What Makes You Feel Good?

Identifying Your Own Mood Lifters

Workbook

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Introduction

We live in difficult times, and with so much chaos and anxiety, it's more important that you know how to give your mood a healthy boost. Do you know what makes you feel good? And when the activities and hobbies that you love the most don't bring the same joy as they used to, do you know what mood lifters to turn to, to give yourself a boost? This workbook will help you identify your mood lifters.

Exercise 1: Gage Your Enjoyment Level

One of the biggest issues with stress and chaos is, as noted above, how typical activities we enjoy lose their luster. A therapist might say this is avoidance. If you spend less time doing the things you enjoy, then, of course, you're going to experience a dip in your mood. So, your mood swings wildly one way and makes it even less likely for you to do these activities. An intervention is necessary, and for this, you will need to get clear on how you spend your time as is. So, let's make a plan. This plan is one you should fill in *as you go*. This isn't something you can do in advance because you're not yet planning your week. Instead, you're documenting it. So, make a note in each box of the activity (or activities) that you completed during these time periods and rate each of them on the enjoyment scale. Use the following rating system to complete the table below:

Enjoyment Level

- Score 0 for no enjoyment.
- Score 3 for slight enjoyment.
- Score 6 for moderate enjoyment.
- Score 8 for enjoyment.
- Score 10 for extreme enjoyment.

We have completed a row with some examples, however, in your week in review, you're encouraged to break down your entire day in time slots. Fill this table out at the end of each day to ensure it is as accurate as possible.

The Week In Review							
Time	**Sunday**	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**
Example	Drank freshly brewed coffee (8)	Finished project (3)	Went for a long walk in the park (8)	Did a little digging and weeding in the garden (10)	Slept in (8) Played cards (3)	Had dinner with partner (10)	Went bike riding (6)

	Had bacon and pancakes for breakfast (10) Struggled to sleep (0)	Started new project (0) Watched sports (6)	Made an elaborate meal/ Ate the elaborate meal (8)	Watched TV (3) Watched a movie (6)	Spent time reading (8) Went to bed early (8)	Watched movies (10) Took a bath (8) Read before bed (6)	Sunbathed (6) Took a bath (8) Watched TV (6)
7am – 9am **9am-10am**							
10am-11am **11am-12pm**							

12pm-1pm **1pm-2pm**							
2pm-3pm **3pm-4pm**							
4pm-5pm							

5pm-6pm **6pm-7pm**							
7pm-8pm **8pm-9pm**							
9pm-10pm							

As tempting as it might be, you should not use this exercise as a way to judge or beat yourself up. This isn't about identifying time-wasting or anything else, it's more about learning more about your habits and patterns and the activities that contribute to your low mood.

The point of this exercise is to get a clearer view of how you spend your time and what is negatively influencing your mood the most. You can then take that information and use it to build a better plan for your week, which we will do later in the workbook!

Exercise 2: What Is Missing

Before we continue, you need to identify activities that you are not currently doing. These might be activities that you once loved, but no longer find pleasurable or it could be an activity or hobby that you have wanted to try but haven't felt motivated to do so. You can break activities down into three specific categories: pleasurable, routine, and necessary. To boost your mood properly, then you need to create a healthy balance of these in your weekly routine. You can't ignore your routine or necessary activities because as stressful as they might be, you will be *more* stressed out by ignoring things that need to be completed.

- **Pleasurable**
  Pleasurable activities provide us with both a mood boost and a sense of achievement. They improve your quality of life. These activities include hobbies, spending time with friends, sports (whether playing or watching), gardening, etc.

- **Routine**
  These are the activities that you do daily to make life comfortable – you wash your dishes, you vacuum, do laundry, make dinner, exercise, sleep, etc.

- **Necessary**
  These essential activities are the ones that would have negative consequences if you did not deal with them. So, dealing with medical issues, going to work, paying bills, etc.

When you lack motivation, when you feel low it can be extremely difficult to remember what you enjoyed before you started to feel so low. If some of the example activities that we included above don't fall into the categories we assigned them to, that's okay! You might find housework pleasurable, so you can put your activities in whichever category is appropriate for you. Use the table below to note down your routine and necessary tasks and activities, and then complete the final column note the activities, hobbies, and tasks you find pleasurable. If you didn't mention those pleasurable tasks in the table above, you can still add them in if you know they lift your mood!

Necessary	Routine	Pleasurable

Exercise 3: My Patterns

Let's draw your attention back to the first exercise where you completed the table with your week in review.

Are there any patterns that you notice with the times of day you find activities most pleasurable? Also, think about how your mood changes after engaging in the activities that gave you the highest achievement or pleasure rating versus the ones you rated poorly. This is just to get a better idea of what's going on with your mood and what influences it. Make a note below of the activities that brought you the most joy, enjoyment, pleasure, or mood lift.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Exercise 4: My Planner

Now, take what you have learned from this workbook thus far and use it to create the ultimate planner. This is simply an effective way to ensure you create balance in your day to ensure you make time for the activities that you enjoy, make you feel good, and naturally lift your mood.

You should include *at least one* pleasurable activity each day and choose the most appropriate time to do so. For example, if you want to get a great mood boost from exercising, don't plan it for the late evening before bed as it will amp you up and make it difficult to get to sleep. Likewise, if you experience a mood boost from a bubble bath, don't have it too early in the evening, the greatest benefit will be shortly before bed as it will help you relax into sleep. The point of choosing just one daily is that you are more likely to do it. If you try to do too much you will set yourself up to fail and do more damage to your mood than good.

You may also want to set a rule around each activity that you will do the activity for a specific amount of time before you give up. Sometimes activities you love can feel like a slog to start, encourage yourself to complete at least 10-15 minutes. You might find that once you're into it, the time flies, but the minimum time limit helps relieve some of the pressure you may feel.

The Ultimate Planner							
Time	**Sunday**	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**
7am – 9am							
9am-10am							
10am-11am							

11am-12pm **12pm-1pm**							
1pm-2pm							
2pm-3pm							
3pm-4pm							
4pm-5pm							
5pm-6pm							
6pm-7pm							

7pm-8pm							
8pm-9pm							
9pm-10pm							

Exercise 5: My Happy Mood List - Key Questions

What makes me laugh?

What makes me happy?

Describe a recent time when you truly felt lighthearted, happy, and joyous?

What people make me feel good when I am around them?

What is one of your favorite memories?

If you had all the time in the world what activities would you engage in most?

What movie is most memorable for making me feel good, even if I cried?

What are my happy words?

What is missing from my life right now that typically lifts my mood?

How can I get it back?

What brings me comfort?

What brings me joy?

Write detailed instructions to a child on how to find happiness.

What are your happy songs, those that make you feel great?

List 3 ways that typically get you out of a bad mood.

Describe your perfect day.

What activities energize you?

What activities inspire you?

What people inspire you?

What one thing that you do for yourself that makes you feel special?

Write your top 10 Gratitude List

Use the answers to these questions to create your My Happy Mood List