



TUNE IN TO MINDFULNESS TO TUNE OUT THE NEGATIVE

A WEBINAR FOR EMPLOYEES FROM YOUR
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

December 8, 2021



Federal
Occupational
Health

INTRODUCTION



OBJECTIVES

- Describe aspects of negative thinking and how it can affect us
- Define positive thinking and mindfulness and explain the benefits
- Engage in positive thinking and mindfulness practices and suggest ways to apply them to your daily life

SECTION 1

NEGATIVE THINKING

DEFINITION, DEVELOPMENT,
AND EFFECTS

NEGATIVE THINKING



“Most people would rather be certain they’re miserable than risk being happy.”

– Robert Anthony

NEGATIVE THINKING: DEFINITION



A pattern of
thinking
negatively
about yourself
and your
surroundings

HOW IT DEVELOPS

The negative bias trap

Societal norms

Family of origin

Explanatory style of your inner dialogue

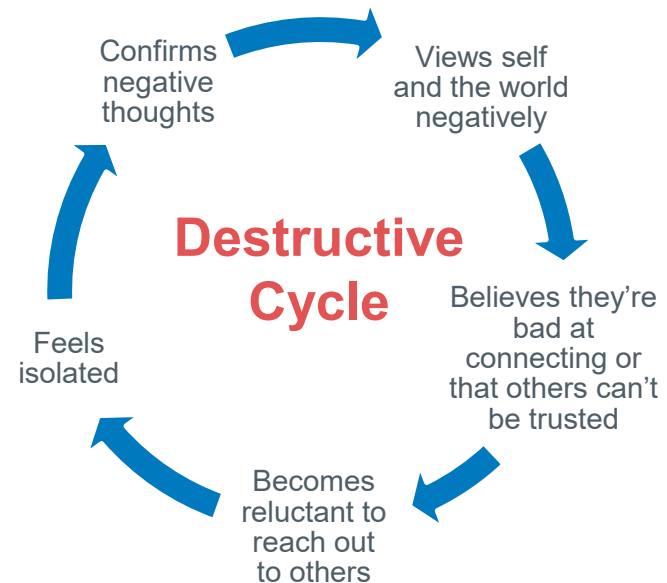
EFFECTS OF NEGATIVE THINKING

Physical and mental health

- Higher stress/cortisol
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Fatigue
- Upset stomach
- Sleep problems
- Anxiety/depression
- Social withdrawal
- Changes in diet

Relationships

- Greater social isolation
- Less meaningful relationships
 - May lead to more sadness
 - Can become a self-fulfilling prophecy



SECTION 2

POSITIVE THINKING

DEFINITION, DEVELOPMENT,
AND EFFECTS

POSITIVE THINKING

*“Watch your thoughts, they become your words;
watch your words, they become your actions;
watch your actions, they become your habits;
watch your habits, they become your character;
watch your character, it becomes your destiny.”*

– Lao Tzu



POSITIVE THINKING: DEFINITION

The practice of focusing on the good in any given situation

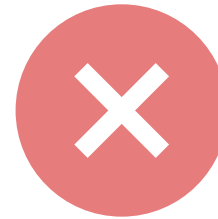


What it is:

Healthy internal narrative
(Self-talk)

Realistic optimism

Intentionally thoughtful
perception



What it is not:

Toxic positivity
(Pretending everything is
great when it isn't)

Inflexible or rigid

Selfish

HOW IT DEVELOPS

Formative experiences

Narrative

Strength-focused

Continued practice

EFFECTS OF POSITIVE THINKING

Health benefits



Resilience



Greater life satisfaction



Enhanced relationships

SECTION 3

THE PRACTICE OF POSITIVE THINKING

POSITIVE REMINISCENCE ACTIVITY

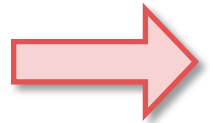
- Settle into a relaxed posture
- Take a few deep, calming breaths
- Relax and center



