



## One in Five, Never Alone: A Call to Support, Advocate, and Rise Together

Kathleen Walsh

I don't know about you but the news, social media and rogue conversations at the office (proverbial) water cooler have been taking a toll on me. You hear about gas prices, city and state budget cuts, devastating weather and a continued epidemic of mental illness resulting in violence. It is brutal. Believe it or not, it makes me want to work longer hours simply to avoid hearing the evening news on TV.

And, well, these topics hit home for me. I am a statistic when it comes to mental health. One in five adults suffer from one form or another of anxiety, depression or deeper mental health issues. Inviting Jackie Lightner to share an article about her journey is reminiscent of my story as well. Community, family, co-workers, and skilled professionals all helped me navigate through my dark days only to emerge more self-aware, stronger and with a tool box that has served me for the past 25 years.

One in five. For me, at the YMCA of Metro North, based on our employee numbers of about 1000 people annually, it means 200 members of my team could be navigating through some sort of challenge. What does that number look like for you? What are we doing to assist? How can we as leaders remove the stigma and be a part of the solution? And finally, as female leaders, how can we continue to be advocates for all in need of a hug, a glass of (non-alcoholic) wine, a brisk walk or a loving conversation?

We have the ability to influence change. Let's use this superpower!

Kathleen Walsh, editor of Rise & THRIVE, is CEO of the YMCA Metro North. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the North Shore Chamber of Commerce and member of the THRIVE Advisory Council.

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## Books and Podcasts

### Good reads about anxiety, overthinking, pressure, perfectionism, or work-related stress:

- The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook — Edmund J. Bourne**  
Probably the most practical choice if you want specific exercises and techniques, rather than just reading about anxiety.
- The Confidence Gap — Russ Harris**  
Great if your anxiety shows up as self-doubt, fear of failure, imposter syndrome, or worrying about what coworkers think.
- Chatter — Ethan Kross**  
Excellent for rumination and an overactive inner voice—especially when you keep replaying a meeting, mistake, conversation, or decision in your head.
- Essentialism — Greg McKeown**  
Best if your anxiety comes from too many responsibilities, constant demands, and difficulty saying no. The focus is on deliberately doing fewer things that matter most.

### Podcasts for people on the move:

- The Anxious Achiever — Morra Aarons-Mele**  
It focuses specifically on anxiety and mental health in the workplace, including stories from business leaders and discussions about leadership, performance, and workplace culture.
- 10% Happier with Dan Harris**  
A broader mental-health podcast, but particularly good for anxiety, stress, overthinking, mindfulness, and self-criticism.
- Anxiety At Work — Adrian Gostick & Chester Elton**  
Very directly focused on workplace anxiety, with practical discussions about stress, uncertainty, managers, and maintaining mental health at work.
- Work Stress Anxiety | Burnout Recovery for High-Achieving Women**  
Especially relevant if you're dealing with emotional exhaustion, replaying conversations, difficulty switching off after work, or chronic workplace pressure.



# How I Healed My Anxiety Using These 5 Things

by Jackie Lightner (adapted for the THRIVE Newsletter)  
Lightwork Therapy & Recovery, LICSW



So I know you're here for the juicy stuff and we're gonna get to it don't you worry! But first, for those that are new or haven't seen my more recent posts ... I've started to become very open about my own personal struggles with postpartum anxiety. I've always been a baseline anxious girlie (fellow empaths know what's up), but what I'd been experiencing over the last few months was unlike anything I've felt prior. I was **CONSTANTLY** tense, on edge, and feeling like I was a sneeze away from a menty B. If anything didn't go my way like down to the tiniest details, I was losing it. For me, this showed up as frustration, rage, and having a **VERY** short fuse by day. By night, I was nearly in tears daily – feeling a dark sense of doom and dread creep over me as soon as the day was winding down and evening was upon me. At bedtime, I would lay there with my brain swirling, unable to shut it up even though I was physically so exhausted. And even on the nights I did fall asleep, I was waking up at 2 or 3am and having the thought spirals then instead. It got to a point where I started to have some scary thoughts...like maybe my son was better off without me because he deserved to have a mom who was happier and less anxious all the time. That's when I knew I **HAD** to do something different. Just trying to white knuckle it or talk myself down was not working anymore. And thus began my journey of trying to manage this in a real way.

Here are the **top five** things that worked for me to manage my anxiety:

- 1 ART Therapy with Dr. Rey Junco:** This therapy is like lowkey witchcraft. Actually it's highly studied and shown to be effective in helping manage symptoms of trauma. Now before you go saying "but I don't have any trauma!"...ya do. It's not always Capital T TRAUMA, but even things that are seemingly more minor from our past can really stick with us and impact us in a way that makes our present day struggles more challenging.
- 2 Starting an SSRI:** I was so resistant to taking a daily medication for so many years. I had all my reasons: not wanting to bandaid the bigger underlying issue, worries about being "addicted" to it or not ever being able to come off of it, it not being "clean or holistic," conflicted feelings about taking meds as a sober person, and frankly pride in thinking that as a therapist I **SHOULD** be able to manage my anxiety without any help. Welp as it turns out...ya girl needs some help! I look at it like this: hopefully I will not have to be on this forever and even if there are longterm side effects, I'm living my life **NOW** and the way in which I was feeling while living with it was not manageable. I really **WASN'T** living because I was so caught up in my anxious thoughts all the time. I also feel like taking a low dose SSRI has helped me take the edge off, and actually allows the other forms of therapy I'm doing to actually take root, sink in, and gives me the ability to think more clearly to be able to use my tools when I am feeling anxious.
- 3 Somatic Therapy with Alexis Kelly at Luma Wellness:** Alexis has helped me so much through somatic therapy coaching. This **REALLY** helped me calm my physical nervous system down and I use the tools she teaches me daily to keep myself grounded in moments of overwhelm. She taught me how to accept help from another human being – that I do not have to carry everything alone.
- 4 Taking Saffron supplements:** I was starting to get depressed by how anxious I was (fun!!!!) and Saffron supplements definitely helped me feel more focused, energized, and stable. The key difference with these is that when I take them daily, I feel the benefits in a nourished way – not in a jacked up caffeine way, or conversely in an overtly chill benzo-like way. I just felt more neutral and like my normal self. I have tried **alllllll** the supplements (magnesium, ashwaganda, etc etc) and this is the one that I have felt the most difference with.
- 5 Exercise:** Sorry but it's true! For me personally, fast walking, running, lifting really heavy, or a more intense HIIT class where I'm sweaty or out of breath works best for me. I know for others pilates or other low intensity exercise works better for their nervous system. But I've learned that getting in a good sweat and turning beat red is a good indication I've done it right.

And that's the juice! If you have questions, feel free to shoot me a message, DM me on instagram, or hit me with an email to ask away!

With love and light,  
Jackie



# Leading and THRIVING with Brain Health in Mind™

## A monthly THRIVE Series

By Dr. Stephanie Peabody, Neuropsychologist  
Founding Director, Brain Health Initiative

This month, we're turning to Brain Fuel and Metabolism—and a new way of thinking about food.

### Every Bite Is an Investment in Your Brain.

Many of us think about food in terms of calories, carbohydrates, protein, or weight management. Those things matter, but nutrition is about much more than maintaining a healthy body. Food provides energy, building blocks, and protective nutrients that help your brain perform at its best.

Although your brain represents only about **2%** of your body weight, it uses approximately 20% of your body's energy. Every thought, decision, memory, conversation, and creative idea depends on the fuel you provide.

The encouraging news is that brain-healthy eating does not require a complicated or restrictive diet. Instead, focus on building a pattern rich in whole, minimally processed foods that fits your lifestyle, budget, culture, personal preferences, and family traditions—and is enjoyable enough to sustain over time.

Some of the brain's favorite foods include:

- ✓ **Healthy Fats** — extra-virgin olive oil, avocado, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish
- ✓ **Flavonoid-Rich Foods** — berries, colorful fruits and vegetables, herbs, spices, cocoa, and green tea
- ✓ **Fiber-Rich Foods** — dark leafy greens, beans, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and whole grains
- ✓ **Fermented Foods** — yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, and fermented vegetables
- ✓ **High-Quality Protein** — fish, seafood, legumes, eggs, nuts, seeds, and other quality protein sources
- ✓ **Hydration** — water throughout the day

Most importantly, enjoy the experience. Share meals with family and friends, explore new recipes and flavors, shop locally when possible, and remember that eating well should nourish both your body and your life.

This week, challenge yourself to incorporate more brain-healthy foods and beverages throughout your day. Look for opportunities to include:

- ✓ **A healthy fat**
- ✓ **A handful of berries or another colorful fruit or vegetable**
- ✓ **Dark leafy greens**
- ✓ **A fermented food (such as yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, or other fermented vegetables)**
- ✓ **A high-quality protein**
- ✓ **A fiber-rich food**
- ✓ **A cup of green tea in the morning or with an early-day snack**
- ✓ **A square of dark chocolate (70% cocoa or higher, enjoyed in moderation)**
- ✓ **Water with and between meals**

Remember: Brain health isn't built through one perfect meal. It is created through healthy eating patterns that fit your lifestyle, budget, culture, family traditions, and personal preferences—and are enjoyable enough to sustain over time.

The goal isn't perfection. The goal is nourishment. Rather than asking, "Is this food good or bad?" try asking, "How is this meal helping to fuel my brain?"

### Ready to take the next step?

Scan the QR code below to continue your journey with the complete article, resources, and practical tools available through the BrainSMART™ Lifestyle Companion.



### Coming Next Month!

Leading and THRIVING with Brain Health in Mind **Through Movement, Mobility, and Performance**

Move Well. Think Well. Live Well.

Discover how physical activity, strength, mobility, flexibility, and balance support brain performance, emotional well-being, resilience, and healthy aging.

### A Brain Health Thought to Carry With You

Every meal is an opportunity to nourish the brain that makes everything else possible.

