

# POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Office of Health Promotion – Department of Student Health – University of Virginia

*Positive psychology is the science of happiness. Hoos can develop habits of mind that help them feel good and thrive, even when life is unpredictable.*

## HABITS FOR WELLBEING

Focusing on things that help us feel better takes practice and perspective. This means prioritizing time for positive thoughts and actions.



Most students do something they find restorative, like art or reading, to feel better.\*

*Try these tips*

### Give!

Using your strengths to help others by volunteering or cheering on a friend can widen your viewpoint and bring you back to what is important to you.

### Take Care!

Practicing self-care can help you feel grounded in what you know about yourself. Try listening to music, getting fresh air outside, drawing in a coloring book, or watching a funny video.

*"If you are feeling down, treat yourself well. Doing something relaxing, like going for a walk with a friend, can help you gain perspective."* – C.Z., Engineering 2020

### Say Thanks!

Take time each day to say thanks or reflect on some things you are grateful for.



Three out of four UVA students practice gratitude.\*

\*From the February 2017 Health Survey with responses from 1,010 UVA students



- ..... have the **agency** to choose who you are, what you do, where you go, and who you spend time with.
- ..... **deserve to be here** and have a place at UVA.
- ..... are **stronger** and more **resilient** than you think.

## BE PERFECTLY IMPERFECT

Everyone struggles sometimes, and it is normal to feel challenged by life. It is easy to compare our insides (how we feel) with other people's outsides (how they appear). Be aware of this, especially on social media. Avoiding these social comparisons frees you to be your perfectly imperfect self. **Opening up to friends** and talking about how you really feel brings people closer, and you might be surprised how often others feel the same way.



Sometimes people have automatic negative thoughts (ANTs), which are not true but make people feel gloomy anyway. If noticing ANTs, look closer at the situation. Crush ANTs with constructive thoughts in order to perform and feel better!

## CRUSH THIS ANT

### ABSOLUTES

"I am the only person at UVA not at a party tonight."

### CATASTROPHIZING

"I botched the exam and now I will never get a job!"

### FORTUNE TELLING

"I did not make the team or club! Now I will never find friends!"

### MIND READING

"My professor forgot my name, so she must hate me."

## TRY THIS TRUTH

"I want to use my weekends to relax and de-stress in ways that make me feel good."

"Bad tests happen sometimes, and I know I can improve next time."

"There are tons of groups to join at UVA and people everywhere who also want to make friends."

"My class has a lot of students, and I might need to introduce myself more than once."

## Resources

### Madison House HELP Line

- (434) 295-TALK
- No issue is too big or too small. They're here to listen.

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

- (434) 243-5150 – M-F 8AM-5PM
- For after-hours emergencies: (434) 297-4261
- Call to see how CAPS can best support you.

### Peer Health Educators

- (434) 924-1509
- One-on-one peer counseling sessions for mental wellness and other topics.

### IfYoureReadingThis.org

- Personal letters and photos from UVA students sharing about mental health and encouraging peers.