



WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

MON



STAY STRONG

Physical Well-Being

TUES



ALIGN

Spiritual Well-Being

WEDS



ENGAGE & GROW

Career & Intellectual Well-Being

THURS



CONNECT

Social Well-Being

FRI



FEEL WELL

Emotional Well-Being

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

1

Activity Title:	Savoring Positive Emotions
Well-Being Dimension:	Emotional Well-Being
Required Resources/Materials:	See below
Author:	Anne Brafford labrafford@aspire.legal

Activity Objective:

Practice savoring positive experiences.

Well-Being Connection: What Is It And How Is It Linked To Well-Being?

DEFINING SAVORING

Savoring is intentionally engaging in thoughts and behaviors that heighten our good feelings about positive events. It includes anything that generates, intensifies, or prolongs our enjoyment. Savoring is about paying more attention to and appreciating all the big and small positive things in our lives for as long as possible. It can be done about the past, present, or future: We can savor memories, current experiences, and future events.

THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SAVORING

A recent study that compared a variety of positive approaches to mental health found that savoring had the biggest connection to higher well-being and lower depression and anxiety. Savoring increases positive emotions (which is one reason it impacts mental health), deepens gratitude, facilitates mindfulness, enhances engagement, and provides greater meaning in our lives.

DIFFERENCES IN SAVORING HABITS

Some people automatically savor, but others tend to dampen positive emotions, which is associated with depressive symptoms and other mental health conditions. People also differ in their tendencies to savor past, present, or future events. Are your strengths in anticipating the future (getting excited about anticipating things in advance), savoring the present moment (full appreciating things as they're happening), or reminiscing about the past (looking back on happy times and rekindling the joy)?

AVOID KILL-JOY THINKING HABITS

Some people have the mental habit of squelching positive emotions rather than milking the experience. People often do so automatically, without realizing what they're doing. Be on guard against this habit. It's related to poor mental health, including depression.

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

Procedure

LET'S PRACTICE

Below is an activity designed and tested to help you practice savoring the current moment.

- 1. Baseline Measure.** To get started, take a survey that will measure your positive and negative emotions. One option is the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE), which appears below.
- 2. Reflect.** Recall 3 positive events that occurred last week, and list how you could've savored them:

Positive Events	How I Could Have Savored?
1.	
2.	
3.	

- 3. Practice.** Over the next two weeks, concentrate on savoring the present moment throughout each day. Look at the 9 Savoring Strategies in the chart below and note any additional strategies that you have identified on your own. Use any strategy you'd like to help you savor experiences.

- Pay attention even to mundane things that you have to do regularly and that you typically do on automatic pilot.
- Really pay attention to the moment and the good parts of the experience—the good smells, sounds, tactile sensations, and emotions.
- Use a Savoring Log to track how often you savor events each day. Just write a short note about the savored positive event. There's no need to write a detailed description—which might actually undermine your ability to savor by being overly concrete or literal.
- Find ways to remind yourself daily to savor the moment. Set a reminder on your calendar, leave yourself sticky notes, etc.
- At the end of the two weeks, take the SPANE again. Were there positive changes?
- Next, begin practicing your skills of anticipating and reminiscing about positive experiences.

Once you have a little practice, work on mental habits that incorporate savoring into your every-day life. Joyfully anticipate upcoming events, mindfully attend to all the goodness in the present, and reminisce about the good parts of past experiences. Science suggests it will benefit your well-being!

JOYFULLY ANTICIPATE THE FUTURE
MINDFULLY ATTEND TO THE PRESENT MOMENT
REMINISCE ABOUT GOOD THINGS IN THE PAST

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

Procedure

9 SAVORING STRATEGIES TO BOOST POSITIVE EMOTIONS

SHARE (“CAPITALIZE”)	Share experiences and memories with others.
BUILD MEMORIES	Actively store images for future reminiscing. Take “mental photographs” (or real ones) to form vivid images.
SELF-CONGRATULATE	Tell yourself how proud or impressed you and others are of, e.g., achievements and personal successes.
COMPARE	Do “downward comparisons” – contemplate how much better off you are than you could be.
SHARPEN PERCEPTION	Intensify pleasure by focusing on certain stimuli and screening out others. Be vigilant in your attention to positive aspects of your experiences.
ABSORPTION	Try not to think; shut off self-talk. Be mindful without cognitive reflection.
EXPRESS	Express positive emotions through non-verbal behaviors. Smile, laugh, jump for joy, pump your fist in the air.
REFLECT ON TRANSIENCE	Remind yourself how fleeting the moment is and that you should enjoy it now; savor bitter-sweetness.
GRATITUDE	Contemplate the good things in your life and feel grateful.

AVOID KILL-JOY THINKING HABITS

SELF-DOUBT	Thinking “I don’t deserve this.”
SUPPRESSION	Hiding positive emotions due to, e.g., shyness, modesty, or fear. “People will think I’m bragging.”
DISTRACTION	Thoughts (often worries) unrelated to current positive event. Thinking of other things you should be doing.
FAULT-FINDING	Paying attention to negative aspects of otherwise positive situations. Focusing on what could go wrong or how it could be better. “This is too good to be true.”
NEGATIVE MENTAL TIME TRAVEL	Think about what has gone wrong in the past and how they likely will go wrong in the future. Attribute causes of good things in the past to external causes (e.g., “I won that motion because my opponent was weak, not due to my strengths”) and negatively anticipate the future (e.g., “My good luck streak will end soon.”).

