

# Experiencing Pleasure & Joy



Engaging in activities that prompt feelings of happiness, enjoyment, and/or contentment (1) can counteract stress, replenish depleted resources, and renew hope by imbuing life with a sense of meaning, purpose, and value as a human being (2).

*Inspired by true stories...Doing things that are pleasurable and enjoyable is good for you!*

**#JoyOfDancing:** While she is dancing something got reawakened in her. She has that sort of joy of life now... we didn't talk about it, she had that experience in her own body -  
Anonymous (3)

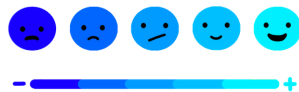
**#AbsorbedInArt:** Art itself is such a therapeutic thing, you get really engrossed in painting and you can see it coming to life, it leaves you with a really good feeling inside -  
Luke (4)

## What About You?

What are you currently doing?

What have you done in the past few years?

How do you feel about it? (Please circle)



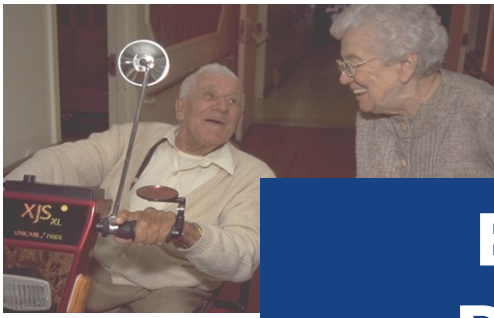
## Goal Setting

In the next \_\_\_\_\_ months/year, I would like to:

To do this, I will need to:

Remember: What you do everyday matters to your health and well-being!





# Experiencing Pleasure & Joy



This dimension involves engaging in activities that prompt feelings of happiness, enjoyment, and/or contentment (1). These activities can counteract stress, replenish damaged or depleted resources, and renew hope by imbuing life with a sense of meaning, purpose, and value as a human being (2).

## Clinician Guide

**When?** This document can be used to empower clients to think beyond their own problems or limitations to identify strengths and talents that they could share with others.

**Why?** Research shows that experiencing pleasure and joy positively impact the course and outcome for individuals suffering from mental illness through their restorative power (2) and their ability to rebuild an effective sense of social agency (5). It can also lead to a greater positive affective state and physical wellbeing for adults and seniors (6).

**How?** The worksheet can be used with individuals or groups, to guide reflection on the importance of experiencing pleasure and joy. Questions below are to prompt reflection & goal setting for change.

## What About You? - Reflection Questions

Are you currently doing anything that help you attain pleasure and joy?

- Describe (who, what, where, when, why?)
- How satisfied are you with your current happiness?
- Benefits? Challenges?

What meaningful and enjoyable activities have you done in the past few years?

- What has changed?
- Is there something from these past experiences that you would like to have in your life now?

## Goal Setting Guide

What could you do differently in your current routine to spend more time enjoying the things you love?

- How meaningful would this be for you? (7-point Likert scale low to high)
- How much time would you like to commit to this? (Engagement)
- How much choice/control do you have over making this change?
- Could it interfere with other things you want or need to do? (Balance)

What personal or external issues might get in the way of meeting your goal?



## Experiencing Pleasure and Joy

### References:

1. Moll, S. E., Gewurtz, R. E., Krupa, T. M., Law, M. C., Lariviere, N., & Levasseur, M. (2015). "Do-Live-Well": A Canadian framework for promoting occupation, health, and well-being: «Vivez-Bien-Votre Vie»: un cadre de référence canadien pour promouvoir l'occupation, la santé et le bien-être. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 82(1), 9-23.
2. Davidson, L., Shahar, G., Lawless, M. S., Sells, D., & Tondora, J. (2006). Play, pleasure, and other positive life events: "Non-specific" factors in recovery from mental illness?. *Psychiatry: Interpersonal and Biological Processes*, 69(2), 151-163.
3. Gordon, A. J. (2014). Focusing on positive affect in dance/movement therapy: A qualitative study. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 36(1), 60-76.
4. Margrove, K. L., Pope, J., & Mark, G. M. (2013). An exploration of artists' perspectives of participatory arts and health projects for people with mental health needs. *Public health*, 127(12), 1105-1110.
5. Seligman, M. E. (2002). Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. *Handbook of positive psychology*, 2(2002), 3-12.
6. Pressman, S. D., Matthews, K. A., Cohen, S., Martire, L. M., Scheier, M., Baum, A., & Schulz, R. (2009). Association of enjoyable leisure activities with psychological and physical well-being. *Psychosomatic medicine*, 71(7), 725.

### Other suggested readings:

1. Jeon, Y. H., Jowsey, T., Yen, L., Glasgow, N. J., Essue, B., Kljakovic, M., ... & Kraus, S. G. (2010). Achieving a balanced life in the face of chronic illness. *Australian Journal of Primary Health*, 16(1), 66-74.
2. Zander, A., Passmore, E., Mason, C., & Rissel, C. (2013). Joy, exercise, enjoyment, getting out: a qualitative study of older people's experience of cycling in Sydney, Australia. *Journal of environmental and public health*, 2013.