

Three Good Things Exercise

Reflect (record in pencil if possible) on how your day went today

Date / Time

The Three Good Things exercise is intended to increase happiness and a sense of wellbeing.

It does this by a simple method of redirecting attention towards positive thoughts and away from negative thoughts. Human beings have evolved to spend much more time thinking about negative experiences than positive ones. We spend a lot of time thinking about what has gone wrong and how to fix it, or how to do it differently next time. In the past there may have been an evolutionary advantage to this way of thinking, since it seems to be innate. However, for modern humans, this negative bias is the source of a lot of anxiety, depression, and general lack of wellbeing.

Luckily, by redirecting our thoughts on purpose towards positive events, we can do a lot to correct this negative bias.

As a side effect, when we focus on the positive, our brains automatically start to look for ways for our lives to be better. Releasing energy to solve problems, work toward goals, and improve our lives.

METHOD

Summary

Each night before you go to sleep:

1. Think of three good things that happened today.
2. Write them down.
3. Reflect on why they happened.

Long Version

This exercise is to be done each night before going to sleep.

- Step 1: Think about anything good that happened to you today. It can be anything at all that seems positive to you. It need not be anything significant or important. For example, you might recall the fact that you enjoyed the oatmeal you had for breakfast. On the other hand, you might also remember that your child took its first step today. Anything from the most mundane to the most elevated works, as long as it seems to you like a good, positive, happy thing.
- Step 2: Write down these three positive things.
- Step 3: Reflect on why each good thing happened. Determining the "why" of the event is an essential part of the exercise. For example, you might say that your oatmeal tasted good this morning because your partner took the time to go shopping at the local farmer's market, where they have fresh, organic oatmeal. You get to decide the reasons for each event that make sense to you.

Write down three positive things that happened today.

Reflect on "why" each good thing happened.

Is there anything good that happened that you felt the to need to dismiss? Example, "Sure they helped us out, but I think they did it to brag." et. Why?

4. What did you learn from what you observed in this exercise?

