



Episode 119: How to Improve Your Mental Health in 10 Minutes

with Dr Lee David

We all experience stress and negative emotions, but how do you respond to them? It's tempting to bury difficult emotions, but doing so can have lasting effects on your mental well-being. Rather than denying difficult emotions, learn to manage them—it doesn't have to be a time-consuming process! Spending just 10 minutes on this, can be a significant help.

In this episode Dr Lee David joins Rachel to discuss practical tips for managing negative emotions and a simple 4-step process to put those tips into practice.

Don't wait for burnout before working on your mental health. Start with small changes today, and live a happier life!

This workbook will equip you with the tools to manage your negative thoughts or feelings.

Podcast links

We're opening our Resilient Team Academy for busy leaders in healthcare this June. [Find out more about it here](#)

[10 Minutes to Better Mental Health](#) by Lee David and Debbie Brewin

[The Chimp Paradox](#) by Dr Steve Peters

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Guest links

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Quote to remember:

"We imagine compassion [as] nice and very gentle...It's about structuring compassion -- what action or actions can you take that would actually be compassionate? It's an action to pick ways of living that actually nourish yourself and nurture your well-being, rather than just kind of beat yourself up to do more and more and harder and tougher and never having a break."

What You Will Learn

Most people's knee-jerk reaction to a problem is to try to solve it. However, this reaction can be counterproductive — or make it worse if the problem is emotional. The cognitive approach isn't going to solve an emotional issue and may instead lock you into a loop of worry and anxiety.

We all experience stress and negative emotions. Identifying how we typically respond to them is the starting point for change. Pinpointing our stress responses can help us determine the right course of action and how to process the negative feelings healthily.

Applying Lee's GROW model starts by getting to know your inner guide. Remember: there's a purpose and intention behind everything you do. However, it's easy to lose sight of this purpose due to expectations and perfectionism. The first step of the GROW model will challenge you to refocus on what you care about and what's important.

Change doesn't happen overnight; it's a continuous process of small steps. When you're thinking about small changes you want to make in your life, try to make them as simple as possible. For example, it's better to practice self-compassion for 10



minutes every day than to try to make a sweeping, dramatic change in a single day. Smaller daily habits are easier to maintain!

Next, learn to label your experiences and emotions; Lee recommends using characters and images. Labelling your experiences can provide a new perspective and help you make better decisions.

Everyone has inner wisdom. As long as you take the time to slow down, your wise mind will be able to help you make the best decision suited for your situation. Similar to labelling our negative emotions, labelling our inner wisdom can make it easier to use.

Finally, don't forget that you're human. You won't be perfect. Improvement will be a lifelong journey. Be kind to yourself. There will be times when you need to take a step back and rest.

Remember that managing stress and emotions isn't about fighting them; it's about acknowledging them and focusing on what's important to you. Remember to pause and let your wise mind guide you.

Activity: Take the Time to GROW

Q1. What are your key takeaways from the podcast episode about how to manage negative emotions and stress?

Q2. How do you usually respond to negative emotions and stress?

Q3. Let's start applying Lee's 4-part framework.

Remember that this is a process of change rather than an overnight event.

- a) **Pick one stressful aspect of your life where you'd like to manage stress better.**



b) G: Inner Guide

What do you care about the most in the context of this area? What is the most important thing to focus on?

c) R: Ready for Action

What small steps could you take to move in the direction of your inner guide?

d) O: Observe

Think about your recurring stress or negative emotions and label the experience. What are you feeling or thinking? Use an image or character to describe this experience.

e) W: Wise Mind

Similar to the previous question, find a representation for your wise mind. You can refer to the episode for ideas.

Q4. Let's take a step back and reflect on self-compassion.

- a) After listening to the episode, do you have any new insight about self-compassion?



b) How kind are you to yourself?

c) What are some acts of self-compassion that you could incorporate into your life?

CPD time claimed:

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