


**NEXTSTEP FACILITATIONS**  
Magis Thinking to Thrive & Flourish





# The NextStep: How to Thrive & Flourish in Recovery

## A Workshop for Professionals Working in Recovery

### Bob Reese, PhD, CH

Presented at the National Guild of Hypnotists  
25<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough, MA  
Aug. 10, 2012

[www.NextStepFacilitations.com](http://www.NextStepFacilitations.com)



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**"What is my next step?"**

At one time or another, in one form or another, we all ask this question.

When a "bad day" develops into a slump; when a job or life transition makes confusion and chaos seem never-ending; when dreams appear shattered; when we are struggling in the dark night of the soul; or, conversely when we achieve a long sought after goal - we ask: "What now?" "What is my next step?"

The answer to this question, "What is my next step?" is often relatively simple. Simple, but not easy. That is, it may be simple to know, but it seems it is anything but easy to accomplish. Being a curious person, I wanted to know the why of this conundrum.

Many years of study, continuing research and education, and a lifetime of experience have convinced me that our ability to thrive and flourish in the world is actualized through a positive psychology. Positive psychology is much greater than the notion of positive thinking. While positive thinking is a necessary ingredient, it can only take you so far. Positive psychology encourages you to focus on your strengths, and to take your next steps in a positive, growth-oriented journey to actualize your potentialities.

**My mission** is to facilitate individuals and groups to thrive and flourish in life.

**My passion** is educating the teachers (coaches, counselors, therapists, etc.) in these facilitative techniques so they can reach more individuals than I can alone.



Bob Reese, PhD

When you or your organization are ready to take the Next Step, [click here](#)

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**Scheduled Public Events**

World Hypnosis Summit May 4-13  
[www.worldhypnosisummit.com](http://www.worldhypnosisummit.com)  
"Improve Sports Performance" May 7  
[Register as an Affiliate of Bob's]  
National Guild of Hypnotists  
[www.ngh.net](http://www.ngh.net)  
Sports Hypnosis Certification Course  
Aug. 10-12, Marlboro, MA  
"The Forgiveness Paradigm: A Positive Psychology Perspective"  
Aug. 14, Marlboro, MA

**Contact:**

Bob Reese, PhD  
NextStep Facilitations  
540.909.4405  
[bob@nextstepfacilitations.com](http://bob@nextstepfacilitations.com)


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Home About Bob Winner's Mentality Who You Are Enneagram Services They Say ...

**Publications**

**PUBLICATIONS**

This page links to forms utilized in Courses taught by Bob.  
 It also contains Articles, Essays, and Abstracts written by Bob, including his Dissertation.  
 Bob's CV is available upon request: bob@nextstepfacilitations.com

**Course Forms: Winner's Mentality & Sports Hypnosis Certification**

- [Index](#)
- [What is Life, Good Stuff Stuff](#)
- [Goal Setting Worksheets](#)
- [Visualization & Relaxation Yhdress Scales](#)
- [Visualization Competitive Preparation](#)
- [Visualization Go to the Beach](#)
- [Relaxation: Repose Handout](#)
- [Affirmation Checklist](#)
- [Mindful Training: Silence](#)
- [Delusion Exercises: Think Outside the Box, Planning Time, Lightbulb Conundrum, Think Inside the Box](#)
- [Delusion Exercises: Autogram](#)
- [Scotomas: Biz Card Scotomas](#)
- [Relaxation Exercises: Daily Breathing, Relaxing Sigh, The Mist: Repose](#)

**Course Forms: Enneagram**

- [Enneagram Profile Assessment](#)
- [Enneagram Profile Assessment Key](#)

**PowerPoints**

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**Contact:**

Bob Reese, PhD  
 NextStep Facilitations  
 940.984.4488  
[bob@nextstepfacilitations.com](mailto:bob@nextstepfacilitations.com)

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## Workshop Description

- **Nicotine, alcohol, drugs, food - these addictions affect everyone. They damage individuals, families, relationships, workplace performance, and the economy. Relapse is common. This workshop is aimed at professionals who work with those in recovery. A "Friend of Bill" for more than 20 years, Bob Reese will share his experience, current neuroscientific findings and implications, and how positive psychology interventions can assist those in recovery to thrive and flourish - and hopefully reduce recidivism.**



Topic	Time (in min)	Presentation Description
▪ Introduction	5	Lecture
▪ Current status of addictions in the Country (Statistics, etc.)	10	Lecture
▪ New neuroscientific findings	10	Lecture
▪ Addiction: Disease of the brain vs. Disease of the attitudes?	15	Lecture/Discussion
▪ Self-Talk Cycle	10	Lecture
▪ VIA Strengths and applications for recovery	10	Lecture
▪ Positive Psychology Interventions	20	Lecture/Demonstrations
▪ Forgiveness Challenges	10	Lecture/Discussion
▪ Letting Go!	10	Demonstration
▪ Discussion / Q&A	10	Discussion / Q&A
<b>Total time:</b>	<b>110</b>	

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## Bob Reese ~ Bio














DEDICATED TO LEARNING FROM SUCCESS IN ADDICTION RECOVERY

VTC Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute

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# Let's Get Acquainted

## The NextStep: How to Thrive & Flourish in Recovery



**A Workshop for  
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Working in Recovery**

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## Neuroscience: Addiction is a Disease of the Brain

- **Bleep Clip**
- **Get some 'stats'**
- **Nora Volkow**
  - 'slipping' = part of recovery

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## Neuroscience: Addiction is a Disease of the Brain

- **Addiction**

- “Addiction is the consumption of large quantities of drugs in an compulsive manner.”

- Nora Volkow, PhD, Director NIDA

- **Disease**

- A pathological condition of a body part, an organ, or a system resulting from various causes, such as infection, genetic defect, or environmental stress, and characterized by an identifiable group of signs or symptoms ... *resulting in morbidity*

- **Brain**

- Organ housed in cranium; the center of thought, understanding, etc.

