

How to Use The Daily 6

Recovering from a brain injury is a challenging journey, and sometimes it can feel like the days are dragging on forever, especially when you can't do the things you love or go back to work. But here's the thing: you have more control over your emotional wellbeing than you might think. It all comes down to your daily habits and where you focus your attention.

That's where the Daily 6 comes in. These six easy-to-do activities have been proven to have a positive impact on mood and well-being. Our brains have a natural tendency to focus on the negative, which can lead to a downward spiral of isolation, frustration, and depression—especially during a long recovery from a concussion or other condition. But by intentionally focusing on the positive, we can shift our mindset and daily habits to feel more alive, joyful, and happy.

Print out the Daily 6 and keep it somewhere you'll see it every day, like on your desk, fridge, or bedside table. It's only one double-sided sheet for the entire week. Make a commitment to complete each task every day and use the checklist to keep track of your progress. At the end of each day, take a moment to reflect on the positive moments you experienced. And remember, you can combine tasks on some days to make it easier.

The Daily 6 might seem simple, but there's power in simplicity, and the key is consistency. By being intentional about your daily habits, you can transform your well-being and happiness. So give it a try and see the transformative power of intentional positivity for yourself.

The Daily 6 +1 and Reflections

physical activity

Regular physical activity is essential for both our physical and mental health. Our bodies were designed to move, and when we don't move enough, it can have a negative impact on our well-being. Research shows that physical activity increases the production of feel-good chemicals in our brains and bodies, which are essential for our emotional and mental health. And research is also showing the important role of physical activity for recovering from brain injuries. Even small amounts of physical activity can make a difference, and more is even better. So think about what types of physical activity you feel able to do and start adding a bit more to what you are already doing each day. And consider a new daily routine like a bike ride, jog, or lifting weights. Of course, check with your doctor first.

meaningful human connection

Research increasingly shows that strong emotional ties play a critical role in our health and well-being. Our ancestors thrived in close-knit communities, relying on one another for every aspect of life. But today, many of us live in isolation, which can be especially tough when we're recovering from a concussion. We know this experience often takes a toll on our relationships and social lives. That's why it's more important than ever to make a conscious effort to connect meaningfully with others regularly. Try adding just 15 minutes of meaningful conversation or human interaction to your day, whether in person or by phone. Don't let a single day go by without meaningful connection. And consider ways to build new connections, especially people who may understand what you're going through. Making a genuine effort to connect with others can have a profound impact on your recovery and well-being. So make a daily intention to connect.

something that brings you joy

We often get so caught up in our responsibilities and projects that we neglect our own needs and joys. Take a moment to make a list of things that bring you joy that are able to do right now. Just focus on the little things that you enjoy for now. And that you can do. Here is a sample list to help you get started: watching the sunset, dancing, taking a candlelit bath, knitting, coloring mandalas, wearing big dangly earrings, singing, or doing a puzzle. Make an intentional effort each day to do something that brings you joy. Start with items from your list and watch how, with practice, you'll add more and more tiny moments of joy to your life.

listen to music

Music has a unique ability to positively impact our well-being by reducing stress, enhancing our mood, and providing a sense of community. Set an intention to add more music to your day, whether it's in the car, during your morning routine, while you cook or work or simply to move to. If your usual music is a challenge for you to listen to right now, explore slow, soft, ambient varieties, like music for meditation, that may be easier to support while proving joyful, calming sounds. Let music enhance your life by adding more of it to your daily routine.

sunlight or time outside

Spending time outdoors, especially in the sunlight, can significantly improve our well-being. Sunlight exposure helps us produce vitamin D and boosts our mood by increasing the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates mood and sleep. Additionally, being in nature, even around a few trees, can have a calming effect on the mind, reducing anxiety, stress, and depression. Make a conscious effort to spend time outdoors in sunlight when possible, and when you can, go hang out with some trees.

moments of savoring

Make it a daily practice to savour small moments in your day. Research shows that savouring positive experiences can improve well-being and increase positive emotions, and decrease negative ones. Take a moment to appreciate the taste of your morning coffee, a hug from a loved one, a moment of quiet or laughter. Aim to collect at least three of these moments each day and write them down in a green box on page 4, along with your three good things/what went well. With time, this practice will help you become more mindful and appreciate the simple joys in life.

bonus: meditation

Meditation is a powerful tool for improving emotional wellbeing and can be very supportive for healing from a brain injury. But we also know that it can be challenging to incorporate into our daily routine. If you can commit to a meditation practice, that's great! There are many benefits to doing that. Start with loving kindness or self-compassion meditations. But if you're finding it hard to fit this in every single day, don't worry, it's just a bonus.

daily reflections

The green boxes on p.4 are for you to list positive moments from your day. Whether it's what went well, three good things, or moments of gratitude, take the time to focus on the positives, as well as the moments you savoured. Sometimes we need to recalibrate our idea of what counts as "good," especially on challenging days when we might be tempted to think "nothing good happened today." But even on those days, good moments can be found. Maybe it's a rare moment of quiet, the sunlight shining through the window and lighting up a plant, discovering the last piece of chocolate when you thought you were out, or a smile from a stranger. Start capturing your small good moments each day.

The Daily 6 Wellbeing Checklist

Week: _____

Daily Intentions

	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S
15+ min of physical activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15+ min of meaningful connection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15+ min of something that brings you joy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15+ min of listening to music you love	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 moments of savoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sunlight or time outside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BONUS: a guided meditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3 Good Things & Savoring

In each green box write 3 Good things or What Went Well and 3 moments you savored each day
