



# THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FEEL BETTER NOW

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When you love someone with an addiction, there are many ups and downs. It can be very challenging and very stressful a times. You might need things you can do right away to feel better. Here are some positive psychology interventions that act as Resilience CPR or First Aid.

Positive psychology is the scientific study of positive experiences, states, and traits. It grew as a field after the realization that psychology mainly focused on dysfunction and disorders while ignoring the research of what conditions might lead to optimal functioning. Let's use the scientific study of human flourishing to help us through a challenge.

Everyone faces moments when they are feeling stressed, unmotivated, or unhappy. There are many different ways to feel better, but it is important to figure out what works best for you.

## Positive Psychology interventions

Here is a list of some positive psychology interventions that you can use that might help you feel better right away:

1. **Gratitude Journal**
2. **Put Energy into Motion**
3. **You at Your Best**
4. **Daily Strength Awareness**
5. **Mindfulness Meditation**



# GRATITUDE JOURNAL

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It's probably one of the most well-known positive psychology interventions. The world's leading expert on gratitude, Robert Emmons, defines gratitude as:

**" A felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life."**

Gratitude is an excellent buffer against negative emotions such as disappointment, anger, worry, and irritation. It involves focusing on the present moment and appreciating what is instead of focusing on what could be. People who are frequently grateful are:

- Happier;
- More energetic;
- More hopeful;
- Experience more frequent positive emotions.

If you enjoy writing, keeping a gratitude journal is a great way to practice gratitude. Pick a time of the day when you can reflect and relax for a while and ponder on the 3 to 5 things for which you are grateful, no matter how small or big they are. Another method is to replace any ungrateful thought with a grateful one.

Try doing this every day for a week and notice how you feel. You might need to customize this exercise to best suit your character and values, as with all the different activities. It makes sense that gratitude is a value we must practice to find deeper calm and meaning.



## PUT ENERGY INTO MOTION

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### **Emotions Are Energy.**

How we experience emotions is the experience of energy moving through the body. This is generally felt as sensations of contraction such as tension or expansion such as calm. Researcher Barbara Frederickson furthered this understanding by describing the upward and downward spiral effect of emotion. Understanding that emotions are energy implies that they are fluid, moving resources meant to be felt and released vs. suppressed and ignored. The drive to move your emotional energy is present every moment because your nervous system constantly pursues homeostasis.

When you get angry or experience stressful emotions, your body tends to get very excited. Your heart rate, blood pressure, breathing speed, and body temperature may increase. Your body also releases certain stress hormones that put your body on high alert.

**The Bottom line: when we experience anger, stress, frustration, disappointment or any negative emotion, one thing is sure, we need to **MOVE**.**

Naturally, our bodies want to RUN or experience a feeling of a safe return home. Exercising and movement release feel-good hormones called endorphins, which improve your mood and help you de-stress. Engaging in exercise or movement diverts you from the very thing you are anxious about. Moving your body decreases muscle tension, lowering the body's contribution to feeling anxiety and stress.



## YOU AT YOUR BEST

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By thinking about your best possible future self, you can learn about yourself and what you want in life. This way of thinking can help you restructure your priorities in life in order to reach your goals.

Consider your most meaningful goals and desires for yourself in the different areas of your life: professional, social, romantic, physical, or any other category of your choice. Visualization and daydreaming are powerful human tendencies. They are very healthy and can be harnessed to make you more optimistic and more resilient in the present moment.

Why does this exercise work? At its simplest, one of the experts in the field, Professor Martin Seligman, says “The important thing about imagination is that it gives you optimism”

Psychologist Dr. Tom Muha has written, "The Best Possible Self positive psychology exercise is one of the most recognized methods for boosting happiness. Researchers find it has long-term effectiveness and people report that it's immediately beneficial. The exercise has been shown to boost people's positive emotions, happiness levels, optimism, hope, improve coping skills, and elevate positive expectations about the future."

### **Then imagine your life after everything has gone as well as it possibly could:**

- What would you be doing?
- Where would you be living?
- What would your days look like?
- How would you feel?

This exercise can help you explicitly see your own understanding of what self-actualization might mean in your case. One of the best-researched and widely used positive psychology strategies is the ‘Best Possible Self’ exercise, which has been shown to boost mood, primarily by increasing hopefulness and specificity about what needs to change.



## DAILY STRENGTH AWARENESS

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Is it easier for you to name your strengths or your weaknesses? Research shows that people who recognize and regularly use their strengths are more resilient. When we focus on developing our strengths rather than trying to improve our weaknesses, we experience more growth and resilience. Knowing your strengths helps increase your self-awareness and ability to bounce back from adversity. It can give you a new appreciation for traits you previously undervalued in yourself.

The development of strengths requires a process of self-examination, self-discovery, and reflection. For someone to really understand their strengths, they need to look inward.

### **Recalling Your Strengths**

Think about a time in the past that you faced a challenge that you overcame. Take a moment to think about one or more of the strengths that you used during this struggle. How were you proud of yourself? –for instance, did you use creativity, perseverance, kindness, or curiosity. Write in detail about what you did, how you felt, and what you learned from the experience.

Consider now how you could use these strengths today in a new and different way. Describe in writing the personal strength you plan to use today and how you will use it. Then, go ahead and do it—act on your strength as frequently as possible throughout the day.

# MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

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Mindfulness meditation is a focus on the present moment achieved through the directing of attention towards one's immediate experiences, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and sensations.

It involves paying attention to our thoughts and feelings with a sense of acceptance and non-judgment. In very simple terms, it implies that instead of focusing on what we should be feeling or experiencing, we are present and aware of how we are feeling. It is not about trying to change anything, just tuning in to our experience at the moment.

A large body of research has established mindfulness meditation as one of the most powerful and effective tools to promote psychological well-being.

According to APA (American Psychological Association), the research on mindfulness has identified as benefits:

- **Reduced rumination;**
- **Stress reduction;**
- **Increases in working memory;**
- **Increased ability to focus;**
- **Less emotional reactivity;**
- **More cognitive flexibility;**
- **Relationship satisfaction.**

One of the most common forms of mindfulness meditation is the Body Scan. But find any form of mediation that works well for you.

Enjoy our SYKM Body Scan Meditation in the Live Life Happy Cafe.



## FINAL TAKE-AWAY

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Some other things you can do to feel better now is:

Take deep breaths. Recite a comforting mantra. Talk to someone. Change your surroundings. Take a break. Go for a walk. Listen to music. Do something nice for someone else. Plan something. Do yoga. Dance. Watch a funny show. Remember good times.

Positive psychology has shown that our well-being and satisfaction can be increased through our efforts and intentional activities. It takes practice, it might not always be easy, but it will most certainly be worth the effort. Life can feel challenging and chaotic when you love someone with an addiction. These real-time resilience skills can help you navigate the turmoil. If you want additional support, don't hesitate to join our community private Facebook group or join an SYKM meeting.

### **You are not alone.**

Have you tried any of these interventions before? Which one had the most significant impact on your life?

Visit our website for more resources to help you tap back into your power and connect with the SYKM community.

[www.savingyouiskillingme.com](http://www.savingyouiskillingme.com)