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## Neuroscience & Genetics

- **Genetics impact likelihood of addiction**

- Only 10% of people who take drugs become addicted
- Genes = 50% risk of addictions at best

- **Not 1:1**



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## Neuroscience

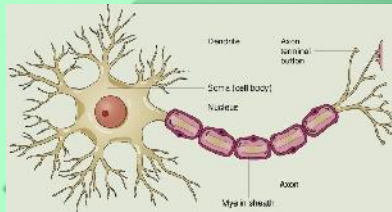
- The human brain weighs three (3) pounds
- It uses 20-25% of the body's energy



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## Neuroscience

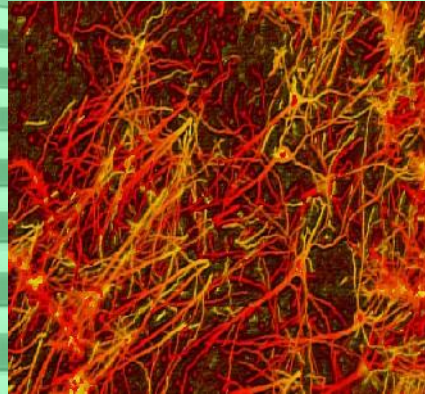
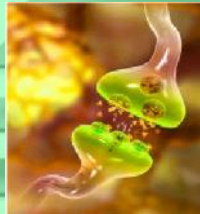
- The human brain has 100 *billion* neurons
  - It grows thousands of new cells daily



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# Neuroscience

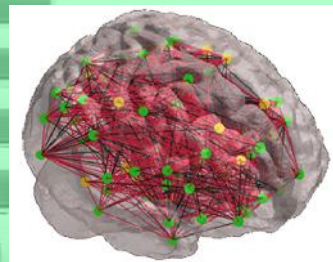
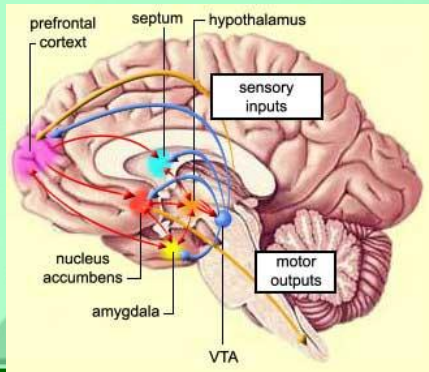
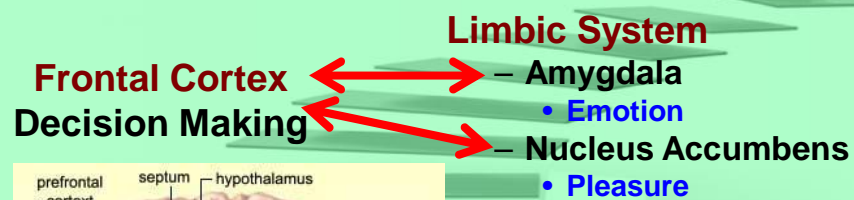
- These 100 billion neurons are capable of making 40,000,000,000,000,000 (Forty quadrillion connections )



Ratey, J. (2002). *Users Guide to the Brain*

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## Neuroscience & Addiction Primary Areas of Concern



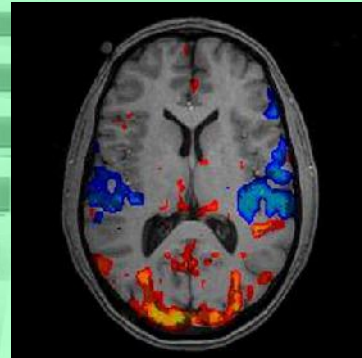
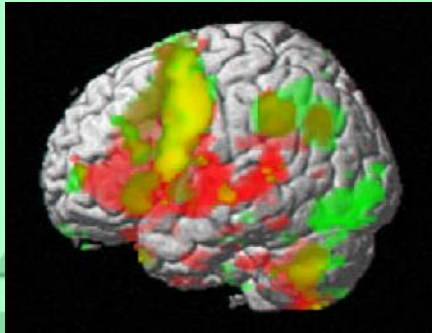
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## Neuroscience FMRI



- **Technology now allows us to look at these connections working**



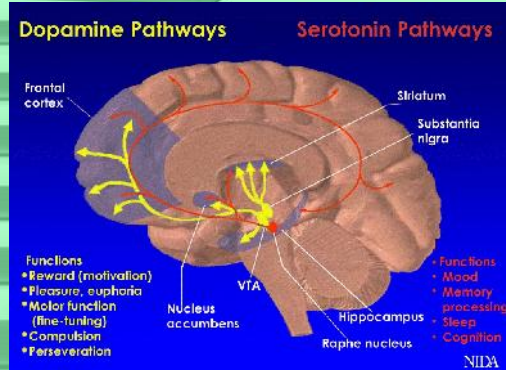
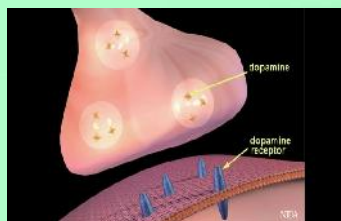
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## Dopamine & Addiction Pleasure & Emotion



- **ALL drugs activate Dopamine**
  - Legal or Illegal
  - Alcohol, Marijuana, Cocaine, Crystal Meth, etc.



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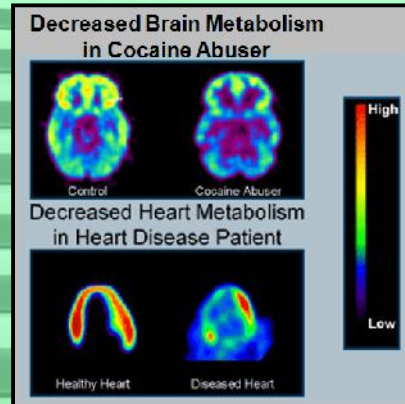
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## Disease of the Brain



- **Addiction affects tissue function just like other diseases**

**Dopamine  
Receptors  
significantly  
reduced in  
addiction**



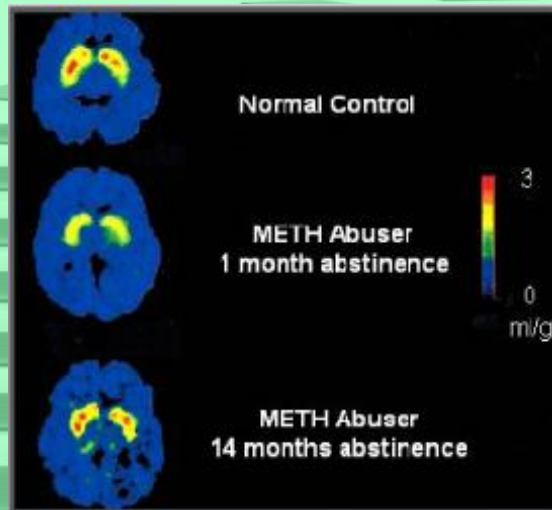
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## ADDICTION Can Be Treated



