

Daily Dozen Resilience Practice

When life confronts us with sudden changes or ongoing uncertainty, the Daily Dozen is a short writing practice that helps restore our resilience. It focuses our attention on positive events in the present, identifies ways that we can help resolve our challenges, and generates a positive vision for the future. Based on research by Dr. Martin Seligman and other leading Positive Psychology researchers, these processes have been shown to increase levels of happiness, energy and wellbeing. In fact, simply doing the 3 Blessings exercise each day is as effective as pharmaceuticals in relieving mid-level depression.

Executives report that regular practice of this focusing technique helps them break through situations where they have been stuck--letting them resolve challenges more quickly and achieve goals with less stress.

Instructions: Each day write down 3 items in each of the 4 categories below. As you write, you can focus on your home life, your business life, or both--or on a specific situation where you feel stuck.

3 Positives - Write 3 short descriptions of positive events or things that happened during the day. Then write what *you* did that helped make those things happen.

Examples:

- ☐ After a rough start, I got positive feedback on the new marketing plan from the CFO. -- I did thorough research and checked assumptions with finance and operations.
- ☐ My wife surprised me with concert tickets. -- I've helped her with several projects recently and I've been taking more time to talk with her in the evenings.
- ☐ The brakes on my car are finally fixed. -- I've taken it back to the mechanic 3 times and kept explaining the problem until he finally got it right.

What it Does for You: Helps you stay focused on positive events, which creates more overall energy and engagement. It also demonstrates that your actions lead to positive results, which encourages you to keep trying despite obstacles.

3 Challenges - Write 3 short descriptions of challenges that you are currently facing. Then write one thing you could do (preferably within 24 hours) to help move the situation in a positive direction. (This does NOT need to fix it entirely—just make it a little bit better.)

Examples:

- ☐ I'm overwhelmed. There are far more things to get done than I can reasonably do today. -- I can prioritize my to-do list, work on the most important things, and accept that I can't do it all.
- ☐ A good friend is facing a serious illness. -- I can send her some flowers and a card telling her how much I care about her.
- ☐ I need to decrease expenses in my department by 10%. -- I can meet with the team and explore all their suggestions, and also look into outsourcing some of the less critical functions.

What it Does for You: Helps you clarify and prioritize your challenges, limiting you to only 3 each day (which seems more manageable); and also lets you see that you can take action to help resolve them.

3 Blessings - Write 3 short descriptions of things/people/situations you are grateful for.

What it Does for You: Expressing gratitude each day has been clinically proven to reduce depression and increase overall wellbeing. It is as effective as mood-altering medication, and has no harmful side effects. Recent research shows that expressing gratitude even once a week has positive benefits.

Future Gratitude - List 3 things that you would like to be, or to do, or to have in the future. Write them as if they were already true now, and feel deeply grateful for them for a few moments.

What it Does for You: There's no empirical research on this practice yet, however there is tangential validation from research in Gratitude, Best Possible Future Selves and Visioning. The combined practices may not only increase your sense of overall well being and hope for the future, but may also facilitate goal achievement.

THE DAILY DOZEN WORKSHEET

3 POSITIVES

Positive things that happened during the day

What YOU did that helped make those things happen

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

3 CHALLENGES

Challenges that you are currently facing

One thing you could do to help move the situation
in a positive direction

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

3 BLESSINGS

Things/people/situations that you are grateful for now

1.

2.

3.

FUTURE GRATITUDE

What would you like to be, to have or to do in the future? Write these in the present tense,
as if they were already true, and feel deeply grateful for them.

1.

2.

3.