

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE: REALIZE YOUR UNIQUE DEFINITION OF SUCCESS

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OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Discuss the concept of ikigai and the uncarved block
- ▶ Learn to distinguish between expectations and values
- ▶ Define mindfulness and discuss techniques you can use to practice it
- ▶ Accept that “failure” is not a negative experience
- ▶ Realize the importance of celebrating other’s successes
- ▶ Develop self-awareness to things that make you truly happy

AT THE VERY LEAST, YOU WILL LEAVE WITH SOME GREAT
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

“It’s the
possibility of
having a *dream*
come true that
makes life
interesting.”

*The Alchemist,
Paulo Coelho*

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WHY ARE WE HERE?

Why did **YOU**
choose medicine?

The Struggle – **Goal-
Oriented Culture**

Our inner voice

- * Make a **difference**
- * **Selflessness**, focused on others well being
- * **Stability** for self or family
- * Taught to push through, **pain is gain**, etc.
- * Good at it

SUCCESS is when you meet X,Y,Z

We have been told what is **RIGHT, GOOD** and
what **SUCCESS** means

SEEKING SUCCESS

Find Your
Voice!

- ▶ People are finding their voices
 - ▶ Change and growth → new pressures and problems

▶ THIS APPLIES TO THE WORLD OF
MEDICINE

How Do I
Start?

- What's my specialty? Private Practice? Academia? To Teach or Not to Teach? National Conferences? Leadership? **Somebody tell me!**
 - Mentors/Teachers/Co-residents or Fellows/The Gods and Goddesses of Medicine
 - This is the tough part –

There is no RIGHT answer



THE JAPANESE CONCEPT OF 'IKIGAI'



IKIGAI

- ▶ Worth, Meaning, Purpose
- ▶ Physical well-being is affected by mental–emotional health and sense of purpose in life
- ▶ *Ikigai* – **INDIVIDUAL** particular intersection of passion, talent and potential to benefit others
 - ▶ Journey might require time, deep self-reflection and effort
 - ▶ “...embracing the joy of little things, being in the here and now, reflecting on past happy memories, and having a frame of mind that one can build a happy and active life.” (Ikigai Tribe, 2019)

Let's support each other finding our ikigai within our medical careers and life

To know the Way,
We go the Way;
We do the Way
The way we do
The things we do.
It's all there in front of you,
But if you try too hard to see it,
You'll only become confused.



I am me,
And you are you,
As you can see;
But when you do,
The things you can do,
You will find the Way,
And the Way will follow you.

(The Tao of Pooh)

THE UNCARVED BLOCK

- ▶ Pooh knows the way
 - ▶ trusts self, follows instincts, and exemplifies kindness and compassion
- ▶ Is Not
 - ▶ Pretentious, Learned, Grouchy, Busy
- ▶ Does
 - Respect **Inner Nature**
 - Uniqueness
 - Recognize their own and other's Inner Nature
 - Work within the scope of each person's Inner Nature
 - Has compassion for others
 - Keeps their mind “full of nothing” to see the world as it truly is

INNER NATURE

Allow things to be what they are.

Everyone has limitations.

Some things cannot be known.



MY STORY, YOUR STORY

- ▶ We chose medicine- **How much did your inner nature guide you?**
 - ▶ Told what to do, acted on those requests
- ▶ Where is the education, time and energy to teach people how to **focus on coping, inner personal growth and development?**
- ▶ We are set up to BURNOUT.

WHY DO I CARE AND WHY SHOULD YOU?

- ▶ Seeking to live our **BEST LIVES** and feel **SUCCESSFUL**
- ▶ Not living in line with your ikigai or not living in line with your Inner Nature leads to **frustration, emptiness, shame and burnout**
- ▶ This then leads to **DEPRESSION, ADDICTION and SUICIDE...**

WHY DO I CARE AND WHY SHOULD YOU?