- **Partial Recovery of Brain Dopamine Transporters in Methamphetamine (METH) Abuser After Protracted Abstinence**  
– Volkow et al, 2001

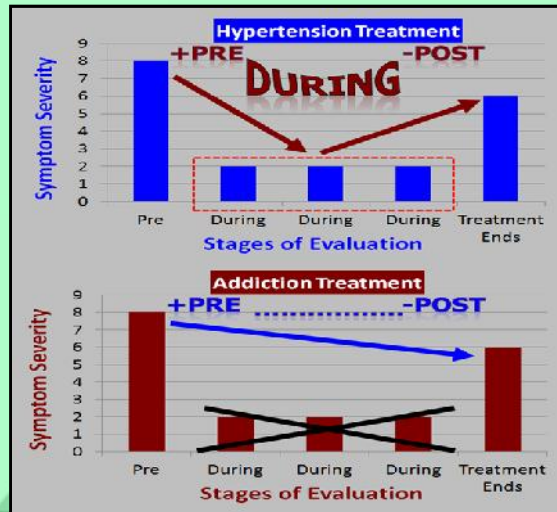


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## Addiction is a Chronic Disease Double Standard in Treatment



Just like  
Hypertension  
Addiction is a  
**CHRONIC** Disease  
that requires  
Continual Care



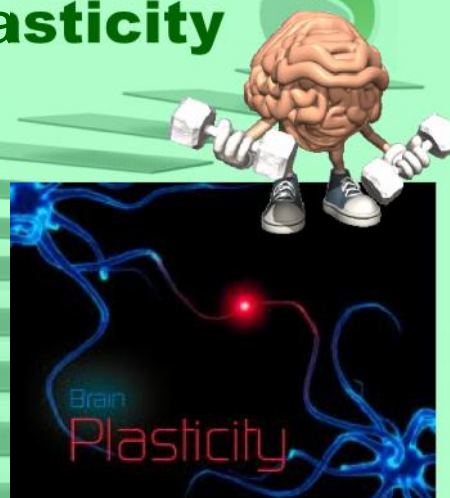
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## Neuroplasticity

The ability of the  
brain to rewire  
and remap itself.

- Your **Brain** can change your **Mind**
- Your **Mind** can change your **Brain**



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# Neuroplasticity

- As your **Brain** changes, your **Mind** changes

– Ways Brain Changes the Mind

- For

? Need for  
this &  
following  
slide



↑ Happiness



- For

– Imbalances in neurotransmitters

– Concussion, Stroke, Tumor, Alzheimer's

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# Neuroplasticity

- As your **Mind** changes, your **Brain** changes

– This produces both temporary & lasting changes in your brain

- **Lasting Changes:**

– Increased blood/nutrient flow to active regions

– Altered epigenetics (**gene expression**)

– “Neurons that fire together wire together.”

- Increasing excitability of active neurons

- Strengthening existing synapses

- Building new synapses; thickening cortex

- Neuronal “pruning” - “use it or lose it”

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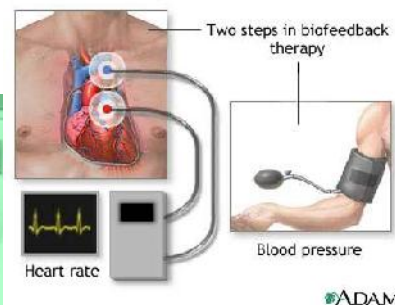
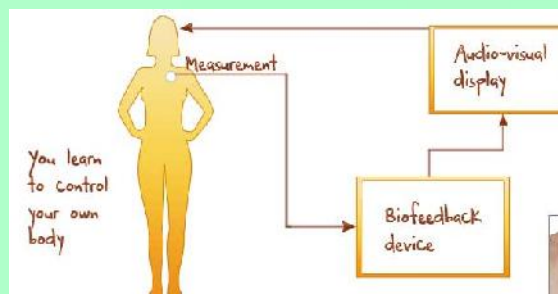
Neuroplasticity  
You can use your **Mind**  
To change your **Brain**  
To change your **Mind** for the better!



**This is Self-Directed Neuroplasticity**  
(Remember this when we get to Interventions)

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Biofeedback  
Mind **CONTROLS** Body



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## The Brain & Learning

- The Brain was designed to Learn
- The brain was meant to Explore and Learn



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## The Brain's Needs

The brain needs to function effectively:

1. Exercise
2. Sleep
3. Oxygen
4. Hydration
5. Food (glucose)  
(20-25% of Body's energy)



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## Learning is when Neurons Wire

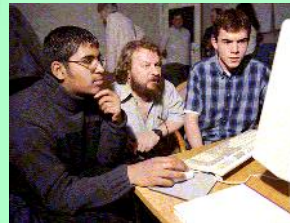


- Learning is a change in the neuron-patterns of the brain.

– (Ratey, 2002; Goldberg, 2009)

- The one who does the work does the learning

– (Doyle, 2008)

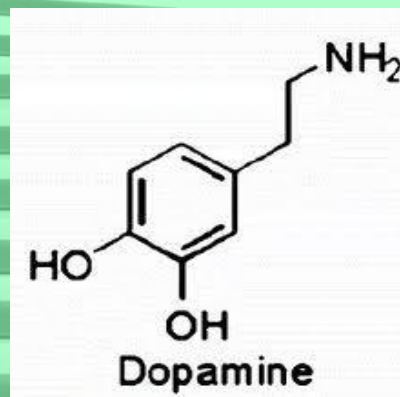


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## Learning (*Like Addiction*) Activates the Brain's Reward Pathways



By giving us a jolt of pleasure (**dopamine**) the reward pathway works to ensure that we will repeat the behaviors necessary to survive.

