



Feel Good

**How to change your mood and cope with
whatever comes your way**



Dr Shane Pascoe & Dr Graham Law

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Cognitive Behavioural Therapy may help
A different way of thinking
Moods impact on well-being and health
This book aims to empower you

Chapter 2: Challenge Your Thinking

Your beliefs will affect your mood
How to start the search for “why”
Optimism will bring hope for your future
Reasoning has benefits for clear thinking
Your conclusions should rely on evidence
Reasoning is also, unfortunately, prone to bias
There are a host of other biases to avoid
Science uses counterfactuals to explore “why”
“Should” is a word with problems
Evaluating your beliefs to help you to explore
your “why” questions
Improving your reasoning

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Signs of anger may be complex and difficult to recognize
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But I don't get angry!
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These sensations are important for survival
Your thoughts are critical to kick starting anxiety
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Your mind influences your distress
Coping techniques can alleviate distress
Other techniques will also alleviate distress

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Descriptive words are important
Behavioural symptoms may define your unhappiness
Unhappiness causes physiological symptoms
Mood-related symptoms are common in unhappiness
Unhappiness affects your thoughts or cognitive symptoms
The power of thoughts which fit into your beliefs
Negative beliefs often lead to the practice of failure
Three common negative beliefs in people with low mood
What keeps unhelpful beliefs going?
Aim to change your negative thoughts to more realistic thoughts

Chapter 7: Well-Being and Happiness

“P” is for positive emotions which we all wish to experience
“E” is for Engagement in something that gives enjoyment
“R” is for Relationships which are critical to our state of well-being

“M” is for Meaning which gives a larger purpose to life

“A” is for Accomplishment whether it is big or small

Well-being is more than just happiness

Optimism influences a person's well-being

Evaluate your life using the PERMA model at regular intervals

Chapter 8: Self-Esteem

Self-awareness is a useful skill

Self-esteem can be improved both from external and internal influences

Developing self-acceptance, both good and bad, will improve self-esteem

The outcomes are up to you

Self-assertiveness is implicit to your human rights

Having purpose in your efforts improves self-esteem

Personal integrity is consistency with your values

Realistic thinking helps your self-esteem

Healthy boundaries protect self-esteem

Measuring improvements will allow you to keep track of progress

Chapter 9: Leading a Balanced Lifestyle

The phrase “work-life balance” hides a range of issues

Controlling things you can change

Develop your motivation for change

Build an accurate view of you
Pleasant event scheduling is designed to improve mood
The importance of sleep is underestimated
Strategies for developing better sleep to help well-being
Regular schedules have a role to play in improving mood
Yoga is a metaphor for balance
How do I stay here?

Chapter 10: Relaxation Techniques

Relaxation is freedom
There are rules for relaxation
Mindfulness is not about emptying your mind
Seeing things as they are helps you to establish insight
With regular practice these techniques will bring rewards

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It is important to assess the progress that you have made
You will need to “let go” of old habits
Monitoring progress will help you to prevent relapse
Once progress has been made it needs to be maintained
Recognizing need is what keeps me going

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“This fascinating book is a fresh and optimistic guide, offering a balanced insight into taking control of our mood and managing our emotions so we can become healthier and happier, and have a more positive effect on those around us. Seamlessly merging science, philosophy, psychology and spirituality into an accessible and empowering book! A must-read for professionals or students alike.”

**Hayley Del Sanderson, Principal and Founder, The
Yoga Academy**

“This is a very welcome book and will appeal to a wide readership and at many levels. It addresses the emotions and feelings that we all experience in life to a greater or lesser degree; and combines sound evidence and therapeutic advice about how to cope and move forward. The approach taken by Graham and Shane is extremely helpful, practical and easy to read; the authors lead readers carefully and explicitly through each chapter. It is highly recommended as a reassuring self-help book and an adjunct book for therapists to use with clients.”

**Dr Jane Cronin-Davis, Chair of College of Occupational
Therapist Specialist Section for Mental Health,
guideline development group member for UK
National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE)**

“Explains the concepts and techniques needed by anyone to improve their mood and makes them accessible for everyone to use in everyday situations.”

**Professor Ian Olver AM, Chief Executive Officer,
Cancer Council Australia**

“Feel Good is a very practical guide to dealing with your mood in daily life. It is easy to read while being based on

some of the best current evidence in psychological research.”

Professor Mark Harris, UNSW Scientia Professor and Executive Director Centre, Primary Health Care and Equity; and Director, COMPaRE-PHC (Centre for Obesity Management and Prevention Research Excellence in Primary Health Care)

FEEL GOOD

**How to Change Your Mood
and Cope with Whatever
Comes Your Way**

Shane Pascoe and Graham Law



CAPSTONE
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This edition first published 2014

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Registered office

John Wiley and Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate,
Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, United Kingdom

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Pascoe, Shane W.

Feel good : how to change your mood and cope with whatever comes your way / Shane Pascoe and Graham Law.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-857-08452-1 (pbk.)

1. Mood (Psychology) 2. Emotions. 3. Affect (Psychology) I. Law, Graham R. II. Title.

BF521.P37 2014

152.4—dc23

2013034151

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-0-857-08452-1 (paperback) ISBN 978-0-857-08449-1 (ebk)

ISBN 978-0-857-08451-4 (ebk)

Cover design: Simon Dovar

*To our children, Bethan, Gabi, Kai, and Sophie. Listed in
alphabetical
order, not a reflection of which ones are our favourites.*

Foreword

Many of us suffer short lived fluctuations in mood. These may become entrenched and start to affect the way we live, our personal relationships and our work. Sometimes they may become more severe and need medical or psychological care. Depression and anxiety are common and increasing problems worldwide affecting hundreds of millions of people. So taking action early to break the cycle of negative mood is important. However many mood problems go unrecognized.

