



Avoid Overstimulation Of Your Nervous System

Anxiety and anger represent the sensations generated by your body's response to threat, and become greatly magnified when it is sustained. These ongoing changes in your body's physiology create physical damage to your tissues and detract from your capacity to enjoy life. Getting upset about things that you have no control over is one of the best ways to maintain this unpleasant state of affairs. Dr. Luskin, author of *Forgive for Good*, has a term called, "the unenforceable rules."

There is an endless of problems to be upset about and it is a justified reaction. But paradoxically, by remaining agitated, you are using the energy you could use to make a positive difference in your own circle of influence. Conversely, by being in this state, you are actively creating your own set of problems.

It is easy to complain about politics, abuses in almost every arena of life, the unequal distribution of wealth, human trafficking, the educational system, bullying, etc. You are also right. This is just a short list of the abuses perpetrated by the human race. It doesn't even include the blatant misuse of power.

Quit upsetting yourself

- Make a list of societal issues that are deeply upsetting to you. Spend some time with this exercise and allow yourself to feel that indignation that exists deep within you.
- Then stop the following activities:
 - Watching violent movies or playing intense video games
 - Complaining on the state of various world affairs that are particularly upsetting to you.
 - Trying to "save" or "help" those around you. It is more helpful to live your life and be an inspiration.
 - Gossiping
 - Spending long periods of time watching the news. Limit yourself to maybe 30 minutes a day. Maybe just skim the daily news headlines.

Then practice awareness of what your quality of life is like when you engage in this pattern of behavior. Initially, you may be so used to being in this mindset that you can't see it. It does take practice. But also notice that there may be a gap in your life and conversations that had been filled with this energy. Just notice it and try not to fill it. It is challenging to be with "quiet" and it is also a learned skill.

Here is a letter from a person who has been suffering from chronic pain for many years.

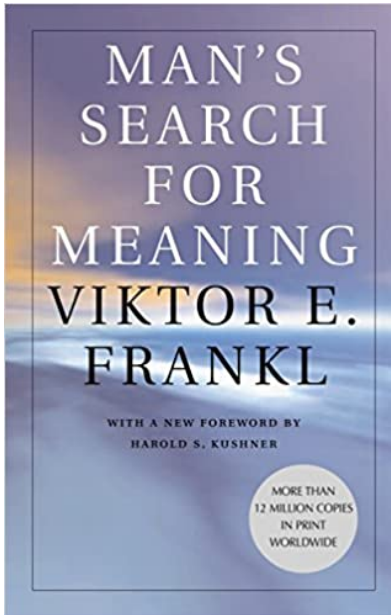
..... violence in nature is difficult for me, but human cruelty to others is incredibly upsetting. I have been this way since childhood. I am very sensitive and I almost do not feel at home on this planet. I feel wired and tired at the same time.

You cannot truly move forward while having this life outlook.

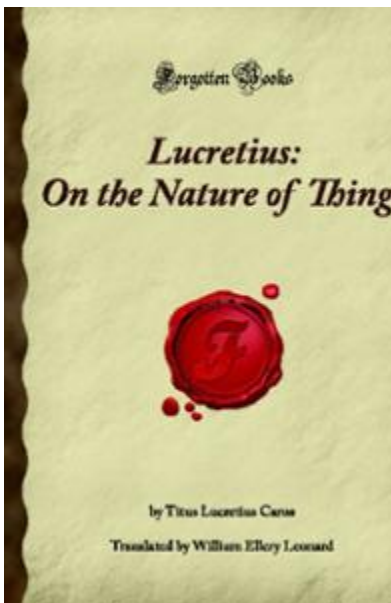
Become a light

Your responsibility to the human experience lies in making a positive contribution and not adding to the misery aspect of the collective consciousness. Two books illustrate the power of this approach.

One is *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor Frankl. He was an Austrian psychiatrist who survived the WWII concentration camps and found meaning and purpose in the midst of extreme suffering.



The other is *The Swerve* by Stephen Greenblatt that tells the story of the discovery of an ancient Greek manuscript that contained the poem, *The Nature of Things* by Lucretius. This finding was a factor in ushering humanity out of the dark ages. Lucretius, in the midst of the darkness of living in ancient times pointed out that all each person can and should do is to live a full, rich and meaningful life.



Both of these books drive home that the history of the human race is extreme suffering and we are the luckiest people to be alive in this modern era. It is easy to become stuck on what is wrong and contribute to the world's collective suffering or we can step up, learn to enjoy our lives and be a conduit for happiness. This is a choice to be made multiple times every day.