



CULTIVATING CONTENTMENT FOR IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH

**A WEBINAR FOR EMPLOYEES FROM YOUR
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

November 9, 2022

INTRODUCTION



OBJECTIVES

- Define contentment
- Discuss the mental and physical health benefits of contentment
- Understand the difference between happiness and contentment
- Explore strategies to cultivate greater contentment
- Engage in several contentment boosting activities

POLL 1

Which two words do you most associate with contentment?

- Euphoria
- Enough
- Elated
- Satisfied
- Overjoyed
- Bliss
- Acceptance

SECTION 1

CONTENTMENT

Definitions and Benefits

CONTENTMENT: DEFINITION

“Feeling or showing satisfaction with one's possessions, status, or situation.”

CONTENTMENT: DEFINITION

“Appreciating what you do have and where you are in your life. Contentment does not mean the absence of desire; it just means you are satisfied with the present, and you trust the turns your life takes will be for the best.”

CONTENTMENT: DEFINITION

“The deep appreciation of enough. Contentment recognizes that enough is sufficient, satisfying, peaceful yet powerful.”



BENEFITS OF CONTENTMENT



Improved mood



Increased attentiveness and focus



Reduced stress and anxiety

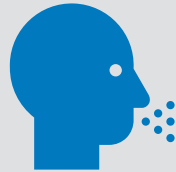


Reduced cortisol levels



Lowered blood pressure

BENEFITS OF CONTENTMENT



Improved immunity



Enhanced longevity



Improved cardiovascular health

BENEFITS OF CONTENTMENT



Stronger relationships



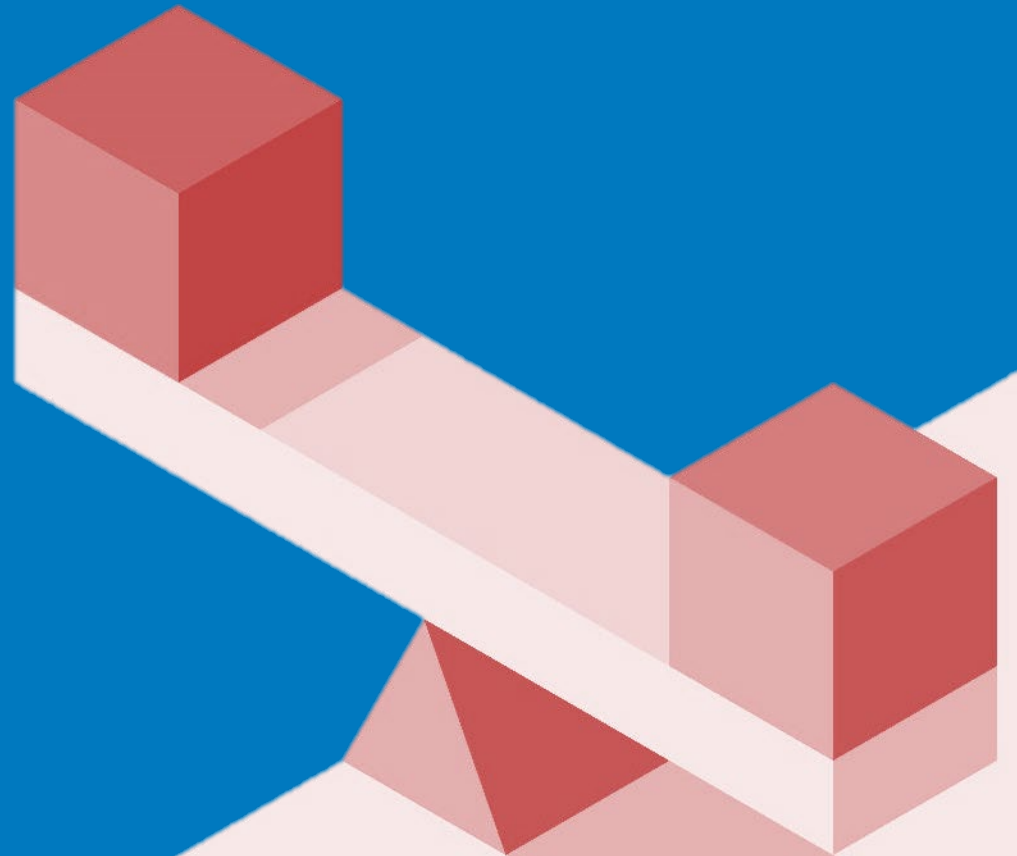
Simplicity



Peace of mind

HAPPINESS VS. CONTENTMENT

Are they
the same?