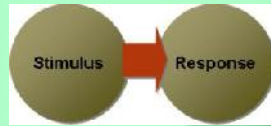


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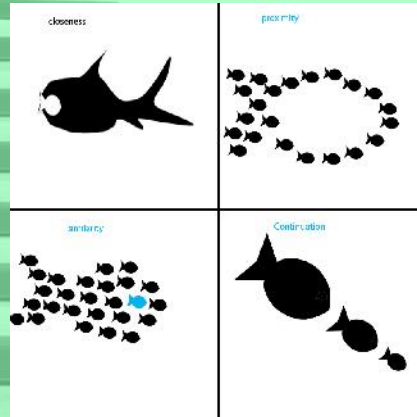
<http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/reward/>



# Patterns, Conditioning & Learning



The brain is a pattern seeking device that relates whole concepts to one another and looks for similarities, differences, or relationships between them.” (Ratey, 2002, pg.5)



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## Neuroscience

### Addiction: A Developmental Disease

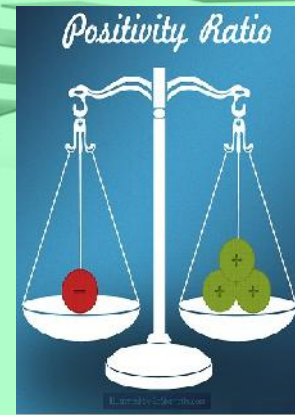
- **Brain does not mature until age 24-26**
  - Frontal Cortex: Decision Making
    - **Black & White thinking**
- **Childhood & Adolescence at greatest risk for addiction**
  - Greater brain vulnerability
  - Early exposure: ↑ to be addicted & longer lasting
  - **Early addiction: longer lasting / harder to recover**
- **Experimentation w/ drugs & alcohol begins w/ teens**
  - 18-25 yrs highest abuse & dependence

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## Negativity Bias of Brain

- Negative stimuli get more attention and processing.
- We generally learn faster from pain than pleasure.
- People work harder to avoid a loss than attain an equal gain ("endowment effect").
- Easy to create learned helplessness, hard to undo
- Negative interactions: more powerful than positive
- Negative experiences sift into implicit memory.

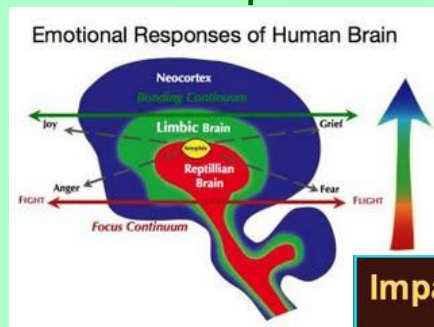


Source: Fredrickson, B. (2008). Positivity. Illustrated by GoStrangle.

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## Brain: Impact of Emotions



### Impact of Emotion on Learning



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# EMOTIONS



- Typically emotions are linked to specific behavioral disposition
  - Specific Action Tendency *(Evolutionary Psych)*
    - Fear → Run
    - Anger → Attack
    - Disgust → Vomit
  - Positive Emotions
    - Specific Action
      - Joy → ?
      - Gratitude → ?

**Same Problem Physiologically**

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## Emotional Components



- **Feeling Component**
  - Fear, Disgust, Repulsion, Hatred → Aversion
- **Sensory Component**
  - Sights, Sounds, Smell
- **Thinking Component**
  - Narrow Focus
- **Action Component**
  - Fight, Flight, Conserve



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## EMOTIONS

- **Finally – we mistrust emotions**
  - Reason vs Emotion
  - Win-Loss / Zero Sum Game

**Emotion & Imagination**  
**ALWAYS win over**  
**Logic & Reason**



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## Emotion & Addiction



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# POSITIVE EMOTIONS



- Why has evolution endowed us with positive feelings?
- Who has positive emotion in abundance?
- How can you build more & lasting positive emotion into your life?

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## Role of Positive Emotions in Positive Psychology



### • The Broaden & Build Theory of Positive Emotions

– Barbara Fredrickson, UNC Chapel Hill



• American Psychologist, March 2001

– Vol. 56, No. 3, 218-226



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## Broaden-and-Build Theory\* of Positive Emotions

- **Certain discrete Positive Emotions**

- Joy
- Interest
- Contentment
- Pride
- Love

- Broaden thought-action repertoires
- Build enduring personal resources
  - Physical & Intellectual
  - Social & Psychological

\*Fredrickson, 1998

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## Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

- **Negative Emotions**

- Narrow attention / focus
- Use personal resources
  - e.g., weaken immune system

- **Positive Emotions**

- Broaden attention / mindsets
- Build personal reserves
  - These become durable

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## Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

- **Undoing Hypothesis**

- Positive emotions = antidote for lingering effect of negative emotions

- They UNDO effects of negative emotions



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## Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

- **Positive Emotions FUEL**

### Psychological Resiliency

- STRESS: Positive Affect ↑ Cope

- **Resilient people**

- Expert users of *Undoing Effect* of Positive Emotions

**Mental  
Toughness**

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## Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

- **Depressed Mood**



- Narrow Attention

- Pessimistic Thinking

- Worse Moods

- » Clinical Depression



- **Increased Emotional Wellbeing**

- Broadened Thinking

- Positive Emotions

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## Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

- **Positive Emotions:**

- Broaden thought-action repertoires

- Undo lingering negative emotions

- Fuel psychological resilience

- Trigger upward spirals to enhanced well-being

- ↑ Creativity

- ↑ Motivation & Energy

- ↑ Physical Health

- **It Feels Good to Feel Good!**

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## Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

- **Positive Emotions:**
  - Transform people for the better
  - Essential elements of optimal functioning
    - A means to achieving psychological growth & improved well-being over time.
  - Also – Shorten duration of negative emotions
    - May slow progression toward disease

Fredrickson & Levenson (1998)

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## Positive Psychology Role of Positive Emotions (Broaden & Build)

**Relevance Beyond Self**

**Meaningful Life**

**Engagement**

**Good Life**

**Pleasure**

**Pleasant Life**



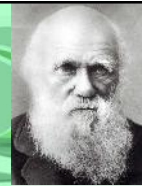
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## Positive Emotions

### Rethink Darwin



- In the *Descent of Man* Charles Darwin wrote

- 2x of "survival of the fittest"
- 95x about love!
- 92x about moral sensitivity
- 200x about brain & mind

Domination  
System  
&  
Love System  
- David Loye

• <http://www.thedarwinproject.com/>

*"We can change the world for better  
by changing the story we live by."*

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- David Loye

## GRATITUDE

A Positive Emotion  
A Personal Strength



In daily life we must see that it is not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy. --Brother David Steindl-Rast  
www.gratefulness.org



