

Good Fact Finding

"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another."

William James

The two underlying elements at play here are neuroplasticity and feeling good. What we dwell on changes our brain which in turn changes our thoughts: that's neuroplasticity. And focusing on good facts is self-honouring and feels better than focusing on negative and self-critical thoughts.

Facts are real, verifiable and indisputable. "I don't think that meeting went well" is not a fact. "Joseph said I handled that issue really well" is a fact. So we are searching for facts, things that happened and are also good. Good means that they were positive factors in our day. They could be personal or work related. Things like, "the transit came just when I got there allowing me to get to work in good time. My daughter gave me a hug today. I had a great talk with my mother. I had a great meeting today that moved some business forward. I did well on that task." Or just, "I felt really good today. I had a healthy lunch. I got my exercise in today. It was a beautiful day."

I used fall into sleep with mindless thoughts of what happened today, what I didn't do, worrying about something going on tomorrow: overwhelmingly negative rumination. Now I fall into sleep with at least three good facts that happened that day. I find there is a direction of progress and of valuing the things I did or were part of. It feels good. Sometimes, in my mind, I am naturally following a good fact with a "ya, that was excellent!" and the good emotion around it. Our brains take this and creates new neural pathways so after a while, you will become more aware of good facts in your life. And that is a good fact!

Exercise 1

- When in bed, about to fall asleep, dwell on at least good facts, enrich them by thinking of why they are good, enjoy them, savour them, “hmm, that was great progress, I feel good about that...”

And, or

Exercise 2

- Write them in a journal. This could be part of goal you intend to attain and affirming the good facts that are moving you to the attainment of that goal. Or it could be for the sole (or soul!) purpose of fueling our self-worth and self-compassion. You would be congratulating a friend on their good facts! Be a good friend to yourself and do the same!
- Below write down at least three things that happened today that are good facts.
- As you write them down, spend about 15 seconds or so thinking about these good things. Remind yourself of them. Savour them. Allow yourself to feel proud and good about them. Let them sink in. You could also tell others with enthusiasm about the good facts. Enriching them in different ways and using different senses builds stronger neural pathways. Honour and dwell upon what you did do, not what wasn't?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Source:

Dr. Rick Hanson, author of *Hardwiring Happiness and Buddha's Brain*