

Life is tough. Despite our best intentions, things go wrong, sometimes *very* wrong. Ninety percent of us get married, full of hope and optimism, yet 40% of marriages end in divorce. We struggle to meet the demands of daily life, only to find ourselves needing care for stress-related problems like high blood pressure, anxiety, depression, alcoholism, or a weakened immune system.

How do we typically react when things fall apart? More often than not, we feel ashamed and become self-critical:

“What’s wrong with me?” “Why can’t I cope?” “Why me?” Perhaps we go on a mission to fix ourselves, adding insult to injury. Sometimes we go after others. Rather than giving ourselves a break, we seem to find the path of greatest resistance.

Yet no matter how hard we try to avoid emotional pain, it follows us everywhere. Difficult emotions—shame, anger, loneliness, fear, despair, confusion—arrive like clockwork at our door. They come when things don’t go according to our expectations, when we’re separated from loved ones, and as a part of ordinary sickness, old age, and death. It’s just not possible to avoid feeling bad.