

How to deal with negative emotions

Being with all of your experiences: bit.ly/3buFLqh (access date: March 9, 2021).

Preparation:

1. Which feelings, emotions and or physical sensations are positive and which are negative?

happiness, excitement, strength, fear, disappointment, feeling anxious, a pain in your stomach, fun.

Positive	Negative

2. Look up these words in a dictionary (diki.pl) and write their meanings:

to avoid	
unwanted	
surface	
to participate	
to allow	
to pretend	
to exist	
to get rid of	

Exercise 1: Watch the film and answer the questions.

1. What are unwanted feelings compared to?

a) a beach ball

b) water

c) the people and things that are important to you

2. Should you learn to like your unwanted thoughts, feelings or physical sensations?

3. If you allow unwanted thoughts and feelings to be there, it means that...

a) you devote your energy to ignore and avoid them,







b) you don't devote your energy to ignore and avoid them.

Exercise 2: Work individually.

Watch the video again and fill in the gaps. Pause and rewind any time you need.

A full and meaningful life comes with a range of emotions and physical sensations: happiness, (1) _____, strength, but also (2) _____, disappointment and pain. Like most people, you might prefer to (3) _____ unwanted thoughts, feelings and physical sensations, especially if they are intense or overwhelming. Imagine your (4) _____ feelings as a beach ball that doesn't go away. You might try different things to (5) _____ the ball doesn't (6) _____. But when you throw it away, it bounces back. And when you move away from it, it follows you. Maybe you try to (7) _____ this beach ball by pushing it under water. You manage to keep it out of sight, but if you let go, the beach ball shoots right back up to the (8) _____. So, you decide to keep holding the beach ball underwater. It's a lot of hard work. Think about how much energy it takes to keep the ball down, and what you might be missing without realizing it. What would happen if you let the beach ball just be there? Or maybe even tried sitting with the beach ball for a while? Instead of actively ignoring the ball, or pushing it underwater, what if you choose to direct your energy instead towards activities and people that are important to you, whether the ball is there or not? (9) _____ unwanted thoughts, feelings or physical sensations to be there doesn't mean you have to like them. It means that you are choosing to (10) _____ your energy towards the people and things that are important to you. Say your friends want to play a game, but you're feeling (11) _____ or have pain in your stomach. Maybe you can't play the full game with your friends, but you can still keep score or cheer them on! Sometimes it's (12) _____ to just be around your friends, even if you can't (13) _____. Some unwanted thoughts, feelings and physical sensations may never fully go away. But you don't have to devote your energy to suppressing or (14) _____ them. You can still be involved in activities, even if you need to pace yourself or take breaks now and then. (15) _____ experiences are part of life for all of us, no matter who we are. It might take some effort and creativity, but even the smallest steps towards allowing your unwanted emotions and physical sensations to just be there can help you do the things that matter to you and let you live a fuller and more meaningful life.

Exercise 3: Summary – are the statements right or wrong? Discuss.

- 1) You can make a situation worse if you push away unwanted thoughts and feelings.  
- 2) Don't waste your energy on avoiding unwanted feelings.  
- 3) It's better to focus on the people and things that are important to you.  

After the video, students might take a moment to let all of their thoughts, feelings and sensations be with them, without pushing any of them away.

For more ideas on this matter, please read the article titled 'Anxiety and anxiety disorders' by SickKids staff at <https://bit.ly/2O7TElv> (access date: March 9, 2021).

Answer key:

Exercise 1:

1 a

2 "Allowing unwanted thoughts, feelings or physical sensations to be there doesn't mean you have to like them. It means that you are choosing to **devote** your energy towards the people and things that are important to you."

3 b

Exercise 2: The missing words are in bold - video transcript available below the YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaNAwy3Xsfi> (access date: 9.03.2021)

A full and meaningful life comes with a range of emotions and physical sensations: happiness, **excitement**, strength, but also **fear**, disappointment and pain. Like most people, you might prefer to **avoid** unwanted thoughts, feelings and physical sensations, especially if they are intense or overwhelming. Imagine your **unwanted** feelings as a beach ball that doesn't go away. You might try different things to **pretend** the ball doesn't **exist**. But when you throw it away, it bounces back. And when you move away from it, it follows you. Maybe you try to **get rid of** this beach ball by pushing it under water. You manage to keep it out of sight, but if you let go, the beach ball shoots right back up to the **surface**. So, you decide to keep holding the beach ball underwater. It's a lot of hard work. Think about how much energy it takes to keep the ball down, and what you might be missing without realizing it. What would happen if you let the beach ball just be there? Or maybe even tried sitting with the beach ball for a while? Instead of actively ignoring the ball, or pushing it underwater, what if you choose to direct your energy instead towards activities and people that are important to you, whether the ball is there or not? **Allowing** unwanted thoughts, feelings or physical sensations to be there doesn't mean you have to like them. It means that you are choosing to **devote** your energy towards the people and things that are important to you. Say your friends want to play a game, but you're feeling **anxious** or have pain in your stomach. Maybe you can't play the full game with your friends, but you can still keep score or cheer them on! Sometimes it's **fun** to just be around your friends, even if you can't **participate**. Some unwanted thoughts, feelings and physical sensations may never fully go away. But you don't have to devote your energy to suppressing or **avoiding** them. You can still be involved in activities, even if you need to pace yourself or take breaks now and then. **Unwanted** experiences are part of life for all of us, no matter who we are. It might take some effort and creativity, but even the smallest steps towards allowing your unwanted emotions and physical sensations to just be there can help you do the things that matter to you and let you live a fuller and more meaningful life.

Exercise 3: Each of the three statements is right.