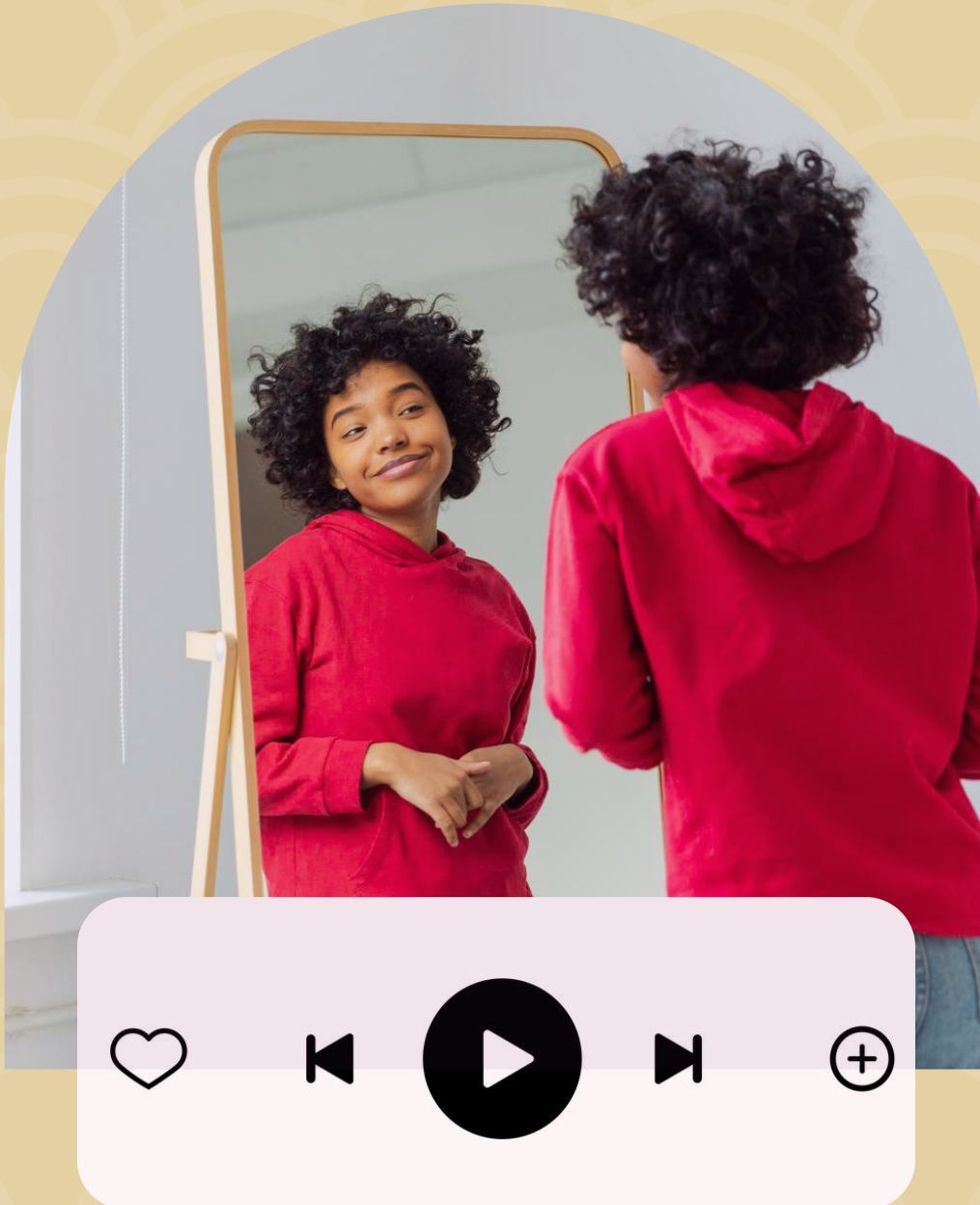




Lincoln Bishop  
University



# Building a Relationship with Yourself

By You! feat. You!

# Let's go do you!



**The relationship you have with yourself is one of the most important ones you'll ever have!**

We often think about relationships with other people, and often think that to 'connect' we must surround ourselves with others. Though this is partly true, having a good relationship with yourself can positively influence all of your other bonds!