HAPPINESS VS. CONTENTMENT

Differences



Happiness

External
Seeking
Transitory



Contentment

Internal
Accepting
Lasting

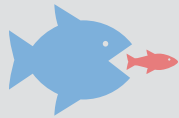
HAPPINESS VS. CONTENTMENT

Two strategies

The More Strategy



Seek more from the outside world

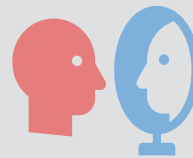


Focus is on the next bump in joy/happiness



The quest for something greater is derived externally

The Enough Strategy



Seek more from within



Focus is on existing joy/satisfaction



The quest for something greater is derived internally

SECTION 2

CULTIVATING CONTENTMENT

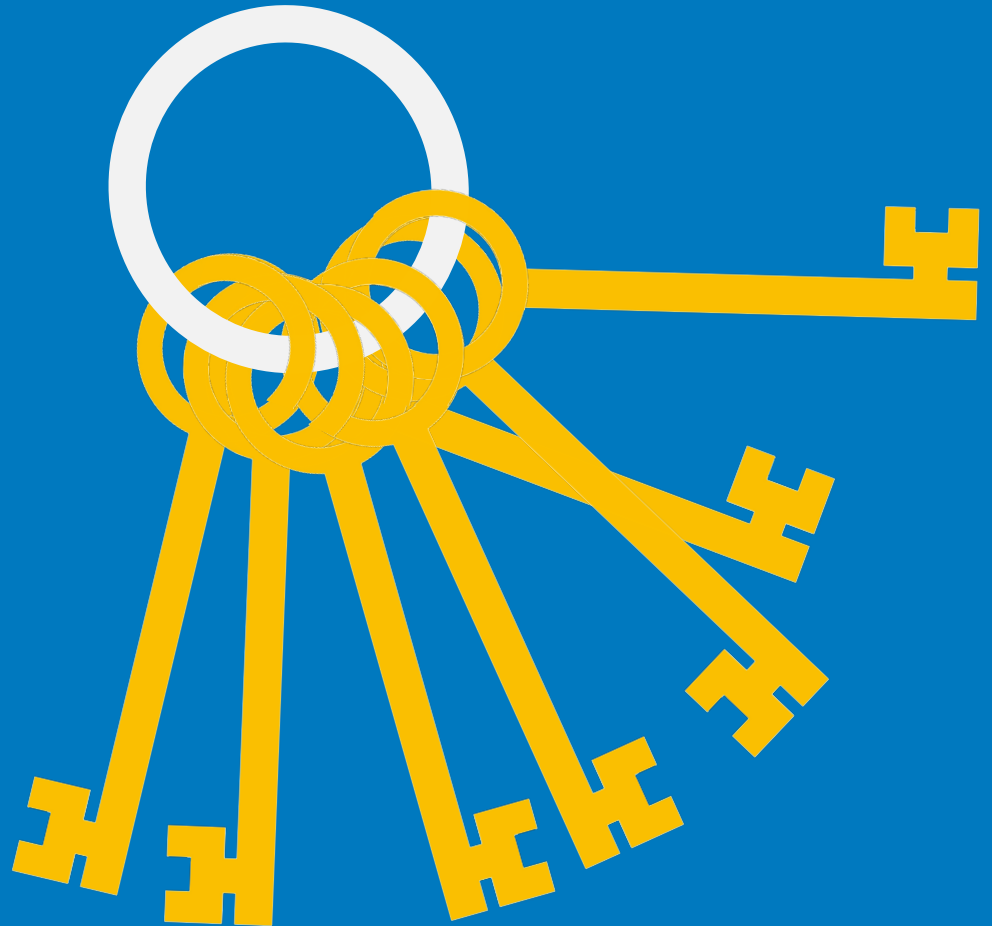
POLL 2

Which two of the following practices would help bring more contentment in your life?

- Less exposure to social media/news
- More physical activity
- Improved self-esteem
- Gratitude
- Deeper, more meaningful relationships
- Recognizing and accepting what is in and out of my control
- Showing more kindness and less criticism to myself

SEVEN KEYS TO CULTIVATING GREATER CONTENTMENT

- ▶ Acceptance
- ▶ Self-compassion
- ▶ Gratitude
- ▶ Connection
- ▶ Present focus
- ▶ Priority and intention
- ▶ Spirituality



