

Tame Your Mood (TYM)

Articles List (as of March 2017)

Article subjects

ACCEPTANCE/SURRENDER

[Oct. 2011: "The Four Stages of Acceptance"](#)--A mini-map of how acceptance unfolds.

[Sept. 2009: "Surrender comes in Waves"](#)--Thoughts on the subject of surrender: "It doesn't (almost ever) come in one fell swoop. Surrender is something that comes in waves. You don't surrender (i.e., relinquish control) once and are done with it."

[Feb. 2009: "Control vs. Surrender"](#)--The article in this month's newsletter is about the difference between "control" and "surrender." There are many ways in which attempts at control (or "fixing") can actually be effective, but that's almost never the case with anxiety and depression.

[April 2008: "Letting the Universe Answer Questions"](#)--Here is a discussion of the difference between real inquiry into an issue, and questions which are actually masked emotions.

[May 2008: "Learning to Love Conflict"](#)--"Who fully and whole-heartedly loves the experience? Not many, in my experience. But I do believe that it's possible to meet conflict as a friend and not an enemy--or at least a tolerable but unwelcome visitor--and that the rewards are great in forging, or refining, this kind of peaceful acceptance of conflict."

ANGER

[July 2014--"Anger is Your Friend"](#)--Anger as a necessary resource and protector.

ANXIETY

[Mar. 08: "Anxiety and Personality: Where the Roots are Rooted"](#)--An article on the personality traits underlying chronic anxiety, and some thoughts on how to organize a plan of "recovery."

DEPRESSION

[April 2016--"What I've Learned from Depression \(so far\)"](#)--A summary article about the essentials of coming out of depression (published at the Huffington Post).

[Sept. 2014--Audio Talk: "Depression and the Fundamentals of Healing"](#)--A 38 minute summary of depression and the essentials of its healing.

[Oct. 2014--"Void vs. Emptiness"](#)--Concerning the critical distinction between the experience of Void and that of Emptiness.

[Mar. 2016--"Depression and Faith"](#)--An article on the necessity of projecting goodness into the void.

[Feb. 2016--"Questions about Depression"](#) (Webinar)--Here is an interview and q&a that I did with Psyched in SF, covering different questions sent in by Psyched's readers.

[Oct. 2015--"Depression and the Dilemma of Stories"](#)--Regarding the dilemma of our own attachment to our depression stories.

[Aug. 2015--"Depression and the Challenge of Savoring" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--Looking at how important the cultivation of pleasure is when healing from depression. (Audio is [here](#).)

[July. 2015--"In and Out of the Void: Pixar's 'Inside Out' as a Map of Depression" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--Exploring the film "Inside Out" through the lens of depression. (Audio is [here](#).)

[April 2014: "Depression and Energy"](#)--An exploration of the way in which depression is an unforgiving monitor of energy.

[Jan. 2014--Normon Solomon's Talk](#)--A wonderful talk by Norman Solomon, and some thoughts on his important parts.

[Aug. 2013--"The Education of a Depressive, pt.1"](#)--The first half of the stages of healing from depression, from grade school through college.

[Sept. 2013--"The Education of a Depressive, pt.2"](#)--The second half of the stages of healing from depression, from grad school through post-grad.

[May 2013--"April is the Cruellest Month"](#)--How pleasure of elemental experiences is crushed by depression.

[April 2013--"The 'Beloved' as Anti-Depressant"](#)--On the idea and experience of the "Beloved," where profound meaning pokes through the mundane.

[June 2012--"Why do Buddhists get depressed?"](#)--A look at a common misconception about practice.

[Mar. 2012--"'Transphilia' Explained"](#)--Further discussion of depression as "attractive of transformation".

[Feb. 2012--"Depression as 'Transphilic'"](#)--The transformative core of depression and anxiety.

[Sept. 2011: "Depression: From Futility to Acceptance"](#)--Five ways we keep ourselves in chronic stress.

[Aug. 2011: "What is Depression?"](#)--A down-and-dirty description of depression.

