

# THE POWER OF POSITIVE EMOTION

## OPTIMISM

### 6. CAN YOU ADD “JOLTS OF JOY” TO YOUR DAY?

#### WHAT

When we experience emotions like awe, love, hope, pride, gratitude, serenity and hope, they open us up and help our brains to work at their best. These emotions help us connect with others, problem solve and bounce through difficulty, making us more resilient. Positive emotions are what Professor Barb Fredrickson calls the “tiny engines that drive our well-being”. These little micro moments are pivotal to feeling good and functioning well, yet how often do we fail to notice and purposely cultivate positive emotions? The science suggests we need to experience a higher ratio of positive to negative emotions to thrive. The good news is, we can lift our moods – just like pulling a mood lever – we can dial up more positive emotions by observing, savouring and cultivating them through the choices we make and what we tune into each day.

#### HOW

You can bring more joy (and other positive emotions) to your day with just a little bit of intention, planning and by saying “yes” to things more likely to make you feel good in healthy ways. We call this adding “jolts of joy”. The problem is, we often forget what lifts us, especially in moments when we most need to shift our mood.

A fun and playful way to add jolts of joy to your day is to make a joy jar.

1. Start by making a list of the things you know that reliably lift you. Perhaps it's connecting with friends, being in nature, playing a game, doing something kind, expressing of feeling gratitude, looking at photos, movement, music, patting your pet, playing with children, watching a funny video. You decide.
2. Now that you have your list, you can hold onto that, or make a **JOY JAR**. The joy jar is a great way of involving others in this mood boosting activity, for example, your classroom, family or team. Invite others to contribute ideas of things that lift them, or that lift you as a group. Write them down and put them in a jar.
3. Keep the jar handy and when you need a mood booster reach for the jar, pull out one of the suggestions and do it. Notice how this resets your mood?! Our moods are contagious, so this not only affects you but those around you too. As you do this more often, it builds your resources, relationships and resilience.

#### WHY IT WORKS

Professor Fredrickson's research has found that heartfelt positive emotions help broaden our minds, build our resources and short circuit stress. She says, “Our brains are hardwired to perform at their best when they feel positive”. This is called the broaden and build effect of positive emotions.

*Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. American Psychologist, 56, 218-226.*

For more info contact us at [hello@needtoseesomeone.com](mailto:hello@needtoseesomeone.com)