


# Fostering Positivity for 2021

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## About Me

- ▶ Licensed Clinical Social Worker
  - ▶ Full time Therapist
  - ▶ My focus with patients is:
    - ▶ Finding strategies to remove barriers to care
    - ▶ Applying Cognitive Behavioral model of psychotherapy
    - ▶ Integrating elements of Positive Psychology
- 

# What we'll accomplish



Change common New Year's Resolutions to be more positive



Learn and Practice Savoring and Gratitude



How to alter language to support self-kindness



Gathering ideas from the group for how to motivate each other to think positive



Hopefully, a feeling of happiness, calm, and hope for the future

The background features a dark brown central area on the left, transitioning into a series of overlapping, semi-transparent yellow and orange geometric shapes on the right. These shapes create a dynamic, layered effect. A thin white line runs diagonally across the right side of the image.

# Reframing Goals

# Changing Common New Year's Resolutions

New Year's Resolutions and New Year's Themes are one way to create goals for making positive change in your life.

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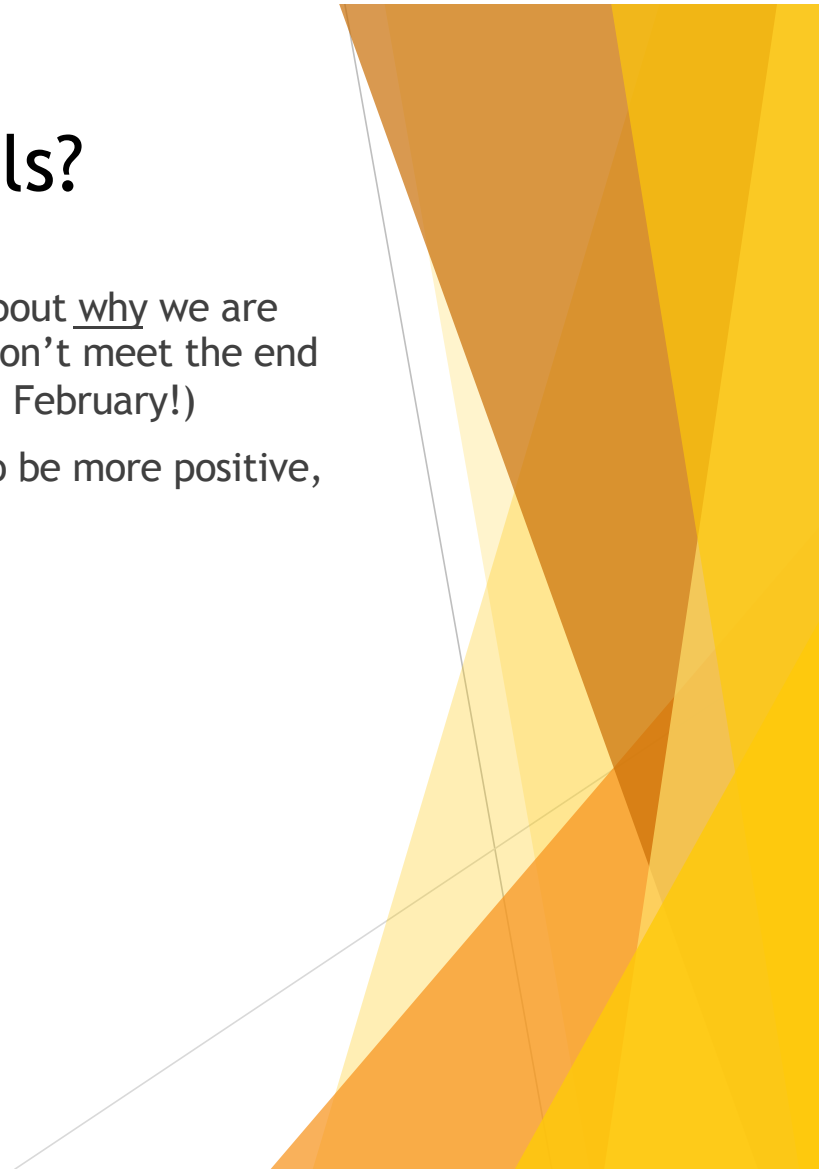
However, certain resolutions and goals can feel more like self-punishment, or self-restriction.