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## Learning to be Grateful



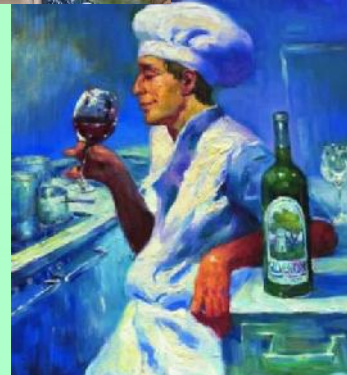
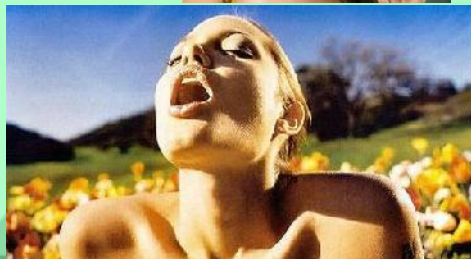
**"You say grace before meals. All right. But I say grace before the concert and the opera, and grace before the play and pantomime, and grace before I open a book, and grace before sketching, painting, swimming, fencing, boxing, walking, playing, dancing, and grace before I dip the pen in the ink."**

**"Gratitude produced the most purely joyful moments that have been known to man."**

**- G. K. Chesterton**

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## Gratitude: Savoring



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## Gratitude

- Being “in Gratitude” opens the door ...



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## FORGIVENESS

A Positive Emotion (?)

- Forgiveness is a complex neurocognitive & emotional process



– Newberg, A.B., 2000

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# FORGIVENESS

## MANY Definitions



- Forgiveness is freeing from a *negative attachment* to the source of the transgression.
  - This definition allows the target of forgiveness to be oneself, another person, or a situation that is viewed as out of one's control.
    - Snyder & Lopez, 2007; Thompson, et al., 2005
- Cancelling a debt.
- “To accept the fact the past can’t change.”
  - Oprah Winfrey
- Choosing to Overcome Your Desire for Revenge

## Forgiving / Forgiveness

- IS**
- ... *condoning*
  - ... *reconciling*
  - ... *giving in, excusing or forgetting about it*
- NOT**
- ... *a way to feel morally superior*
  - ... *repressing genuine feelings of hurt, anger, or hate*
  - ... *failing to hold people accountable for their actions*
  - ... *a bi-lateral transaction; it is a unilateral act of generosity.*

## Why Forgive? Culture of 'Forgiveness'



- **Forgiveness Songs**
  - 1,410,000 hits / Google
- **Media is obsessed w/ it**
  - Tabloids
  - Entertainment TV/Mags
  - Soaps
  - Cable News
- **Men need it often**
  - “Wife Insurance”
    - 24 hour roses @ George's Florist



## Why Forgive? Psychological Aspect



- **Cognitive Psychology**
  - Forgiveness leads to improved physical and mental health as well as better relationships.
    - Enright, R. D., 1991
  - Forgiveness requires a sense of Self
    - Self is often damaged due to problems requiring the forgiveness.
    - Learning to forgive enhances & strengthens sense of self
      - McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2001
- **Positive Psychology**
  - Forgiveness creates positive emotions
    - Gratitude, Happiness, Hope, Optimism, etc.
    - Snyder & Lopez, 2007; Tangey, et al, 1999
- **Evolutionary Psychology**
  - It may break the cycle of violence
    - Social order may be stabilized

## Why Forgive? Religious Aspect



- **ALL major religious traditions carry basically the same message:**
  - For Salvation – you must have
    - Love
    - Compassion
    - Forgiveness
- **Many Traditions:**
  - To get to ‘Heaven’ you must be “forgiven”



## Why Forgive? Recovery Aspect



### 12-Step Programs

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became *willing* to make **amends** to them all.
9. Made direct **amends** to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.





## Recovery & Forgiveness Self-Forgiveness

- Aimed at lessening shame or guilt
- The individual needs to
  - Take *responsibility* for the action ~ **FESS UP**
  - To take *accountability* for the action ~ **FIX IT**
  - To let go
  - To move forward
- **GOAL:**
  - Prevent letting the negative feelings interfere with positive living



## How Do We Forgive?

- Giving up *negative emotions* is the core of forgiveness:
  - Forgiveness: a cognitive-affective transformation following a transgression
    - The victim makes a realistic assessment of the harm done & acknowledges the perpetrator's responsibility
    - Then, freely chooses to “cancel the debt”
      - Snyder & Lopez, 2007; Tangney, Fee, Reinsmith, Boone, & Lee, 1999
- Not seeking revenge **IS** forgiveness

**NO  
revenge**

You can't MAKE someone forgive you



MOVE ON

Know when to quit.

Swagster.com

Letting  
GO

LETTING  
GO



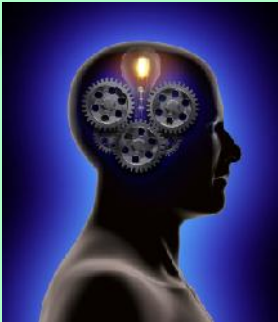
- ... does not mean to stop caring, it means I can't do it for someone else
- ... is not to cut myself off
- ... is not to enable but to allow the other to learn from natural consequences
- ... means realizing I can't control another
- ... is not to 'fix' but be supportive
- ... is not to blame or change another, it is to make the most of myself
- ... is not to care for, but care about
- ... not to be protective but to let another face reality
- ... is not to deny, but to accept
- ... is not to nag, scold or argue, but to search out my own shortcomings and correct them

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

Adapted from The LifeChanger e-newsletter; Ontario Hypnosis Centre. 62  
Georgina Cannon. To subscribe: [info@ont-hypnosis-centre.com](mailto:info@ont-hypnosis-centre.com).

