## ACTIVITY: Noticing the Good

### Purpose

- Taking time to notice frequent, small positive experiences can improve the brains ability to see the good despite our bias towards negativity.

- The purpose of this activity is to apply an easy way of recognizing positive events during your daily work routine, meeting or even at home.

### ESTIMATED TIME

**10** minutes

### MATERIALS

Required:

A. Pen
B. Paper or handout

### Background

- Many people tend to have a negativity bias. Your brain is built with a greater sensitivity to unpleasant or negative events. This bias tends to be automatic and studies have shown that the negative bias is present during the initial stages of processing information.
- While negativity bias is not necessarily a bad thing, being bombarded with negativity can lead to focusing on the negative aspects of life much more than is healthy or necessary. People who are surrounded by negative bias tend to be less optimistic which leads to being less resilient.
- There is a silver lining! Taking time to notice frequent, small positive experiences can improve the brains ability to see the good despite our bias towards negativity. This active practice will help improve optimism and result in a more resilient you.

## Activity

1) Have the group fill out Step 1 and Step 2 on the attached worksheet. Let them know that the event or situation they are describing in Step 1 doesn't have to be something monumental, just something good that happened.

2) After giving the participants several minutes to complete, have them share with others. Depending on group size, they can share with one person, a small group, or with the entire group.

3) Use the discussion questions/ key points below to debrief the activity. You can also choose to discuss the key points before the activity.

## Discussion Questions/ Key Points

- Discuss the concept of negativity bias. Ask the group where they see negative bias in their lives. Some examples may be from work, home, the news, etc.
- How often do people take time to notice the positive in their lives?
- When something good happens, do people spend time thinking or talking about it?
- Do people share positive experiences or "wins" in your workplace?
- What are some other ways we could notice or put more emphasis on positive experiences at work, home, or in the community?

## Let's Try This!

Have the group decide how they could incorporate discussions of positive experiences into their workflow. One possibility is to start meetings by asking for positive things that staff have experienced that week.

## Follow-up

Check back with the team after one month (or whatever time frame the team decided).
Has your group succeeded in your goals to share more positive events?
If not, why?
If so, how do they feel?

## Sources/ More Information

Negative Information Weighs More Heavily on the Brain: The Negativity Bias in Evaluative Categorizations

http://www.wisebrain.org/media/Papers/NegativeBiasInEaluativeCategories.pdf

Our Brain's Negative Bias

https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200306/our-brains-negative-bias

.

## ACTIVITY: Noticing the Good

**Step 1:**
Write down something good that happened to you within the past 2 weeks.

**Step 2:**
Describe some aspect of the experience in detail. (What details do you remember? Any specific sounds or sights surrounding the experience? How did you feel?  Any actions you took as a result?)