[July 2011: "Games vs. Grimness"](#)--Looking at depression from the perspective of what makes games tick.

[May 2011: "Language and Mood" \(Q&A\)](#)--Thoughts on the question, "I have always been unhappy, but I don't want to be."

[April 2011: "Symptoms and Self-Blame" \(Q&A\)](#)--Addressing the question: "When I feel depressed, I sleep...a lot. What's wrong with me that I can't just go outside and enjoy the sunshine?"

[Dec. 2010: "Why is Depression So Destructive?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Thoughts on the question: "Why is my depression so destructive?"

[Aug. 2010: "Can I Just Depend on God?" \(Q&A\)](#)--This month's question, first of the Q&A series: "If I do nothing, will depression go away like other ailments?"

[July 2010: "Will Depression Just Dissipate?" \(Q&A\)](#)--This month's question, first of the Q&A series: "If I do nothing, will depression go away like other ailments?"

[Nov. 2009: "Maps of Mood"](#)--The article for this issue is a short piece on the importance of good maps in healing from chronic anxiety or depression.

[May 2009: "Getting the 'Penthouse': Experimentation vs. Success"](#)--This month, a discussion on the importance, when healing depression, of focusing on experimentation rather than success-or-failure.

[April 2009: "Life During Wartime: 7 Thoughts and Tips"](#)--This month's article is on how to actively engage depression in a way that's not counter-productive. Because as important as the work of mindfulness is, there's much to be said in being active with depression.

[Aug. 2007: "Wrestling Intimacy Away from Depression"](#)--The practice of loving kindness as an act of finding intimacy.

[April 2007: "Finding Beauty Amidst Depression and Anxiety"](#)--Flexibility in choosing perspectives is a necessity in deeply uprooting depression.

[June 2011: "The Problem with Rumination" \(Q&A\)](#)--On the way in which rumination feeds depression.

EMOTIONS

[Mar. 2017—"The Cultivation of Awe, pt.2"](#)—Some (more) thoughts on awe, and some exercises.

[Feb. 2017—"The Cultivation of Awe"](#)—Some thoughts on the different kinds of awe.

[July 2016—"Trust Only Love"](#)--An article focusing on what happens if we only trust Love, and how "trusting" is different than "hearing".

[Jan. 2015--"What Emotions are Trying to Tell Us" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--A "taxonomy" of the categorical emotions, what they are and what they are trying to signal. Also, with an audio reading of the article, [here](#).

[April. 2012--"What is Safety?"](#)--A look at the "necessary illusion" of safety.

GRIEF

[Aug. 2014--"The Stalling of Grief"](#)--What we are meaning when we say, "I can't believe!"

[Mar. 2014--"Grief: From Pain to Poignancy"](#)--A description of the necessary path of grief.

MEMORY

[Nov. 2012--"The Past Pretending to be the Present"](#)--The difference between implicit and explicit memory.

MISC

[December 2016—"Depression and the Burden of Holiday Preciousness"](#)
---A bit of musing on the need to be creative about how we approach the Holidays.

[June 2016--"Taking Responsibility for our Future Selves"](#)
--Article about treating our future selves better by not pushing on them the costs of our present-tense decisions.

[Feb. 2015--"The Coffee on the Corner Voice" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--A look at that part of us that helpfully warns against putting the coffee right there at the edge. (Audio is [here](#).)

[Feb. 2014--"Why Sunshine Can Scare You"](#)--Making sense of how we can react to things...that don't make sense to react to.

[Mar. 2013--"Teachers, Conscious and Unconscious"](#)--Concerning the manifold "unconscious teachers" in our lives, and the wealth of unintended teachings they have for us.

[Sept. 2012--"Confessing Greatness" & Upcoming MBCT Class \(9/16\)](#)--An exercise in owning one's "golden shadow".

[Aug. 2012--"The Wobble of Progress"](#)--Why development is linear, but not straight forward.

[May 2012--"Mother is Not Negotiable"](#)--A look at the inescapable human need for being mothered.

