



PRACTISING POSITIVE EMOTIONS

This strategy is suggested in the BrainWaves lesson **16-18 The psychology of wellbeing** and referenced in the lessons **11-14 The science behind wellbeing** and **14-16 The psychology of happiness**.

About positive emotions

Just like physical exercise is good for our body, making sure we have daily helpings of positive emotions is good for our mental health. Deliberately practising the experience of positive emotions, such as happiness, joy, gratitude, hope, fun, love and awe, makes us feel good. Dr Barbara Fredrickson explains in her 'Broaden and Build Theory' that positive emotions broaden how we see things and how we react in life, and helps build the physical, intellectual and psychological resources to adapt and cope with life.

The scientific evidence behind practising positive emotions

A study explored the role of positive emotions among a sample of 293 adolescents. Frequent positive emotions during school were associated with higher levels of student engagement in school activities and adaptive coping strategies:

- Reschly Amy L. (2008). [*Engagement as flourishing: The contribution of positive emotions and coping to adolescents' engagement at school and with learning.*](#) Psychology in the Schools, Vol. 45(5), 2008 DOI: 10.1002/pits.20306

Another study with 160 adolescents found positive emotions to be an indicator of psychological wellbeing:

- Rana, S., Nandinee, D. (2016) [*Profile of Adolescents' Positive Emotions: An Indicator of their Psychological Well-being.*](#) Psychol Stud 61, 32–39. DOI: 10.1007/s12646-015-0347-1

Further reading

The broad and build theory of positive emotions:
<https://positivepsychology.com/broaden-build-theory/>

How positive thoughts and emotions help you:
<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/power-positive.html>

Positive emotions and your health:
<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2015/08/positive-emotions-your-health>