A negative self-relationship can hold people back from achieving and pursuing goals, eventually impacting your self-esteem and having a lasting effect on your mental health.

A healthy self-relationship can lead to positive relationships, increased confidence, and successful boundaries, overall making you a better and stronger person!

# What's good?

**Often, when looking at ourselves in stressful or uncomfortable situations, we can create a negative self-image. Sometimes, these feelings last past the situation and long-term once we start thinking about them more often!**

**Realistically, we all have qualities we want to improve, but it's important to recognise the positive ones too!**

On the next few pages there are three lists of words - Positive, Neutral, and Negative. Grab a pen or highlighter (use different colours for each column if you wish) and circle/highlight each word that you think describes who you are.

Don't worry if there are negative and neutral words circled! We'll explore them later! But, when you feel negative feelings about yourself, come back to the page and look at the positive ones you've highlighted!

## Positive Traits:

Accessible  
Active  
Adaptable  
Admirable  
Adventurous  
Agreeable  
Alert  
Anticipative  
Appreciative  
Aspiring  
Articulate  
Athletic  
Attractive  
Balanced  
Benevolent  
Brilliant  
Calm  
Capable  
Captivating  
Caring  
Challenging  
Charismatic  
Charming  
Cheerful  
Clean  
Clear-headed  
Clever  
Colourful  
Companionly  
Compassionate  
Confident  
Conscientious  
Considerate  
Constant  
Contemplative  
Cooperative  
Courageous

## Neutral Traits:

Absentminded  
Aggressive  
Ambitious  
Amusing  
Artful  
Authoritarian  
Big-thinking  
Busy  
Casual  
Competitive  
Complex  
Confidential  
Conservative  
Contradictory  
Crisp  
Cute  
Deceptive  
Determined  
Dominating  
Dreamy  
Driving  
Dry  
Emotional  
Enigmatic  
Experimental  
Freewheeling  
Glamorous  
High-spirited  
Hurried  
Impassive  
Impersonal  
Impressionable  
Intense  
Invisible  
Irrelevant  
Modern  
Moralistic

## Negative Traits:

Abrasive  
Abrupt  
Agonising  
Aimless  
Angry  
Anxious  
Apathetic  
Argumentative  
Arrogant  
Artificial  
Assertive  
Attention seeking  
Avoidant of intimacy  
Barbaric  
Bewildered  
Bizarre  
Bland  
Blunt  
Boisterous  
Brutal  
Calculating  
Callous  
Careless  
Cautious  
Charmless  
Childish  
Clumsy  
Cold  
Complaintive  
Conformist  
Compulsive  
Cowardly  
Crazy  
Criminal  
Critical  
Crude  
Cruel

## Positive Traits:

Courteous  
Creative  
Cultured  
Curious  
Daring  
Decent  
Decisive  
Dedicated  
Deep  
Dignified  
Directed  
Disciplined  
Discreet  
Dramatic  
Dynamic  
Educated  
Efficient  
Elegant  
Empathetic  
Energetic  
Enthusiastic  
Exciting  
Extraordinary  
Fair  
Faithful  
Farsighted  
Firm  
Flexible  
Focused  
Forgiving  
Freethinking  
Friendly  
Fun-loving  
Generous  
Gentle  
Genuine  
Good-natured

## Neutral Traits:

Mystical  
Neutral  
Noncommittal  
Non-competitive  
Obedient  
Old-fashioned  
Ordinary  
Outspoken  
Physical  
Political  
Predictable  
Preoccupied  
Private  
progressive  
Proud  
Pure  
Questioning  
Quiet  
Religious  
Reserved  
Sarcastic  
Self-conscious  
Sceptical  
Smooth  
Soft  
Solemn  
Solitary  
Stern  
Strict  
Stubborn  
Stylish  
Subjective  
Surprising  
Tough  
Unaggressive  
Unambitious  
Unceremonious

