


WELLBEING ACTIVITY



OPTIMISM
BEST POSSIBLE SELF ACTIVITY



"I am larger, better than
I thought; I did not know I
held so much goodness."

Walt Whitman
Poet, essayist & journalist



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Welcome

INTRODUCTION

Putting positive psychology into practice begins here.

Welcome to your activity booklet, a focused resource designed to help you harness the power of positive psychology in your daily life. In these pages, you will find a single, impactful exercise centered on optimism—a crucial element in enhancing happiness and wellbeing.

Positive psychology recognises the complexity of our emotional experiences. While we inevitably face challenges, we also have the capacity to cultivate positive emotions and build resilience. This exercise offers practical strategies for increasing your sense of optimism, helping you to navigate life's ups and downs with greater ease.

Crafted by researchers and practitioners from around the world and compiled by Work on Wellbeing, this booklet reflects our commitment to providing valuable resources for individuals, workplaces and communities alike. Through our courses, we strive to empower everyone to flourish, and this exercise serves as a stepping stone on that journey.

We encourage you to approach this activity as a personal experiment. Dive in, reflect on your experiences, and discover how embracing optimism can enrich your life. We would love to hear how you are putting positive psychology into practice.

Let's begin this journey toward a more fulfilling and joyful life together!

BEST POSSIBLE SELF

Research

The Best Possible Self exercise can increase optimism. This exercise requires people to envision themselves in an imaginary future in which everything has turned out in the most optimal way. Over the past years, writing about and imagining a best possible self has repeatedly been demonstrated to increase people's mood and wellbeing. Studies have shown it can increase optimism in terms of expecting favourable outcomes, an effect that was independent from the mood that was simultaneously increased by the exercise.

Advice

While in most cases, the exercise is used in a written form, it is also possible to draw your best possible self. One of the most powerful ways is to visualise your best possible self on a daily basis. To most people, writing down their fears and troubles has therapeutic results. This exercise takes a more positive approach toward oneself.

Researchers warn that this exercise may backfire if done incorrectly. Some people may compare their current self to their ideal self, causing feelings of disappointment due to the large gaps. To avoid these negative results, or if you find this happening, write about a realistic possible future self.

Further reading

King, L. A. (2001). The health benefits of writing about life goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(7), 798-807.

Meevissen, Y. M., Peters, M. L., & Alberts, H. J. (2011). Become more optimistic by imagining a best possible self: Effects of a two week intervention. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 42(3), 371-378.

Peters, L. M., Flink, I. K., Boersma, K., & Linton, S. J. (2010). Manipulating optimism: can imagining a best possible self be used to increase positive future expectancies? *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(3), 204-211.

BEST POSSIBLE SELF

Goal

The goal of this exercise is to increase optimism in terms of expecting favourable outcomes for yourself.

Instructions

TASK #1 - Imagining your best possible self

Set a timer or stopwatch for 10 minutes. In this time, think about your best possible future self and write it down. Imagine your life the way you always imagined it would be like, your best possible self. Picture that you have performed to the best of your abilities and you have achieved the things you wanted in life. While writing, don't worry about grammar or punctuation; focus on writing all your thoughts and emotions in an expressive way. Describe what this future would look like for you.

BEST POSSIBLE SELF

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BEST POSSIBLE SELF

TASK #2 - Reflecting on your best possible self

After completing the exercise, reflect on your feelings and your answer. Think about the following questions:

- What effects did this exercise have?
- Does this exercise affect you more emotionally, or does it affect your current self-image?
- Did it motivate or inspire you?
- Does it make you want to make changes?
- How did this exercise impact you overall?

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Best Possible Self activity provided by Dr Aaron Jarden, adapted by Langley Group.
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Langley Group Institute

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Where science meets
life-changing growth.



Let's connect!

ABOUT LANGLEY GROUP INSTITUTE

At The Langley Group Institute, we're dedicated to transforming lives with positive psychology and wellbeing science.

As an Australian Registered Training Organisation (RTO #40655), we offer government-accredited courses that blend learning with application. Our courses translate the latest science into actionable strategies you can immediately apply to your personal and professional life.

Our students join a community of like-minded people on a journey to better themselves and the people around them. You'll learn from an inspiring team of experts who help you get the most out of your experience, whether you're learning face-to-face or online.

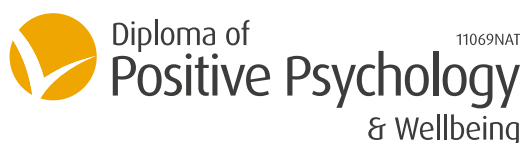
The best part of our courses lies in their impact. As you enhance your own wellbeing, you'll also gain the tools to influence those around you and create a ripple effect of positive change and transformation.

OUR COURSES

Become the architect of your wellbeing with our [Certificate IV in Wellbeing Science](#).



Ignite personal growth and fuel positive change with our [Diploma of Positive Psychology and Wellbeing](#).



Find out more about our courses;
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Or, if you're ready for a positive step forward,
click here:

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