Feel Good by Shane Pascoe and Graham Law is a very practical guide to dealing with one's own mood in daily life. The chapters are organized around moods and emotions explaining these and then providing examples of how they be managed. The book describes a number of coping mechanisms and strategies for improving the quality of one's mood. It draws on psychological evidenced-based psychological interventions such as cognitive behavioural therapy and mindfulness.

However the book is not a medical or psychological text and is, of course, not intended to replace professional help. It uses lay language and is easy to read and apply to daily life. As such it fills an important gap and will help boost your “mental health literacy” – the essential knowledge and skill that we all need to stay healthy and function better in our lives.

Mark Harris

Scientia Professor and Director of the Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity, University of South Wales

Preface

In the Arizona desert there is a physical representation of what we have tried to do with this book. Frank Lloyd Wright built a home, a workplace, a school and so much more in Taliesin West. His motivation was to deal with the ideas the landscape inspired in him, and what he achieved was the bringing together of all the best elements from all of his achievements. All the best elements of helping people over the years have been brought together here. The people Shane has seen have often had significant trauma and prolonged distress. The lessons learnt in helping these people are the same we have distilled here, to help people who may have experienced something similar if not necessarily as intense. Graham has considerable experience in the science of health and disease research. On a personal level he has tried to improve physically, mentally and emotionally. This journey, with the invaluable support of his wife and children, led through mindfulness and yoga to a calm and fulfilling life.

Writing together has enabled us to bridge the disciplines we have found fascinating over the years: education, psychology, philosophy and medicine. It is through these experiences we have been privileged to sit with the patients and students who have inspired us, lucky enough to see the brilliance of other professionals we have worked with and generally kept going to address the needs of those that come through the door every day.

Acknowledgements

Asiyah for knowing when to smile and urge Shane on and when to smile and point out the magic beans that lie in his hand. Nicki for her unstinting inspiration and ability to finish things. Shiraz Rehman for his amazing assistance in negotiating contracts and asking all the right questions, all the time. Morris Averill for looking at every angle and beyond to get the best out of this project for everyone. Ben Treverton for his great photography.

To the team at Capstone; Iain Campbell, Holly Bennion, Jonathan Shipley, Jenny Ng, Vicky Kinsman, Megan Saker, Emily Bryczkowski, Samantha Hartley and Louise Campbell.

To the friends who looked over the draft; Jeremy Miles, Natasha Grabham, Geraldine Carroll, Christina Bossinakis, Dom Hilbrink, Ben Treverton, Tim Manning, Bibiana Chan, Fiona Skewes, Nick Campbell, Rachel Madden, Mark Harris, Ian Olver and Angelo Kapsalis.

Illustration credits:

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About the Authors



Dr Shane Pascoe

Shane Pascoe is a husband, father, and a danger to himself and others with a tool in his hand. Since graduating from the University of Newcastle, Shane has worked in the field of Psychology in a variety of different roles in several countries. He has practised meditation since being introduced to it by a group of cancer patients.

**Dr Graham Law**

Graham Law is a senior lecturer at the Leeds School of Medicine in England. He is a scientist in health research and leads a team looking at the impact of sleep on our metabolism and general health. He has published over 75 papers in peer-reviewed journals, and this is his second book published with Shane. Graham is a keen practitioner of yoga and mindfulness. His wife and two children are the core of his life and provide continuous meaning and support.

Chapter 1

“How Are You?”

When someone asks “How are you?” it can set off a cascade of thoughts in your mind. Despite the fact that this has become a greeting, it is a serious question and it makes you wonder “What mood am I in?” Have you ever examined your mood and what impact it has on your life? This book will help you to explore a range of mood issues that confront people every day, addressing the characteristic feelings and emotions, the triggers and outcomes. Of course, you are also reading this to discover what you can do about these issues. This book will show you strategies that can be used to overcome mood problems and lead a happier and more content life.

The chapters in this book are organized around the moods and emotions that people feel, both positive and negative, all of the time. Your mood is your conscious state of mind or your predominant emotion. Mood is an umbrella term for all the emotions and affective states that you experience. An emotion is a more specific term than mood. An emotion is your perception of a feeling, more related to individual experiences. The affective state is a technical term, from psychology, and relates to what is seen on the outside as a sum of all those moods and feelings you subjectively experience. Moods have what is known as a “valence”, which describes overall whether the mood you are experiencing is either positive or negative. The valence of a mood has become part of our everyday language; it is commonplace for someone to describe themselves as being

in a good mood, or a bad mood, or their mood is low.

This book deals with issues around moods such as hope, anger, distress, unhappiness, well-being and self-esteem. All of us must deal with these moods during our lives. An important starting point is for you to identify which of these mood issues you are experiencing and the extent to which they are operating. [Chapter 2](#) will help you to think about the ways moods develop and how these may influence your life. [Chapters 3](#) to [8](#) cover some of the different moods you may experience, both positive and negative, in more detail and within each of these chapters there are coping mechanisms and strategies for improving the quality of your mood. The final three chapters cover more general techniques to improve your mood and your ability to cope whatever comes your way.

Why do I experience moods?

It does seem odd to me, when we are a technologically advanced society, and humans have become powerful over nature, able to cure disease, start wars, fly to the moon, and yet, you and I still experience the feelings of emotion which contribute to something so primeval as a mood. Scientists have identified that emotions developed in animals to help us survive in our environment. Emotions are experienced by lots of different animals – as you could imagine when you see a cat running away from a perceived threat, the cat is more than likely scared. When a dog is barking we assume it is angry. An emotional response has been an essential part of the survival of our species, and we accept and embrace many emotions such as happiness and affection.

However, a problem is encountered when your mood, or its valence, has a detrimental effect on your life. Some