

Feeling Your Feelings: Gratitude

Coping Skills Class



Feeling Your Feelings: What is it?

Feeling is a skill that helps us strike a balance between sticking and stuffing our feelings.

Sticking

Feeling

Stuffing

Feeling Your Feelings: Stuffing

Sticking

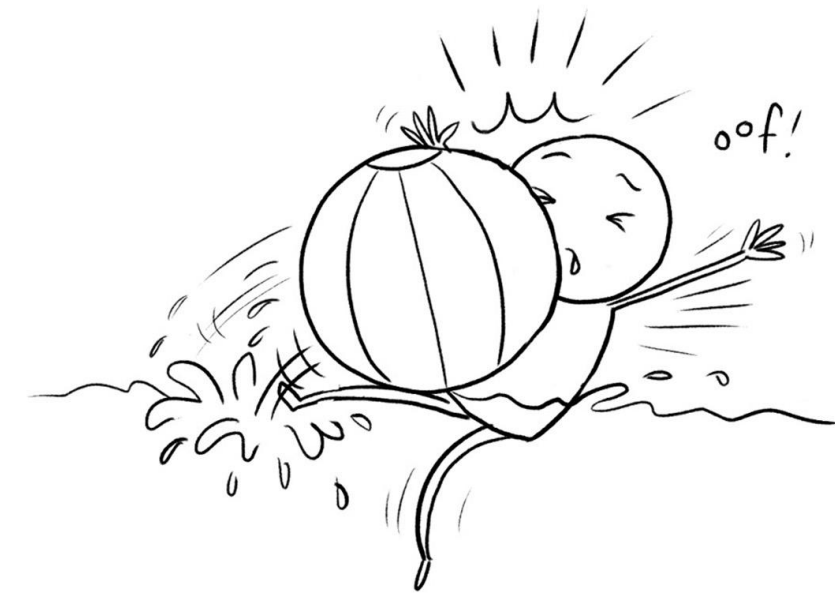
Feeling

Stuffing

A relationship we can have with our emotions in which we do not recognize, validate, or allow them to exist, often causing them to build up in the background.



PUSHING AWAY
DIFFICULT THOUGHTS FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS...



DOES NOT MAKE THEM GO AWAY...
IT CAN MAKE THINGS MORE DIFFICULT !

Feeling Your Feelings: Sticking

Sticking

Feeling

Stuffing

Sticking is a relationship we can have with our emotions in which we are fused with thoughts and feelings, have trouble letting them go, and believe them to be true.



