

# JOY CARDS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

<p>1</p> <p><b>“Joy is the reward of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own, you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another.”</b></p> <p>Archbishop Tutu, <i>Mission: JOY</i></p> <p>MISSION: JOY <a href="http://www.MissionJoy.org">www.MissionJoy.org</a></p>	<p><b>TRY THIS:</b></p> <p><b>SHARE A STORY ABOUT....</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ a kindness that you offered to another</li><li>→ a memorable act of compassion or kindness that you received</li><li>→ an act of compassion or kindness you witnessed</li></ul> <p></p> <p>When and where did it happen?</p> <p>How did you feel?</p> <p>Are you smiling yet?</p>
<p>2</p> <p><b>“The ultimate source of a meaningful life is within our own self. Usually everybody seeks happiness, joyfulness from the outside, from money, from power, from a big car OR house. The ultimate source of a happy life—even physical health—is inside, not outside.”</b></p> <p>His Holiness the Dalai Lama, <i>Mission: JOY</i></p> <p>MISSION: JOY <a href="http://www.MissionJoy.org">www.MissionJoy.org</a></p>	<p><b>TRY THIS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ You can't control the events of your life, but you CAN control how you think about them. Reframing the story—looking at it from a different point of view—can change everything.</li><li>→ Remember a time in your life that felt difficult or unpleasant. Now try to think of one positive thing that came about as a result of that difficulty.</li><li>→ Share with your group your example of finding joy from the inside!</li></ul>
<p>3</p> <p><b>“Joy is our essential nature, something everyone can realize. We could say that our desire for happiness is, in a way, an attempt to rediscover our original state of mind.”</b></p> <p>Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, Author, and translator for the His Holiness the Dalai Lama, <i>Mission: JOY</i></p> <p>MISSION: JOY <a href="http://www.MissionJoy.org">www.MissionJoy.org</a></p>	<p><b>TRY THIS:</b></p> <p><b>THINK ABOUT A CHILDHOOD MEMORY THAT MAKES YOU SMILE. IT MIGHT BE...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ a favorite holiday</li><li>→ your favorite game</li><li>→ someone who made you feel loved</li></ul> <p></p> <p>In pairs or small groups, share your memory. Do you notice any similarities among the memories?</p>

4

**“One study found that people who did acts of kindness for others became happier and actually stayed happier for about two to four weeks after the study was over. They also showed changes in their body that were associated with a stronger immune response— a kind of anti-inflammatory response.”**

Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky, University of California - Riverside, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

- Share a memory of a time when you were kind, or when someone was kind to you. Or of an act of kindness that you witnessed.
- How do you feel after exchanging stories? Notice any changes?
- Talk about your reactions to Dr. Lyubomirsky's research. Why do you think acts of kindness might cause physiological changes?

5

**“What really was important about kindness was that you're connecting with another person by doing acts of kindness.”**

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

**FIND SOMEONE IN YOUR GROUP TO CONNECT WITH, AND TALK ABOUT KINDNESS:**

- Who do you think you learned kindness from?
- Can you think of a time in your life when an act of kindness led to a deeper personal connection? Maybe with a friend or a neighbor?

6

**“What the Dalai Lama and I are offering is a way of handling your worries: thinking about others.**

**You can think about others who are in a similar situation or perhaps even worse a situation, but who have survived, even thrived. It does help quite a lot to see yourself as part of a greater whole.”**

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

**FIND A PARTNER AND TAKE TURNS SHARING SOMETHING THAT MIGHT BE WORRYING YOU.**

- Can you or your partner think of someone who has experienced a similar situation?
- How has that person survived, or even thrived? Offer them empathy and compassion.
- Offer YOURSELF empathy and compassion, and know that you are not alone!

7  
“The equivalent of neuroplasticity in genomics is epigenetics, or how genes are regulated and expressed. Think of genes as something with volume control that can be turned on or off. Studies have shown that with eight hours of meditation from skilled practitioners there is evidence of a measurable difference in gene expression—from purely mental practice. In other words, our brains and genes are dynamic and have a great deal of plasticity.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison, in a TED Talk

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

#### TRY THIS:

TALK ABOUT YOUR REACTIONS TO THE EVIDENCE THAT OUR BRAINS AND OUR GENES CAN ACTUALLY CHANGE BASED ON PRACTICES LIKE MEDITATION.

- As the mind changes, the brain changes. In what ways would you like to change your brain?
- What possible effects do you think this information might have in your life? In the world?

8  
“Suffering [is] opportunity testing you. There is someone who is a Tibetan who spent many years in the Chinese gulag. [The] Gulag is difficult. Hard labor, torture. He told me that during those 18 years, it was a difficult period. He faced some dangers. I thought there was danger to his life. I ask, what kind of danger? He told me, danger of losing compassion towards those Chinese perpetrators.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

#### TRY THIS:

THINK OF A PERSON IN YOUR LIFE WITH WHOM YOU HAVE A TENSE RELATIONSHIP.