Important Statistics

- 2022 Medscape National Physician Burnout & Suicide Report, on average **10%** of physicians have had thoughts of suicide.
- 5% point increase in burnout overall, from 42% in 2020 to **47% in 2021**, **W>M at 56%**
- **54%** indicating that **the impact was strong** to severe, including with their relationships
- Physicians said they cope by exercising (48%), **isolating from others (45%)**, eating junk food (35%) and drinking (24%)

What does it mean?

- ▶ What brings **US** joy?
- ▶ AAFP Physician Happiness Survey 2019
 - **Freedom and autonomy**
 - **Rewarding personal relationships at work**
 - **Being recognized** for the work they do
 - **Work-life balance**
 - Strong **mentoring** relationships

THE POST COVID ERA

- ▶ Suicide rates **male physicians** are **40% higher** than males in **general population**
- ▶ Suicide rates **female physicians** is **130% higher** than females in **general population**
- ▶ Many health care workers not directly caring for COVID-19 patients faced being furloughed or having their hours reduced
- ▶ COVID-19 **increased demands** on health care workforce: messaging, immunizations, testing, and inpatient and outpatient care while often **limiting the supply of health care workers and materials**
 - ▶ We were asked to do more with less



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OFFICE OF
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ISSUE BRIEF

May 3, 2022

HP-2022-13

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Hospital and Outpatient Clinician Workforce

Challenges and policy responses

THE POST COVID ERA

- ▶ Survey of **physician assistants** first few months of the pandemic
 - ▶ 22% had been furloughed
 - ▶ 4% had been terminated
 - ▶ **59% had their work hours reduced**
 - ▶ 31% had had their base pay reduced
- ▶ Critical staffing shortages- **Rural hospitals** in particular
- ▶ 2021 OIG report staffing **shortages particularly among nurses**
 - ▶ affecting patient care and the mental health of their staff (particularly through exhaustion and trauma)
 - ▶ staffing challenges exacerbated by **higher than normal turnover**



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THE POST COVID ERA

Figure 5: Percentage of Hospitals Reporting Critical Staffing Shortages

January 2022

March 2022



Source: COVID-19 Reported Patient Impact and Hospital Capacity by State data, available here: <https://healthdata.gov/Hospital/COVID-19-Reported-Patient-Impact-and-Hospital-Capa/g62h-syeh>

The image features a central rectangular frame with a white border. Inside the frame, the background is a gradient of a starry night sky, transitioning from a dark blue at the top to a warm orange and red glow at the bottom, suggesting a sunset or sunrise over a dark horizon. The text is centered and written in a white, serif font. The quote reads: "When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." At the bottom of the frame, the author's name is written in a smaller white font.

When you want
something, all
the universe
conspires in
helping you to
achieve it.

~ Paulo Coelho

OUR STORY

- ▶ Start asking the right questions
- ▶ Are you...
 - Living in line with your **core values**?
 - Feeling invigorated or empty?
 - Practicing **mindfulness** and self growth?
 - Part of the problem or part of the solution?

RECOGNIZING ITS NOT YOUR BEST LIFE

- The Pooh Way = way of inaction/contemplative
- The opposite behavior = overaction
- “Bisy Backson”



OKAY I'M HERE...SO NOW WHAT?

▶ Tiddely pom principle

- ▶ Named after one of Pooh's songs
- ▶ Take the first step of believing in yourself to allow the natural momentum of life to build toward happiness and contentment.
- ▶ Snow ball effect

- ▶ Believe in your power and learn how to wield it
- ▶ Use your gifts to make life work for you
- ▶ Start with defining your values

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND VALUES

- ▶ **Expectations are a byproduct of entitlement mentality**
 - ▶ You have subconsciously (or consciously) decided people should behave or act in a certain way to fit into your reality construct
 - ▶ When you live by expectations, you will be frustrated
- ▶ **Values are solid ideals that inform your inner satisfaction and happiness**
 - ▶ When you live by values, you can find the good in most if not all situations

