

Do Now

Lesson 4 and 5: How can we stay happy and positive?



Emi could barely drag herself out of bed this morning, she felt so down and tired. She had so many jobs to do; walk half an hour to the shops, finish her English assignment, babysit her little cousin and help out down at the retirement home. Strangely, after her very busy day, Emi felt a real level of happiness and positivity.

Discuss: Why might completing these activities have helped change Emi's mood?



Define the term 'positivity.'
How is this different from happiness?

I think positivity means...

This is different from happiness because...

How can we stay happy and positive?



Learning outcomes:

Explain how certain activities can help to improve our moods and make us feel happier and more positive, as well as why these tips work.

Analyse the short- and long-term benefits of the different healthy ways we can improve our own and other people's moods.

Happiness – Happiness is a positive and pleasant emotion, ranging from contentment with your life to temporary intense joy.

Positivity - The practice of being or tendency to be positive or optimistic in attitude.

Now let's return to Emi.

What we've learned seems to make sense here. Emi spent the day walking around (improving her health and fitness levels), helping her community and family (strengthening relationships) and completing her assignment (focusing on a goal).

Helping out the elderly people may also have made Emi feel grateful for her own youthful exuberance and independence.

1. Spend ten minutes now creating a day plan for yourself where you would cover our four human happiness factors in one day. What activities would you do to ensure you covered all four?



Did you know?

Apparently, the UK is currently measured as the 2nd least happy country in the world. Watch carefully:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hGTUVcpBc0>

How can we stay happy and positive?



You have just been given an information pack, which you will need for today's activities. Before we get started, let's read it through together.

THORNDEN THREE - READING!

Follow the text in your booklet



We are now going to read the text to help us understand ways that we can stay happy and positive

THORNDEN THREE - READING!

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What is happiness?

Happiness is the state of being happy – in other words, being content or pleased with your life, your situation, or the person that you are. It means having good feelings about the present, (and maybe the past or the future), and feeling that you are able to achieve what you want, or able to enjoy yourself. Although happiness can be defined in general terms, it can also vary greatly from person to person, in terms of what brings them happiness. For example, for some people, happiness would be having a loving partner, seeing family often or having great friends. These are all examples of emotional happiness, which comes from the relationships that a person is able to form. Yet again, for other people, happiness might mean doing really well at school, getting high grades, becoming a master at their particular hobby or interest, and getting a top job in their chosen field. This might be classed as professional happiness, because it's focused on achieving potential, focusing on a goal. For other people, happiness might mean seeing everybody in society doing well and being looked after. We might call this social happiness, as it's focused on the wellbeing of other people. Of course, there are many more types of happiness, and many people have a mix of all of these.

We are now going to read the text to help us understand ways that we can stay happy and positive

THORNDEN THREE - READING!

Follow the text in your booklet



How do I become happy?

There are several things to think about carefully in order to answer this question. The first thing you need to think about is what makes **you** happy. As described above, there are many different types of happiness, and these are different for every person, which usually relate back to the main four discussed earlier today. You need to think about what is important to you, in order to be able to pursue the kind of goals that are going to make you happy. For example, if you value great relationships as a way of being happy, but you spend all your time working in order to get a competitive job that is going to take up all of your time, you may not end up particularly happy.

Another key thing to consider when looking to become truly happy is what you already have. This doesn't mean that you have to be grateful for everything in your life, but it does mean that you can acknowledge the things that are already good about your current situation. For example, you may have some good aspects of physical health, or you may have a special talent, or you may have benefited from a good role model, and so on. The more often you make the effort to notice the good things in your life, the easier it will become to spot them, which in turn will help you to feel more positive.

Being aware of the good things about your current situation doesn't mean that you don't want to change anything. You can still be aware of what is less good and what you want to develop, whilst at the same time acknowledging what's working. In fact, taking a balanced view will help you to set appropriate goals.

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THORNDEN THREE - READING!