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Let's see if we can reframe frequently cited New Year's Resolutions

# Why do we want to reframe goals?

- ▶ We naturally fixate on the outcome of these goals and forget about why we are motivated to change. Thus, we become discouraged when we don't meet the end objective (this could be why gym memberships dip so quickly in February!)
- ▶ If we try to find the root reason for these changes, they tend to be more positive, and less discouraging.



# “I want to lose weight/eat healthier”

- ▶ Weight loss and eating healthier - by themselves - are not usually the true goal we wish to achieve.
- ▶ Alternatively, framing the same actions like:
  - ▶ “I want to feel stronger”
  - ▶ “I want to have more energy”
  - ▶ “I want to love my body more, and feel desirable”
  - ▶ “I want to get more comfortable being intimate”
  - ▶ “I want to pay attention to what my body is telling me it needs”

# “I want to get more organized”

- ▶ "More Organized" is vague and not meaningful as a goal. Does this mean you want your pantry to look like Pinterest? To feel less stressed with work paperwork?
  - ▶ Rather, here are some alternatives:
    - ▶ “I want to display the objects in my home that I love”
    - ▶ “I want to incorporate more color in my home”
    - ▶ “I want to challenge feelings of guilt when I want to get rid of something”
- ... in these instances, you're more specific in your actions (display objects I love, Incorporate color) AND help address motivations that cause clutter.



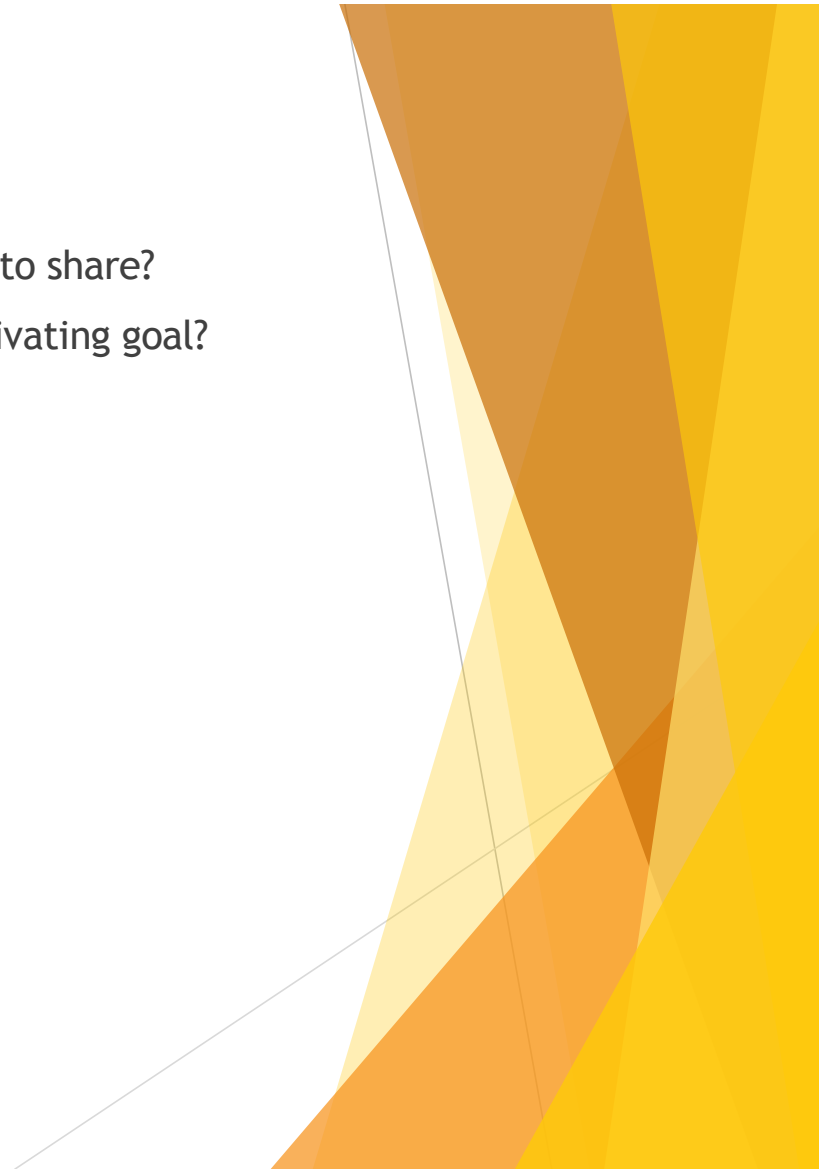
# “I will become more financially savvy”