## Negative Traits:

Cynical  
Deceitful  
Delicate  
Demanding  
Depressive  
Dependent  
Desperate  
Destructive  
Detached  
Devious  
Difficult  
Discouraging  
Dishonest  
Disloyal  
Disobedient  
Disorderly  
Disorganised  
Disrespectful  
Disruptive  
Distractible  
Disturbing  
Envious  
Erratic  
Excitable  
Extravagant  
Extreme  
Faithless  
False  
Fearful  
Foolish  
Fixed perception  
Forgetful  
Gloomy  
Greedy  
Grim  
Hateful  
Hesitant

## Positive Traits:

Gracious  
Hardworking  
Healthy  
Helpful  
Honest  
Honourable  
Humble  
Humorous  
Idealistic  
Imaginative  
Impressive  
Incorruptible  
Independent  
Individualistic  
Innovative  
Inoffensive  
Insightful  
Intelligent  
Intuitive  
Kind  
Knowledge  
Leisurely  
Liberal  
Logical  
Lovable  
Loyal  
Mature  
Methodical  
Moderate  
Modest  
Neat  
Nonauthoritarian  
Objective  
Observant  
Open  
Optimistic  
Orderly

## Neutral Traits:

Unchanging  
Undemanding  
Unhurried  
Unpredictable  
Unsentimental  
Whimsical

## Negative Traits:

Hostile  
Ignorant  
Impatient  
Impractical  
Impulsive  
Inconsiderate  
Incurious  
Indecisive  
Indulgent  
Insecure  
Insensitive  
Insincere  
Insulting  
Intolerant  
Irrational  
Irresponsible  
Irritable  
Lazy  
Manipulative  
Malicious  
Mannered  
Mannerless  
Melancholic  
Messy  
Miserable  
Misguided  
Mistaken  
Moody  
Naive  
Narrow  
Negative  
Neglectful  
Obnoxious  
Obsessive  
Odd  
Paranoid  
Petty

## Positive Traits:

## Neutral Traits:

## Negative Traits:

Organised  
Original  
Passionate  
Patient  
Peaceful  
Persuasive  
Perfectionist  
Playful  
Planful  
Popular  
Practical  
Precise  
Principled  
Protective  
Punctual  
Rational  
Realistic  
Reflective  
Relaxed  
Reliable  
Resourceful  
Respectful  
Responsible  
Responsive  
Romantic  
Secure  
Selfless  
Self-critical  
Sensitive  
Sentimental  
Sharing  
Skilful  
Sophisticated  
Sociable  
Spontaneous  
Stable  
Strong

Procrastinating  
Reactive  
Regretful  
Risk taking  
Rigid  
Secretive  
Selfish  
Self-indulgent  
Shallow  
Shy  
Single-minded  
Submissive  
Superficial  
Suspicious  
Tasteless  
Tense  
Timid  
uncaring  
Unappreciative  
Uncharitable  
Uncreative  
Uncritical  
Undisciplined  
Unemotional  
Unfriendly  
Unhealthy  
Unimaginative  
Unreflective  
Unrealistic  
Unreliable  
Unstable  
Vague  
Vulnerable  
Weak  
Withdrawn

**Positive Traits:**

**Neutral Traits:**

**Negative Traits:**

Subtle

Sweet

Sympathetic

Tasteful

Thorough

Teacherly

Tolerant

Tidy

Trusting

Uncomplaining

Understanding

Warm

Well-rounded

Winning

Wise

Witty

Youthful

*Let's turn a  
negative into a  
positive!*

**Pick a negative trait which you highlighted above and write out your response to the exercise below on a piece of paper! Keep it in a place to go back to and look over at a later date!**

**Your best friend comes to you who is feeling (*insert negative trait*), what do you say to them and how do support them?**

# Here's a little image to help you out!

## PROBLEM FOCUSED

## SOLUTION FOCUSED

|                 |   |                                           |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------------------------|
| bossy           | → | natural leader, visionary                 |
| defiant         | → | holds strong beliefs, bold, determined    |
| demanding       | → | knows what they want, outspoken           |
| dramatic        | → | expressive, passionate                    |
| fearful         | → | cautious, careful                         |
| fussy           | → | has strong preferences                    |
| hyperactive     | → | energetic, enthusiastic, on the go        |
| impulsive       | → | spontaneous, instinctive                  |
| oppositional    | → | advocates for a different perspective     |
| rebellious      | → | is finding their way                      |
| stubborn        | → | persistent, determined, steadfast         |
| talkative       | → | enjoys communicating                      |
| tattletale      | → | seeks justice, respects rules             |
| unfocused       | → | multitasks, pays attention to many things |
| wants attention | → | advocates for needs, seeks connection     |

Once you've written down a few, reflect on them at a later date when you feel that your self-image is negative!

