



AMERICAN MEDITATION INSTITUTE

Bringing Yoga Science to Life

First-Aid Kit for Burnout

From the Annual CME Conference on Yoga Science as Holistic Mind/Body Medicine



**“I am an old man
and have had many troubles,
most of which never happened.”**

Mark Twain

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A Message from
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Yoga Science as Holistic Mind/Body Medicine*

You became a physician or healthcare provider because you *care* about people. You work hard and truly want to serve your patients and your profession. But in today's world you are subject to many stressors: overwork, cumbersome regulations, EMR and coding requirements, medical liability, on-call issues, lack of sleep, politics, frustrations with the reimbursement structure, and often an unrewarding work/life balance.

By learning to practice Yoga Science as holistic mind/body medicine, you can transform your stress into strength—improving all your personal and professional relationships while reducing burnout symptoms of anger, depression, anxiety and exhaustion.

Based on my own personal experience, I can tell you that the physical, mental and emotional challenges you may now be facing can be overcome. Simply experiment by using the enclosed *First-Aid Kit for Burnout*. Then, as I've discovered for myself, you can quickly learn how to creatively deal with all of life's demands.

If You Change your Perspective, You'll Change your Experience

Learning how to live FREE from old, debilitating emotional triggers begins with the recognition that you are a citizen of two worlds. Clearly, you are a citizen of the ever-changing material world of animal, vegetable and mineral matter. In this familiar environment, the body is your vehicle for action and your mind is your most powerful instrument for evaluating circumstances and motivating your body into action. For every action your mind-body-sense complex takes, a consequence results.

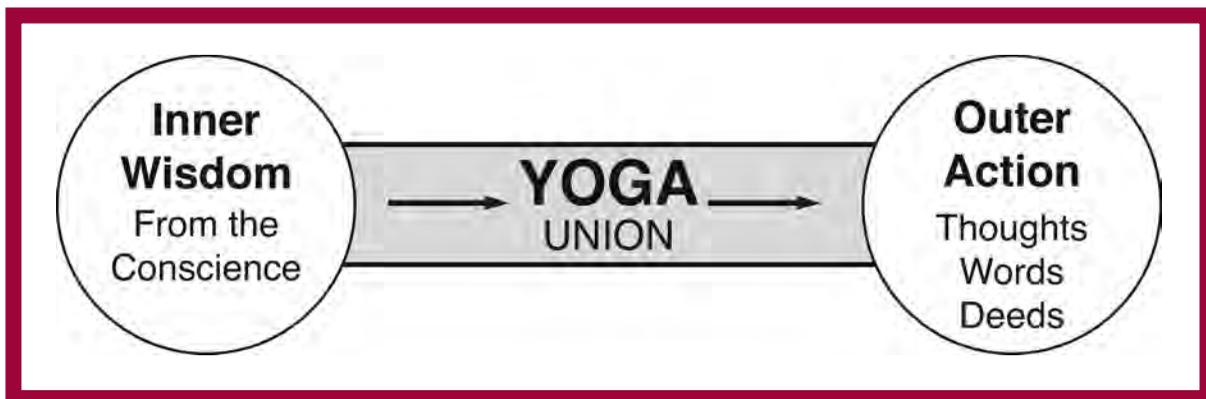
But you are also a citizen of the distinctly non-material, yet profoundly real world of consciousness. Within this subtle world exists an intuitive library

of knowledge that unerringly identifies which of your possible actions will lead you to realize health, happiness and freedom from fear, and which will lead to physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dis-ease.

When, as a citizen of the material world, your outer actions reflect the perfection of your inner, subtle wisdom, you are led for your highest and greatest good. The choice to base your outer action on your own inner wisdom is the essence of all forms of Yoga. Yoga means union, and Yoga Science as holistic mind/body medicine provides a reliable blueprint for building a trustworthy, ever-accessible bridge to your own inner wisdom.

The Bridge of Yoga

The *Bridge of Yoga* is a very practical tool that you can easily use in every circumstance. By employing it regularly, you will learn to deal confidently and skillfully with common, everyday situations. Here's a brief overview of what the *Bridge of Yoga* is, how to use it, and how it can enhance your creative ability to deal with every relationship—including stressful thoughts.