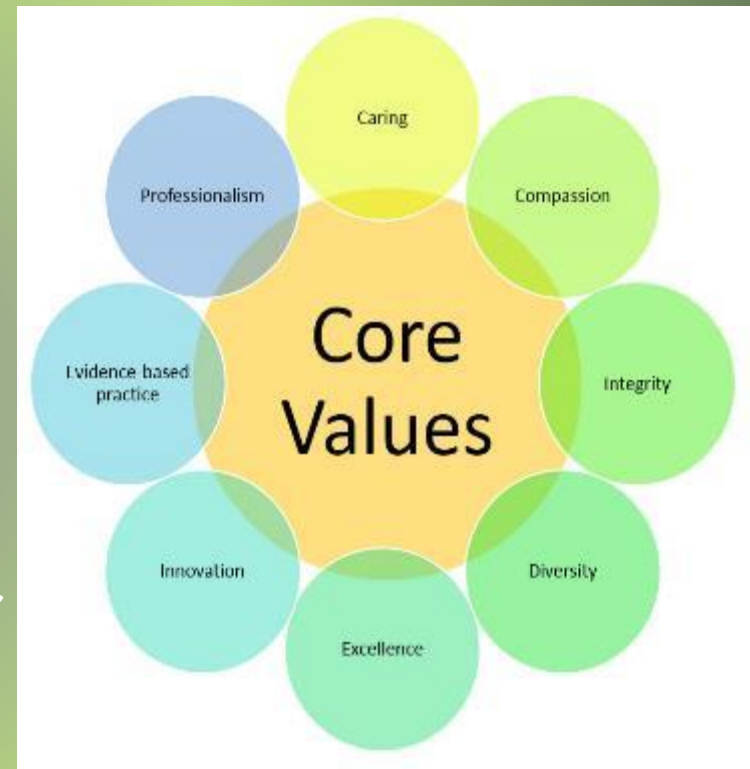
WHO AM I SUPPOSED TO BE? (INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL)

▶ Define good values. . .

- ▶ Realistic
- ▶ Socially constructive
- ▶ Immediate and controllable
 - ▶ Examples: adaptability, innovation, vulnerability, curiosity, creativity
 - ▶ Achieved internally

▶ ... and these will help you achieve your goals.

- ▶ Acknowledge the things that personally matter; Discover opportunities to realize fulfillment and a feeling of success every day!



LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

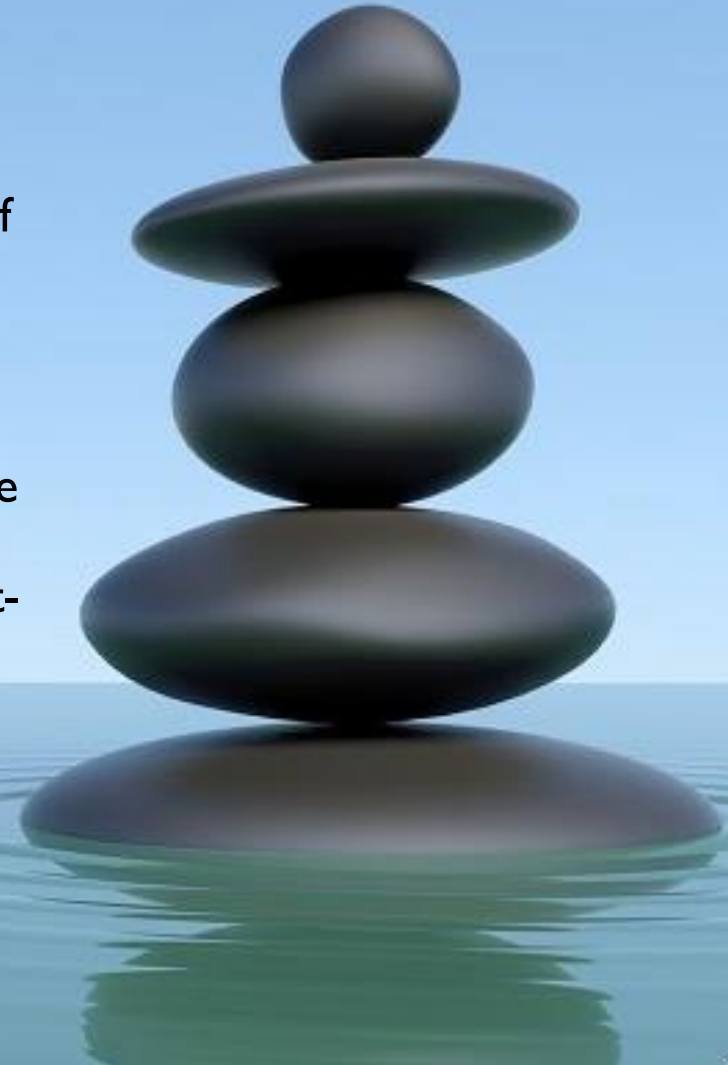
- Job satisfaction and life satisfaction are intertwined