# Letter to yourself!

**For this task, grab a nice piece of paper and your favourite pen (or type it on your computer). Write a letter directed to the person you want to be in 1 years time. Seal it, and add a reminder on your phone to open it next year!**

You can include things like:

- What interests/activities you'll be taking part in.
- What your personality will be like.
- A little message of encouragement to that person.
- Write a compassionate wish for a person close to you.
- Mention how you'll be taking care of yourself.
- Who you'll be surrounded by and what aims you will have.



# QUESTION TIME!



**It's question time! Here are a few questions to ask to yourself - feel free to ask them with a friend and reflect on them together!**

1. How do I feel about my life?
2. How do I feel about the relationship with my family?
3. How do I feel about the relationship with my partner?
4. How do I feel about the relationship with my friends?
5. What brings me joy?
6. Are my actions aligned with my core values?
7. What underlying fear may be driving my current worries?
8. Which recent decision resonates most genuinely with who I am right now?

9. When I reflect on my life, which moments or experiences will truly matter to me?
10. Which aspects of myself do I struggle to fully accept and embrace?
11. Where can I cultivate forgiveness within myself or towards others?
12. Where do I find my inner sanctuary, a place of peace?
13. When do I feel most connected to authentic self?
14. If guaranteed success, what learning or creative endeavour would I eagerly embark on?
15. Is there something I am missing in my life?
16. What is one thing that I'm holding on to that I'd like to let go?
17. Am I being true to myself?
18. What am I most proud of achieving recently?
19. What am I most looking forward to?
20. If life could be perfect tomorrow, what would it look like?



Self-awareness  
gives you the  
capacity to learn  
from your mistakes  
as well as your  
successes.

Lawrence Bossidy

**It can be useful to create a self-care plan to stick to which will ensure you look after yourself, both physically and mentally! Here are the different types of self-care - on the next page there are example topics, then the page after is a space to add your own!**

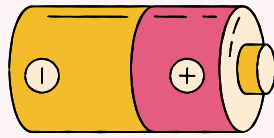
**Remember - it is not selfish to take time for yourself!**





## Physical

Sleep  
Stretches  
Walking  
Gym  
Healthy Food  
Yoga



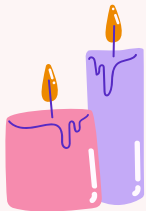
## Emotional

Stress management  
Mental Health  
Resources  
Journaling  
Schedule



## Social

Community  
Charity  
Social Media Usage  
Friend Meetups  
Societies



## Spiritual

Independent Time  
Meditation  
Crystals, Incense,  
Spirt Cards  
Prayer



## Financial

Saving  
Budgeting  
Money Management  
Bills  
Boundaries



## Work

Projects  
Volunteering  
Breaks  
Purpose  
Time Management



## Space

Safety  
House  
Cleaning  
Decorations  
Comforts  
Warmth

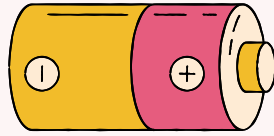


## Personal

Hobbies  
Creativity  
Goals  
Identity  
Authenticity



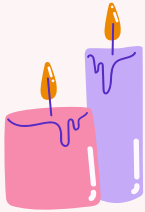
**Physical**



**Emotional**



**Social**



**Spiritual**



**Financial**



**Work**

**Space**



**Personal**



# DAILY



# CHECK-IN

**Sometimes we don't give ourselves time to check-in with ourselves. Even though it only takes a few minutes, we can have busy schedules and can often forget - it's okay!**

For this task, invest in a 'check-in journal' and set a phone reminder for a specific time every morning (e.g. 0700) and in the evening (2000) and write down how you're feeling. Feel free to use some of the prompts below! Once you've done this, try linking this daily check-in with your self-care strategies above (e.g. I'm feeling on edge and worried - therefore I'll go to the gym this morning).

