

B.C. SAFE



Broome County Suicide Awareness for Everyone

A local suicide prevention coalition in Broome County whose mission is to reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts by increasing public awareness and providing educational and training resources.

As a new year begins, our thoughts typically turn to resolutions. What if we were to forego the old way of thinking and instead strive to find ‘Silver Linings’ and opportunities of gratitude for a more positive way to frame the start of 2021?

FINDING SILVER LININGS

WHY YOU SHOULD TRY IT

We all tend to ruminate on things that have gone wrong in our lives—a mistake we made at work, an evening that didn’t go as planned. We might even think about them so often that our lives seem filled with these mishaps and disappointments. Focusing on them too much, however, can cast a pall over our lives and even be associated with depressive thinking. Looking on the bright side even when things go wrong is a key component of optimism, which research links to lower rates of depression, a better ability to cope with stress, and more relationship satisfaction, among other benefits. While finding the silver lining on a negative experience might (understandably) make you fear turning into a Pollyanna, many of us have a tendency to look on the bright side too rarely, not too often. This exercise is designed to help you achieve a healthier balance.

HOW TO DO IT

- To start, list five things that make you feel like your life is enjoyable, enriching, or worthwhile at this moment. These things can be as general

as “being in good health” or as specific as “drinking a delicious cup of coffee this morning.”

The purpose of this first step is to help you shift into a positive state of mind about your life in general.

- Next, think about the most recent time when something didn’t go your way, or when you felt frustrated, irritated, or upset.
- In a few sentences, briefly describe the situation in writing.
- Then, list three things that can help you see the bright side of this situation.

For example, perhaps you missed your bus this morning. Three ways to look on the bright side of this situation might be:

- Even though you missed the bus, you got some good exercise when you were running to catch it.
- You’re fortunate to live in a city where there was another bus just 10 minutes later, or where buses run reliably at all.
- Ten years from now, you likely won’t remember what happened this morning.

WHY IT WORKS

Looking on the bright side of life in general, or of a bad situation in particular, can increase happiness by boosting your sense of self worth, motivating you to go after your goals, and enhancing your enjoyment of life. Regularly completing the silver linings exercise can help you get in the habit of recognizing positive aspects of your life and seeing the upside to challenging situations rather than fixating on the downsides. With repeated practice, you may find that it comes more naturally to look on the bright side, even when faced with difficulties in your life.

Adapted from https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/finding_silver_linings

**"I'm thankful
for my struggle
because without it,
I wouldn't have
stumbled upon
my strength."**

- Alexandra Elle

How You Can Put Your Mental Health First in the New Year

The new year is quickly approaching. For many, it's a time to hit the reset button on fitness and nutrition, let go of negative habits and expand career or travel goals. It's also a great opportunity to prioritize your mental health.

Use these self-care strategies from the *Mental Health First Aid* curriculum to prioritize your mental health.

Practice self-acceptance. New Year's resolutions often focus on improving parts of who we are, such as physical appearance. Instead of trying to change, use the new year as an opportunity to practice self-acceptance and self-love.

Move your body. Exercising for at least 30 minutes

every day can help alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety. Go for a walk, take a fitness class or play a sport with friends and family.

Be grateful. Research shows that practicing gratitude every day can invoke feelings of thankfulness and optimism that make managing challenges easier.

Put yourself first. Remember that self-care isn't selfish. It's important to take time every day for yourself and your mental health. This might include enjoying a hot bath, treating yourself to a movie or spending time with family or friends. Do what helps you relax and recharge.

MHFA - mental health first in the new year

7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude

Whether you choose to write a few sentences in a gratitude journal or simply take a moment to silently acknowledge all that you have, giving thanks can transform your life. Here are 7 scientifically proven benefits:

1. Gratitude opens the door to more relationships. Not only does saying "thank you" constitute good manners, but showing appreciation can help you win new friends, according to a 2014 study published in *Emotion*.
2. Gratitude improves physical health. Grateful people experience fewer aches and pains and report feeling healthier than other people. Not surprisingly, grateful people are also more likely to take care of their health.
3. Gratitude improves psychological health. Gratitude reduces a multitude of toxic emotions, from envy and resentment to frustration and regret. Robert

- Emmons, a leading gratitude researcher, confirms that gratitude effectively increases happiness and reduces depression.
4. Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression. Grateful people are more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, even when others behave less kindly. They experienced more sensitivity and empathy toward other people and a decreased desire to seek revenge.
 5. Grateful people sleep better. Writing in a gratitude journal improves sleep, spend just 15 minutes jotting down a few grateful sentiments before bed, and you may sleep better and longer.
 6. Gratitude improves self-esteem. Studies have shown that gratitude reduces social comparisons. Rather than becoming resentful toward people... grateful people are able to appreciate other people's accomplishments.

7. Gratitude increases mental strength. For years, research has shown gratitude not only reduces stress, but it may also play a major role in overcoming trauma. Recognizing all that you have to be thankful for—even during the worst times—fosters resilience.

Adapted from: [PsychologyToday - 7 scientifically proven benefits of gratitude](#)

GRATITUDE PROMPTS

1. A **strength** of mine for which I am grateful is...
2. Something **money can't buy** that I'm grateful for is...
3. Something that **comforts me** that I'm grateful for is...
4. Something that's **funny** for which I'm grateful for is...
5. Something **in nature** that I'm grateful for is...
6. A **memory** I'm grateful for is...
7. Something that **changes** that I'm grateful for is...
8. A **challenge** I'm grateful for is...
9. Something **interesting** that I'm grateful for is...
10. Something **beautiful** I'm grateful for is...

If you or a loved one is in crisis, seek emergency help immediately by calling **911** or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.

Text **GOT5** to **741741** for the Crisis Text Line
NYS Emotional Support Help Line: **1-844-863-9314**
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Download the FREE **HOPE - Broome County Mental Health App** for more information and resources.

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#BroomehasHope