- Herbert Benson, MD

Credited with bringing mindfulness into the realm of Western medicine

- Mindfulness

- The practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis.
- **Learning to recognize your feelings to in turn become more effective and less reactive**



PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

► Mayo Clinic

Pay attention. Experience your environment with all of your senses
Live in the moment. Bring open, accepting and discerning attention to everything you do.

Accept yourself. Treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend.

Focus on your breathing. When you have negative thoughts, try to sit down, take a deep breath and close your eyes.

Body scan meditation. Lie on your back with your legs extended and arms at your sides, palms facing up. Focus slowly and deliberately on each part of your body head to toe.

Sitting meditation. Sit comfortably, back straight, feet flat and hands in lap. Breathing through nose, focus on your breath moving in and out of your body.

Walking meditation. Find a quiet place 10 to 20 feet in length, and begin to walk slowly. Focus on the experience of walking, being aware of the sensations of standing and the subtle movements that keep your balance.

Benefits OF mindfulness

- ✓ Greater sense of wellbeing
- ✓ Improved ability to remain task-focussed
- ✓ Better equipped to cope with stress
- ✓ Awareness of mental 'roadblocks'
- ✓ More cohesive team environment

9 easy ways TO BE MORE mindful at work

Start the day with a few moments of 'conscious awareness'

Spend a few minutes silently tuning in to the moment. Become aware of your thoughts (while being willing to let them go).

Practice active listening

Listen carefully to what is being said, process what was said, and then reply thoughtfully and intentionally.

Notice your body language

Body language speaks volumes. It sets your intention to both yourself and your colleagues.

Watch the tone and language in your communications

Be mindful of the message you intend to send. At times, your intention may not match your intended outcome.

Eat mindfully

Take small bites. Chew your food slowly. Notice the flavours and textures.

When stressed, take a time out

Get some fresh air. A short break may break your thought cycle and change your perspective on things.

Respect all people, even if you may not agree with their ideas

Everybody has the right to be heard. Listening to alternate opinions may help you with your own.

When communicating, remember to THINK:

- Is it True?
- Is it Helpful?
- Is it Inspiring?
- Is it Necessary?
- Is it Kind?

Stay in the moment!

The past has already happened. The future has yet to occur. Check in with yourself. Now is what we have!

WU WEI

- ▶ Let things happen without struggling against their nature
 - ▶ REMEMBER- Your core values are different from those you work with
 - ▶ Learn to **work WITHIN THEIR inner nature**, do not force yours onto them.
- ▶ To use *Wu Wei*, a person must listen to their intuition or follow their inner voice
 - ▶ "Outside" voices typically tell us to do or be a certain way in contrast to our Inner Nature or circumstances.

There is nothing wrong
with having future goals
or ambitions, but if you
are constantly looking
for greener pastures,
you'll never see the
beauty of the ones you
are currently in.

