| | | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| | AVERAGE | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | WORST | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Number of
people contacts

Positive: _____

Negative: _____

WEEKLY ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

| | M | T | W | Th | F | Sat | Sun |
|---------|--------------|---|---|----|---|-----|-----|
| AM 8-9 | | | | | | | |
| 9-10 | f | | | | | | |
| 10-11 | f | | | | | | |
| 11-12 | f | | | | | | |
| PM 12-1 | | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-3 | | | | | | | |
| 3-4 | f | | | | | | |
| 4-5 | | | | | | | |
| 5-6 | | | | | | | |
| 6-7 | | | | | | | |
| 7-8 | | | | | | | |
| 8-on | | | | | | | |

CONNECTIONS

The most important part of good health and relief from stress is surrounding yourself with people who love you.

~Wilma Rudolph

Spending time with people we love and enjoy being with can do wonders for our spirits. African-Americans have always understood this. When we relax, kick back, laugh and party, our troubles seem to disappear. It might be a temporary means of stress reduction, but the good feelings that carry over into the next day can help put things into perspective.

Knowing we have a safety net of sanity, support, and love makes life more precious and our blues more tolerable.

Let's make time for connections.

~Eric Copage, Black Pearls: Daily Meditations, Affirmations, and Inspirations for African-Americans.