[Nov. 2011: "Cultivating Spaciousness"](#)--The process of finding and cultivating a sense of spaciousness in one's life.

[Nov. 2008: "Hope: Realistic and Grounded"](#)--With anxiety and depression, hope often ends up being pitched overboard, where it bobs along as something you can make out against the waves, but which you can't hold in your hands. So the article this month is about hope: what it is, and how it can elude us.

[Oct. 2008: "Why Does Mindfulness Work?"](#)--This month's newsletter focuses on the question: Why does mindfulness work. (A perhaps snarkier way of phrasing that: why bother practicing?) Basically the answer is that practicing mindfulness builds a good, portable mother.

[Sept. 2008: "Politics as Inquiry into 'Macros and Micros'"](#)--This article looks at how to use macro level issues--in this case, the presidential race--to explore micro level (personal) issues.

[Aug. 2008: "Love as a Resource, Love as a Practice"](#)--The focus of this month's article concerns what the Buddhists refer to as metta practice, the practice of "loving kindness." Love is both a state of being, and a response to our experience, and can be cultivated into the best kind of habit. Love tends to trump fear, and since there is often so much fear in anxiety and depression, it acts, as a practice, to stop the spiraling quality of these moods.

[Nov. 2007: "Knowing Which Fish are in Which Ponds"](#)--In this newsletter, the topic: what are real pleasures, and what are the stand-ins we use when we can't find the real thing?

[Feb. 2008: "The Hand Brake is On: How beliefs can limit growth"](#)--This month's article is about the way in which unacknowledged, and unexplored beliefs can cause us to drag in moving forward in our lives.

SHAME

[June 2014--"Energy Theft"](#)--Toxic shame and guilt as "energy theft".

[Dec. 2012--"What is Shame?"](#)--The nature and function of this pervasive, and generally invisible, experience.

STRESS/SELF-REGULATION

[August 2016--"10 Tips for a Depression-Free Election"](#)

--Some tips on how to guard yourself from the free-floating toxins of this election season."

[Dec. 2013--"Slowing Down"](#)--A very practical, and literal, resource to counteract the overly-speedy.

[Nov. 2013--"Self-Regulation as the Inner Tube on the River of Life"](#)--A (slightly silly) metaphor for the delicate balance of self-regulation

[Oct. 2013--"Finding Energy when Feeling Exhausted"](#)--Using myself as an example of how we can build energy by starting small.

[June 2013--"The 'Nervous System Salve' Checklist"](#)--On attending to the needs of our nervous system, by whatever means available.

[Jan. 2013--"The Problem of Open Loops"](#)--Managing overwhelm is a problem when there are too many open loops.

[Nov. 2012--"Holiday Survival Tip"s & Free Audio"](#)--More tips for surviving the holidays.

[Dec. 2011: "De-pressurizing the Holidays"](#)--Tips for the holidays.

[June 2008: "Skillful Dependence: The Courage to Take Support"](#)--A discussion of the difference between "skillful" and "unskillful" dependence. "In psychotherapy, I think of the movement towards 'skillful dependence' as largely a matter of making small declarations of one's needs, and then taking the risk of allowing others to support you."

[Jan. 2008: "Resources you \(probably\) didn't know you had"](#)--An article on using "Resource Tapping," a hands-on, practical technique for strengthening one's own access to positive feelings and thoughts.

[Dec. 2007: "Tips for the Holidays"](#)--This month's article: 9 tips for surviving and making sense of the holidays.

THERAPISTS (For therapists)

[May 2016--"How Therapists Do Not Become Embittered, Depressed Burn-outs"](#)--An article written to answer the common question, "How do you sit with all the suffering," a question vital to being a therapist, but also to all of us humans.

["Greedy Bastards! Or Why Paying for Missed Therapy Sessions is Good for You!"](#)—A description of why not being “nice” around money is such a critical part of a healthy therapy.

THERAPY (process of)

[Sept. 2010: "Any Therapist Will Do?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Thoughts on: "Can any therapist help with any problem?"