(Nelis et al., 2016; Salzberg, 2014)

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

Procedure

Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE)

The SPANE scale can help you evaluate progress on experiencing more positive than negative emotions through savoring and other activities discussed in other worksheets.

Please think about what you have been doing and experiencing during the past four weeks. Then report how much you experienced each of the following feelings on a scale of 1 to 5.

	1 Very Rarely or Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Very Often or Always
Positive	1	2	3	4	5
Negative	1	2	3	4	5
Good	1	2	3	4	5
Bad	1	2	3	4	5
Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5
Unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5
Happy	1	2	3	4	5
Sad	1	2	3	4	5
Afraid	1	2	3	4	5
Joyful	1	2	3	4	5
Angry	1	2	3	4	5
Contented	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring:

The measure can be used to derive an overall affect (i.e., emotions and mood) balance score, but can also be divided into positive and negative feelings scales.

- **Positive Feelings:** Add the scores for the 6 positive items: positive, good, pleasant, happy, joyful, and contented. The score can vary from 6 (lowest possible) to 30 (highest positive feelings score).
- **Negative Feelings:** Add the scores for the 6 negative items: negative, bad, unpleasant, sad, afraid, and angry. The score can vary from 6 (lowest possible) to 30 (highest negative feelings score).
- **Affect Balance:** Subtract the negative feelings score from the positive feelings score. The difference that results can vary from -24 (unhappiest possible) to 24 (highest affect balance possible).

Source: Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2009). New measures of well-being: Flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, 39, 247-266.

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

Procedure

SAVORING BELIEFS INVENTORY (SBI)

The SBI can help you measure your current mental habits related to savoring as well as track your progress on savoring skills. For each statement listed below, indicate how much you disagree or agree a scale from 1 to 7 (1=lowest, 7=highest). There are no right or wrong answers.

SAVORING BELIEFS	
1.	Before a good thing happens, I look forward to it in ways that give me pleasure in the present.
2.	It's hard for me to hang onto a good feeling for very long.
3.	I enjoy looking back on happy times from my past.
4.	I don't like to look forward to good times too much before they happen.
5.	I know how to make the most of a good time.
6.	I don't like to look back at good times too much after they've taken place.
7.	I feel a joy of anticipation when I think about upcoming good things.
8.	When it comes to enjoying myself, I'm my own "worst enemy."
9.	I can make myself feel good by remembering pleasant events from my past.
10.	For me, anticipating what upcoming good events will be like is basically a waste of time.
11.	When something good happens, I can make my enjoyment of it last longer by thinking/doing certain things.
12.	When I reminisce about pleasant memories, I often start to feel sad or disappointed.
13.	I can enjoy pleasant events in my mind before they actually occur.
14.	I can't seem to capture the joy of happy moments.
15.	I like to store memories of fun times that I go through so that I can recall them later.
16.	It's hard for me to get very excited about fun times before they actually take place.
17.	I feel fully able to appreciate good things that happen to me.
18.	I find that thinking about good times from the past is basically a waste of time.
19.	I can make myself feel good by imagining what a happy time that is about to happen will be like.
20.	I don't enjoy things as much as I should.
21.	It's easy for me to rekindle the joy from pleasant memories.
22.	When I think about a pleasant event before it happens, I often start to feel uneasy.
23.	It's easy for me to enjoy myself when I want to.
24.	For me, once a fun time is over and gone, it's best not to think about it.

WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

Procedure

SAVORING BELIEFS INVENTORY (cont.)

Scoring

- The SBI is made up of 4 sub-scales, which represent different types of savoring habits: (1) Anticipating, (2) Savoring the Moment, (3) Reminiscing, and (4) the SBI Total score. You can score your results as follows:
- **Anticipating subscale score:** (a) Sum up responses to the following four items: 1, 7, 13, 19. (b) Sum up responses to the following four items: 4, 10, 16, & 22. (c) Subtract the total obtained in Step B from the total obtained in Step A, to get a summed score for the Anticipating subscale.
- **Savoring the Moment subscale score:** (a) Sum up responses to the following four items: 5, 11, 17, 23. (b) Sum up responses to the following four items: 2, 8, 14, & 20. (c) Subtract the total obtained in Step B from the total obtained in Step A, to get a summed score for the Savoring the Moment subscale.
- **Reminiscing subscale score:** (a) Sum up responses to the following four items: 3, 9, 15, & 21. (b) Sum up responses to the following four items: 6, 12, 18, & 24. (c) Subtract the total obtained in Step B from the total obtained in Step A, to get a summed score for the Reminiscing subscale.
- **Total SBI score:** (a) Sum up responses to the following 12 (odd-numbered) items: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, & 23. (b) Sum up responses to the following 12 (even-numbered) items: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, & 24. (c) Subtract the total obtained in Step B from the total obtained in Step A, to get a summed SBI Total score.

RESOURCES

- Stacey Kennelly (2012). [10 Steps to Savoring the Good Things in Life](#). Greater Good Magazine.
- [Savoring in Psychology](#): 21 Exercises and Interventions to Appreciate Life. PositivePsychology.com
- Tchiki Davis (2018), [What Is Savoring—and Why Is It the Key to Happiness?](#) Psychology Today.
- Magdalena Puniewska (2019). [Is Savoring the New Mindfulness?](#) Outside Magazine.