**Mindfulness Tools for Daily Use**

1. **Destress** - Relax using mindful breathing 4 second inhales deep breaths to the tummy, hold for 7 seconds, blow out slowly for 8 seconds…repeat 3 times. Then visualize a safe place, seeing yourself there in your imagination. In your imagination, explore that environment with your senses, remembering or imagining what it smelled like, how it felt to your skin, what it sounded like as a space. You can use experience for this place or just make up one that you feel safe in. Make this place in your mind to be as safe, calming, and peaceful as possible. Do this for five minutes a day.
2. **Mindfulness** - Choose an object nearby or an object that you have with you. Hold it in your hands and use your mindful breathing as you relax and focus on this object. While breathing carefully and intentionally, observe this object - what does it feel like? What color is it or does it have a color at all? What is its surface like and what is unique about it? What is it like to close your hand on it, and how does it feel? Do this for 5 minutes.
3. **Emotion Regulation** - Recognizing your emotional triggers is important. This exercise asks you to review a recent upsetting situation. Trying to remain objective, you would ask yourself to break down what happened step-by-step. Recall how you felt, paying attention to when your feelings changed. At what point did you feel your feelings change? What was that triggering moment, word, or action? Identifying as many triggers as possible helps you to be more aware and helps you to plan a better response.
4. Interpersonal- Paying Mindful Attention to Others is simply a focus on being observant of others who you interact with throughout the day. Observe their body language. Does it match their words? If there is a mismatch, ask the person a question to determine if something else is on their mind. You might ask, “How are you feeling today?” “Is there something you want to talk about?”....”Are you and I ok? Would you like to talk about something else?” or even …”You seem distracted. Can I help?”... This not only helps you get better communication from others; it also helps you improve the quality of your own communication.

**Books for Recovery from Codependency**

***Codependent No More by Melody Beattie***

In 1986, Melanie Beattie’s classic self-help book introduced the world to the concept of codependent behavior. Written especially for people-pleasers, it offers stories and tips to help readers recognize their need to put the care of others before their own and shows them ways to value themselves. A Codependent No More Workbook that helps readers track their own recovery through a series of ten lessons is also available.

***The Language of Letting Go:* Daily Meditations for Codependents by Melody Beattie**

In this book for self-reflection, Melanie Beattie uses the knowledge gained from her own experiences as a daily guide for those seeking to take responsibility for their own lines. The meditations are as fitting for addicts and alcoholics as they are for the people who love and care for them. The collection includes an inspiring meditation for each new day.

***You’re Not Crazy– You’re Codependent*.: What Everyone Affected by Addiction, Abuse, Trauma or Toxic Shaming Must know to have peace in their lives by Jeanette Elisabeth Menter.**

People who grow up in families with drug addiction or alcoholism are often unaware of the impact that addiction has on their own lives. In addition to trauma, physical or emotional abuse and shame, they often feel overly responsible for the happiness and behavior of others. This can result in issues like depression, anxiety, unhealthy relationships, controlling behavior or the need for perfection. Menter uses an interactive format to help readers recover from codependent thinking by using mindfulness.

***The New Codependent***: **Help and Guidance for Today’s Generation by Melody Beattie**

In an update to her earlier writings on codependent behavior, Beattie looks at its changes in the 21st century. She breaks the obsession of caring for others into specific actions that can be individually addressed. Each chapter deals with a different topic, including the difference between codependent and chemically dependent behavior. She also talks about healthy behaviors like acceptance and self-love.

***Facing Codependence*: What It Is, Where It Comes from, How It Sabotages Our Lives by Pia Mellody**

Pia Mellody is an authority on alcohol and drug addiction. In this book, she explains the link between childhood trauma and the inability to have healthy relationships as an adult. She introduces the concept of the inner, or “precious” child and describes a re-parenting process to heal old wounds and love oneself. A workbook, Breaking Free: A Recovery Workbook for Facing Codependence, accompanies the book.

***Co-Dependency for Dummies* by Darlene Lancer**

This book provides an in-depth view of codependent behavior, explains its causes, and addresses methods of healing. It also distinguishes between healthy and dysfunctional caretaking as well as discussing healthy boundaries and offering a recovery plan.

***The Road Back to Me***: **Healing and Recovering from Co-dependency, by Lisa A. Romano**

This is the story of a woman who survived a childhood of loneliness and bullying but carried its painful legacy into adulthood. Her journey to healing from low self-esteem and suicidal feelings comes after the birth of her three children and provides a role model for anyone recovering from a painful past. She distinguishes between inherent self-worth and dysfunctional programming from the early years.

***Prodependence:* Moving Beyond Codependence by Robert Weiss, Ph.D., MSW**

Weiss uses his knowledge as a psychotherapist to offer a new approach called to caring for and living with addicts. In it, he recognizes the stigma sometimes attached to the old paradigm of loving someone too much or loving the “wrong” person. He also outlines the steps toward healing the self-doubt and blame that comes with being involved with a person with drug addiction. His answer lies in validating the caregiver’s and the addict’s journey instead of pathologizing it.

***Healing the Shame that Binds You* by John Bradshaw**

In his classic book, Bradshaw talks about the toxic shame that comes from growing up in an alcoholic home and outlines 12 steps for transforming it into the healthy shame needed for spiritual living. He also addresses the importance of championing the inner child and learning self-forgiveness.