Feeling Your Feelings: Feeling

Sticking

Feeling

Stuffing

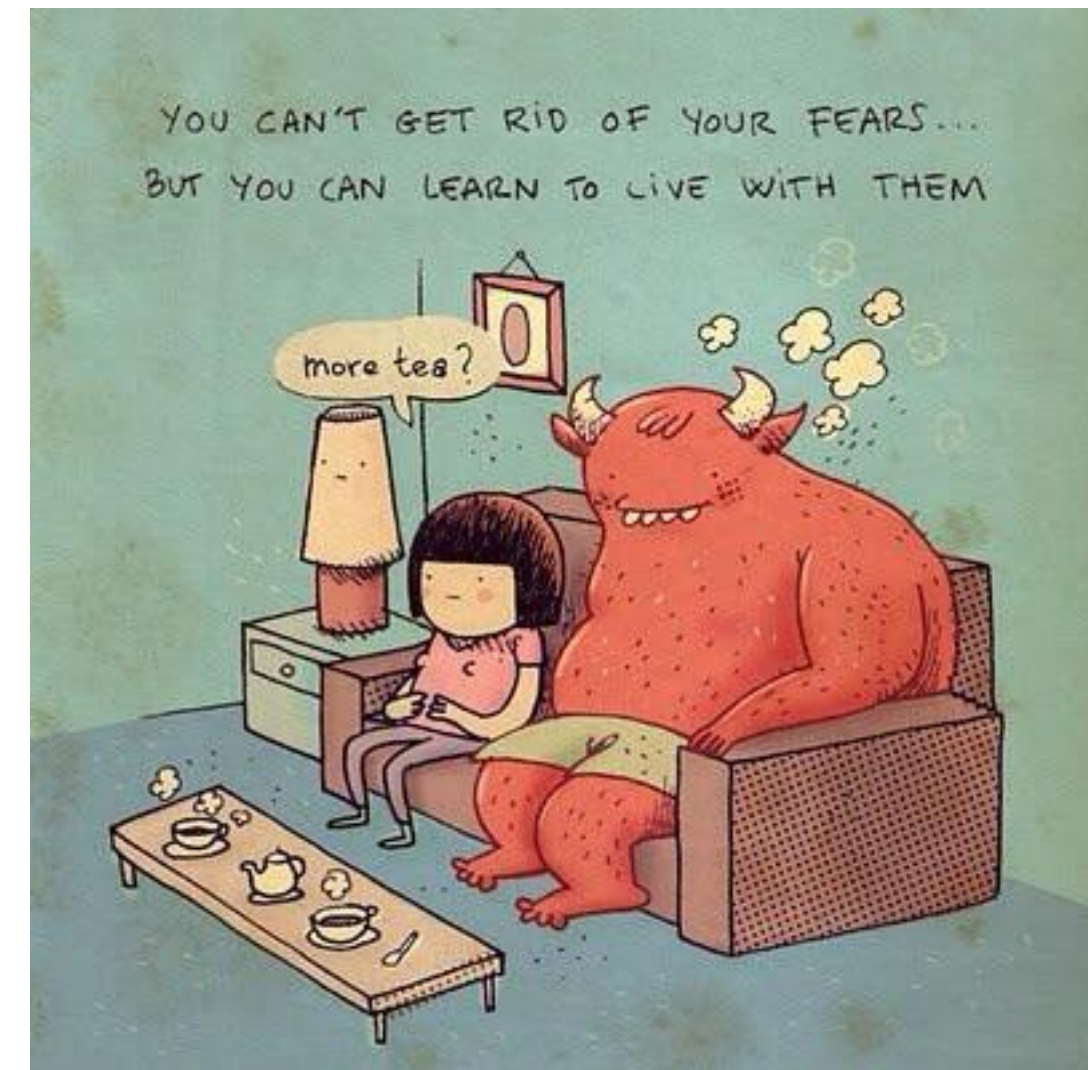
A relationship we can have with our emotions in which we accept them just as they are, without judgement, and with self-compassion.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIKE THEM OR WANT THEM..
YOU MAY WISH THEY WERE NOT HERE



BUT COULD YOU BE WILLING
TO ALLOW THEM TO BE HERE...
SO YOU CAN GET ON WITH
WHAT TRULY MATTERS TO YOU ?



Feeling: Gratitude

Gratitude is both a skill and a perspective we can develop to get unstuck from distressing emotions and experience more pleasant and balanced emotions.

The
acknowledgment
of goodness in
one's life

Gratitude: What is it good for?

Gratitude is a widely studied skill that has shown benefits for mental health, social wellbeing, relationship satisfaction, physical health and more.

A study on gratitude visits showed that participants experienced a **35% reduction in depressive symptoms** for several weeks, while those practicing gratitude journaling reported a similar reduction in depressive symptoms for as long as the journaling continued (Seligman et al., 2005).

Patients with hypertension who “count their blessings” at least once a week experienced a **significant decrease in blood pressure**, resulting in better overall health (Shipon, 1977).

A two-week gratitude intervention **increased sleep quality and reduced blood pressure** in participants, leading to enhanced wellbeing (Jackowska, Brown, Ronaldson, & Steptoe, 2016).

It has been shown that study participants who practiced gratitude regularly for 11 weeks were **more likely to exercise** than those in the control group (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