- ▶ Again, “financially savvy” may be vague and money can have constraints (i.e. set or fixed income or limited hours you can work).
- ▶ “I will have a bank account that reflects my values”
- ▶ “I will save money for my future, AND allow for spending money on myself”
- ▶ “I will spend money in a way that makes me feel balanced”



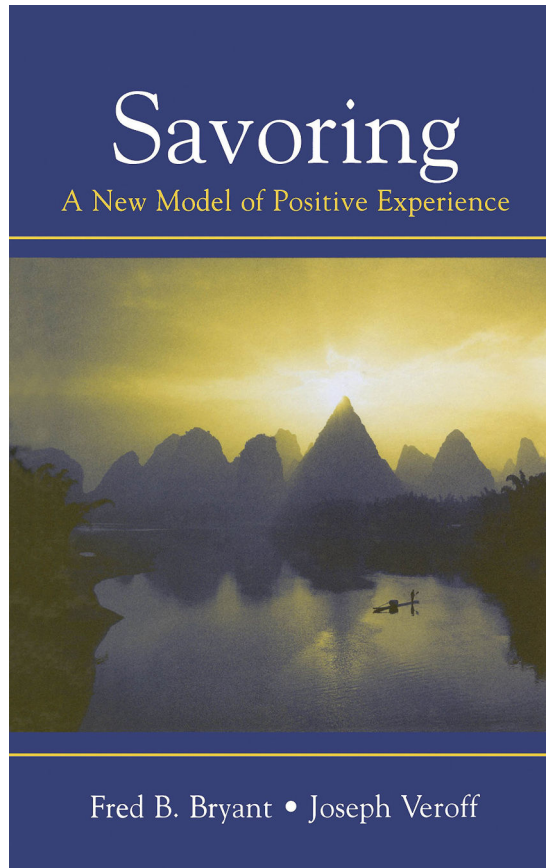
# Putting this in action

- ▶ Do you have a New Year's Theme or Resolution you would like to share?
- ▶ Can we, as a group, try to guide towards a more positive/motivating goal?





Savor the moment



## What is Savoring?

- ▶ A fairly recent concept in the field of Positive Psychology, Savoring is the practice of expanding and prolonging feelings of enjoyment.
- ▶ The practice is divided into four categories:
  - ▶ Luxuriating
  - ▶ Marveling
  - ▶ Basking
  - ▶ Thanksgiving

*Reference: Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience, Fred B. Bryant and Joseph Veroff*

# Luxuriating

- ▶ Extending feelings of pleasure
- ▶ Taking a few extra minutes in the morning to enjoy the feeling of comfort in your bed
- ▶ Breathing in the scent of laundry you just took out of the dryer
- ▶ Taking longer than usual to read your newspaper, magazine, or book



# Marveling

- ▶ Expanding on feelings of awe
- ▶ Soaking up nature (sunsets, beautiful landscapes)
- ▶ A historic landmark or memorial site
- ▶ Observing beauty







## Basking

- ▶ Expanding on feelings of pride
- ▶ Goals reached; tasks accomplished
- ▶ Receiving an award
- ▶ Watching your favorite sports team win a game
- ▶ These can be smaller achievements, or big milestones

# Thanksgiving

- ▶ Expanding on feelings of gratitude
- ▶ Thanksgiving is not just one day!
- ▶ Sending thank you cards
- ▶ Telling someone how much you appreciate their kindness
- ▶ Expressing thankfulness for all of the good things you have in your life