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BELONG CARE ASPIRE SUCCEED

This leads on to another important factor to consider, which is realism. You may think that the only thing that would make you happy is something that is completely impossible – for example, everybody living forever, or all diseases being completely eradicated from the Earth. If your happiness is aimed this high, then you will always be disappointed. Instead, it's important to be happy with smaller achievements and events, especially ones which lead to your ultimate goal.

But how can I be happy when there is so much suffering in the world?

It's easy to take a pessimistic view of the world sometimes: the climate is in serious trouble thanks to human activity; there are wars in many parts of the world; social inequality is rising in many countries, and a host of other reasons to be miserable.

However, you may find it helpful to consider the following:

- you being miserable about these things won't stop them from happening or from getting worse, nor will it alone make them any better
- if you're not positive in your outlook then it's harder to find the energy to actively change things
- suffering is not the only thing happening in the world; there are many wonderful things happening all over the world too
- progress is being made in many areas as well as across history
- just because inequality and suffering exist, doesn't mean that you don't deserve to be happy
- you can feel sadness, pain and all the other negative emotions – but you can also have hope. Remember, everyone deserves to be happy – including YOU.

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What can I do to cultivate the habit of positivity?

Positivity can be exercised like a muscle, with some of these daily workouts:

- Keep a note of five different things you're grateful for every day for a month. Look back over what you've written in order to remind yourself of the good things you've got in your life. If five is too many – try one to begin with!
- Acknowledge good things in yourself and others. If someone's done something that you admire, respect, or are grateful for – tell them! Give yourself the same treatment too. This could be as simple as telling a friend, or just making a mental note to yourself that you've done well.
- Deal with problems as they arise (don't let things build up). Approach issues in a proactive way, being open and unafraid of conflict.
- Let go of blame, grudges, and anything that might keep you from being open and focused on enjoying the present.
- Get regular exercise. The endorphins released from exercise help you to feel good and to get a good night's sleep.

Belong - Care - Aspire - Succeed

Earlier on, we heard that the US Surgeon General (basically one of the world's top doctors) thought that social media was making people less happy. Why is this? How does this seem to apply more to teenagers? Let's investigate together now. Watch the clip and we'll go through our answers together shortly



What did the first report show about spending one hour per day on social media?

[1.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuqdE-5FOLM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuqdE-5FOLM)

What have all recent studies shown us about time spent on social media?

Which seems to be worse, passive or active use?

What do we mean when we talk about an 'opportunity cost'?



What did the first report show about spending one hour per day on social media?

That our overall satisfaction with our lives can reduce by up to 14%

What have all recent studies shown us about time spent on social media?

It makes us less happy – all studies show a small but significant decrease.

Which seems to be worse, passive or active use?

Passive – think doom-scrolling!

What do we mean when we talk about an ‘opportunity cost’?

We mean social media is taking up all of the free time that you could have spent doing something more productively – that actually would make you happier.



How can we stay happy and positive?



Useful, legitimate and appropriate helplines and charities:

Young Minds. Child and adolescent mental health charity for teens struggling with any subject. Call: 0808 802 5544

Teen Line | Teens Support hotline - Connect, talk, get help! Teen Line's highly trained teen listeners provide support, resources and hope to any teen who is struggling.

SANE. National out-of-hours mental health charity offering emotional support, guidance and information. Call: 0300 304 7000 (4.30pm to 10.30pm)

Mental Health Foundation. Information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

<https://www.nhs.uk/> The National Health Service website



Need Support? You're Not Alone

If anything in today's lesson has affected you, or you want to talk to someone, there is help available.



Mental Health & Low Mood

YoungMinds – <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>
Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com>
Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Talk to Someone

Your Tutor or Head of Year – We're here to help.
Wellbeing Team and School Nurse
Report a Concern on Satchel
Safeguarding Team with the Purple lanyards

Healthy Lifestyle

NHS Every Mind Matters – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>
Change4Life – <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

Apps That Can Help

Calm – For mindfulness and sleep.
Headspace – Meditation and stress relief.
Clear Fear – Manage anxiety (designed for young people).
MeeTwo – Anonymously talk to other teens, moderated by experts.

Eating Concerns

Beat Eating Disorders –
<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>
NHS Live Well – Eating Disorders –
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/eating-disorders/>