1

ACCEPTANCE

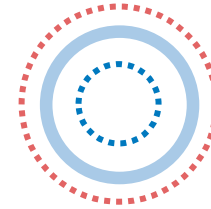


Experiential
avoidance



Radical
acceptance of
discomfort

Fully
acknowledging
reality with your
mind, body,
and spirit



The ability to
separate what is
in and out of your
sphere of control

ACCEPTANCE ACTIVITY: JOURNALING

Outside my control	Inside my control
1. News/current events	1. The amount of exposure that I allow myself
2. Feeling down when it's raining outside	2. Calling a friend, taking a walk, or meditating
3. Conflict with a coworker	3a. Taking a pause and choosing to behave respectfully 3b. My words and actions
4. Inflation	4. Working on next year's family budget
5. Feeling fatigued	5. Going to bed at the same time every night to get sufficient rest

2

SELF-COMPASSION



Involves being more understanding of and kinder to yourself



Entails mindfulness, connectedness, and self-kindness

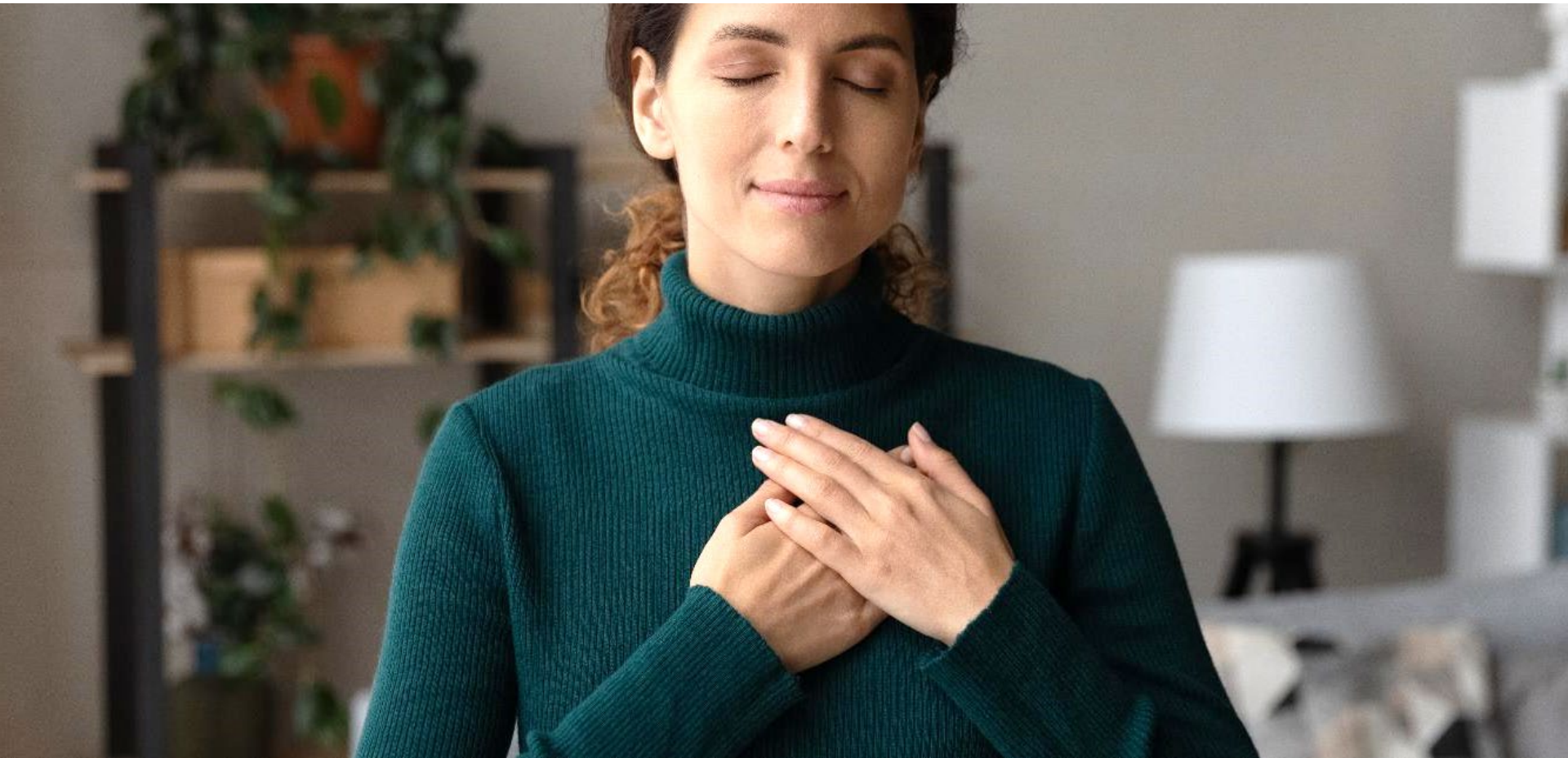


Com = with or together

Passion = to suffer

SELF-COMPASSION ACTIVITY

Touch



POLL 3

After trying this self-compassion activity, how do you feel?

