

2.4.1. Technical Sheet Learning Positive Emotions

Activity Identification	Dimension	Number of Participants	Duration (minutes)
13 Learning Positive Emotions	Transitional Skills	8 – 12	30 + every day 10

The aim of the activity

To motivate and have the participants focus on and explore their positive emotions. This activity aims to cultivate positive emotions. Focusing on and experiencing positive emotions can open and broaden one's mind as well as enforce one's sense of resilience, hope and strength. Focusing on positive events and positive emotions can help one deal with negative events in a more constructive way.

Preparation

Print handout **Positive Emotions '3 Good Things'**. One for each participant.

Print the story/example of positive emotions to use as a model.

Read the **pedagogical section** regarding **positive emotions**.

Instructions

1. Introduce the participants to the concept of **positive emotions** based on Barbara Frederickson. An important aspect, when talking about positive emotions, is that the negative emotion is not bad. Negative emotions are of great importance to humans, both in daily life and from an evolutionary perspective. In this activity, we place focus on the positive experiences.
2. Have the participants think of one of their most positive and memorable experiences. E.g., A time when they felt safe, happy, and comfortable. (This is most likely a moment where the participant experienced joy). As a facilitator, you can start by sharing an example of personal experience, then ask participants to come up with their own positive experience examples in the plenum.
3. To strengthen the awareness of positive events and positive emotions in the participants' lives, you can do one of the two following exercises in the classroom:
 - a. Create further awareness of positive life events by introducing **13A** and ask participants to write the endings to the inspirational sentences written in the handout.
 - b. Write sentences that include words or expressions like; pleasure, gratitude, happiness, satisfaction, hope, optimism, joy etc. on pieces of paper. Put the notes in a container of some sort (so the participants can pick them randomly). Each participant proceeds to pick a note from the box and fills in the missing words with their own positive experience or situation. Each participant then



shares the sentence with the group by reading it out loud. This activity can increase the number of positive experiences and emotions shared.

4. Introduce the **positive journal – 3 good things every day** using the example in **handout 13B**. Hand out 13B to the participants, have them think of one good thing that has happened to them today or the day before and ask them to write it down in the handout. Each participant shares the written story in plenum.
5. Have the participants write 3 good things, and the appertaining emotions, every day for the next two weeks (good things being; stories/experiences from the day). Use **handout 13C** for this activity.
6. The participants can either write (filling out the questionnaire 13C) or create a collage (collecting pictures or images from magazines etc. representing each of the 3 positive things).
7. Ask the participants to share the positive stories each day when they meet in groups.
8. After two weeks of collecting good stories each day, have the participants share their experiences with this activity and talk about the effects of the activity in relation to the increased awareness of the good things in life and the emotions connected to these.
9. Motivate the participants to complete this activity as part of their everyday routine and to continue updating their journals of positive stories.

Observations / Suggestions

Keep in mind when introducing and working with positive emotions it is relevant not to exclude questions related to negative emotions.

Read the section about 'The cognitive model' regarding negative emotions also referred to as inappropriate or irrational or negative thoughts. These negative thoughts can easily keep the person trapped in a negative spiral or way of thinking. All people can experience events or actions causing inappropriate feelings such as anger, fury, disapproval, disgust or grief, and these feelings can be appropriate for certain types of events.

Participants decide if they would rather use the writing approach - 13C or the 'collage approach' - 13D, according to their creativity and interest. Participants with low language skills can use the collage approach (13D).

Note: The handout 13C only allows one week of registering positive events. Either print two pages or have the participants write their reflections in a notebook /on a device.

Source / Links / Further Information

The positivity ratio by Frederickson's and Losadas (2010). Frederickson, Positivity (2009) Chapter 4. List of emotions (positive emotions). To learn more about emotions by Greenberg, Leslie (2010) Emotions focused Therapy.

Actual version of this tool can be found here: <https://live2work.eu/go/learning-positive-emotions/>