

Humor Diary: Increasing Positive Emotions

Positive emotion is one element of the formula for Well Being:

Positive Emotion
Engagement
Relationships
Meaning
Accomplishment

In *Hardwiring Happiness: The New Brain Science of Contentment, Calm, and Confidence* by Rick Hanson, he explains what “positive” is.

By positive and good, I mean what leads to happiness and benefit for oneself and others. Negative and bad mean what leads to suffering and harm. I’m being pragmatic here, not moralistic or religious.

Increase your positive emotions by starting a Humor Diary.

Unpublished research by psychologist Willibald Ruch suggests that you can increase your well-being and decrease depression over the longer term by keeping a humor diary.

Before you go to sleep write down the three funniest things which happened to you that day. Do this on a regular basis and notice how much your well-being improves.

One of the reasons this works is that it draws your attention to funny things (making them more noticeable and less easy to ignore) and away from negative things. You can also give yourself an instant boost of happiness just by dipping into your humor diary and remembering all those funny moments.