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- Awe
- Compassion
- Connection
- Empathy
- Forgiveness
- Gratitude
- Happiness
- Kindness
- Mindfulness
- Optimism
- Resilience to Stress
- Self-Compassion

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Sort by most popular



CASUAL ★★★★★
Frequency: 1x/day | Duration: 10 mins

Three Good Things

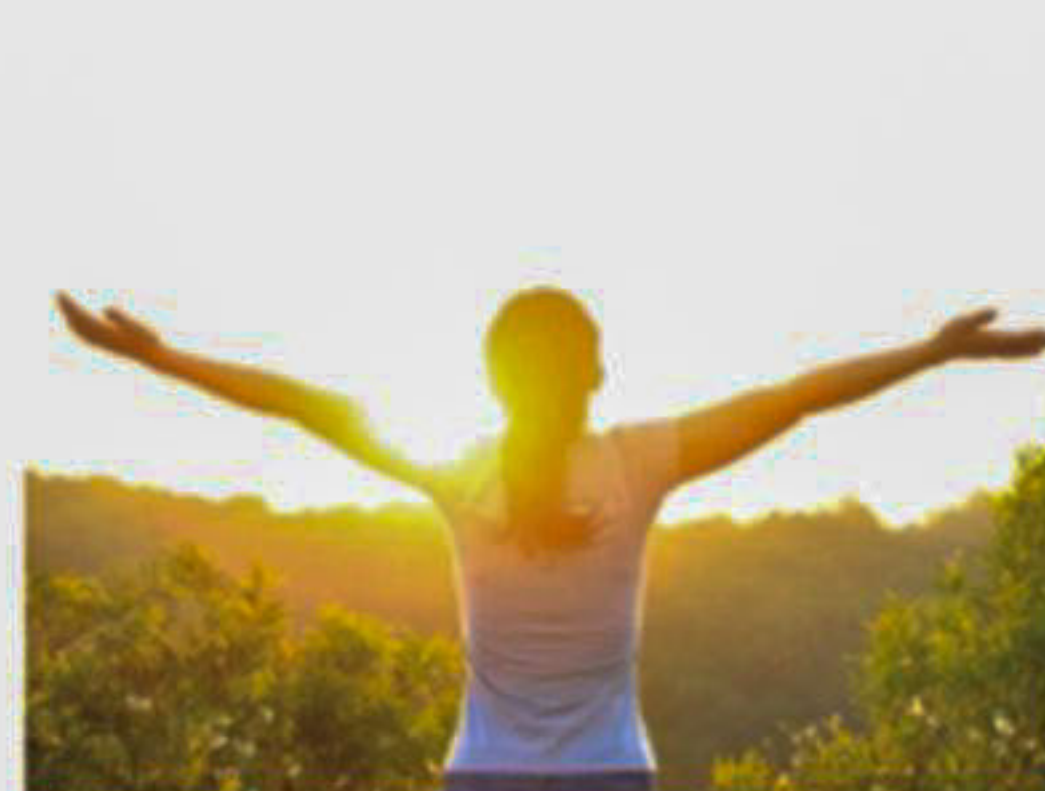
A way to tune into the positive events in your life.



CASUAL ★★★★★
Frequency: 1x/day | Duration: 15 mins

Mindful Breathing

A way to build resilience to stress, anxiety, and anger.



CASUAL ★★★★★
Frequency: 1x/week | Duration: 15 mins

Self-Compassionate Letter

Stop beating yourself up for flaws and mistakes.



MODERATE ★★★★★
Frequency: 3x/week | Duration: 30 mins

Body Scan Meditation

Feeling tense? Feel your body relax as you try this practice.

PRACTICING OUR EMOTIONS

MAYABEE ARANNYA

A few weeks ago, I came across a podcast called "The Science of Happiness". The host Dacher Keltner, a professor of psychology, brought in "happiness guinea pigs" in each episode, which were essentially people who shared their experiences after partaking in one of the practices that the website "Greater Good in Action" had in store.

Greater Good in Action was launched by University of California Berkeley's Greater Good Science Centre, in collaboration with HopeLab. All of the sections called "practices" on the website are developed by researchers who believe that some emotions are actually skills that can be developed through practice. All these practices state the exact amount of time you need to execute each exercise, the frequency with which you should do it, and the difficulty level. It also clearly tells you why and how you should do the practice, provides evidence that it works by citing actual research, and also has a quiz in the end to evaluate yourself.

The home page lists various emotions that you can build on, such as Happiness, Compassion, Empathy, and so on. The one that first caught my eye was "Awe" since it had never occurred to me that being in awe can be something to build on.

I decided to try a practice called the

"Awe Narrative". It instructed me to take 15 minutes to write about the most recent experience I'd had that had left me in awe. It was honestly difficult to think of something but I soon remembered how I had my mouth literally open almost the entire time I watched the movie "In This Corner of The World." The website was leaning more on a beautiful view or an awe-inspiring action by a person but a couch potato like me could only think of a movie. It took me five minutes to write it, and I could actually feel the same way I felt while watching the movie, since I was recalling it all. For that five minutes, my mind was completely focused on that memory. But what was the point of this?

Apparently, awe is an emotion that is supposed to expand our view of the world and make us less conscious about minor things in life, and help us look at the bigger picture. They provided evidence from a study that showed people were satisfied with their lives if they experienced more awe. This practice alone was too short to have a big enough impact on my life.

I therefore took the "Awe Quiz" that they had and found out my "Awe Score" is 48 out of 75. It stated that because I have a fairly moderate level of awe in my life, I am more prone to stress and burn-out. It recommended other awe-inducing practices, but I was more concerned about the fact that stress is actually something I

suffer from a lot and could use some relief.

After searching for practices related to stress relief, I landed upon a practice called "Mindful Breathing". Mindfulness is the ability of being aware of your thoughts, feelings, and being more present. I was already familiar with this technique of breathing through a meditation app. It required me to sit in a comfortable position and concentrate on my breathing. What I had to do was inhale deeply, hold my breath for a few seconds, then exhale in a similar fashion. I also had to breathe into my stomach and not my chest, which takes a bit of practice to learn to do. This honestly works really well whenever you're stressed or anxious and need to quickly calm down. I scored a 58 out of 100 on the "Mindfulness Quiz" and was recommended lots of different meditation practices to help increase my mindfulness.

While looking for practices to enhance happiness, which is probably the most fundamental emotion, I realised that there was no singular practice for just happiness. Happiness is achieved by building on other positive emotions. Most of the practices under happiness were unsurprisingly based on gratitude. A practice called "Mental Subtraction of Relationships" caught my interest. It stated that I should think about a close friendship or romantic relationship and consider all of the events that led up to

me meeting that person. It asked of me to think of life without them, and write down all of the events that happened and decisions I took that could have happened differently and I would have ended up without that specific person in my life.

This one hit me hard. I had never thought of doing something like this before. No matter how independent we call ourselves, most of us will find that we depend on our loved ones in some form, especially emotionally. It's actually eye-opening what the extent of this dependence can be at times. On the "Gratitude Quiz" I got a 65 out of 105, which apparently means I am a grateful person. I agree with this, and also have learned that gratitude is not something to just overlook.

After trying out several of the practices on the website, I can safely say that taking the time to look through the practices and integrating some of them into your life will help better your life. No matter how happy or depressed you consider yourself to be, there is always room for improvement. Our mind is supposed to be a well-oiled machine just like our organs, therefore taking care of and managing our mind and emotions is important.

Check out Greater Good in Action at <https://ggia.berkeley.edu>



Greater Good in Action

SCIENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE