

## #1. Choosing Better Feeling Thoughts

This strategy is something you can do in order to feel better. It's something that you can do in your mind after some diligent practice, but the act of writing it down makes it more powerful. I usually sit down to do this exercise. Writing down is both easier to and gets you better results. It's more powerful than typing.

These two exercises in this article are such key exercises in my life (remember, positivity requires exercise, and it's worth the little effort, and it will make you feel better and better) that I've bought myself a nice pen and notebook and I take 15 minutes each day to sit somewhere comfortable, put some music on, and improve my thinking (and therefore how I feel).

This isn't an instant-quick-fix to think positive. Sometimes it takes some guiding of your thoughts and thinking to come to more positive and realistic thinking.

And, just thinking positive when you're thinking really negative can sometimes be too difficult to do. When you think "I'll never be socially confident", choosing the thought "I will be socially confident" might be too big of a jump.

It's easier to take some intermediate steps. You can coach yourself towards feeling a bit better using this "choosing better feeling thoughts-strategy".

Lets start with an example before I elaborate.

You have the thought "I'll never be socially confident".

When you think that, you feel negative emotion (and yes, you can definitely tap during this exercise). When you force yourself to think "I will be socially confident", you might find that you have a hard time believing it.

And a key of this exercise is that you *believe the positive thought*, so it sticks.

So you want to gently coach yourself into believing it by choosing a better feeling thought to the negative one you're thinking.

You want to come up with a thought that causes you to feel slightly better than the current negative thought. You have to believe the new thought, and it only has to make you feel a tiny bit better. You're looking for a thought that gives you a little bit of relief.

The key is that you believe the better feeling thought that makes you feel some relief.

*Example:*

Negative Thought (NT): I'll never be socially confident

Better Feeling Thought (BFT): Others have made it from social anxiety to confidence

When you come up with this BFT and you believe it, you have succeeded in this exercise. Because now you have given your mind another option to think. Before it got stuck on the thought "I will never be

socially confident” and now when you think that thought, your mind will remember the better feeling thought.

If you can come up with another better feeling thought that that one, you want to add that one too.

*Example:*

NT: I'll never be socially confident

BFT: others have made it from social anxiety to confidence

BFT: I do feel better after doing EFT

This additional better feeling thought -that you believe- provides you with even more relief.

You're now slowly coaching yourself to the more positive thought “I will socially confident”. If you cannot come up with more good feeling thoughts at this time, I suggest you move on, and come back to this exercise later.

Pushing yourself does not work well with this exercise. As you go about your life, you will gather more evidence of the better feeling thoughts you have chosen. And you'll get insights on additional better feeling thoughts to coach yourself closer to the conviction that you will be socially confident.

*If you can still think of more BFT's, keep going:*

NT: I'll never be socially confident

BFT: others have made it from social anxiety to confidence

BFT: I do feel better after doing EFT

BFT: I feel less anxious than I did a few months ago

BFT: I am definitely making progress

If, by choosing a new BFT additional negative thoughts come up, you want to choose BFT's to counter that additional negative thought too.

*Example:*

NT: I'll never be socially confident

BFT: others have made it from social anxiety to confidence

BFT: I do feel better after doing EFT

BFT: I feel less anxious than I did a few months ago

BFT: I am definitely making progress

NT: But it takes a lot of effort

BFT: I rather put in effort than that I suffer

BFT: I like the fact that there's something I can do out of my suffering

BFT: And the effort is bringing me results

BFT: Perhaps I'm building up to reach a tipping point, who knows

BFT: I'll feel better by putting in the work, I will simply keep going until I have what I want

BFT: I have nothing to lose, feeling better to gain

BFT: It's worth my effort

After you have found enough BFT's to counter the negative thought that that came up, return to the original NT you were finding BFT's for and you continue (only if you can think of more, if not leave it alone and come back to it some other time.)

*Example:*

NT: I'll never be socially confident

BFT: others have made it from social anxiety to confidence

BFT: I do feel better after doing tapping

BFT: I feel less anxious than I did a few months ago

BFT: I am definitely making progress

BFT: I have a roadmap to getting there

BFT: I know why I have anxiety and I know how to get to no-anxiety

BFT: I've been doing good at progressing this far already

BFT: As I persist I keep improving and feeling better

BFT: I can do this

BFT: One step at a time

BFT: I will keep moving forward because I keep feeling better and getting results

BFT: I can always find a way to get some expert help

BFT: I'm simply taking a step forward every day

BFT: I got this

BFT: I will be socially confident

So as you can see, you start with a negative thought, and you pick one BFT at a time to step-by-step coach yourself to a positive thought. This exercise usually takes between 5 and 20 minutes as it requires some effort to come up with better feeling thoughts.