- Ask yourself, what difficulties may this person have experienced? Can I put myself in their place?
- If you are comfortable doing so, share the problem(s) you faced with them and any insights to their lived experience.

9  
“Every day we have the opportunity to create and re-create our lives. This is the power we yield. No dark fate determines our future.”

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

#### TRY THIS:

ONE OF THE PRACTICES SUGGESTED IN THE BOOK OF JOY IS “MORNING INTENTION SETTING.” LET’S TRY IT RIGHT NOW, NO MATTER WHAT TIME IT IS.

- Set an intention for how you would like the rest of your day to go. Share your intention with your group.
- And try it again tomorrow—and every morning—to see how positive intentions can re-create your life!

10  
“There’s a concept that we have in South Africa, the concept of ubuntu. It says, a person is a person through other persons. I mean I could not speak as I am speaking without having learned it from other human beings. I could not think as a human being except through learning it from other human beings.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

#### TRY THIS:

- Think about someone who has had a positive impact in your life.
- Take a moment to think about how you would describe their influence.
- Turn to a partner or a small group and describe this person. Talk about their impact on you. Does their influence continue to shape your life?

11  
“Forgiveness does not mean forgetting. You should keep the memory about negative things. But because of that, there is the possibility of developing anger or hatred. That control, that’s the meaning of forgiveness. So it is totally wrong that the practice of tolerance and practice of forgiveness are signs of weakness. Totally wrong. Hundred percent wrong. A thousand percent wrong.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

#### TRY THIS:

##### THERE ARE THREE PARTS TO A GOOD APOLOGY:

1. Say you’re sorry.
2. Admit your mistake and take responsibility for the impact it had.
3. Make or offer a reparation to set the situation right. If you don’t know what you should do, ask—and then follow through.

#### Discuss with a partner:

Have you received or offered an apology like this? What was your experience like?

12  
“Well-being is a skill. Well-being can actually be learned, it can be nurtured, and it’s a skill that can enable us to live a happier life. We know that if you want to learn to play the violin, you’ve got to practice. If you want to learn a complex sport, you’ve got to practice. If you want to learn well-being, you have to practice.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, Neuroscientist and Psychologist, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

#### TRY THIS:

##### THINK ABOUT “WELL-BEING” IN YOUR LIFE. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE FOR YOU? SHARE A FEW EXAMPLES.

- Share an experience that illustrates how you practice well-being in your life.

#### OR

- Talk about the ways you would LIKE to practice more well-being in your life.

“Neuroplasticity describes the fact that the brain changes in response to experience and in response to training, wittingly or unwittingly. Our brains are constantly being shaped, and we can actually harness the power of neuroplasticity. It turns out that when we cultivate wholesome qualities of our mind, our brains change accordingly.”

*Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison*

13

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

#### DR. DAVIDSON'S STUDIES TELL US:

- An average American pays no attentions to what they are doing 47% of their time.
- When they are not paying attention to what they are doing, they are significantly less satisfied.
- Talk about your reactions. Why do you think paying attention might make people feel more satisfaction?



What are you training your brain to do right now?

Where is your mind right now?

At this moment, how happy or unhappy are you?

“The two leaders had told us over the course of the week that there is no joy without sorrow, that in fact it is the pain, the suffering, that allows us to experience and appreciate the joy.”

*Douglas Abrams, The Book of Joy*

14

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

#### SHARE A STORY OF SUFFERING AND TRANSFORMATION. IT MIGHT BE:

- A personal story from your past
- A story of someone else's journey
- A story about someone you admire who overcame adversity
- Talk about the feelings that arise when you hear each other's stories.

His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu believe their own suffering has offered them opportunities for growth and transformation.

“At age 24, I lost my own country. Because I became refugee, a new opportunity comes. If I still remained in Potala, in Lhasa, some people, you see, describe [this as a] golden cage. So I personally, I prefer the refugee life. It's more useful. More opportunity to learn, more experience.”

*His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mission: JOY*

15

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

Can you think of a time in your life when a painful experience led to an unexpected new opportunity? How did it feel to make that realization?

Share your thoughts and reflections with your group.

**“Mental health is actually not simply the absence of mental disease. It is something more.”**

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison

16



MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRYTHIS:

- Taking care of yourself physically and emotionally is an important part of health and well-being. There are lots of ways to practice self-care: through nutrition, exercise, quiet time/meditation, etc.
- But self-care can also be small moments in our day: Taking a few deep breaths, or closing our eyes for a minute.
- What form of well-being in your life do you already practice and have learned well?

**“Joy is the reward really of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own, you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another.”**

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

17



MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRYTHIS:

- Find a partner and ask one another about your well-being today.
- Take turns truly listening—with no interruptions—for about two minutes.
- Then take a moment to express gratitude for the conversation.