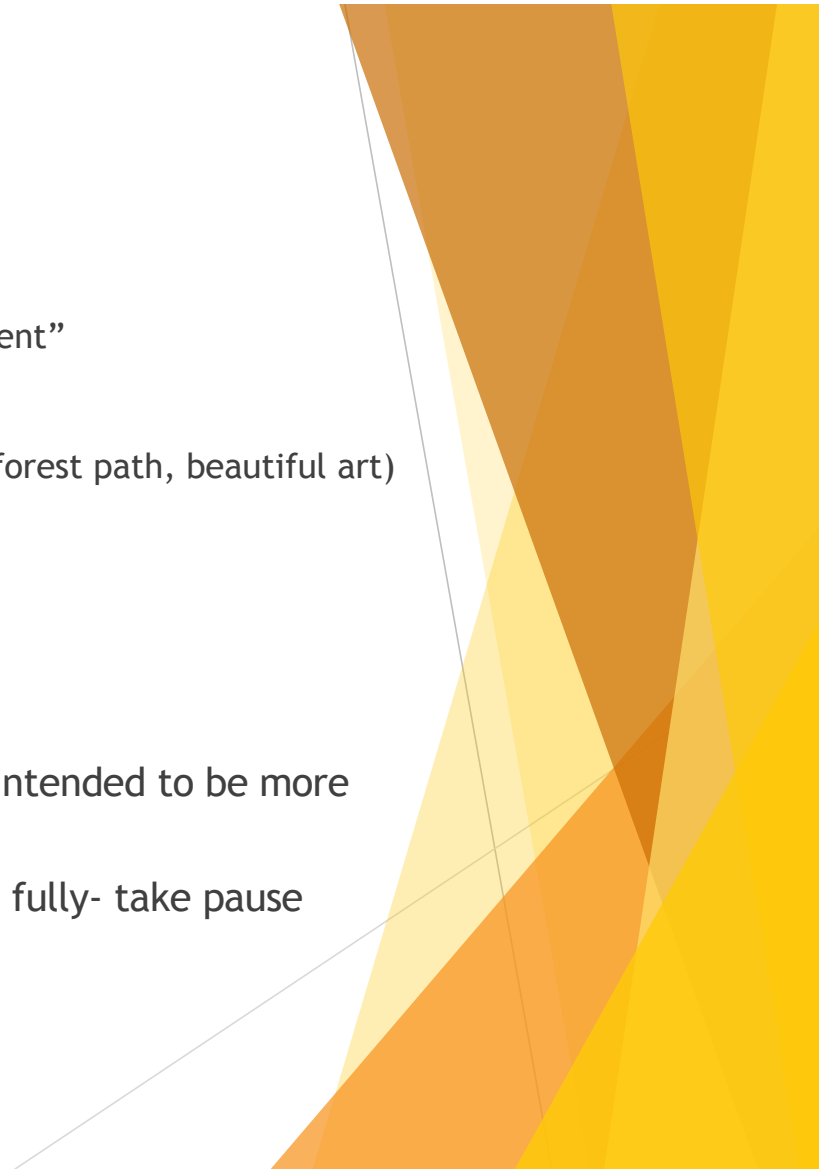


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# Ways to help you savor

- ▶ Give yourself permission to lose yourself in the moment
  - ▶ We often equate positivity or luxuriating as “selfish” or “indulgent”
- ▶ Engage all your senses
  - ▶ What does the moment look like, what can you see? (A sunset, forest path, beautiful art)
  - ▶ What does it sound like? (rainfall on a summer night)
  - ▶ What does it smell like? (a fresh candle)
  - ▶ How does it feel like? (a warm shower or bath)
  - ▶ What does it taste like? (That first taste of birthday cake)
- ▶ Think of it as a more positive form of *mindfulness* (which is intended to be more neutral)
- ▶ Given yourself the time you need to experience the moment fully- take pause



# Excercise

- ▶ From the clip - which elements of Savoring are present?
  - ▶ Luxuriating (pleasure)
  - ▶ Marveling (awe)
  - ▶ Basking (pride)
  - ▶ Thanksgiving (gratitude)



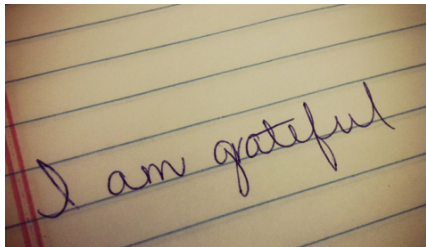
**What are some  
of your favorite  
ways to savor?**

