

## **Lesson 2**

### **Savouring Good Experiences**

#### **Introduction**

‘Savouring’ is when we become more aware of positive moments, past, present, or future.

Noticing and being engaged with your positive feelings, thoughts, and situations leads to increased happiness.

Savouring positive moments improves your physical and mental health. It leads to stronger relationships and develops your creative problem solving abilities.

#### **Science**

Savouring boosts your mood, and it can involve entering a dream-like state. For example:

- indulging in reliving a past pleasant moment
- appreciating a good experience in the ‘now’
- anticipating an enjoyable experience in the future

Focussing on something good allows you to calm down from a stressful day. It helps you to recognise your achievements, and motivates you to participate in life more fully.

Studies show that savouring lowers depression, improves happiness and life satisfaction - leading to stronger psychological wellbeing.

The best thing is, the skill of savouring can be learnt and gets better the more you practice.

#### **Why this helps**

There are many ways of savouring positive moments, and the benefits of doing this are huge.

Savouring enhances positive emotions. It gives us a mental boost so we can enjoy life to the full, and it helps us cope better with tricky situations.

## Exercise

There are lots of things you can try to help you savour positive experiences. Try it yourself with the following exercises.

### 1. Take a mental picture

- Pause for a second and 'drink in' everything you want to remember. What stands out in this moment?

### 2. Use your senses

- What can you see, hear, smell, taste and feel? Your sensory perceptions maximise awareness of the moment and recall in greater depth beyond the moment.

### 3. Be present

- Reminding yourself to savour any pleasant moments 'in the now' connects you to the past. So when you look back at it in your memory, the positive feelings and thoughts you had can be recreated in the future.

### 4. Talk to yourself

- Using positive self-talk when a pleasant moment occurs is a great way of compounding your feelings, such as: 'I'm loving this. This is so good. 'I'm amazing.'

### 5. Smile

- Research has found that if you're feeling down, smiling is good for you. Even if you have to force a smile, it will lead to other people smiling back at you, which will result in you feeling happier.

### 6. Share your positive feelings, thoughts and experiences

- Share the good news! Telling someone else makes you feel happier and is proven to prolong happiness.

### 7. Surround

- Spending time with someone who is more positive leads to you feeling happier too. Research has found that having a happy partner, friend or neighbour who lives close by to you improves your likelihood of having a more positive mood in general.

### 8. Thank people

- Expressing your gratitude for positive experiences and showing more appreciation for the present moment, like thanking someone for helping you, is a great way of savouring the moment.

## 9. Find humour

- Oh no, the worst has happened! Can you look back at something and laugh at it now it's over? If it happened to someone else, would it raise a smile? Try to find the funny side, it'll soon be tomorrow's news.

## 10. Reflect

- Positive moments will quickly pass and respecting them for a few seconds will do wonders in improving your optimistic outlook.

## Wrap

It can take time to look at things in a more positive light than usual, especially if you're used to concentrating on the details, rather than your feelings and thoughts about the task.

It's easy to miss and savour the moments that might lead you to be more optimistic in your thinking.

The benefits of introducing savouring into your daily life are scientifically proven. Not only will your physical and mental health improve, you'll also feel less stressed and look forward to the future more.

You'll feel re-energised.

## VIDEO:

In this video, we'll guide you through more simple strategies you can use in everyday life.

### 1. Compare

- Weigh up the outcomes of situations. Look at both the positive and negative sides, being sure to pick out the things that went well, before, after, or during your tough moments in a day.

### 2. Reframe situations

- Remember that the more you pay attention to the positive aspects of any scenario, the more you're training your brain to form this habit, which then stops you dwelling on the bad parts.

### 3. Accept what you can't control

- Letting go of any battles gives you peace and serenity. Some things are just out of your hands.

#### 4. Change the things you can

- Taking small steps each day to make your world a better place creates more opportunities to savour, get those tasks completed, go out for a date - whatever gives you a sense of achievement.

### Next steps

Try savouring positive moments and emotions in your week ahead, focusing on the following two ways:

1. Reflect and take a mental picture in your mind of situations that led to you feeling positive.
2. Use all your senses.
  - Pause for just a second and 'drink in' everything you want to remember
  - Where were you?
  - What was happening?
  - Who else was there?
  - What could you see, hear, taste, touch, smell?
  - As you savour the moment, how do you feel and what's happening?
  - What is your facial expression?