Yoga means union. It represents a bridge between inner wisdom and outer actions. When your outer actions (thoughts, words and deeds) are based on your inner wisdom, you are always led for your highest and greatest good.

The Powerful Force of Stress

To one extent or another, we all deal with various symptoms of burnout. If the truth were known, most of us squander a tremendous amount of creative energy attending to notions of what the future might or might not hold. Just as Gulliver

was hopelessly bound by the Lilliputians' slender threads, many of us are held captive by habitual thoughts generated from our own preconceptions.

In actuality, much of life is spent imagining things that never were and never will be. Because of all our concerns, we often can't even get a good night's sleep. And the more attention we give to negative thinking, the worse we feel—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Over fifty years ago, as I wrestled with the painful loss of my father, I received some sage advice that, at the time, seemed of little value. But as my Yoga Science and meditation practice deepened, and my ability to “see” and understand grew, that counsel proved to be profound. “Nothing is as it appears,” I was told. It echoed the observation made by German philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832): “We don't know what we see; we see what we know.”

In other words, our unconscious concepts determine our conscious perceptions. In everyday life we don't really experience the world, we experience our mind. And because so many of our stored, unconscious concepts are neither true nor valid, our perceptions and our actions often lead to dis-ease, burnout and pain.

The Greek philosopher Epictetus observed, “People are not disturbed by things, but by the views they take of them.” And in the play *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare (circa 1602) made the bold observation, “There's nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

What to Do When You Feel Stressed and Burned Out

The everyday triggers that arise from working in today's medical culture need not burden or diminish us. Experiment with all of your concerns (one at a time) according to the following *First-Aid Kit for Burnout*. Then, experience for yourself how liberating and rewarding life can be.

When you have done all that you can do in a situation, but still find yourself plagued by judgments, anger, fears, worry, depression or any other form of consternation, use this checklist to transform the power of those debilitating thoughts into reserves of energy, will power and creativity. But remember, true happiness is never realized by simply dismissing your concerns for the future, nor by repressing them. Rather, when you become a Yoga scientist you can recognize and counter thoughts that hold power to hijack your mind, as they arise, by experimenting with this gentle and loving time-tested procedure.

First-Aid Kit for Burnout



AMI's One-Minute Meditation **A Proven Remedy for Thoughts that Can Lead to Burnout**

1. Sit in a firm, padded, straight-back chair with your head, neck and trunk straight.
2. Gently close your eyes and mouth, and place your hands comfortably on the thighs.
3. Establish the “finger lock” by gently joining the thumb and index fingers of both hands, in the “okay” sign. The joining of thumb and index finger on each hand completes a circuit in the body, reducing dissipation of the body’s energy.
4. Silently repeat this *Pledge of Resolve* to yourself: “For one minute (60 seconds), I will give my complete, one-pointed attention to the inhalation and exhalation of the breath. I want to do it. I can do it. I have to do it. I am going to do it—no matter what; no matter what thought, image or sound comes into my awareness.”
5. Now, while the eyes and mouth remain closed, bring your attention to the breath at the bridge between the two nostrils (where the nostrils meet the upper lip), and simply witness the inhalation and exhalation for 60 seconds.
6. Ideally, the inhalation and exhalation should be a slow, full, continuous and unbroken stream of breath—free of jerks, pauses and sounds.
7. If any uninvited thought, image or sound comes into your awareness, don’t push it away or be upset with yourself. Simply honor and witness the distraction, gently let it go, and bring the mind back to the breath until you complete your one-minute meditation.
8. If you have the time at the end of one minute, pledge to yourself that for a second minute you will continue to give your attention to the breath at the bridge between the two nostrils.
9. When you conclude your breath awareness meditation, gently open your eyes.
10. Finally, at any time during the day, try to recognize an opportunity to engage in some selfless service. (The opportunity is probably right in front of you). This kind practice can further transform the contracting power of stress into positive, creative energy.

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