**Protect. Optimize. Perform. THRIVE.**



# Getting To Know The THRIVERS!

*Please meet ...*

Kristin Kolick  
Esquire  
Correnti Kolick LLP

## **Tell us about your professional journey and how you landed where you are today?**

I grew up studying music and trained to become an opera singer, eventually earning a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from a music conservatory. Near the end of college, I realized it would take roughly a decade for my voice to mature before I could sing professionally, so I began exploring law school as an alternative path. After graduating from college, I spent a year working for a law firm, to test whether I could sit still in an office all day. I then moved to Boston for law school and found that I loved the challenge and pace of legal work. After starting my career as an attorney, I moved from Boston to the North Shore and was fortunate to eventually join a wonderful firm in Salem with a varied practice, excellent mentors and congenial colleagues. I remained at the firm and became a partner in 2023. It has truly been a journey from singing in costume to practicing law at Correnti Kolick LLP!

## **What was the most challenging professional obstacle that you overcame and how?**

Transitioning to law school was very challenging. I spent my college years singing, doing homework at the piano, studying period-style movement, and reading and translating foreign languages. When I started law school, it seemed to take me twice as long as my colleagues to finish the reading assignments. I worked hard every day, and I instituted my own time limitations for completing the assignments, which taught me how to work under pressure. I also found that some of the skills I learned from music, such as logic and reasoning, translated well to legal work. It took some time, but eventually I found my rhythm.

## **What are your guiding principles as a female leader?**

To be treated with respect, you must command respect. Don't be afraid of speaking with anyone, regardless of their title or position. Walk into every negotiation fully prepared. Remember that you were invited into the room for a reason.

## **What would you tell your 18-year-old self?**

It's okay if things don't unfold exactly as you planned. Your life and your work can still be deeply fulfilling, even if it is different than you imagined, and you can still go on to accomplish amazing things.

## **What is in your physical and emotional self-care tool kit?**

I am a strong believer in balance. When your life is in balance you do better work, and when work is going well, you carry positive energy home. To maintain the balance, I love listening to music, but some days, absolute silence can be glorious! I am also an advocate for movement to combat stress and clear the mind – anything from walking to yoga.

## **Name three things that bring you GREAT joy outside of work?**

Singing, playing the piano, and my husband.

## **If offered \$1,000,000 to use in anyway but for yourself & family, what would you do with it?**

I would use it to establish an organization for the benefit of the arts, with a focus on preserving and expanding access to classical music and classical music education. Although I am not pursuing music professionally, it shaped the person I am today, teaching me logic, communication, focus, and drive. I believe everyone should have an opportunity to have that experience and gain those important life skills.

## **What do you want your legacy to be?**

As an attorney, my legacy will probably end up being the documents I have notarized! But in all seriousness, I hope the work I do every day is meaningful, and that it helps to build systems and communities that truly work for people and allow them to thrive.

# For Your Calendar

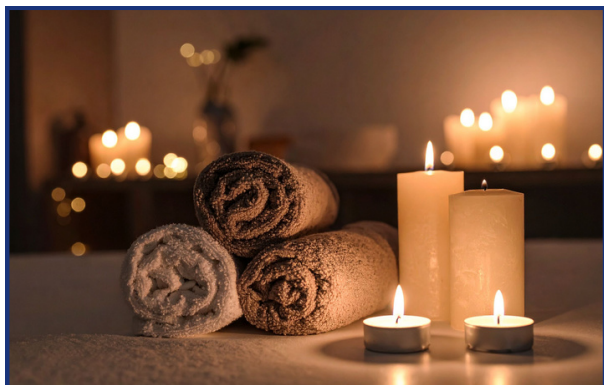
REGISTER on [www.northshorechamber.org](http://www.northshorechamber.org)

**September 24, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.**

**Peabody Marriott**

## **THRIVE Signature Luncheon Series**

THRIVE's signature Women Among Us Luncheon will shine a spotlight on seven local leaders and the nonprofit organizations making a meaningful difference in the lives of women across the North Shore. Through fast-paced, five-minute presentations, discover the important work happening in our communities, the resources available to women, and the ways you and your company can make an impact



**October 27, 5-7 p.m.**

## **THRIVE Networking With a Cause**

Join us at Maison Esthetique October 27 for an evening of meaningful networking, light bites, and refreshments—paired with a little well-deserved self-care! Connect with fellow professionals while enjoying a mini-spa experience and the opportunity to sample some of Maison Esthetique's signature services. Guests are asked to bring gently worn fall/winter women's business attire for the THRIVE Closet, which supports women re-entering the workforce!

**Registration is limited**, so be sure to reserve your spot early!

**December 2, 5-7 p.m.**

## **Save the Date!**

Don't miss the Chamber's Annual Holiday Party at Hawthorne Hotel in Salem. Spend a cozy evening featuring festive music, plentiful hors d'oeuvres and seasonal cheer! Stay tuned for what good cause THRIVE will be supporting! Please mark your calendars today, because we know holiday happenings come a plenty!



Have an idea for content for the THRIVE monthly newsletter? Please email **Kathleen Walsh** at [kwash@metronorthymca.org](mailto:kwash@metronorthymca.org).

Be sure to share this newsletter with your network, and encourage others to sign up for THRIVE! It's free!