

5 WAYS TO GENERATE MORE JOY

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Thank you all for joining us today for our presentation *5 Ways to Generate More Joy*.

Before we get started, I'd like to introduce our presenter. Ina Bachman is a Senior Consultant with the FOH Employee Assistance Program and is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and Certified Employee Assistance Provider. She has conducted over 200 Health and Wellness Presentations for the federal population, and has extensive experience working with individuals, groups, families, and couples. Ina has significant experience providing consultation to supervisors and employees, assisting with organizational issues, consultation, and crisis response. And as one of our Senior Consultants she also leads teams and mentors staff just like you all here today. And with that, I'll turn it over to Ina to begin the presentation.

Thank you, Tammy. Thank you, everybody. I am very excited to do this presentation today. I want to welcome you. December 20 19th. Who knew what situations we would be dealing with and what kind of challenges we would be having in 2020. What is interesting about this year is, normally the things that we would do that bring us joy are not so accessible whether it be to hang out with family and friends during a holiday or maybe it be to fly to another country. Maybe it would be to have your kids go to school and get them to watch a soccer game or go to a symphony. We are really enjoying-challenged at this time. We are really going to investigate this topic. Here are some of the things that we are going to cover in the next hour. So, I want you to look at the poll. If you click on the poem, that would be great. It is interesting when we created this poll, all of the different ways we created joy. See which ones work for you.

Okay. Great. We got about four seconds left everybody. I'm going to put the results up. Okay. One second here. Okay. The results are up.

Fabulous. Looks like happiness gets the biggest marks here. Looks like peace and contentment are runners-up. And, it looks like we also have love. Thanks, guys, for participating in that poll. Let's take a look at the chase, the hunt for happiness. You can see that they are also trying to understand happiness and joy. And, then, if we go into our Constitution which was written in 1780-something. Then, in the field of psychology, for the longest time, it was about studying pathology, problems. But, in the late 90s, it became a new branch study. How to create more positivity, how to create more joy in our life. Before we jump into what joy is, we want to look at what blocks are joy. Finding joy can take some study and research. If we name what is blocking our joy, we can actually tame it. I want you to pick the two actions that steal the joy most for you. We have My Job, Relationships, Health, Finances, Politics. Make sure you make your choices there before we run out of time. Thank you. It looks like politics news and social media are what steal joy the most. Negativity as being contagious. This is a woman that I know and she was

telling me a story about I think it was in April or May. People were connecting in a way maybe they hadn't connected in a while they all got on a zoom call together. After she got off the call, she felt so bad. I asked her what happened. Everybody was sharing their anxiety, worst case scenario, future. Another person was talking about climate change. Somebody else was talking about the crash of the economy. It went on and on. I realized how much worse I felt after the call. I think that is really interesting. When we talk about what steals your joy, it is important to look at a viewing different aspects that we will look at here. The first we want to talk about is the negativity bias. It is actually in your bibliography, and it will be in your resources. Dr. Hansen says our brains have actually evolved to be negative. Think about that for a moment. Back in caveman days, we had a threat of dying every single day. This species evolved to anticipate negative things. Having a negativity bias that you can see possibly bad things down the road is a good thing. But, we -- in our own life today, we want to be not in that negativity bias, when most of us are not dealing with life-threatening situations every day. Understand how that negativity can impact us. To add on to that, we also have a brain that defaults to the negative. This is also interesting. This was a Harvard study that was done. Our brains aren't engaged in an activity whether it be studying, watching TV, when they are sitting around doing nothing, our brains actually default into negative. Reviewing a negative experience in the past. That is actually pretty important information. The good news is the fact that we have this negative default is that now that we know about this we can actually take some steps to make it better. So, another component that steals our joy is how we can respond to suffering. You cannot avoid suffering. It is a part of the human condition. It is painful, but for the work of Sharon Salzberg who is a meditation/philosophy professor, when you are feeling the pain of something in a certain situation, the other 90% that you are feeling is just our minds going back to that default mode, and we can actually shift that. That is important information. The next piece that might steal our joy is our inner critic. I feel like I have this judge inside my head. What was I thinking? I have this coach standing up to me. Putting me down. The good news is there are people who have been studying this. The next thing I want to talk about joy is a mindset that is always striving. She says that people believe that their joy is going to come from something outside their cells themselves. They always go up against the fear that it is never enough. Find this perfect relationship. If I find this amount of money, maybe then I will be happy. I will be joyful. Maybe we will get that short hit of a joint when we accomplish joy when we accomplish. This last one is on the kind of interesting. She talks about this experience of when people are actually feeling joy is another thing that hits them which is when a moment of joy hits them, they fear it is going to be taken away. Then, I heard people also share stories with me. There I was staring at my baby with so much joy and love, and then, I think about all of the bad things that may happen to it. The good news is, this is another thing that we can learn how to manage, figuring out what our minds are doing so we can actually find joy. Think about a garden. The same thing can happen with our joy as well. I want to move into our next slide here. Thinking about what actually sparks our joy. You can choose what sparks joy for you. Looks like we have friends and family, animals, your pets, community involvement, being in nature, spiritual connection. Check off the ones that spark your joy.