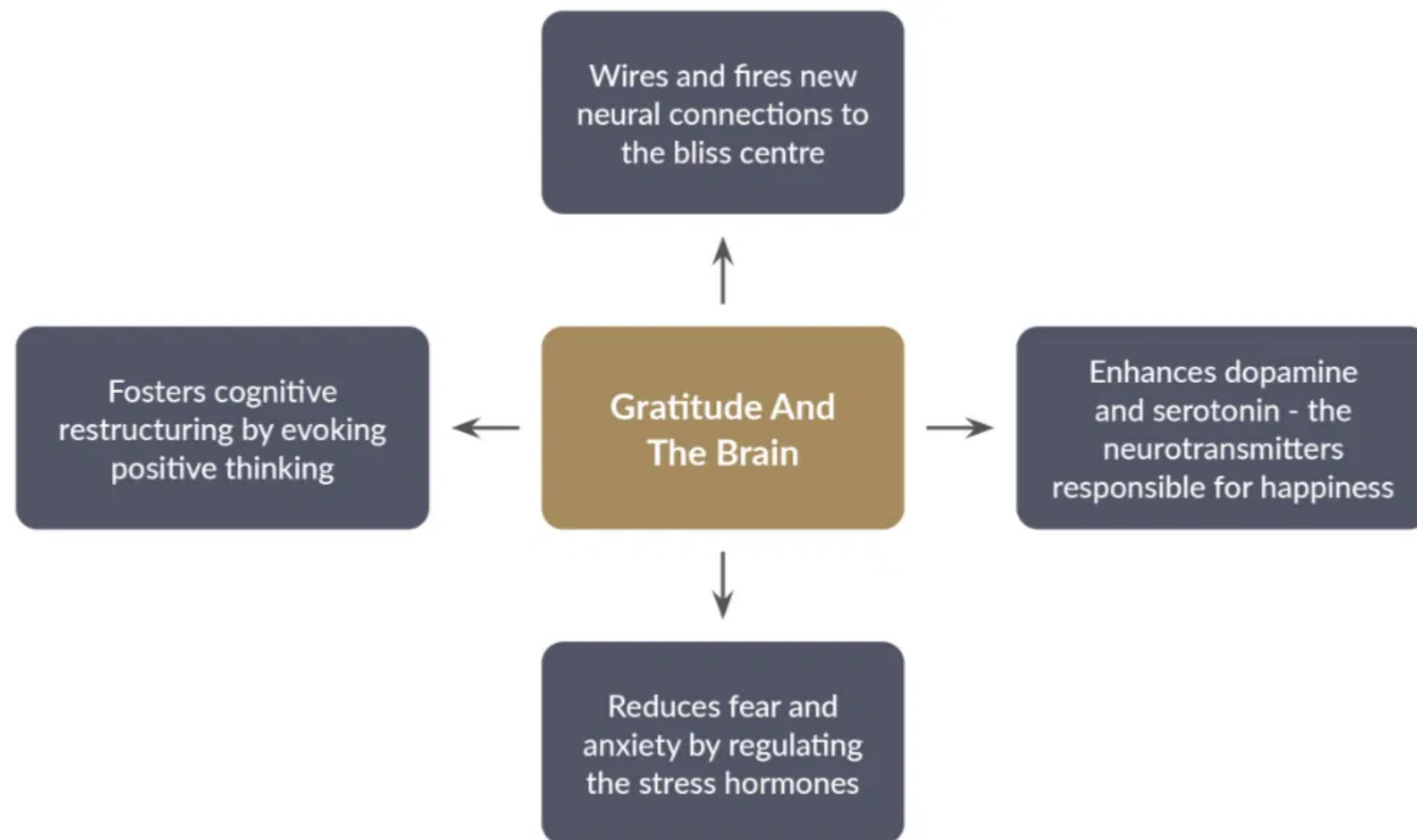
In a rigorous examination of the effects of gratitude on stress and depressive symptoms in hospital staff, researchers learned that the participants randomly assigned to the gratitude group reported **fewer depressive symptoms and stress** (Cheng, Tsui, & Lam, 2015).

Participants who completed a four-week gratitude contemplation program reported **greater life satisfaction and self-esteem** than control group participants (Rash, Matsuba, & Prkachin, 2011).

Simply journaling for five minutes a day about what we are grateful for can **enhance our long-term happiness by over 10%** (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

Gratitude: Why does it work?

Gratitude is a positive psychology skill that helps rewire our brain's negativity bias.