[Feb. 2011: "Therapy or Pills?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Addressing this question: "Is it better to seek private therapy or find a doctor to prescribe a pill that will help?"

[Jan. 2011: "Why am I So Embarrassed To Seek Out Therapy?" \(Q&A\)](#)--"Why am I embarrassed about seeking therapy (I don't have a problem with going to the doctor for a broken arm...)?"

[Nov. 2010: "When to Seek Therapy?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Addressing the question: "As an individual, how do I know when I really need professional help?"

[Oct. 2010: "When to Seek Out Support?" \(Q&A\)](#)--This month's question: "How do I know when it's time to call a friend for help?"

(Articles in order of publication—i.e., unsorted)

[May 2016--"How Therapists Do Not Become Embittered, Depressed Burn-outs"](#)--An article written to answer the common question, "How do you sit with all the suffering," a question vital to being a therapist, but also to all of us humans.

[April 2016--"What I've Learned from Depression \(so far\)"](#)--A summary article about the essentials of coming out of depression (published at the Huffington Post).

[Mar. 2016--"Depression and Faith"](#)--Here is an interview and q&a that I did with Psyched in SF, covering different questions sent in by Psyched's readers.

[Feb. 2016--"Questions about Depression"](#) (Webinar)--Here is an interview and q&a that I did with Psyched in SF, covering different questions sent in by Psyched's readers.

[Oct. 2015--"Depression and the Dilemma of Stories"](#)--Looking at how important the cultivation of pleasure is when healing from depression.

[Aug. 2015--"Depression and the Challenge of Savoring" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--Looking at how important the cultivation of pleasure is when healing from depression. (Audio is [here](#).)

[July. 2015--"In and Out of the Void: Pixar's 'Inside Out' as a Map of Depression" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--Exploring the film "Inside Out" through the lens of depression. (Audio is [here](#).)

[Feb. 2015--"The Coffee on the Corner Voice" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--A look at that part of us that helpfully warns against putting the coffee right there at the edge. (Audio is [here](#).)

[Jan. 2015--"What Emotions are Trying to Tell Us" \(plus audio recording\)](#)--A "taxonomy" of the categorical emotions, what they are and what they are trying to signal. Also, with an audio reading of the article, [here](#).

[Oct. 2014--"Void vs. Emptiness"](#)--Concerning the critical distinction between the experience of Void and that of Emptiness.

[Sept. 2014--Audio Talk: "Depression and the Fundamentals of Healing"](#)--A 38 minute summary of depression and the essentials of its healing.

[Aug. 2014--"The Stalling of Grief"](#)--What we are meaning when we say, "I can't believe!"

[July 2014--"Anger is Your Friend"](#)--Anger as a necessary resource and protector.

[June 2014--"Energy Theft"](#)--Toxic shame and guilt as "energy theft".

[April 2014: "Depression and Energy"](#)--An exploration of the way in which depression is a unforgiving monitor of energy.

[Mar. 2014--"Grief: From Pain to Poignancy"](#)--A description of the necessary path of grief.

[Feb. 2014--"Why Sunshine Can Scare You"](#)--Making sense of how we can react to things...that don't make sense to react to.

[Jan. 2014--Normon Solomon's Talk](#)--A wonderful talk by Norman Solomon, and some thoughts on his important parts.

[Dec. 2013--"Slowing Down"](#)--A very practical, and literal, resource to counteract the overly-speedy.

[Nov. 2013--"Self-Regulation as the Inner Tube on the River of Life"](#)--A (slightly silly) metaphor for the delicate balance of self-regulation

[Oct. 2013--"Finding Energy when Feeling Exhausted"](#)--Using myself as an example of how we can build energy by starting small.

[Sept. 2013--"The Education of a Depressive, pt.2"](#)--The second half of the stages of healing from depression, from grad school through post-grad.

[Aug. 2013--"The Education of a Depressive, pt.1"](#)--The first half of the stages of healing from depression, from grade school through college.

[June 2013--"The 'Nervous System Salve' Checklist"](#)--On attending to the needs of our nervous system, by whatever means available.