We have about five seconds left. Go ahead and submit your responses.

Beautiful. I love this. Looks like we got family and friends, animals, being in nature that spark our joy. The good news is, we can do some of these things now creatively through Zoom or taking a walk outside. Okay. So, we are going to move on to some real joy sparkers. I'm going to take about five different ways to spark joy. Later we are going to get into the specifics on how to spark joy within yourself. He says another component to that is that the brain is velcro like Teflon. The negative ones stick to our memory, but the positive ones slide off. Your brain just keeps replaying the story over and over, and you feel the rush of chemicals, the stress in the body. It makes the memory of that negative experience stick. If bad things happen, we need to remember that. The good news is that Dr. Hansen says we can make those positive experiences stick as well. It is like going to the gym and building your muscles. We are going to talk about how to do that in a moment. Another thing that actually brings joy to our lives is our relationships. We are going to talk about those specific tools that you can manage and enhance your relationships. The study started in 1988. They studied these men's lives for 80 years. For those that are still alive, they are studying them today. What they were looking for is, what creates a life of quality. It is not what you think. We all would think it would be money, career, success in some way. The people who lived the longest were those with healthy, loving relationships. That means that we can enhance our relationships, we can actually bring more joy in our lives. We are going to talk about specific skills to do that. It has been studied a lot in the field of psychology. Self-love. Forgiveness. She does tell us one story about herself. She has an autistic child. He was 4 years old or 5 years old at the time. She had -- on this long flight to London this is what happened to her. [Indiscernible - muffled] She felt so helpless about the situation. She felt powerless. In that moment, she put her hand on her heart and said, it is okay dear. She was speaking to herself. We are going to get through this. She felt herself relax and be more compassionate to resolve. Herself. There is some specific tools that we are going to talk about. This is also an important aspect about finding joy in our life. Whether you are giving money or volunteering your time anything we do that impacts it person in a positive way. One research study had two groups of people studying. Each group measured their happiness levels before. You folks go off and use this study. You folks take this money and give it to someone else. You can do it anonymously or whatever way works for you. [Indiscernible - muffled] I think that is really powerful information. We can increase our Angel joy. You know how we talked about the stress hormones? They often make you feel so stressed out. Chemicals in our body. There actually are ways that we can actively increase our joy by decreasing those hormones. One way is endorphins. When our body is physically challenged, it releases endorphins. That can give us a sense of happiness. Oxytocin. The love hormone, the love chemical. It gets released when we have a connection with another person. Men can experience it as well. Even petting an animal, cats or dogs. Our brains are actually set up to create attachment, connection. Another one is called dopamine. That is the one that we go outside of our comfort zone. When we finally accomplish that, our brain releases dopamine. Serotonin is the one that can -- on a mood level. Serotonin is like endorphins. I bet you are having some questions about how can I get more of these things? We are going to talk about specific behaviors. What are a few things that you happen to know to grow your joy? Back to the brain. Back to the negativity bias. Dr. Rick Hansen came up with this activity how we can make positivity stick in the brain. Stop, drop, and roll. We can use that same three words to remind us how to build more positivity experiences in our brain. Our brain actually grows on what we focus on. Let's talk about stop, drop, and roll.