—
SHAWN ACHOR



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

- ▶ Once you've defined your goals, **don't get caught up in the "someday" mentality**
 - ▶ Someday, I will be finished with school, and I will be happy.
 - ▶ Someday, I will be married with kids, and I will be happy.
 - ▶ Someday, I'll be in charge and won't have to answer to others, and I will be happy.
 - ▶ More money, fancier house, nicer car, plastic surgery. The list goes on.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY

- ▶ PRACTICE acknowledging how you've lived in line with your values every day
 - ▶ “One day, you’ll be bitter and angry like the rest of us.”
 - ▶ “How did you make it through residency and still have a smile on your face every day?”
 - ▶ Find a reason to smile and celebrate yourself even on the worst days!
- ▶ Some of our worst days become the moments that shape us the most and allow us to reach our potential

LOOK FOR THE HIDDEN PATHS

- ▶ Backup plan or recognize you need a change
 - ▶ You aren't a failure if you find another path*
 - ▶ You define your values!
- ▶ Not an excuse to give up and throw your hands in the air
 - ▶ Power & growth come from facing obstacles & developing solutions
- ▶ It's okay to have a BAD DAY, or several
 - ▶ Face the failure, acknowledge it, don't make excuses for it
 - ▶ THEN make a plan so it can SERVE YOU

BE OPEN WITH YOUR OWN FAILURES

YOU are a product of your
successes and failures

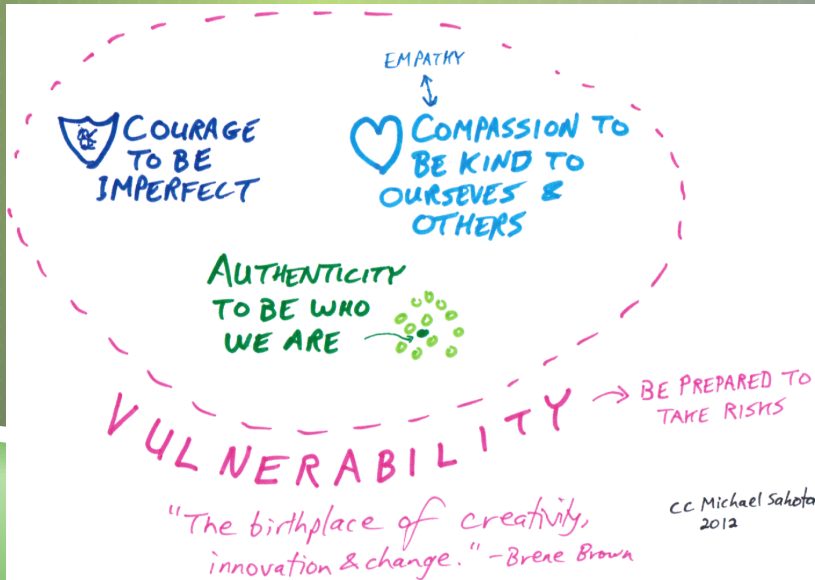
With each experience, open yourself up for a chance to grow “You go from wrong, to slightly less wrong, and then you will learn something else new and go from slightly less wrong to slightly less wrong than that” and so on...

