

FOREWORD



Ease into Freedom is a wonderful and timely addition to the growing literature in the field of stress management and focused mindfulness. Will Frey has put together a practical and truly user-friendly handbook, designed to promote healthful habits of mind and body, recognizing the needs of each and honoring their interactions.

We could say that there is reading about health-promoting methods for change, and then there is actually putting a practice that works in place. *Ease into Freedom* is clearly in the latter category, but it is more than that. Will Frey is a highly skilled, compassionate, and insightful coach with a long history of caring for the distressed. He knows what it takes to make changes in specific behaviors and thoughts. That knowledge, born in part from his considerable coaching experience, comes through in the wise content of his “tips.”

His very solid suggestion to embrace each tip for a week at a time leads to a kind of intimate savoring of the content and intent of each tip, allowing it to settle in and effect a desired change. Linger over them, as he suggests, also promotes a sense of ownership of the new thought or behavior. Practicing in this way allows the individual to have the experience of adaptation over an extended period of time, over and over again as they move through the material at their own pace and intensity. Working with the tips in this extended fashion is in sharp contrast to the “thought for the day” approach, which is more suited to achieving a brief inspirational uplift.

The author also guides readers in other useful ways, such as suggesting they pick their own topics to embrace in whatever order seems right for them. However, given that advice, it is also important to heed the implicit recommendation to learn the breathing and sitting techniques described in first few entries in order to bring structure to contemplation through meditation, while at the same time learning very effective ways to handle anxiety and associated stress. The suggestions about the tips in the Introduction are very valuable and are meant to be read many times over.

The author's writing voice is consistent from tip to tip, friendly and direct where needed without being overbearing. He is encouraging and, refreshingly, not in the business of promising too much. The scope of the tips is broad and covers most, if not all, key aspects of being human, from "Anger" to "Humor," and from "Trying Too Hard to Be Perfect" to "Celebrating What Works." Will has clearly worked hard on expanding his own practice, and his readers can all celebrate the gift he offers to those who make a commitment to change.

Ease into Freedom is an attractive, thoughtfully crafted, easy-to-use program for effecting change in order to live with greater success in the face of stress and uncertainty. It leads readers to become practitioners, to experience less fearfulness, and to embrace a fuller, richer experience of living. His intent to continue and extend the work he has given us here is most welcome.

J. Douglas Mann, MD
Professor of Neurology
UNC School of Medicine