## Summary: Neuroscience & Addiction

- **Addiction: Disease of the Brain**
  - Can be treated
    - Double Standard in Treatment
  - Developmental Disease
- **Neuroplasticity**
  - Negativity Bias of Brain
- **Brain & Learning**
- **Brain & Emotions**
  - Broaden & Build / + Emotions
  - Gratitude
  - Forgiveness
    - Letting Go

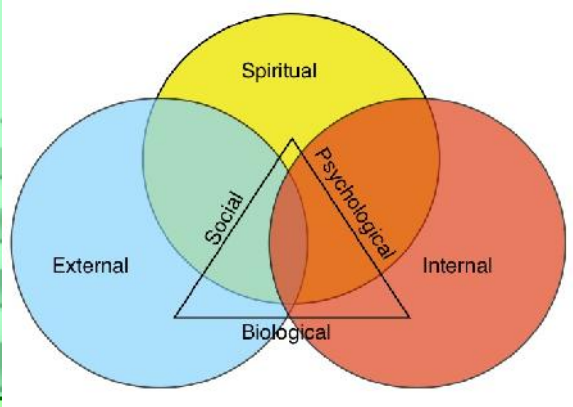


**NEXTSTEP**  
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## Addiction: Multi-faceted Problem

- **In order to Thrive & Flourish we have to incorporate ALL Facets**



**NEXTSTEP**  
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# •Interventions



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## EXERCISE: Wonder Drug!

- 
- Makes you feel good
  - Enhances self-esteem
  - Induces calm
  - Improves thinking
  - Makes you more attractive
  - Improves your love life
  - No negative side effects
  - It's legal
  - It's free



**NEXTSTEP**  
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# Exercise

- Exercise is the single most important thing a person can do to improve their learning.

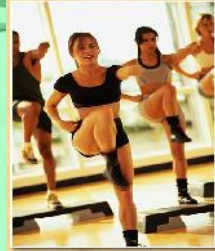
- Exercise increases production of neurotransmitters that help:

1. Focus and attention
2. Motivation
3. Patience
4. Mood (more optimistic)

- Ratey, 2008

- Exercise stimulates the production of new synapses, whose capacity and efficiency underlie superior intelligence.

- Voss, et al., 2010

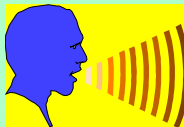


**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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# Self-Talk Cycle

WM  
p. 188



Self-Talk

Self-  
Image

Performance  
Behavior

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Negative Self-Talk ... (Negative Thinking)



... is like an assault on your brain!

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Self-Talk



- I am going to try ...
- I am trying ...

Try?  
Do, or do not.  
There is no try.



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

# Self-Talk



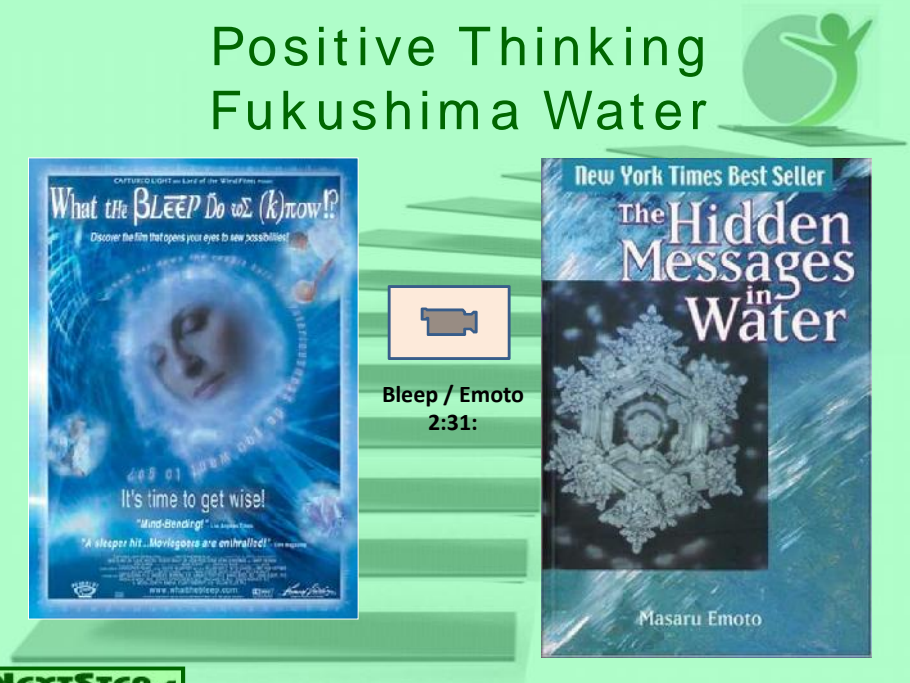
Hi.  
My name is \_\_\_\_\_,  
and I am an  
alcoholic.

**Why is this  
Self-Talk  
important?**

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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# Positive Thinking Fukushima Water



**What the BLEEP Do we (k)now!?**  
Discover the film that opens your eyes to new possibilities!  
It's time to get wise!  
"Mind-Bending!" - Los Angeles Times  
"A sleeper hit... Moviegoers are enthralled!" - Los Angeles Times  
www.whatthebleep.com

**New York Times Best Seller**  
**The Hidden Messages in Water**  
Masaru Emoto

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

# Self-Talk

## Cognitive Awareness Exercise

### Part 1

- Negative Self-Talk
  - ‘Snap it’
  - “Stop it!”

### Part 2

- Add Positive Self-Talk
  - “That’s not like me anymore
  - “I am ... !”



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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# “Self”-Protection

- **SHEILDS UP!**



*Shield's Up!*

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

## “Self”-Protection



- Learn to set **CLEAR** Boundaries
- Learn to Be Firm



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## WINNER'S MENTALITY Integrate & Apply

*Enduring  
Success*



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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# Goal Setting



- **Big Goals** →  
–leave room for

**Even MORE!**

Always Leave Room for "Even More!"

Goal

**MAGIS THINKING**

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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# POSITIVE EMOTIONS

## Feelalization

- **FEELAZATION**  
– The anchoring of a powerful emotional component to vivid visualization

**END RESULT GOAL**

Mental Toughness

Effective Thinking

Energy Management


**Feelazation**

**Visualization**


**Goal Setting**

- Emotive Imagery
- Felt Sense
- Anchoring

WM p. 131



Eugene T. Gendlin, Ph.D.  
**FOCUSING**



**Winner's Mentality System**

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## FEELAZATION



If you can **SEE** it -  
you can **BE** it!

If you can **FEEL** it -  
you **AM** it!