Do not confuse *experiencing* a failure as *being* a failure



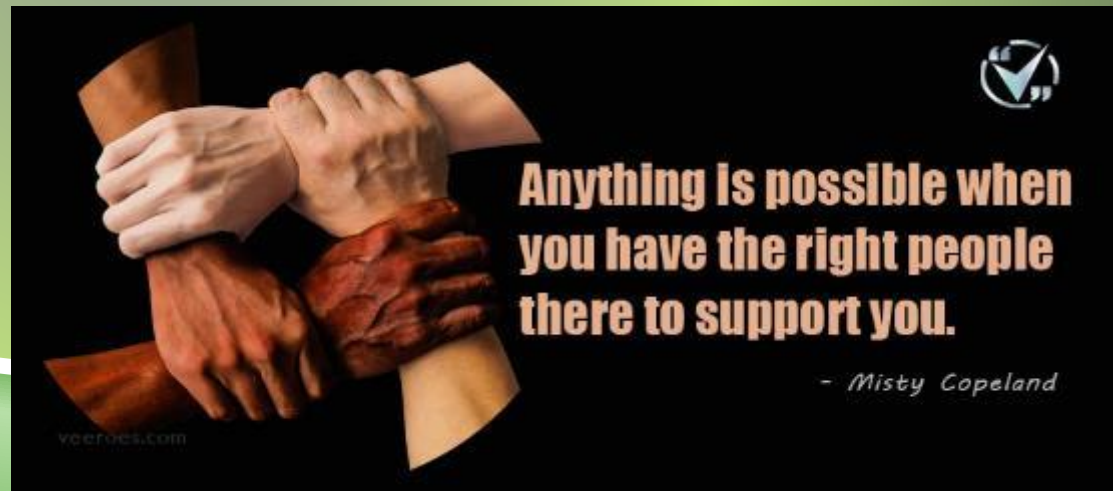
THE POWER VULNERABILITY

- ▶ Let's shift focus to LIVING our **MOST AUTHENTIC** life!
- ▶ Vulnerability- having the courage to show up and be seen when we have no control over the outcome.
 - ▶ Birthplace of **JOY, BELONGING, CONNECTION, INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, CHANGE**



YOU CAN ALWAYS GET BACK ON TRACK

- ▶ Can't choose or change what happens to you, but you are responsible for your reaction
- ▶ Obsessing over each misstep or misadventure will keep you from reaching your ultimate goals
- ▶ Support others' successes
 - ▶ And learn from them



FIND THINGS YOU DO JUST



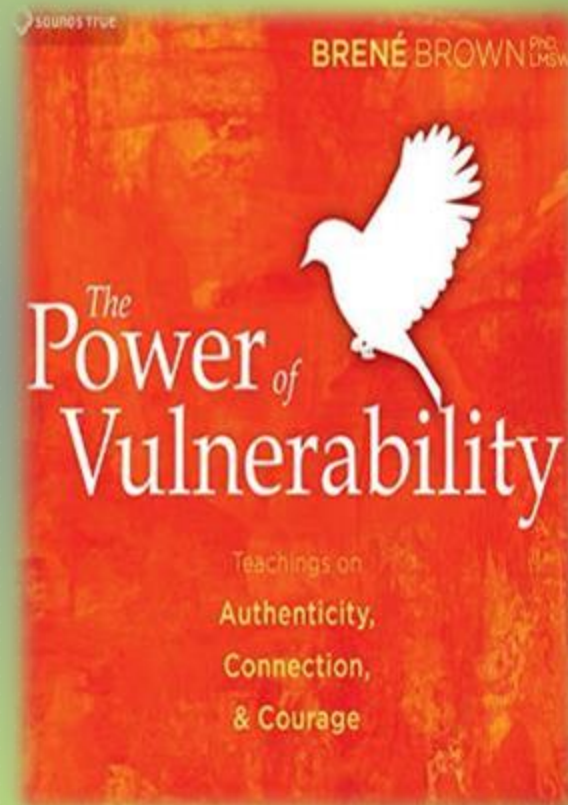
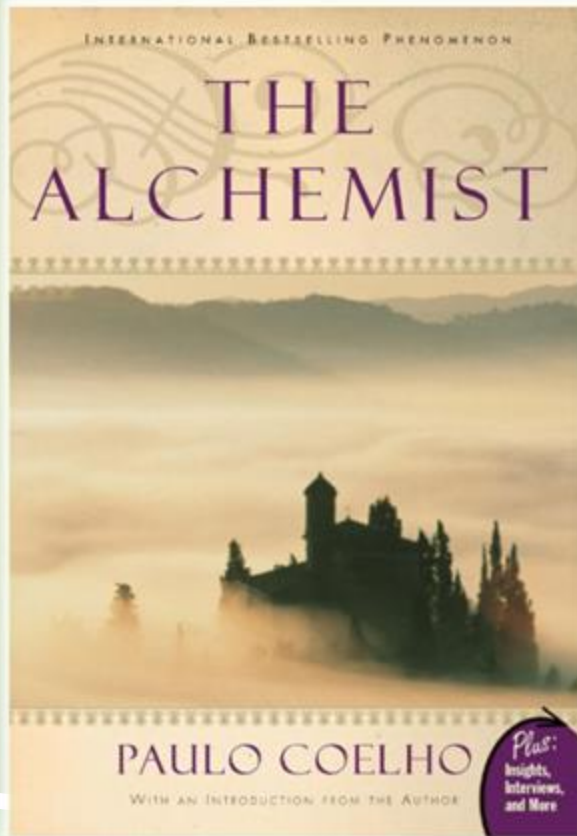
I DON'T HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT!

