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**From:** Carolyn Rangel [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 3/13/2018 4:21:17 PM  
**Subject:** Weekly Update  
**Attachments:** image001.png; image002.jpg; image003.png; image004.jpg; image005.png; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg  
**Importance:** High



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**SFGATE**

*Published on Monday, March 12, 2018*

**[I Never Feel Like Less of an American ...](#)**

I never feel like less of an American than when idealistic teenagers call for gun control, and I know Congress won't let it happen.

I never feel like less of an American than when the richest people abandon the poorest.

I never feel like less of an American than when a President lies, and his supporters applaud.

Sometimes it takes the experience of shame to galvanize change, and this is such a time. Having lived too long on the self-image of "America is the greatest, richest, most powerful country in the world," we produced Trumpism, which has shattered that image. It's been a traumatic experience. Mature adults are supposed to be resilient in the face of difficult challenges, but a person can bend only so far. That's why one sees an outraged Resistance, moving from "He's not my President" to "Is this even my country?"

If as we often hear, America isn't a place on the map but an idea, the idea is in trouble. Every day I'm reminded of Sinclair Lewis's 1935 novel, *It Can Happen Here*, which imagined the election of a Fascist to the presidency. As tumultuous as the Thirties were, fascism didn't happen here. In fact, the New Deal and the inception of a social safety net came about. But reactionary forces simmer away when they aren't at a boil. Who would have thought that the leader of the House in 2018 wants to weaken the social safety net by "saving" Social Security and Medicare?

A survey of 117 historians recently ranked Donald Trump the worst President in history, which seems right after only one year in office. But what makes me feel like less of an American is knowing that 40% of my fellow citizens love and approve of him, who have reservations, yes, but overall want his agenda to move ahead. In the daily fire hose of presidential offenses, little attention was paid to the revelation by Reince Priebus, former White House chief of staff, that however chaotic this Presidency looked from the outside, it was worse on the inside--fifty times worse.

Trumpism is the product of collective consciousness, and although one hears about "the wisdom of crowds," but when collective consciousness veers as close to lunacy as this administration, healing is the only answer. Reactionary forces, racists, white supremacists, and haters are like algae on the surface of a pond. Algae only appears if the pond is dank and still. When water is clear and flowing, there is no condition for algae to thrive in.

The remedies for healing America are flowing with more force than before. Notions like Medicare for all, free higher education, and bringing huge banks to heel were semi-fantasy in the last Presidential election. Now they are quickly moving mainstream. Ecological awareness is growing and unstoppable. There is a possibility that by destroying America's self-image, Trumpism has opened the way for facing reality, which after all is better than living up to a self-image that is hollow at the core.

In the meantime, each person needs to remain resilient and relevant. The structure of government moves slowly, and it took decades of incremental moves for the reactionary right to gain the power it presently holds tight. If the midterm elections don't restore sanity, then collective consciousness is more wounded than we imagine. Without a doubt Trumpism is horrifying, but the grievances it represents are real. Address those grievances honestly and with a clear conscience: that's the only remedy.

## SFGATE

Archive of Deepak's Articles published by [The San Francisco Chronicle](#).



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*Published March 12, 2018*

### [4 easy ways to squeeze meditation into a busy day](#)

By Deepak Chopra and Kabir Sehgal, Contributors

There is no doubt that you can benefit from daily meditation. It has several [health benefits](#) like reducing cortisol levels that cause stress, lessening blood pressure, and slowing the heart rate. Besides these physiological effects, it can also have a positive impact on your work life, by increasing your attention span, deepening your focusing, catalyzing your creativity, and making you a better listener.

Given all these constructive outcomes, meditation should become an integral and required part of your day. But finding the time to actually engage in this practice can be difficult, so here are a few ways you can incorporate mindfulness exercises into your day.

#### **First, a morning ritual**

When you wake up, you're already in a quiet room in which you feel relaxed. This might be the last time you're surrounded by silence, so take five minutes and practice breathing in and out. Notice the sound of your breath as you inhale and exhale. Imagine the air rushing into your mouth and filling your lungs, and then picture it leaving your body and filling the room.

Instead of hitting the snooze button, sit up right and fill your morning with peace. These few minutes of mindfulness will prepare you for your busy day to come. Pretty soon, you'll get so used to meditation in the morning, that you won't want to start your day without it.

### *Second, a morning commute*

If you take public transportation like a bus or the subway, you can use these moments for practicing meditation. To be sure, you might be disturbed by the noise of other people taking and public-address announcements.

But by simply closing your eyes and taking long breaths, you will inevitably retreat into a cocoon where you pay less attention to the sounds around you and train your mind on taking deep breaths. When you finally open your eyes, you will feel a sense of accomplishment, that you have gone somewhere on your commute that few others have – to a place of higher consciousness.

### *Third, a lunch retreat*

When your colleagues and clients go to lunch, you can take advantage of this quieter period of the day. If you have your own office, you can close the door and spend five minutes again practicing breathing in and out. If you work in an open-office where you have limited privacy, you could either steal away into a conference room or bathroom to find a few moments of peace.

Some forward-thinking firms like General Motors, Google and Intel [encourage](#) employees to practice meditation, and some even have rooms and facilities on their campuses dedicated for this purpose. If you work at one of these companies, make sure to take advantage of these benefits.

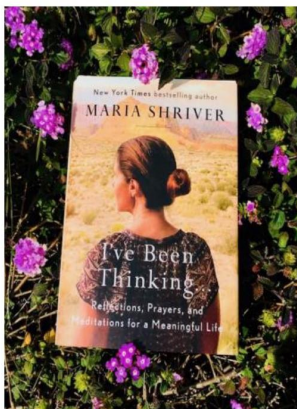
### *Fourth, a night time ritual*

Before your turn down your bed and go to sleep, try spending a few minutes sitting upright on your bed and practicing your breathing. You will find that when you are engaged in deep breathing exercises, it will help still your thoughts and prepare you for a better night sleep. A night time practice of meditation might make you feel better rested in the morning too.

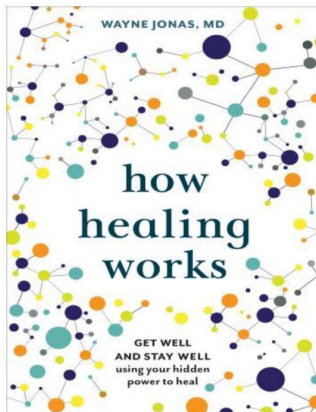
## **We are currently reading:**

This quote from my friend @mariashriver on her new book, [\*I've Been Thinking...Reflections, Prayers, and Meditations for a Meaningful Life\*](#):

“No matter how busy you are, carve out time in your day to get calm, to think, to reflect, to be present.”

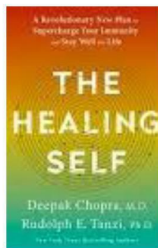


[\*How Healing Works\*](#), Dr. Wayne Jonas lays out a revolutionary new way to approach injury, illness, and wellness.



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**National Best-seller: [The Healing Self: A Revolutionary New Plan to Supercharge Your Immunity and Stay Well for Life](#)**

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