Luxuriating  
Marveling  
Basking  
Thanksgiving

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Express Gratitude

# Speaking of Gratitude and Thanksgiving...



- ▶ Evidence repeatedly shows that gratitude practice reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety
- ▶ We can benefit by incorporating consistent, regular gratitude practice (preferably daily)
  - ▶ Gratitude journaling
    - ▶ Bullet points, free form journaling, using social media- you pick the medium!
  - ▶ Gratitude jar
    - ▶ Collect items or slips of paper that demonstrate happy times, and review the contents on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, yearly)
    - ▶ Also, a great activity for children!

Reference: *Positive Psychology in Practice: Simple Tools to Pursue Happiness and Live Authentically*  
by Gina Delucca, PsyD and Jamie Goldstein, PsyD (2020)

# Gratitude How To's

- ▶ It can help to identify the “Why” of the thing/person for which you are grateful:
  - ▶ Instead of “I am grateful for my sister,” “I am grateful for my sister, because she is a constant source of support and unconditional love”
- ▶ Big milestones are ok (new promotion, relationship, etc.), as well as small occurrences in your day (feeling less pain than the day prior, a few minutes of sunshine)
- ▶ Be specific:
  - ▶ Instead of “I am grateful for a roof over my head”
  - ▶ I am grateful **for the security and safety** that a roof over my head provides

Reference: *Positive Psychology in Practice: Simple Tools to Pursue Happiness and Live Authentically*  
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What are some of your favorite ways to express **gratitude** to others? To yourself?



The background features a dark grey rectangular area on the left and a series of overlapping, semi-transparent yellow and orange geometric shapes on the right. The text is centered within the dark grey area.

Other tools for positivity



# Watch Your Language!

## Change “Should” to “Could”

- We want to reduce the frequency of “should” thinking, as it promotes feelings of shame and guilt where it is harmful
- “I should eat fewer sweets” becomes “I could drink more water/eat more vegetables”

## Change “Sorry” to “Thank You”

- “I’m sorry I’m late” becomes “Thank you for your patience”
- “I’m sorry I didn’t respond sooner” becomes “Thank you for your understanding”



# Fostering Positive Self-Talk and Intention

- ▶ We want language to feel empowering, not restrictive
- ▶ How do you talk to yourself? Is it positive? Is it negative? Where does that voice come from?

What is one song that always puts you in a positive mood?

Hint: We might just share the list



# Joyful Imagery



Fernand Légaré, *In the Café*, 1882, Art Institute of Chicago

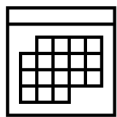
- ▶ What is an image that always makes you happy?
- ▶ Why does it evoke that feeling within you?
- ▶ What color patterns prompt feelings of joy?

The background features a dark brown, almost black, trapezoidal shape on the left side. To the right of this shape is a complex, abstract composition of overlapping triangles and polygons in various shades of yellow and orange, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text "Practice consistently" is centered within the dark brown area.

Practice consistently

# Positivity takes practice...

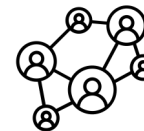
- ▶ We can take active steps with our mental wellbeing to not only address our negative thoughts and feelings, but also to support expanding on the existing positive moments in our lives!
- ▶ Alex Elle, writer and self-care guru says, “Self-Care is a Community Act.” Let’s use our communities to support positivity for each other!



Mark your  
calendar for  
'being positive'



Make reminders  
to express  
gratitude



Talk with  
'positivity pros'  
(just others who  
are positive  
around you)

# Resources for Further Discovery

- ▶ *Positive Psychology in Practice: Simple Tools to Pursue Happiness and Live Authentically* by Gina Delucca, PsyD and Jamie Goldstein, PsyD (Positive Psychology)
- ▶ *Joyful: The Surprising Power of Ordinary Things to Create Extraordinary Happiness* by Ingrid Fetell Lee (Interior Design)
- ▶ *Big Potential* by Shawn Achor (Business)
- ▶ *Heart Talk: Poetic Wisdom for a Better Life* by Cleo Wade (Poetry)