Recognize what's happening. Because they slip off, we often miss them or forget about them. Experience it in all of your senses. You want to memorize the experience. Consciously imagine experiencing it over and over in your mind. So, I'll give you an example about how this can work. Think about a drink that you like. Coffee, tea, water. I use coffee as an example. Brewing that cup of coffee, you want to stop in the moment. Why not use it for your positive brain building up muscle? Then, we want to drop into the experience with all your senses. What does it smell like? You want to listen to it. Feel the cup. Then, you are going to look at the coffee. It might look delicious the way it is, maybe pour creamer in there. Allow yourself to take it all in. Then, you are going to roll it. You are going to close your eyes and memorize the experience. Just allow yourself to replay the full experience. That is how we make these positive experiences stick. A lot of this Dr. Hansen talks about mindfulness. Mindfulness is a friend of meditation. We are not going to go into how to meditate. Insight Timer app. Another is called Calm. They have tools. The reason mindfulness is powerful is, mindfulness brings us right to the present moment. We have that default anxiety about the future or regret about the past. It allows us to experience the present moment in a positive way. If they can get themselves into the present moment, they notice that they are safe in that moment. They can even put their hand on their heart, and tell themselves they are safe. Awe is looking around and taking in the beauty of today. The awe experience of walking through a garden. It brings you into the present moment. A gratitude practice is about daily practice thinking about what you are grateful for each day. A lot of people keep a journal. The families that sit around the dinner table and share what they are thankful for. You probably have questions. We are going to look at those afterwards. The next tool I'm going to talk about is relationships. We talked about relationships as a source of joy. I know I talked about building our joy like a garden. I like to say relationships meet just at the garden, we need to feed them. We feed them with taking time for them. Laughter, humor. She says that vulnerability, when we share the truth of our experience, things that we might be struggling with, we connect on this human level, and that brings more joy into our situation. How do we weed our garden? It could be criticism, blame, contempt, stone-walling. That is where we put up a wall and not talk to our partner. That is from the work of John Gottmann. Those four things are relationship destructors. We need to have a ratio of 5:1. Five positive experiences for every one negative experience we have. For example, we may have criticism, and that actually causes a rift between the two of you. It will take five positive experiences. The relationship can actually feed you back. So, the next tool we are talking about here for growing and enhancing your joy is the antidote to your inner critic. So, there is so much more literature about this. We could talk for days about this. I am going to quickly touch on two things. CBT is all about taking a look at how our thoughts impact our emotions and reality. If we can recognize the negative thoughts, we can actually change them, and then, we can change how we feel. If you would like to learn more about this, you can call your EAP, and work with one of the EAP consultants to build those behaviors. There is a woman who came to talk to me about how things had really become toxic at home. Things had gotten really frustrating for you. We dug a little deeper. What is causing this frustration? They never do the laundry. I wanted her to take a look at those problems from a different perspective. One question I asked her was, will this really matter 10 years from now? She realized that, you know, this isn't that big a deal in this big scheme of things. She is like, you know what, I think I'm going to teach them how to shut their doors. That is one example of CBT. Tara Brach has a similar process. First, you want to recognize the situation, feel it in your body.