[May 2013--"April is the Cruellest Month"](#)--How pleasure of elemental experiences is crushed by depression.

[April 2013--"The 'Beloved' as Anti-Depressant"](#)--On the idea and experience of the "Beloved," where profound meaning pokes through the mundane.

[Mar. 2013--"Teachers, Conscious and Unconscious"](#)--Concerning the manifold "unconscious teachers" in our lives, and the wealth of unintended teachings they have for us.

[Jan. 2013--"The Problem of Open Loops"](#)--Managing overwhelm is a problem when there are too many open loops.

[Dec. 2012--"What is Shame?"](#)--The nature and function of this pervasive, and generally invisible, experience.

[Nov. 2012--"Holiday Survival Tip"s & Free Audio](#)--More tips for surviving the holidays.

[Nov. 2012--"The Past Pretending to be the Present"](#)--The difference between implicit and explicit memory.

[Sept. 2012--"Confessing Greatness" & Upcoming MBCT Class \(9/16\)](#)--An exercise in owning one's "golden shadow".

[Aug. 2012--"The Wobble of Progress"](#)--Why development is linear, but not straight forward.

[June 2012--"Why do Buddhists get depressed?"](#)--A look at a common misconception about practice.

[May 2012--"Mother is Not Negotiable"](#)--A look at the inescapable human need for being mothered.

[April. 2012--"What is Safety?"](#)--A look at the "necessary illusion" of safety.

[Mar. 2012--"'Transphilia' Explained"](#)--Further discussion of depression as "attractive of transformation".

[Feb. 2012--"Depression as 'Transphilic'"](#)--The transformative core of depression and anxiety.

[Dec. 2011: "De-pressurizing the Holidays"](#)--Tips for the holidays.

[Nov. 2011: "Cultivating Spaciousness"](#)--The process of finding and cultivating a sense of spaciousness in one's life.

[Oct. 2011: "The Four Stages of Acceptance"](#)--A mini-map of how acceptance unfolds.

[Sept. 2011: "Depression: From Futility to Acceptance"](#)--Five ways we keep ourselves in chronic stress.

[Aug. 2011: "What is Depression?"](#)--A down-and-dirty description of depression.

[July 2011: "Games vs. Grimness"](#)--Looking at depression from the perspective of what makes games tick.

[June 2011: "The Problem with Rumination" \(Q&A\)](#)--On the way in which rumination feeds depression.

[May 2011: "Language and Mood" \(Q&A\)](#)--Thoughts on the question, "I have always been unhappy, but I don't want to be."

[April 2011: "Symptoms and Self-Blame" \(Q&A\)](#)--Addressing the question: "When I feel depressed, I sleep...a lot. What's wrong with me that I can't just go outside and enjoy the sunshine?"

[Feb. 2011: "Therapy or Pills?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Addressing this question: "Is it better to seek private therapy or find a doctor to prescribe a pill that will help?"

[Jan. 2011: "Why am I So Embarrassed To Seek Out Therapy?" \(Q&A\)](#)--"Why am I embarrassed about seeking therapy (I don't have a problem with going to the doctor for a broken arm...)?"

[Dec. 2010: "Why is Depression So Destructive?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Thoughts on the question: "Why is my depression so destructive?"

[Nov. 2010: "When to Seek Therapy?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Addressing the question: "As an individual, how do I know when I really need professional help?"

[Oct. 2010: "When to Seek Out Support?" \(Q&A\)](#)--This month's question: "How do I know when it's time to call a friend for help?"

[Sept. 2010: "Any Therapist Will Do?" \(Q&A\)](#)--Thoughts on: "Can any therapist help with any problem?"

[Aug. 2010: "Can I Just Depend on God?" \(Q&A\)](#)--This month's question, first of the Q&A series: "If I do nothing, will depression go away like other ailments?"

[July 2010: "Will Depression Just Dissipate?" \(Q&A\)](#)--This month's question, first of the Q&A series: "If I do nothing, will depression go away like other ailments?"

