

Thriving: The Science of the Good Life

Thriving is about feeling good and finding fulfillment in life.

- Positive emotions, accomplishments, relationships, personal strengths, and meaning are key ingredients that can help all of us thrive.
- It's up to each of us to figure out which of these ingredients nourish us the most and to build those into our day-to-day lives.



To get started strengthening these key ingredients, try these tips:

1 Positive emotions

Boost positive emotions by prioritizing activities that make you feel good and noticing what's going well.

Practice: Reflecting on the good

Each day for one week, write down three things that went well and why.

Example: One thing that went well: I had a delicious cookie after lunch. Why? I decided I deserved a treat and I made time for it.

Notes: _____

2 Accomplishments

Build accomplishments by setting and achieving goals and finishing tasks.

Practice: Seeing goals as challenges.

To keep up motivation, focus on what you will gain if you succeed—not what it will feel like if you fail.

Ask yourself:

- What will I gain by achieving this goal?
- What value will this add to my life?

Example: ~~I need to exercise or I'm going to have serious health problems.~~ Exercising once per week will help me keep up my stamina to run around with my kids.

Notes: _____

3 Relationships

Strengthen relationships by intentionally building up the ties to your community.

Practice: Mixing it up:

- ☐ Surprise someone you haven't talked to for a while by reaching out to catch up.
- ☐ Start a new activity with someone you spend a lot of time with (e.g., take a class with your partner).

Practice: Focusing on purpose in your interactions:

- ☐ Do a small act of kindness for an acquaintance, co-worker, or loved one (e.g., bring someone a small treat you know they love).
- ☐ Make a commitment to a cause with another person (e.g., volunteer together).

Practice: Making your time together quality time:

- ☐ Take a trip together (e.g., a short day trip or a longer getaway).
- ☐ Open up about yourself to someone you trust (e.g., share hopes, fears).

Notes: _____

4 Personal strengths

Tap into your personal strengths by identifying them and putting them front and center in your life.

Practice: Identifying

- What personal strengths or positive traits describe you? Has someone pointed out a strength of yours? Of these strengths, which feel core to who you are, are energizing, and are easy to use?
- Take this quiz to help you identify your strengths:
<https://www.viacharacter.org/account/register>

Practice: Prioritizing

- Across your life, like at work, at home, and in your hobbies
- Strategically, to help you through a challenge or problem
- Daily, by leading with your strengths in routine activities

Notes: _____

5 Meaning

Boost by focusing on your values and serving a purpose larger than your day-to-day needs and desires.

Practice: Identifying values

Imagine your retirement party. What would you want people saying about you? This can offer clues into your values (e.g., if you hope people say that you really contributed to the work community and the communities around you, you may value community).

Practice: Serving something larger

Ask yourself what activities you can plan in your day-to-day life to live into this value (e.g., can you organize a social hour or a canned food drive for the food bank?).

Notes: _____

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Your turn: Which ingredients do you think might be most important to your good life? Where do you want to start building?

6 Self-acceptance

Ultimately, thriving is not all about building. To truly thrive, we must also know and accept ourselves as we are—our strengths and our growth areas.

Practice: Moving closer to self-acceptance

- Remember: We all have strengths and growth areas, and too much self-criticism can be demotivating.
- Treat yourself with kindness and imagine what you would say to a friend who was being overly self-critical (e.g., instead of only focusing on what you see as your flaws, also focus on the strengths and values that make you uniquely you).
- Remember: Self-acceptance is a key step on the journey to growth, and treating yourself with kindness can help you move forward.

Notes:
