

Set the Mood

Understanding and Directing the Power of Moods

Good News about Bad Moods

Moods clearly have influence over our lives and can leave lasting imprints on physical and mental health. But did you know that both positive and negative moods have a specific function in our lives, helping us to learn from experience and adapt our behavior?

The idea that even negative moods serve a greater purpose is something of a new discovery. It runs counter to the popular “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” school of thought, suggesting that instead of immediately shaking off a bad mood, we may want to take time to learn what the mood is trying to tell us.

Do Worry...Then Be Happy

Experts have linked positive mood and emotions to improved physical and emotional health for years. New research indicates that negative moods may also be beneficial to our wellbeing.

A study at the University of New South Wales, Australia, demonstrates that periods of low mood can increase attention, boost short-term memory, and enhance communication skills. According to researcher, Dr. Joe Forgas, mild or temporary bad moods serve an important purpose by teaching us to cope and adapt resilience to challenging situations.

Perspective can be a useful tool to help make a bad mood more productive and less debilitating. Try using mindful observation to better understand where a mood originated, what you can learn from it, and how to constructively apply those lessons.

設定情緒

了解並善用情緒的力量

關於壞情緒的好消息

情緒顯然能影響我們的生活，並在我們的身心健康留下長期的印記。但您可知道，無論和負面情緒，在我們生活中都具有特定功能，我們記取經驗教訓，從而修正我們的行為？

即使是負面情緒也有正面功能的想法，是個新發現，和時下流行的「只要快樂，不要煩惱」學派唱反調，它主張與其立刻甩掉壞心情，不如花點時間了解一下，情緒想要告訴我們什麼事。

煩惱來了不逃避...然後還是要快樂

專家長久以來都把正向的情緒和感受，與身心健康連結在一起。新研究指出，負面情緒對我們的幸福也是有益的。

澳洲新南威爾斯大學 (University of New South Wales) 一項研究證實，情緒低潮期有助於促進專注力，增進短期記憶，以及強化溝通能力。根據主持研究的福格斯博士 (Dr. Joe Forgas) 表示，輕度或暫時性的負面情緒負有重要任務，可以引領我們因應困難的狀況，並且發揮韌性。

換個方式看待情緒，是個有效的方法，可以讓壞心情變得比較有效益，且較不傷神。試試在情緒浮現時，使用正念觀察來了解它，您能從中學到什麼，以及如何具建設性地運用這些經驗。



Example Scenario

Step 1. Think back to when your mood began to identify the trigger.

- A reminder of a lost loved one triggered a sad mood.

Step 2. Consider what the mood may be trying to tell you.

- Did it bring up unresolved emotions?
- Have you taken time to mourn?

Step 3. Consider constructive actions.

- What can you do to process these memories in a healing way?
- Recall memories of your lost loved one from a place of gratitude. I'm happy to have known them. I was lucky to share fun times with them.
- Put on a sad song and have a cathartic cry. Acknowledging loss and allowing related emotions can promote healing.

Can't break out of a funk? Breathe into it.

Being in a low mood every now and then is a normal part of life's ebb and flow, and, as you've seen, can even help us to adapt and build resilience. However, if you experience frequent or extended low moods accompanied by negative or self-defeating thoughts, you may be stuck in a rumination loop.

Rumination loops happen when uncomfortable emotions or self-judgment replay in our heads to the point that we get drawn further into a bad mood instead of letting it naturally pass. The practice of mindfulness can be a good technique for breaking a rumination loop because it encourages us to observe and relate to our thoughts, feelings, and emotions as they arise without judgment.

情境範例

步驟一。 回想您的情緒何時開始而找出觸發點

- 想起逝去親人而引發悲傷的情緒

步驟二。 思考這個情緒想告訴您的訊息

- 它是否喚起未能解決的情感糾葛？
- 您有否有花時間好好哀悼？

步驟三。 思考採取建設性的行動

- 您該怎麼做，去消化這些記憶，療癒傷痛？
- 以感恩的心情試著回想您與這位逝去親人的回憶，我很高興能遇見他們，很幸運曾與他們共度歡樂時光。
- 播一首悲傷的歌曲，好好痛哭宣洩一場。正視失去親人並接納這些痛苦的情緒，有助於傷痛的療癒。

無法破繭而出？試試正念呼吸

偶爾陷入情緒低谷是正常的人生起伏，而且如您所見，低潮甚至能幫助我們調適，變得更堅韌。然而，如果您很頻繁或長時間地情緒低迷，伴隨負面或自傷的念頭，那麼您可能卡在反芻性思考的負面循環裡了。

當不舒服的感受或自我批評在腦海重複播放，沒有自然消退，把我們拖進負面情緒的漩渦，這就是反芻性思考的負面循環。正念練習是破除反芻性思考的一個好技巧，因為它鼓勵我們在思緒，感受，以及情緒升起時，不加以判斷地去觀察和理解。

Meditative breathing is a cornerstone of mindfulness and a good place to start on your mindfulness journey.

A Mindful Breathing Meditation

1. Sit or lie comfortably
2. Focus your attention on either your nose or your abdomen and begin slow, deep breathing
3. Breathe in – acknowledge the breath entering your body
4. Breathe out – acknowledge the breath leaving your body
5. Continue breathing – each time your mind wanders away from your breath, think calmly to yourself — wandering — and gently bring your focus back to your breath entering and leaving your body.

If you practice this technique regularly for 10 to 30 minutes a day, you'll tend to feel more peaceful and clearer, and find it easier to remain in the present. This can help you adjust your mood if it strays into a rumination loop. As with the breath, just think calmly to yourself — ruminating — and gently steer your thoughts back to a more constructive path.

Like any skill, mindfulness meditation becomes stronger with repetition. With enough practice, it could even become second nature.

靜坐呼吸練習是正念的基礎，也是練習正念的好起點。

正念呼吸靜坐法

1. 舒服地坐下或躺下
2. 將注意力集中在鼻尖或腹部，開始緩慢的深呼吸
3. 吸氣 — 感知空氣進入您的身體
4. 呼氣 — 感知空氣離開您的身體
5. 繼續呼吸 — 每當您的注意力從呼吸間飄走，平靜地知曉自己— 走神了，輕輕將注意力拉回到呼吸進出身體的覺知。

如果您一天規律練習這個技巧十到三十分鐘，您會感覺心情更平靜，思緒更清晰，也更容易活在當下。這個技巧可以幫助您在陷入情緒漩渦時調節心情。配合正念呼吸，平靜地告訴自己 — 不斷重複 — 輕輕將思緒轉到更有建設性的軌道上。

和所有的技巧一樣，正念靜坐隨著不斷練習，效果會更強。有足夠的練習，您便可以如第二天性般運用自如。