

Three Good Things

Overview of Tiny Tool:

In our day-to-day lives, it's easy to get caught up in the things that go wrong and feel like we're living under our own private rain cloud at the same time, we tend to adapt to the good things and people in our lives, taking them for granted. As a result, we often overlook everyday beauty and goodness -- a kind gesture from a stranger or the warmth of our heater on a chilly morning. In the process, we frequently miss opportunities for happiness and connection.

This exercise guards against those tendencies. By remembering and listing three positive things that have happened in your day -- and considering what caused them -- you tune into the sources of goodness in your life. Giving you the space to focus on the positive, allows you to notice, remember, and savor the better things in life. It's a habit that can build and change the emotional tone of your life -- which may be why this exercise is associated with significant increases in happiness.

Directions:

Each day for at least one week, write down three things that went well for you that day, and provide an explanation for why they went well.

- It is important to create a physical record of your items by writing them down it is not enough simply to do this exercise in your head.
- The items can be relatively small in importance (e.g., "my co-worker made the coffee today") or relatively large (e.g., "I am going on a big vacation").
- To make this exercise part of your daily routine, some find that writing before bed is helpful.

As you write, in any writing style that pleases you, follow these instructions:

1. Give the event a title (e.g., "my friend helped make a pie").
2. Write down exactly what happened in as much detail as possible, including what you did or said and if others were involved, what they did or said.
3. Include how this event made you feel at the time and how this event made you feel later (including now, as you remember it).
4. Explain what you think caused this event -- why it came to pass.
5. If you find yourself focusing on negative feelings, refocus your mind on the good event and the positive feelings that came with it. This can take effort but gets easier with practice.

Or consider naming Three Good Things at some certain time of the day (e.g., before you go to sleep, first thing when you wake up, sitting down for dinner).

1. Name the event or item that you are thankful for during the day (e.g., the feeling of sun's heat on your back during a walk, cup of tea in the morning, seeing a friend)
2. Think about the event and envision it in your mind, the colors, the details, the words or actions, the smells, sensations. Ahhh!
3. Envision and name another event or item of the day in the same way.
4. And then again.
5. May you savor the good things of your life!

**** When you savor a positive thing in your mind for 12 or more seconds, it transfers the positive experience into your long-term memory. Your brain will have an easier time accessing positivity for your life then. You are training your brain in a new way!**