- Less content
- More content
- I did not notice a change.
- I noticed my heart beating.

3

GRATITUDE



Appreciating
what you
have in life



Choosing to be
appreciative
and behaving
accordingly



Being intentional
about taking
notice and
actively practicing
gratitude

GRATITUDE ACTIVITIES



Write a handwritten letter thanking someone who has had a positive impact on your life



Give a thoughtful compliment to at least one person each week



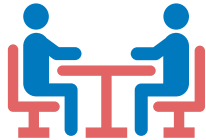
Every night, journal a good experience that happened in your day



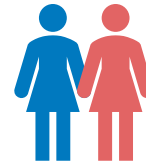
After a positive experience with a customer service agent, ask to speak to their supervisor so you can share how grateful you are to the employee

4

CONNECTION



Maintaining meaningful relationships



Having at least one person who fully knows us and allows us to be vulnerable

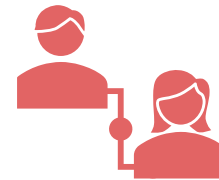
CONNECTION ACTIVITIES



**Find one simple way
to connect with
someone each day
for the next week**



**Carry out random
acts of kindness**



**Be vulnerable with
someone you trust**
**Share something
small that you've
never told them**

5

PRESENT FOCUS



Experiencing
each moment
as a gift



Making space
to be with our
thoughts and
emotions



Engaging our
senses to
connect with the
present moment

PRESENT FOCUS ACTIVITY

Dropping the anchor



6

PRIORITY AND INTENTION



Prioritizing
and living with
intention



Taking inventory of:

- ▶ Non-negotiables (sleep, nutrition, downtime, fun)
- ▶ How you spend your time vs. your priorities



Being cognizant of
what adds
contentment in life

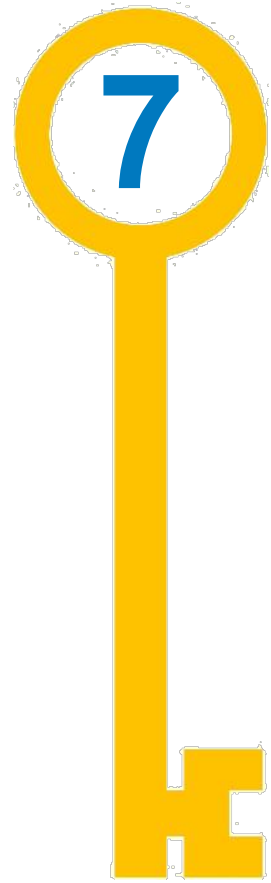


Creating a vision
statement

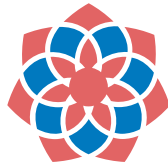
PRIORITY AND INTENTION ACTIVITY

Create a vision statement

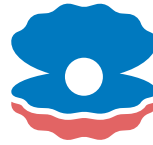




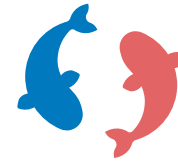
SPIRITUALITY



Having a sense of connection to and/or belief in something higher, greater, or outside of yourself



Discovering meaning in life



Developing loving, affirming relationships with yourself and others

CULTIVATING SPIRITUALITY

- Start with small, manageable steps
 - Try staying silent for 5-10 minutes a day in a quiet, soothing environment
- Find moments to connect with something greater
 - Take a walk at lunchtime to notice nature
- Explore and get curious
 - Ask others about their spiritual experiences, whether through religion or personal journeys
- Develop more optimism
 - Focus more of your attention on the positive events in your life that bring you a sense of joy and wonder

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

Loving-kindness meditation



SUMMARY



Contentment is:

- Enough
- Internally focused, acceptance-based, and is a lasting experience
- Rewarding with many physical and mental health benefits
- Cultivated with practice, intention, and commitment
- Satisfying and fulfilling

RESOURCES

Books

- ***This Book Won't Make You Happy: Eight Keys to Find True Contentment***
 - N. Feliciano, 2022
- ***Stillness is the Key***
 - R. Holiday, 2019

Websites

- Self-Compassion
 - self-compassion.org
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy
 - dbtselfhelp.com/dbt-skills-list/mindfulness

Online Articles

- Happiness vs Contentment: Which Should You Seek in Life?
 - happierhuman.com/happiness-vs-contentment
- Sustainable Happiness: How to Find Contentment that Will Last
 - happify.com/hd/sustainable-happiness-how-to-find-contentment-that-will-last

Videos

- Happiness vs. Contentment
 - youtube.com/watch?v=EYXYuADualc
- Dr. Seuss' Guide to Contentment
 - youtube.com/watch?v=BISICKSKbQY

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