- ▶ I am NOT a self-help writer
- ▶ I do not have the secrets to a happy and stress-free life
- ▶ These are lessons, concepts and ideals from some of my favorite books and learned from my life experiences
- ▶ My hope and mission are to remind you that:
 - ▶ You are enough
 - ▶ No one is perfect – Strive to just be a little better instead of seeking perfection
 - ▶ And...

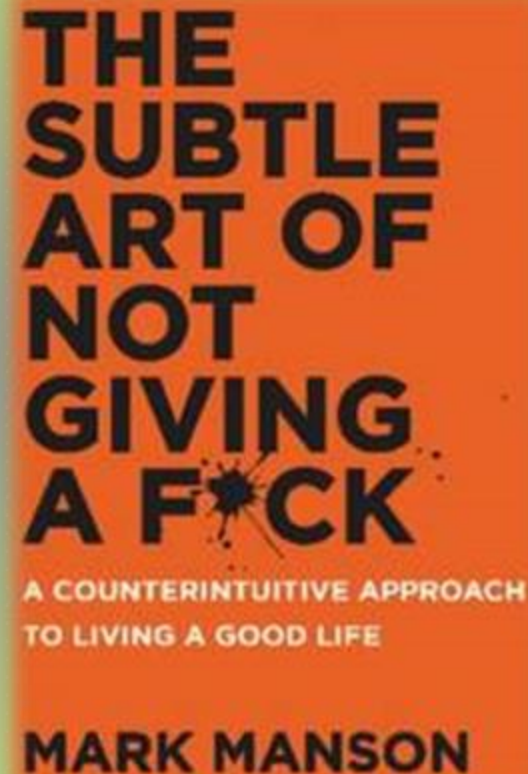
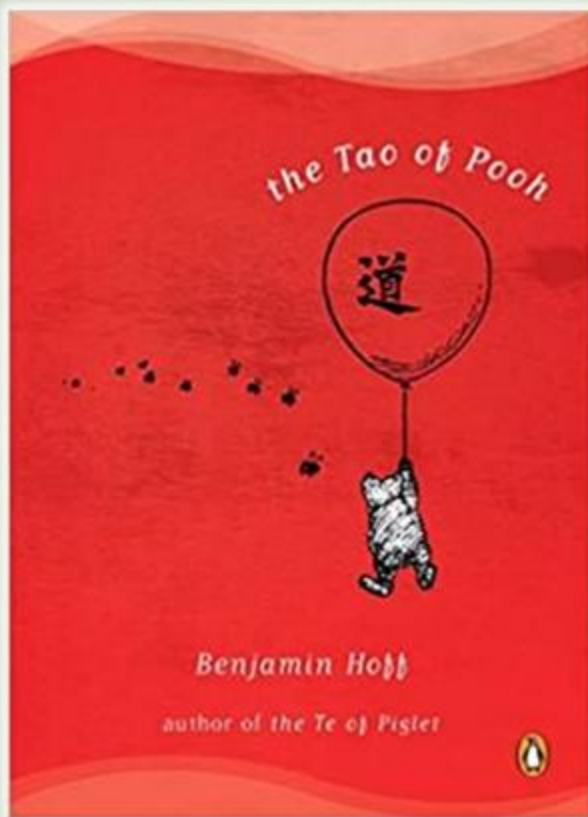
Your BEST LIFE is different than everyone else's best life – and that is a beautiful thing!



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



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**“AUTHENTICITY IS THE
DAILY PRACTICE OF
LETTING GO OF WHO WE
THINK WE’RE SUPPOSED
TO BE AND EMBRACING
WHO WE ARE.”**

BRENÉ BROWN

EST. 2014 | VALORINE