By doing this you deliberately give your mind improved ways of thinking.

If that negative thought would come up in the future, your mind now has a ladder to go to the positive thought since you have given it the steps of the ladder.

I suggest you do this exercise for all your repetitive negative thoughts. And, I would recommend you make this a habit for life. I have, and it serves me very well.

**NOTE:** Do not force yourself too much when doing this exercise. Sometimes it's challenging to come up with many BFT's. You might only be able to come up with one, or two BFT's. That's OK.

Remember that the BFT's need to be believable. If you don't believe the BFT, it's not truly a *better feeling* thought because your mind goes "yeah right, bullshit!".

Only go as far as you can go with the BFT's at that moment in time. What you will find is that when you go away from the exercise and you return at a different time, perhaps when you're feeling in a bit better mood, you can come up with new BFT's and you will be able to come up with all the steps of the ladder to make it all the way to the positive thought.

## #2. Wouldn't It Be Nice If...

When you have negative thoughts, when you are worrying, you are thinking about things you *do not want*. What you want to do is think about things that you do want. But it's not always that easy.

This gentle process helps you to move past your resistance to thinking more positive. It makes moving towards thinking more optimistic easier. As with the above exercise, once you are proficient at this you can do this in your mind, but even then writing it down is far more powerful.

Lets start with an example before I elaborate.

You have the thought "I'll never be socially confident".

When you think that, you feel negative emotion (and yes, you can definitely tap during this exercise). When you force yourself to think "I will be socially confident", you might find that you have a hard time believing it.

And a key of this exercise is that you *believe the positive thought*, so it sticks.

So you want to gently coach yourself into believing the more positive thought to the negative one you're thinking.

By putting "wouldn't it be nice if..." in front of positive thoughts, you soften the resistance to the positive thought, and you more easily coach yourself towards thinking more positively.

*Example:*

Negative Thought (NT): I'll be made fun of when I run into people who know me from before

Wouldn't it be nice if... this thinking is based on insecurity and not reality

Wouldn't it be nice if... these people changed for the better

Wouldn't it be nice if... people turn out to be nicer than I remembered them to be

Wouldn't it be nice if... people notice a positive change in me

Wouldn't it be nice if... I feel surprisingly comfortable around them

Wouldn't it be nice if... being made fun of no longer means something malicious is being done to me

Wouldn't it be nice if... I viewed being made fun of as something enjoyable

Wouldn't it be nice if... I took myself less seriously

Wouldn't it be nice if... I trusted that I can handle being made fun of

Wouldn't it be nice if... I'm surprised at the end of interacting with them by how positive the experience was for me

*Another example:*

Negative Thought (NT): Going to gym class is going to really hard I know nobody there, I'll just be awkward, won't know what to say, and will go home feeling deflated

Wouldn't it be nice if... there were other people there who were there for a first time as well

Wouldn't it be nice if... I'm in a great mood and feel comfortable walking into class

Wouldn't it be nice if... the group turns out to be full of friendly people

Wouldn't it be nice if... I meet someone I instantly connect with

Wouldn't it be nice if... the trainer is a very warm and friendly

Wouldn't it be nice if... the environment is warm and inviting

Wouldn't it be nice if... the focus is on the exercises

Wouldn't it be nice if... I enjoy the exercises being taught

Wouldn't it be nice if... conversation just happens naturally

Wouldn't it be nice if... I end up having a great time

**NOTE:** Don't make your "Wouldn't it be nice if..." statement too outrageous. Keep them in the range of possibility. You have to believe that it would be possible.

"Wouldn't it be nice if... I walk into gym class and the gym teacher flirts with me, everyone smiles and laughs at me and hangs on every word I say, everyone is eager to be my friend and I hand out my number to everyone, and I walk out while they sing out my name in utter bliss" is a bit much...

Enjoy these exercises. They will really make a positive difference in your overall life quality as you start putting them into practice.