**How do I really feel today?**



**What am I thinking?**



**What sensations am I feeling?**

**What coping mechanisms am I going to use today?**

# ♥ ACCEPTANCE ♥

***“I am trying all of these coping strategies to better myself, but some things I just can’t control!”***

Self-acceptance may help you change the way you live your life and support you letting go of feelings that we have to be somebody we’re not, or let go of situations we cannot control.

You may think:

- *I can’t deal with this!*
- *It’s not fair!*
- *Why is this happening to me?*
- *You are frustrated that you can’t change situations.*

***Let’s work on this together!***

# *Radical acceptance doesn't mean you 'approve' of the situation*

## **Radical acceptance is not appropriate for:**

- Abusive relationships
- Being harassed, taken advantage of, or not treated fairly at work
- Experiencing burnout or lack of motivation
- When you are intentionally not taking action out of fear
- When acceptance becomes an obstacle in actually improving your situation or standing up for yourself

## **However, it is appropriate for:**

- Going through the end of a breakup
- Experiencing unexpected changes in your life (such as job loss)
- If a loved one has died
- Experienced a traumatic event
- If you feel stuck or unable to move on from a negative event
- If you have tried other ways of dealing with your pain and nothing has worked.

# How to practice Radical Acceptance:

1. Pay attention to what triggers resistance, or notice when you can't accept something something.
2. Remind yourself that in this moment, reality can't be changed.
3. Remind yourself that there are no causes for this reality that are outside of your control.
4. Think about what you would do if you were able to accept what happened (and then do those things as though you have accepted what happened).



5. Imagine what things would be like if you accepted the situation.
6. Use relaxation strategies, mindfulness practices, journaling, and self-reflection to understand your emotions.
7. Let yourself feel your emotions in a safe way.
8. Observe how emotions resonate in your body. Is there any tightness, pain, or restriction?
9. Accept that life can be worthwhile even when experiencing pain.
10. Decide to commit to the practice of acceptance when you feel resistance come up again.

Remember to also talk to others about how you're feeling, or imagine what a role model or admired friend would do in the same situation.

# Self-Image Goals!

Goals can focus on lots of different things, but overall it comes down and relates back to your self-image. For example, you try to reach a goal to benefit and better yourself!

This task looks at some of the topics in earlier activities, but in a slightly different way which you may engage better with! You can also share goals with a therapist or mental health adviser to collaboratively work towards them!

**My short-term goals are:**

**My long-term goals are:**

**My values from most to least important:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**My self-blockades are (how you hold yourself back - these can be emotions or behaviours):**

**What do I need to do to reach my goals and overcome the blockades?**

**You can use this activity to help you with the question above - draw a picture of your 'today self' and then your 'future self' - include yourself, your surroundings, and the people in your life. Add as many details as you like! Then, again, list what you need to do to reach your future self!**

**Today Self**

**Future Self**

If you always  
do what you've  
always done,  
you'll always  
be where you've  
always been.

T.D Jakes



I'm not  
sharp enough



I'm not colourful  
enough



## The Negative Effects of Comparison

Often as human beings we compare ourselves to others due to our social nature wanting to surround ourselves around others and see how we measure up. Social media makes this even easier as we can see people without actually being with them!

Every single person brings something new and exciting to the world, whether that be a talent, the way they express themselves, or something they act upon. It is easy to jump to conclusions as well, thinking that 'positive' situations don't have 'negative' aspects - for example if your friend earns £50,000, and you earn £25,000. However, your friend may actually be unhappy and doesn't have as many talents like you.

# What can help?

**Keep a record of your achievements** - it doesn't matter what they are, just make a record of it if it's something you are proud of!

**Practice gratitude** - write down in the notes of your phone what you are grateful for and look back on it when comparing yourself.

**Water your own grass** - recognise your own interests and strengths and improve these. Join a new society, make a friend, practice a talent!

**Love your past** - your life might have been messy and bumpy, but these mistakes have created a more courageous version of yourself - embrace your story!

