



# Kelly McGonigal

Lecturer, Stanford University  
Author, *The Joy of Movement*, *The Upside of Stress* and *The Willpower Instinct*

*The latest science on willpower and the impact of movement*

## Biography

### Oprah Magazine's first 20/20 Visionary 2020

Dr. Kelly McGonigal is a health psychologist and a lecturer at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business. As a pioneer in the field of “science-help,” her mission is to translate insights from psychology and neuroscience into practical strategies that support personal well-being and strengthen communities.

She is the author of several books, including the international bestseller *The Willpower Instinct*, *The Upside of Stress*, and her current book, *The Joy of Movement*. Her next book, *Joy Is a Risk Worth Taking*, will be published in October 2026.

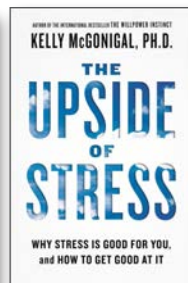
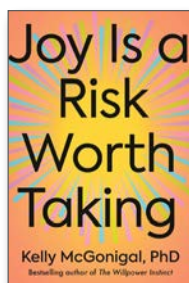
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## Topics & Books

*Health*

*Stress and Wellness*

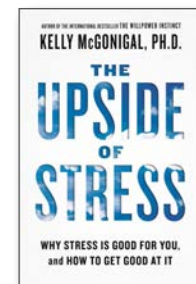
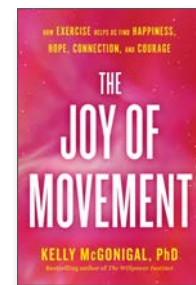
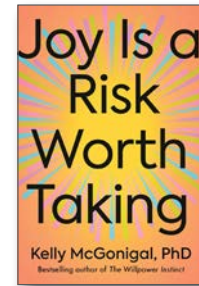
*Lifestyle Entrepreneur*



Dr. McGonigal's book, *The Joy of Movement*, is a revolutionary narrative that goes beyond familiar arguments in favor of exercise, to illustrate why movement is integral to both our happiness and our humanity. Exercise is health-enhancing and life-extending, yet many of us feel it's a chore, but it doesn't have to be. Movement can and should be a source of joy. Through her trademark blend of science and storytelling, McGonigal shows how movement is intertwined with some of the most basic human joys, including self-expression, social connection and why it is a powerful antidote to the modern epidemics of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. *The Joy of Movement* tells what we can do in our lives and communities to harness the power of movement to create happiness, meaning, and connection.

Her 2013 TED talk, "How to Make Stress Your Friend," is one of the 20 Most Viewed TED talks of all time, with over 35 million views. Through the Stanford Center for Compassion and Altruism, she co-authored the Stanford Compassion Cultivation Training and studies how social connection can promote health, happiness, and resilience.

Dr. McGonigal has consulted for a wide range of non-profit organizations and industries to bring evidence-based strategies for well-being into the workplace, healthcare, education, technology, and community outreach. In her free time, she is a passionate advocate for animal rescue and volunteers as an adoption counselor for Best Friends Animal Society.



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