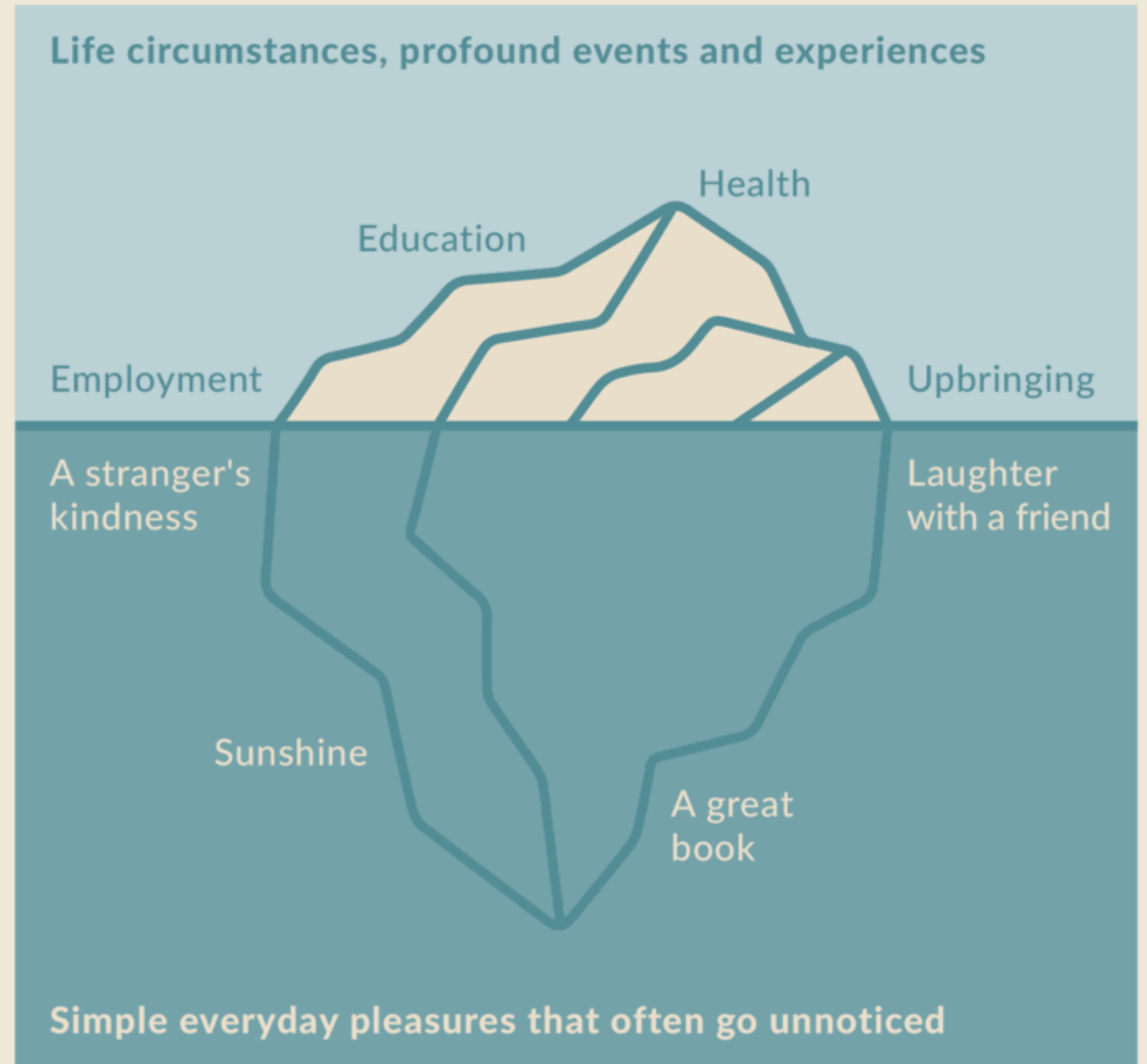
Neuroplasticity: deterioration of old neural pathways, growth of new ones



Gratitude: What is there to be grateful for?

Gratitude can be applied to anything – big or small, monumental or incremental.

THE ICEBERG OF GRATITUDE



Gratitude: How to practice

1. Find a positive experience

Look for something good, meaningful, or pleasant in your daily life. This could be anything from a compliment, a beautiful flower, a satisfying accomplishment, to a feeling of love or a peaceful moment.

