

Coping Skills

Three Good Things

Negative thinking is a defining feature of depression. Positive experiences are minimized, while negative experiences are magnified. Gratitude helps combat this tendency by shifting focus toward *positive* experiences, rather than negative ones.

- 1 Write about three positive experiences from your day. These experiences can be small ("The weather was perfect when I walked to work") or big ("I got a promotion at work").

Choose one of the following questions to answer about each of the three good things:

- 2
 - Why did this happen?
 - Why was this good thing meaningful?
 - How can I experience more of this good thing?

- 3 Repeat this exercise every day for 1 week.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness means paying attention to the present moment. It means taking a step back and noticing the world, and one's thoughts and feelings, without judgment. The goal of mindfulness is to simply *observe*. Mindfulness helps reduce the rumination and worry that often accompany depression.

One way to practice mindfulness is through meditation. During mindfulness meditation, you will simply sit and focus your attention on the sensation of breathing. By focusing on your breathing, you will put yourself in the here-and-now.

Time and Place

Find a quiet, comfortable place where you can practice mindfulness for 15 to 30 minutes every day. Frequent and consistent practice leads to the best results, but some practice is better than none.

Posture

Sit in a chair or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes or let your gaze soften. Let your head, shoulders, arms, and legs relax. Adjust your posture whenever you feel uncomfortable.

Awareness of Breath

Focus on your breathing. Notice the sensation of the air as it travels in through your nose and out through your mouth. Notice the gentle rise and fall of your belly.

Wandering Mind

During meditation, it's normal for the mind to wander. When this happens, gently turn your attention back to your breathing. You may need to do this frequently throughout your practice.

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Strengths Exploration

Those who know their strengths and use them frequently tend to have more success in several areas. They feel happier, have better self-esteem, and are more likely to accomplish their goals.

To use your strengths effectively, it's important to have a clear idea of what they are, and how they can be used. Some of your greatest strengths might be easy to recognize, while others go unnoticed because they feel ordinary to you (even if they aren't).

In this worksheet you will identify your strengths and ways in which you are already using them. Additionally, you will explore *new ways* to use your strengths to your advantage.

Circle your strengths from the choices below, or add your own at the bottom.

Wisdom	Artistic Ability	Curiosity	Leadership
Empathy	Honesty	Open Mindedness	Persistence
Enthusiasm	Kindness	Love	Social Awareness
Fairness	Bravery	Cooperation	Forgiveness
Modesty	Common Sense	Self-Control	Patience
Gratitude	Love of Learning	Humor	Spirituality
Ambition	Creativity	Confidence	Intelligence
Athleticism	Discipline	Assertiveness	Logic
Optimism	Independence	Flexibility	Adventurousness

Strengths Exploration



Personal Fulfillment

List the strengths you possess that help you achieve personal fulfillment.

Describe a *specific* time your strengths were able to help you with personal fulfillment.

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths for personal fulfillment.

1

2