[Nov. 2009: "Maps of Mood"](#)--The article for this issue is a short piece on the importance of good maps in healing from chronic anxiety or depression.

[Sept. 2009: "Surrender comes in Waves"](#)--Thoughts on the subject of surrender: "It doesn't (almost ever) come in one fell swoop. Surrender is something that comes in waves. You don't surrender (i.e., relinquish control) once and are done with it."

[May 2009: "Getting the 'Penthouse': Experimentation vs. Success"](#)--This month, a discussion on the importance, when healing depression, of focusing on experimentation rather than success-or-failure.

[April 2009: "Life During Wartime: 7 Thoughts and Tips"](#)--This month's article is on how to actively engage depression in a way that's not counter-productive. Because as

important as the work of mindfulness is, there's much to be said in being active with depression.

[Feb. 2009: "Control vs. Surrender"](#)--The article in this month's newsletter is about the difference between "control" and "surrender." There are many ways in which attempts at control (or "fixing") can actually be effective, but that's almost never the case with anxiety and depression.

[Nov. 2008: "Hope: Realistic and Grounded"](#)--With anxiety and depression, hope often ends up being pitched overboard, where it bobs along as something you can make out against the waves, but which you can't hold in your hands. So the article this month is about hope: what it is, and how it can elude us.

[Oct. 2008: "Why Does Mindfulness Work?"](#)--This month's newsletter focusses on the question: Why does mindfulness work. (A perhaps snarkier way of phrasing that: why bother practicing?) Basically the answer is that practicing mindfulness builds a good, portable mother.

[Sept. 2008: "Politics as Inquiry into 'Macros and Micros'"](#)--This article looks at how to use macro level issues--in this case, the presidential race--to explore micro level (personal) issues.

[Aug. 2008: "Love as a Resource, Love as a Practice"](#)--The focus of this month's article concerns what the Buddhists refer to as metta practice, the practice of "loving kindness." Love is both a state of being, and a response to our experience, and can be cultivated into the best kind of habit. Love tends to trump fear, and since there is often so much fear in anxiety and depression, it acts, as a practice, to stop the spiraling quality of these moods.

[June 2008: "Skillful Dependence: The Courage to Take Support"](#)--A discussion of the difference between "skillful" and "unskillful" dependence. "In psychotherapy, I think of the movement towards 'skillful dependence' as largely a matter of making small declarations of one's needs, and then taking the risk of allowing others to support you."

[May 2008: "Learning to Love Conflict"](#)--"Who fully and whole-heartedly loves the experience? Not many, in my experience. But I do believe that it's possible to meet conflict as a friend and not an enemy--or at least a tolerable but unwelcome visitor--and that the rewards are great in forging, or refining, this kind of peaceful acceptance of conflict."

[April 2008: "Letting the Universe Answer Questions"](#)--Here is a discussion of the difference between real inquiry into an issue, and questions which are actually masked emotions.

[Mar. 08: "Anxiety and Personality: Where the Roots are Rooted"](#)--An article on the personality traits underlying chronic anxiety, and some thoughts on how to organize a plan of "recovery."

[Feb. 2008: "The Hand Brake is On: How beliefs can limit growth"](#)--This month's article is about the way in which unacknowledged, and unexplored beliefs can cause us to drag in moving forward in our lives.

[Jan. 2008: "Resources you \(probably\) didn't know you had"](#)--An article on using "Resource Tapping," a hands-on, practical technique for strengthening one's own access to positive feelings and thoughts.

[Dec. 2007: "Tips for the Holidays"](#)--This month's article: 9 tips for surviving and making sense of the holidays.

[Nov. 2007: "Knowing Which Fish are in Which Ponds"](#)--In this newsletter, the topic: what are real pleasures, and what are the stand-ins we use when we can't find the real thing?

[Aug. 2007: "Wrestling Intimacy Away from Depression"](#)--The practice of loving kindness as an act of finding intimacy.

[April 2007: "Finding Beauty Amidst Depression and Anxiety"](#)--Flexibility in choosing perspectives is a necessity in deeply uprooting depression.