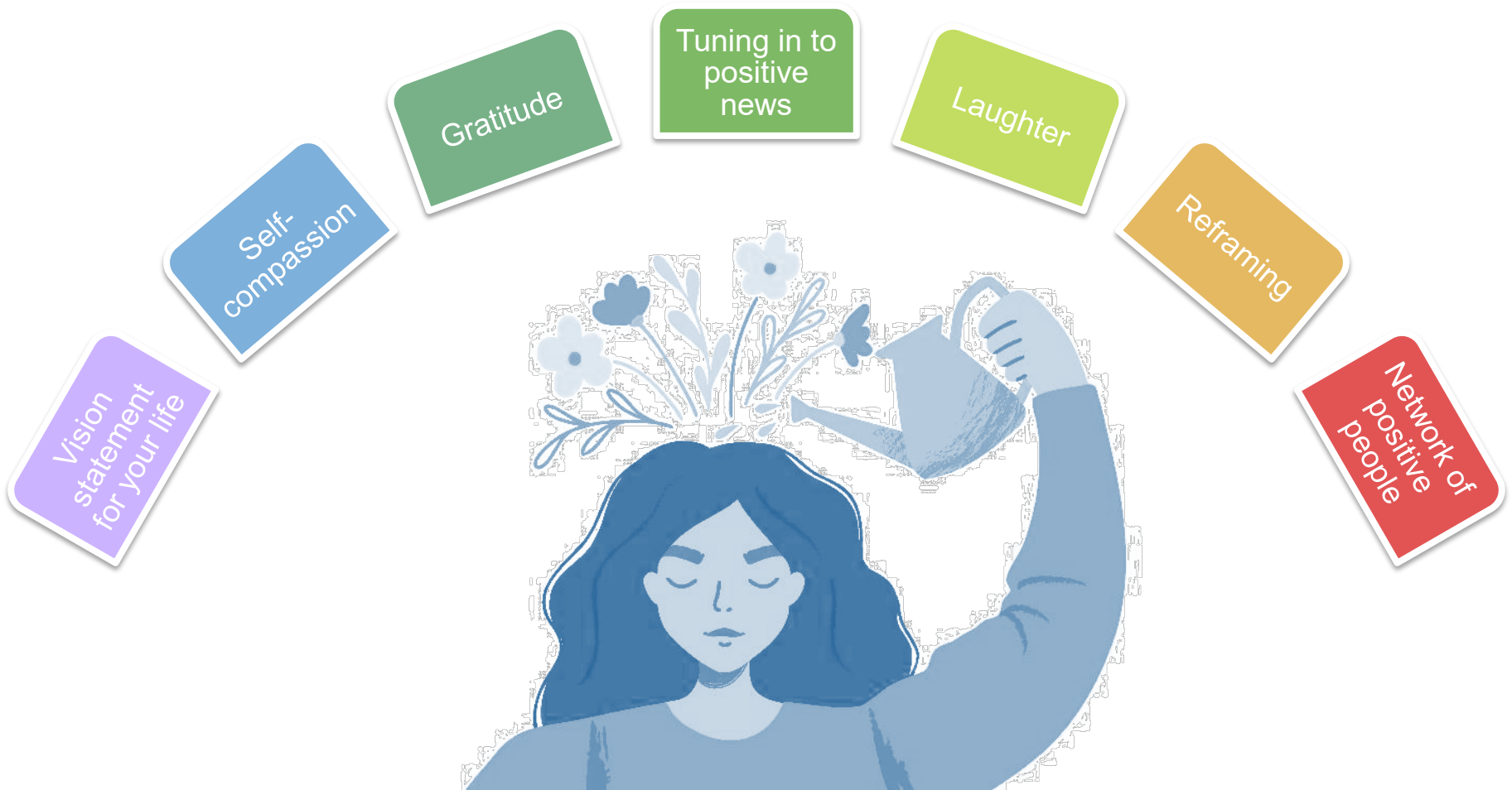
POLL 1

What do you notice about how you feel after doing the positive reminiscence exercise?

Select an answer(s) from the polling panel, then click **Submit**.