**Take something from them** - try and see your comparison to a 'unique gift' - send appreciation their way and take a positive from the interaction instead of a negative.

**Have boundaries** - take a break from social media - go for a walk and find inspiration in your environment without comparison - e.g. what can you see that is beautiful - but don't compare!

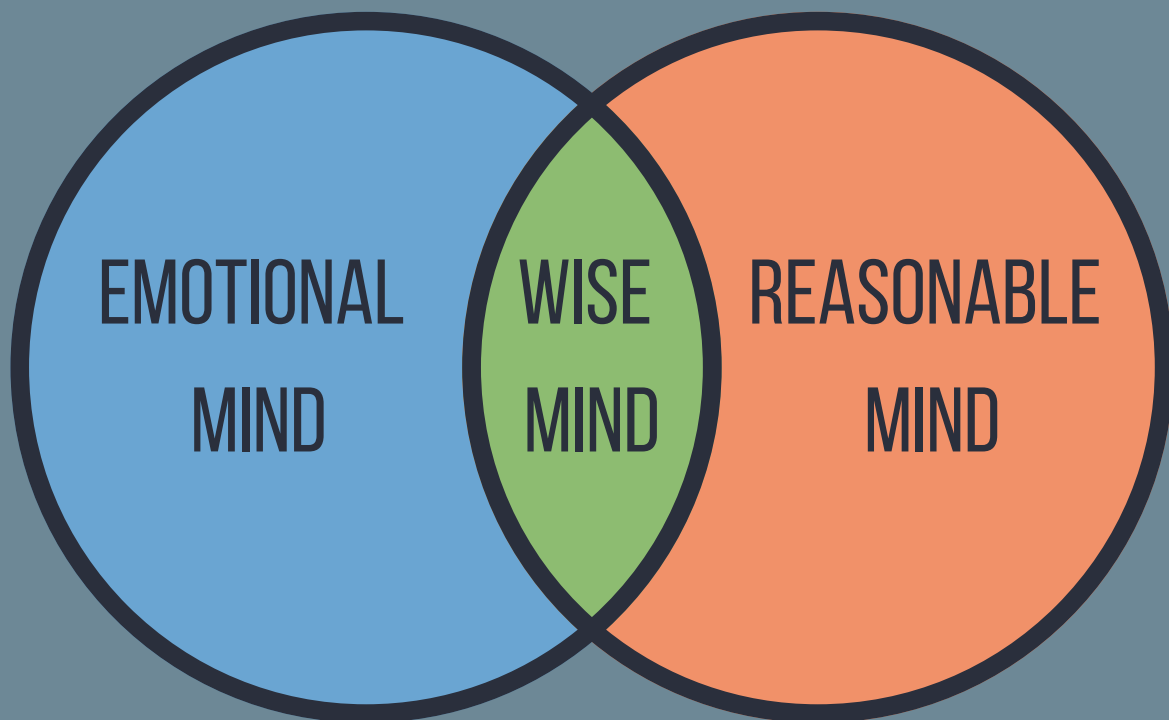
# *Remember!*



1. **Comparisons are always unfair.** We typically compare the worst we know of ourselves to the best we presume about others.
2. **Comparisons, by definition, require metrics.** We cannot count or measure these.
3. **You are too unique to compare fairly.** We have all got different experiences - your gifts and talents are entirely unique to you and can never be properly compared.
4. **Comparison doesn't change anything.** But embracing your uniqueness does!
5. **Comparisons deprive us of joy.** They add no value, meaning, or fulfilment to our lives - they only distract from it.

# THE WISE MIND

The Wise Mind is a mindfulness exercise to help address who you are, where you are going in life, and the ability to control what goes on in your mind.



The emotional mind is used when feelings control a person's thoughts and behaviour.

They may act impulsively with little regard for consequences.

The wise mind refers to a balance between the reasonable and emotional halves.

They recognise and respect their feelings while responding to them in a rational manner.

A person uses their reasonable mind when they approach a situation intellectually. They plan and make decisions based on fact.

