

The Emotional Gym

Breathe:

Gratitude

Love

Peace

Joy

Hope

Using The Emotional Gym Instructions

The Emotional Gym is a 1-minute exercise practiced while breathing slowly and deeply. To breathe slowly, you must allow a minimal amount of air to pass through your mouth and down into your lungs at any given point in time. The time sequence leads to:

- Breathing in for 6 seconds and out for 6 seconds = 12 seconds x the five positive emotions = a 1-minute exercise.
- Practicing ten times a day = 10 minutes a day maximum.

The value of the exercise comes not from thinking about the five positive emotions but from being emotionally connected to or experiencing them. So, any positive focus, big or small, that you can feel and connect with is desirable. So be in your experience and feel. You may want to start with more minor and easy to connect with experiences and build a connection in your brain until you can easily connect with each emotion.

Find the pattern for doing the exercise that works for you. Practice while eating, sitting at a traffic light, when going to sleep, or when you have a shared minute. Attempt to spread out these ten practice experiences throughout the day. If one of the five emotions feels more important than the others, practice it more often or for extended periods. Any practice is better than nothing, so don't judge your efforts.

Two Benefits

1. A Resource: Practicing the Emotional Gym will develop neurological patterns and give you a tool to use whenever you need it, five positive emotions to use whenever you need them. Feeling depressed, connect with joy, gratitude, love, or hope.
2. Increased Happiness & Spirituality: The word down spiral means to slide down into negative emotions, such as depression. Practicing the emotional gym ten times a day will cause you to raise your level of happiness by approximately 20%. This increase is even more significant since the research indicates that your happiness is only 40% within your control. According to Dr. Larkin, a Clinical Psychologist and Theologian, this same practice ten times a day will increase your spirituality by pulling you up and into what he calls the UpSpiral. The UpSpiral as a positive concept matches the common beliefs that heaven or the spiritual realm is up, and that spiritual connection is a positive, happy, etc., experience.

The Five Positive Emotions

Gratitude: Feel grateful, appreciative, or thankful about... (whatever)

Love: Feel empathy, caring, or kindly for... (whatever)

Peace: Feel peaceful, calm, or relaxed about... (whatever)

Joy: Feel joyful, happy, or laugh about... (whatever)

Hope: Is a future emotion, feel hopeful about... (whatever)

The Instruction offered by Tom Rohrer, Ph.D., LMFT, 719-494-4208, drtom@tomrohrer.com



The Emotional Gym, from *Growing the Positive Mind with the Emotional Gym*, William K. Larkin, Ph.D.