THE PRACTICE OF POSITIVE THINKING



SECTION 4

MINDFULNESS

DEFINITION AND EFFECTS

MINDFULNESS

“Reality does not accede to our wishes or plans but remains intent upon its own narrow path. To stand in opposition to reality is certainly a cause of suffering . . .



. . . Serenity comes not only from accepting what we cannot change but from giving up trying to be in control. Accepting the world on its terms is living a heroic life.”

– David Richo

MINDFULNESS: DEFINITION

Maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens without judging them.

– University of California, Berkeley

Mindfulness is:

- Living in the present moment
- Cultivating greater curiosity
- Acceptance and allowing
- Practice-based

Mindfulness is not:

- An emotion
- Absence of thought
- Only experienced in meditation
- Complacency or inaction
- Experiencing only positive thoughts and emotions

EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS



SECTION 5

THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS

MINDFULNESS IN DAILY PRACTICE: TUNING IN



In the morning and at bedtime

- Observe five mindful breaths before going to sleep and after waking up



During routine activities

- Focus more attentively while doing your hair, brushing your teeth, washing dishes, or eating, and drinking



While you wait

- When you find yourself waiting – in line, on hold, for a flight, or in traffic – take note of your breath or how you feel in that exact moment



In conversation

- Listen without agreeing, disagreeing, or planning a response
- Notice the thoughts and feelings that arise without acting on them



In daily reflection

- Acknowledge your experiences, either to someone else or in a journal for grounding and closure



Through forgiveness

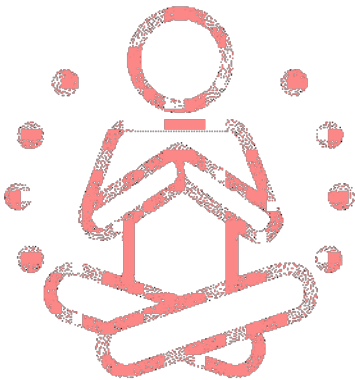
- Find inner peace by showing appreciation and offering forgiveness to yourself and those around you

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

“We humans are like young children who have a bad case of poison ivy. Because we want to relieve the discomfort, we automatically scratch, and it seems the perfectly sane thing to do . . . scratching is our habitual way of trying to get away, trying to escape our fundamental discomfort . . .

. . . Mindfulness meditation can be described as learning how to stay with the itch and the urge to scratch, without scratching . . . just staying present, open, and awake, no matter what's going on.”

– Pema Chodron



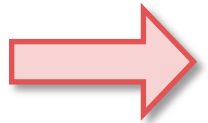
GUIDED MEDITATION: MINDFULNESS OF BREATH



POLL 2

After doing the mindfulness of breath exercise, I feel:

Select an answer from the polling panel, then click **Submit**.



SUMMARY



- Negative thinking
 - Deprives us of leading a happy, fulfilling life
 - Can be detrimental to our physical health
- Positive thinking and mindfulness
 - Can lessen our tendency toward negativity
 - Can be practiced in many everyday ways
- With time and intentionality, we can
 - Alter our perspective
 - Become happier and healthier
 - Enhance our connections with loved ones

RESOURCES

Books

- ***Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life***
 - M. Seligman, 2006
- ***Mindfulness in Plain English***
 - H. Gunaratana, 1992
- ***The Positive Thinking Workbook***
 - A. Brand, 2021
- ***Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears***
 - P. Chödrön, 2009

Website

- Good News Network
 - goodnewsnetwork.org

Guided Meditations and Practices

- Body Scan Meditation
 - youtube.com/watch?v=PYsuvRNZfxE&t=6s
- Loving Kindness Meditation
 - youtube.com/watch?v=sz7cpV7ERsM
- Self-Compassion Exercises
Dr. Kristin Neff
 - self-compassion.org/category/exercises

Apps (Free; iOS and Android)

- Insight Timer
Meditations for sleep, anxiety, and stress
- Smiling Mind
Meditations for all ages

Laughter

- Baby Monkey Going Backwards on a Pig
 - youtube.com/watch?v=5_sfnQDr1-o

THANK YOU



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