2. Take it in (with your senses and body)

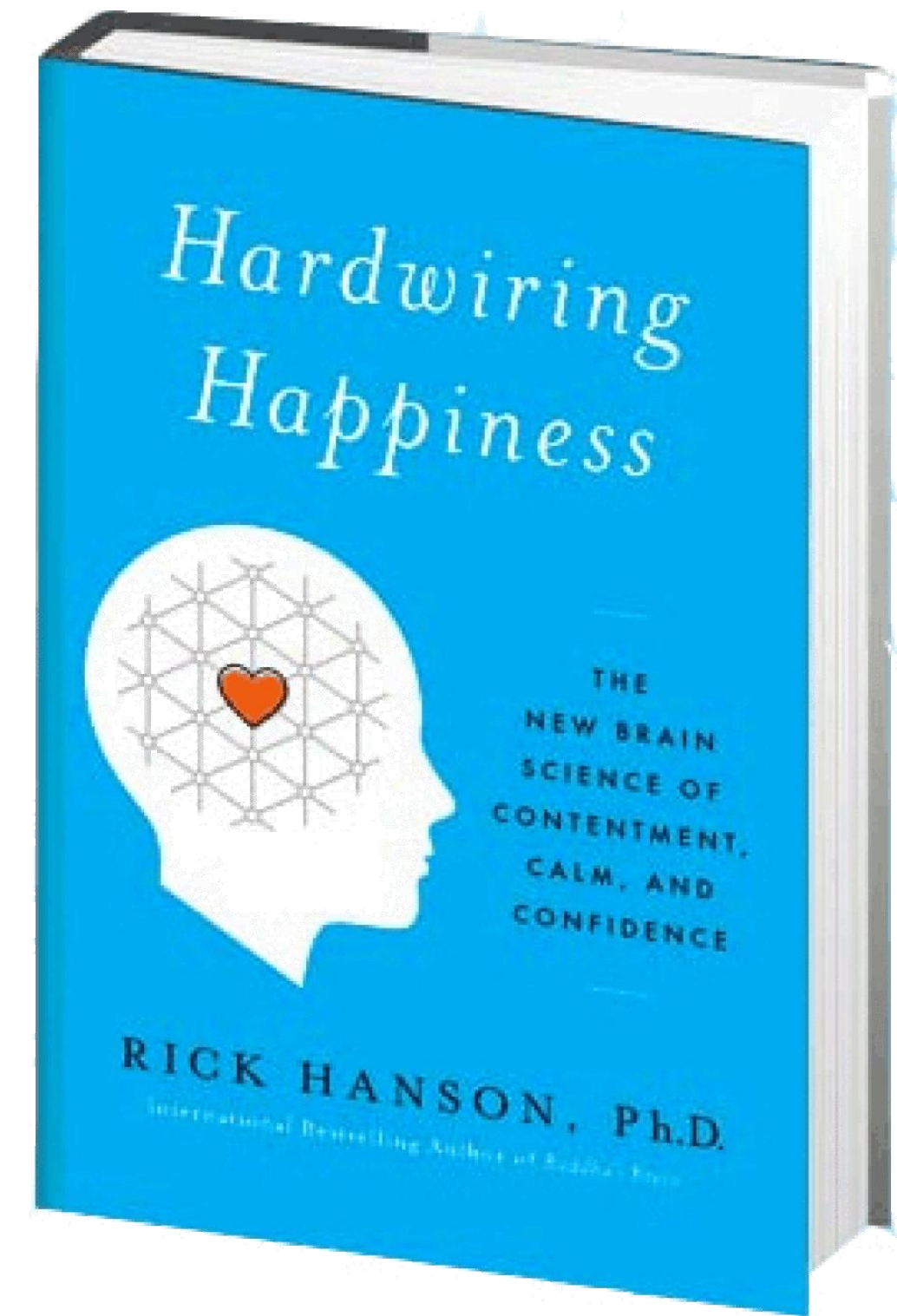
Instead of just thinking about the experience, focus on its sensory details and how it feels in your body. Notice any inner warmth, lightness, or pleasurable energy.

3. Savor it (stay with it)

Lengthen the experience by consciously enjoying it and letting the feeling grow. Stay with the positive sensation, emotion, or thought for about 20 to 60 seconds, or even longer.

4. Link positive and negative material (optional)

Let the positive experience sink down and sooth old pain. Or, when having a negative experience, call up gratitude as an antidote. Remember that positive and negative can co-exist.



Gratitude: Ideas to Practice

Gratitude Journal

Jot down a few things you are grateful for at a frequency that works for you

Gratitude App

Find a gratitude app – like The Gratitude Journal – to help you practice gratitude regularly

Gratitude Letter

Write a letter of appreciation for someone in your life. Consider hand delivering it to them!

Gratitude Meditation

Take time to focus your attention on something you are grateful for

