



**Practice: Taking in the good/ gratitude**

**Key learning:**

Warming up the neural circuitry to create feelings of warmth and connection

Balancing the negativity bias

Being mindful in the moment of good experiences whether past or current

**Resources:**

Mats/ chairs, bolsters, blankets, cushions, clock, bells / singing bell, handout for client, recording for client to have for home practice.

**Benefits:**

Recalling

**Potential Difficulties Arising:**

**Guidance:**

**Taking in the Good**

This is a technique for learning how to consciously build positive mental and emotional strengths by spending time savouring our current experiences or recalling positive experiences from the past. We spend so much of our time rushing around that we can miss opportunities to appreciate what is right under our noses.

We can thank neuroscientist Rick Hanson for introducing this valuable technique into popular culture. You may recall that he says “The brain is like Velcro for negative experiences and Teflon for the positive”.

By resting our attention on positive experiences we are increasing our ability to deal with stress and reactivity, making us more responsive to life’s challenges, strengthening the immune system, and leading us to greater overall happiness.

Whatever we give our mental energy and attention to will make a lasting impression on us.

**Exercise 1**

Start with grounding

Spend at least 30 seconds allowing your attention to focus on the memory of an experience that made you very happy a memory with no emotional charge. Bring as many senses into the memory as possible. What did it look, sound, feel, smell, taste like? Who was there? What did it feel like emotionally? Feel the connection between yourself and others or the surroundings.

Soak up the experiences like a sponge soaks up water.

You can either do this practice with a memory or when something good is actually happening, such as taking the time to look at and smell a beautiful fragrant rose on a warm summer's day.

---

### ***Gratitude***

At the end of the day, as you lie in bed and revisit what happened during the day, do you find your attention being drawn to the things that didn't go so well, hurtful things that people may have said, things you could have done better? This is all part of our natural brain's response, which we do have the capacity to change.

### ***Exercise 2***

At the end of each day, think of 5 small events or experiences for which you are grateful. It may be something as small as someone smiling at you whilst serving you in a shop or the sound of a bird singing. Rest your attention on these events for several seconds each to ensure they lodge into your memory banks.

Our recommendation is that you continue with these practices for the rest of your life.

### **Inquiry**

**Ask about the participants' experience of the practice and acknowledge and explore any benefits and potential difficulties which come up.**

Examples of useful questions to start the inquiry process with the client:

During or after the practice ask them to notice:

Did you feel differently at the end as compared to the start of the practice?

What was this like?

Are you able to do this more often during the day?

How did it feel to journal the experiences, if you did?

