

Three Ways to Be Good to Yourself:

Increasing Positive Emotions

Positive emotion is first element in the formula for Well Being:

Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment

Through evolution, our brains became slippery for positive emotions and sticky for negative emotions. In the past, this helped us survive, but we have learned the benefits of positive emotion in today's world. Try these three ways to be good to yourself to increase your positive emotions. The goal is three positive emotions for every one negative one.

1. When you're feeling down and need a pick-me-up, do one of the following for 5 minutes:
 - a. Call a good friend who can help you look on the bright side
 - b. Go outside for a walk, preferably somewhere green
 - c. Listen to energizing music, anything that will get you tapping your feet or humming along.
2. Create a folder of favorite positive photos on your computer and use them as the screensaver. Every so often when you take a break from your keyboard, a happy image will randomly pop up on the screen and make you smile. You can also do this on your phone.
3. Boost your positive emotions by treating yourself to a special day (out or in), for example a walk in the woods and a picnic, a visit to an art gallery or a local landmark followed by a nice lunch, a trip to the water, a visit to a health spa, a swim, a game of golf or a day devoted to your favorite hobby. Avoid the temptation to spend all day in your PJs, crashed out on the sofa with the remote control, even though this might seem to be the most relaxing way to spend your time. Take your time planning what you're going to do, take your time to enjoy the day and take your time reminiscing about it afterwards using savoring tips. Then try stretching this out into a week of activities - think of something different to do for 15-30 minutes every day which will boost your positive emotions. Ideas include enjoying a bubble bath or dancing round the living room to some of your favorite songs. Record the activities you do, and how good you felt doing them, in your well-being journal.