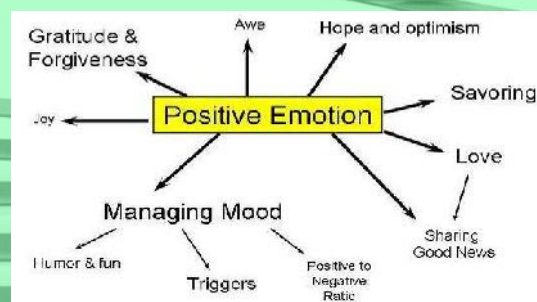
**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Positive Emotions Broaden & Build

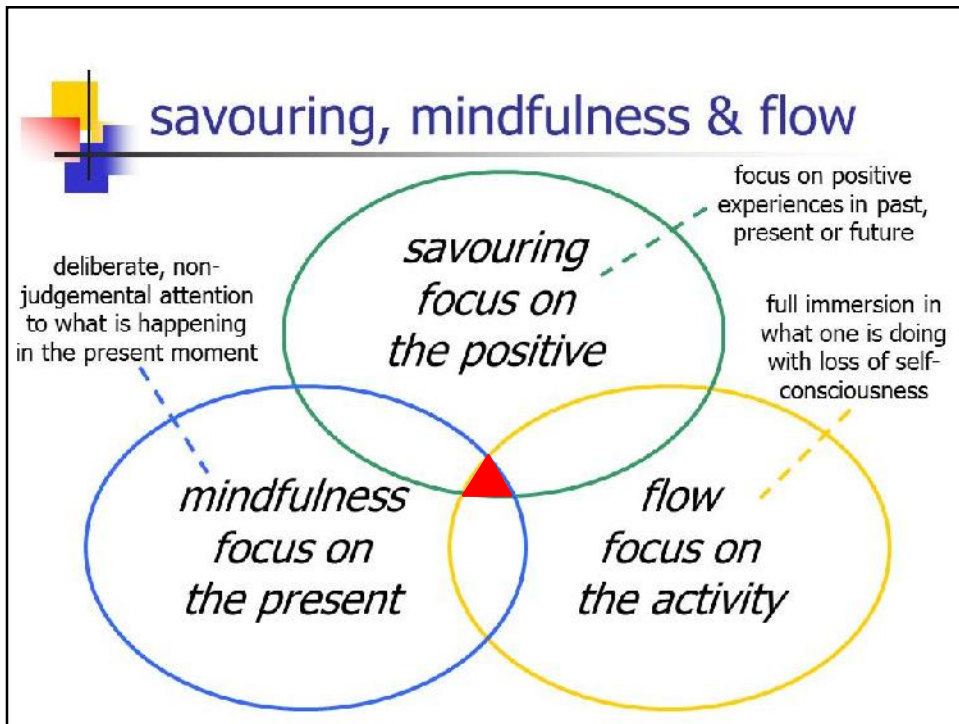


- **Gratitude**
- **Savoring**
- **Be Present**



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Well-Being Intervention

[www.authentic happiness.org](http://www.authentic happiness.org)

Sonja Lyubomirsky



- **Gratitude Journal**
  - 1 x / Wk for 6 wks
    - Write down things your are thankful for
- **Satisfaction w/ Life ↑ Significantly**
  - Control group did not



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

## Well-Being Intervention

[www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)

Martin Seligman

### 3 Blessings Exercise

- Each night before you go to sleep:

1. Think of three good things that happened today.
2. Write them down.
3. Reflect on why they happened.

- After completing '3 Blessings' for 1 week, then just do it 1x/Wk.
- Tie in w/ Gratitude Journal



**NEXTSTEP**  
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## Well-Being Intervention

[www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)

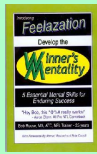
Martin Seligman

- Take time to reflect on Gratitude
- Think of someone you never thanked fully for helping you
- Write them a letter expressing your gratitude
  - See them “in person” & read the letter to them
    - If can't do it in person, Skype
      - At worst: phone
  - Reflect on experience



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Positive Emotions Letting Go



- **Give Emotions Form**  
–and you **CONTROL** them



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Forgiveness Holding a Space for Healing



- Can you “Hold a Space” for their Healing?
- Can you wish the person well?
  - Whether you are in their life or not
- Then “Let Go”
  - And hold a space for their healing
- Can you do it for Yourself?

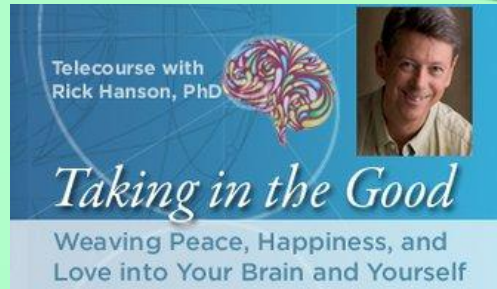


**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Positive Emotion Self-Directed Neuroplasticity

<http://www.rickhanson.net/>

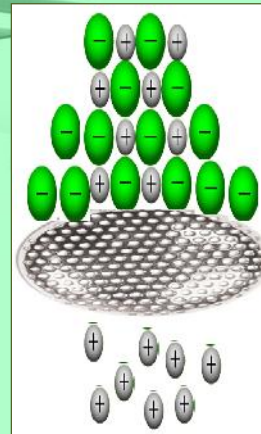


- **Mindfulness**
- **Controlling Attention**

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

## Negativity Bias of Brain: Some Consequences

- **Just *having* positive experiences is not enough.**
- **They pass through the brain like water through a sieve, while negative experiences are caught.**
- **We need to engage positive experiences actively to weave them into the brain.**



**(savor)**

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

Rick Hanson, PhD



## How to Take in the Good

1. Look for positive facts, and let them become positive experiences.
2. Savor the positive experience:
  - Sustain it for 10-20-30 seconds.
  - Feel it in your body and emotions.
  - Intensify it.
3. Sense and intend that the positive experience is soaking into your brain and body - registering deeply in emotional memory.



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

Rick Hanson, PhD

## Kinds of “Good” to Take in

- Things are alright; nothing is wrong; there is no threat
- Feeling safe and strong
- The peace and relief of forgiveness
- The small pleasures of ordinary life
- The satisfaction of attaining goals or recognizing accomplishments - especially small, everyday ones
- Feeling grateful, contented, and fulfilled
- Being included, valued, liked, respected, loved by others
- The good feelings that come from being kind, fair, generous
- Feeling loving
- Recognizing your positive character traits
- Spiritual or existential realizations

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

## Why It's Good to Take in the Good

- **Rights an unfair imbalance, given the negativity bias**
- **Gives oneself today the caring and support one should have received as a child, but perhaps didn't get in full measure; an inherent, implicit benefit**
- **Increases positive resources, such as:**
  - Positive emotions
  - Capacity to manage stress and negative experiences
- **Can help bring in missing “supplies” (e.g., love, strength, worth)**
- **Can help painful, even traumatic experiences**

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

Rick Hanson, PhD

## A Goal of TIG

- **In essence, how can we actively internalize resources in implicit memory - making the brain like **Velcro** for positive experiences, but **Teflon** for negative ones?**



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

## Power of Mindfulness

### Controlling Attention

- Attention is like a spotlight, illuminating what it rests upon.
- Because neuroplasticity is heightened for what's in the field of focused awareness, attention is also like a vacuum cleaner, sucking its contents into the brain.
- Directing attention skillfully is therefore a fundamental way to shape the brain - and one's life over time.



**NEXTSTEP**  
MAGIS THINKING

## Well-Being Interventions

### Self-Knowledge

- If you are struggling with
  - Forgiveness
  - Resentment / Self-Pity
- Then you have to start with finding out '*Who You AM!*'
  - Simple but NOT easy
    - Reflection → best tool
      - Journal
    - Therapy / Counseling / Spiritual Direction



**NEXTSTEP**  
MAGIS THINKING

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## Who You AM ?

'DO'

What are you going to be when you grow up?



What are you going to do with your life?

- Greetings:

- “How are you doing?”

- “So, what do you do?”

What do you want (to have) in your life?



**NEXT**  
Magis Thinking

## Who You AM ?

BE → DO → HAVE

Reality:

~~DO → HAVE → BE~~

BE → DO → HAVE

Who YOU AM !

Who YOU BE !

**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking



## Signature Strengths

- **Talent vs Strength**
  - Talent = Nature
    - Can be improved (or wasted)
    - Nonmoral
    - Either possess it or not
  - Strength = Nurture
    - Can be Built / Acquired
    - **Moral Traits**
    - Choices: When to use it; keep building it



**NEXTSTEP**  
Magis Thinking

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## Signature Strengths

- **Using Strengths → Win – Win**
  - 24 Signature Strengths
- **Values-In-Action (VIA)**
  - <http://www.viacharacter.org/>
  - [www.authentichappiness.com](http://www.authentichappiness.com)

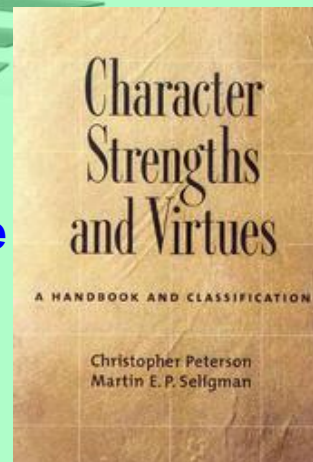


**NEXTSTEP**  
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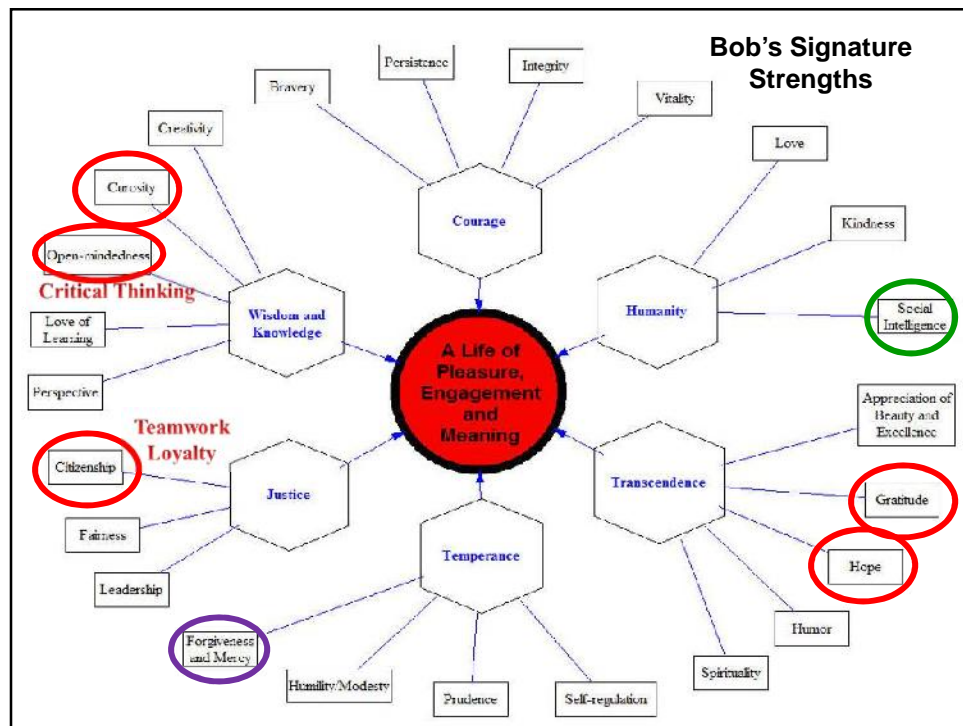
99

## Signature Strengths

- **Knowledge & Application of character strengths:**
  - ↑ life satisfaction
  - ↑ health
  - ↑ optimal performance



**NEXTSTEP**  
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## Virtues, Values, Strengths, & Talents

**To make the most of**

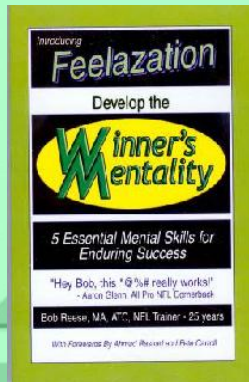
- your Virtues ...
- your Values ...
- your Strengths ...
- your Talents ...

**You've got to know:**  
**Who You AM!**

The Venn diagram shows the intersection of four key areas: Virtues, Values, Strengths, and Talents. The central intersection of all four is labeled "Self-Awareness".

**NEXTSTEP**  
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Bob Reese, PhD  
www.NextStepFacilitations.com  
bob@NextStepFacilitations.com  
• Slides are on NextStep website



**NEXTSTEP**  
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**NEXTSTEP**  
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## References: Websites

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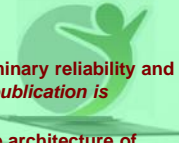
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