**Describe an experience you've had with each of the three states of mind.**

**REASONABLE  
MIND**

**WISE  
MIND**

**EMOTIONAL  
MIND**

You may have worked out when you've experienced each of these - don't worry if not! But how do we actually go about accessing our wise mind?

The wise mind is like a deep well in the ground - the water at the bottom of the well is an underground ocean (representing the wise mind), but often there are trap doors that impede progress. Sometimes there are certain things you have to do to get past this trap doors!

# UNLOCKING THE WISE MIND

**Wise mind can feel different to each person; here are some ways to experience it:**

- Take a deep breath, pause, now ask yourself: “is this action, thought, ideas, plan etc, my wise mind? Listen for the answer, check for any imbalance of reason or emotion.
- It often feels like ‘stepping back’ and seeing the ‘full picture’ in the situation.
- Slow down, feel your experiences - does it feel like ‘the calm that follows the storm’ - this shows you are reflecting and are ready to access the wise mind.



# DATE PLANNER



**It's time to plan a date! A date you ask?  
Yes!!**

However, this date is with yourself! Often we think by finding other people it can 'complete' us. We have enough on our own - sometimes we have to just find it!

Write some date ideas to do below - these can be things you would normally do with somebody else, only this time, give it a go alone and step out of your comfort zone - even try something new!



# Optimism

## VS

# Pessimism

Optimism has lots of benefits for our mental health and wellbeing! It can make us feel happy, and even if bad things happen, having a positive approach is more likely going to help us get through it quicker, and allow us time to reflect appropriately on it!

It also has a positive affect on our physical health, leading to reduced stress and further issues later in life!

Optimism also helps us achieve greater things in life!

**On the next page try the optimism vs pessimism scale. Score your core three symptoms - depression, anxiety, and anger - then see how optimistic you are even if those things are bringing you down. It's a good reminder to be optimistic, even if you're struggling mentally! Score the other scales, then repeat in a few weeks to see if you have improved.**

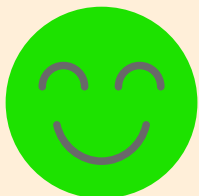
## Depression

Date:



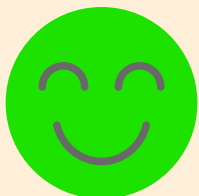
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## Anxiety



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## Anger



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Tendency to express gratitude**



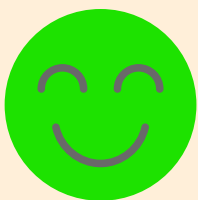
**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

**Tendency to give time and energy to others**



**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

**Interest in others**



**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

## Ability to forgive



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## Tendency to smile and laugh



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

# How do we get better at being optimistic?



## **Reframe our thoughts:**

We can replace negative thoughts with more responsible ones! Such as:

*Negative thought:* I haven't achieved what I wanted this past year. It was a terrible year.

*Positive thought:* It wasn't the year I thought it would be, but many great things happened that I am grateful for, and the negatives will make me a better person this year!

## **Focus on solutions, not problems:**

This gives us a sense of hope and moving forward, preventing us from being stuck.

## **Practice acceptance as explained in the above exercise:**

We can then stop fighting life's problems and find a calmer approach.

# Grow your knowledge

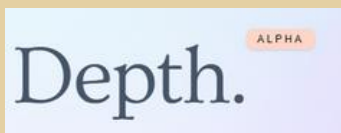
One way you can get to know yourself better is by learning something completely new! For this task, Google something you are intrigued about, go to the library and take out a random book, or travel to a random place on a map! Write below what you've learnt in terms of knowledge, but also what have you learnt about yourself? Have you discovered a new love for history or reading? Do you want to travel more?



# Useful Resources



- Download the Calm or Headspace app and give meditation a go! Relaxation as well as meditation can help you look inwards and get to the core issues of self-reflection.



- Try this new AI powered reflection prompt app called 'Depth.' to help you begin journaling or reflecting:  
<https://depth.reflection.app/>

- Try creating your own personal safety plan which you can access via the Wellbeing Resources webpage.
- Utilise a weekly mood tracker or symptom tracker which can be found on the website.

**For any further support surrounding your mental wellbeing, reach out to the mental health adviser team and make an appointment on the Lincoln Bishop University website.**