Take a moment and recognize what is going on. Allow yourself to be in it. Maybe you are feeling helpless. Allow what it is that is going on. Investigate it. Go a little deeper. What is the source? You don't push it away. You come back to that loving self. Take a deep breath, and allow it to be. And, so now, we are going to talk about contributing. As we said before, contributing is a -- I want you to think about something you feel passionate about. Making a contributing habit. Not actually thinking about this, but how you are going to do this. Schedule it. Put it in your daily or weekly schedule. What I want to talk about is, back to those positive chemicals. We talked a little bit about this before, but I want you to think about what are some behaviors that you can do to bring about these chemicals. Lifting weights. Stretching. Gets those endorphins released, and helps me start my day. For a lot of us, it is very isolating, this pandemic. You have to make sure to consciously connect with other people. Could be a phone call, text, Zoom call, walk. You get a daily dose of that oxytocin. Is there something in your life where you wanted to step outside your comfort zone and wanted to do? Take that risk. Set those goals. Actually trying something new for yourself. I want you to think about all these five areas. These are the ones that we decided to focus on in this presentation. Is there one you can do or all of them? The good piece is, it is not based on anybody else. It is just yourself. Happiness is an inside thing. I just want to remind you, we talked about the history of happiness. And identifying what is getting in the way of your happiness. Then, we talked about how to shift things. Okay, we are going to do one more poll. This one is about, what is one behavior you want to do or restart this holiday season? Exercise. Volunteer. Connect with a friend or family member. Make amends with one family member. Spend time with pets. Reflect on what you've achieved during 2020, and share that with someone. Meditate daily.

All right. I'm going to go ahead and put up the results here.

All right. Great. Exercise definitely has many positive impacts in our lives. It helps our brains work better as well. These are some of the resources that we talked about in the presentation today. Tammy, I am going to hand it over to you since this is the last slide.

Thank you for your wonderful presentation Ina. If you would like more information on this or other topics, give us a call, or go online to our website FOH4You.com. Before we get to your questions, I do want to remind everybody that the recording of the transcript will be emailed to you after the webinar. When you exit today's webinar, a satisfaction survey will appear. We appreciate any feedback you may have. Let's get this started, Ina. People around me are struggling. How can I feel joyful when they are having a tough time?

Your joy can actually lift other people up. You may be a source of joy to others. Instead of feeling guilty, you can use it as an opportunity to share your joy.

How do I get rid of the inner critic?

This is a great question. From some of the tools, there are many, many ways that we can get the inner critic get quieter, and quieter. It is a free benefit. Why not get some inner critic tools? Great question. Thanks for asking.

Which joy activity is the best one to start with?

Choose the easiest one to start with. A lot of people, enhancing their exercise routine. Many different positive behaviors happen as well. If you can make it a habit for yourself, do it on a daily basis.

How much do our childhood experiences influence our inner critic?

Yes, that is a good question. Some people will actually do a deep dive in their past to find out what is keeping them from feeling joy. Thanks for asking that question.

All right. Thanks, Ina. Do you have any suggests our advice to help with self-forgiveness?

Yes, that is the self-compassion. I would say that is a great EAP question. You know what? I want to get better at self-forgiveness. See if I can find some real specific tools. Thank you for that.

Great. Thanks. Someone else would like to know, can you provide some tips for those of us who have had many bad relationship experiences?

Wow. I saw this question. I don't know anybody who hasn't at some time in their life. That is a great EAP question. The most important thing is to see them as learning experiences. There is more great literature out now regarding relationships. There is new neuroscience on relationships too. They are both about what you do with relationships and how we change those patterns ourselves.

We have time for one more. Can you talk about R.A.I.N. again?

I am going to go back to the resources. Tara, her first name is Tara, T-A-R-A. Her last name is Brach, B-R-A-C-H. The first thing you want to do is recognize what is going on. If you can take a moment and say, I am really struggling here. It helps you to recognize it so you can see it. Recognize what is happening in your body. That is where mindfulness comes in. Being in the present moment with these experiences. Why is this so triggering for me? Why am I reacting this way? Just investigating why I respond to this particular situation. [Indiscernible - muffled] Not trying to push the experience away. Check that out.

All right. Fantastic.

We've reached the top of the hour, we'll conclude our webinar for today. I'd like to once again thank Ina Bachman for presenting today, and I want to thank you for taking time to participate. Have a wonderful rest of your day!

Thank you, everybody.

[Event concluded]