**“Taking care of what matters most is the way our mind functions. It is the ultimate thing that determines the quality of our experiences.”**

Matthieu Richard *The Book of Joy*

18



MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRYTHIS:

- With a partner or a small group, talk about what matters most in your life. Make a list of your top five priorities.
- Talk about how you take care of those priorities, and other ways you take care of yourself.

19

"I was actually with my dad when he and the Dalai Lama first met at a museum in, of all places, Newark, New Jersey. Honestly, the energy between them is eight-year-old boy. I look at them and I think, I am so glad that I was not your third-grade teacher, because they're so playful. So much fun and teasing."

Mpho Tutu, Desmond Tutu's daughter, Priest, Author *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

You don't have to be a neuroscientist to know that laughter can reduce stress and improve your mood. But did you know laughter may also boost your immune system and relieve pain? Just a smile can make a big difference!

Now...

Think of a funny story you've heard or experienced. Turn to a partner and exchange your stories with one another.

Have a good laugh - and notice how good it feels!

20

"Meditation is a familiarization with a new way of being, a new way of perceiving things which is more in [accord] with reality, with interdependence, with the stream and continuous transformation which our being and our consciousness is."

Matthieu Ricard, Buddhist Monk, Photographer, Author, Ph.D in Cell Genetics

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

#### TAKE TWO MINUTES FOR A SHORT MEDITATION.

- Find a comfortable seat and close your eyes.
- Take three long breaths through your nose. Exhale through your mouth.
- Think of one thing in your life, big or small, that brings you joy.
- End by saying: "Joy isn't something to wait for. It's something to practice. To create."
- Open your eyes and turn to a partner. Talk about any changes in how you feel.

21

"Think of joy as a more meaningful type of happiness. 'Hedonistic happiness' is fleeting, and only includes emotions we tend to think of as positive. 'Eudaimonic happiness' includes meaning, growth, and acceptance even of emotions we may call negative."

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

#### THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO KINDS OF HAPPINESS. ONE IS FINDING PLEASURE AND AVOIDING PAIN; ANOTHER IS FINDING DEEPER JOY DESPITE PAIN.

- In pairs or small groups, talk about your understanding of the different kinds of happiness. Share stories that exemplify one kind or the other.
- Have you experienced both types of happiness?

22

“His Holiness and my dad are both people who have very strong disciplines of prayer and quiet time. When I went to seminary... I had the experience of learning my dad's language in a way.... The most important lesson that I have taken is taking time for prayer and taking time for quiet.”

Mpho Tutu, Desmond Tutu's daughter, Priest, Author *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

### TRY THIS:

Take one minute away from the group to quiet your mind. Think about your breath as you inhale and exhale. When thoughts or feelings come up, acknowledge them but don't indulge them.

### NOW REJOIN YOUR GROUP TO DISCUSS:

- Is quiet time a regular part of your schedule?
- How might you benefit from more quiet time?
- Share ideas about how and when to make quiet time part of your daily routine.

23

“We have to take care of ourselves without selfishly taking care of ourselves. If we don't take care of ourselves, we cannot survive. We need to do that. We should have wise selfishness rather than foolish selfishness. Foolish selfishness means you think only of yourself. In fact, taking care of others, helping others, ultimately is the way to discover your own joy and to have a happy life. So that is what I call wise selfishness.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

### TRY THIS:

Can you think of a time when you were “wise selfish?” When you took the time to help another, but you benefited from the good feelings too?

Share your stories of “wise selfishness” with your group.

24

“Joy subsumes happiness. Think of a mother who is giving birth. Almost all of us want to escape pain. And mothers know that they are going to have pain, the great pain of giving birth. But they accept it. And even after the most painful labor, once the baby is out, you can't measure the mother's joy. It is one of those incredible things that joy can come so quickly from suffering.”

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

### TRY THIS:

- Have you ever had a personal experience where pain (emotional or physical) was juxtaposed with joy?
- Find a partner or a small group and talk about experiences that might be a combination of pain and joy.
- Do you see similarities in your stories?





MISSION: JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

25

**“In The Book of Joy His Holiness reminds us that a benefit of having a healthy body is it’s good at fighting off disease. Similarly, if your mental health is sound and strong you are able to recover quickly from distress. But, “If your mental health is not good, then small disturbances, small problems will cause you much pain and suffering.”**

**TRY THIS:**

Well-being is a skill that can be developed with practice, and one of the simplest ways to start is to focus on gratitude.

Make a list of eight things you feel grateful for today. People, events, feelings — anything! As you write, let yourself really feel the good feelings you associate with each thing.

Now turn to your group and share some of the things you’re most grateful for—and feel your well-being rise!

P.S. If you make a habit of doing this once a week, you’ll feel even better. It’s all in the science!



MISSION: JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

26

**“We really become something, something quite special... At our first meeting I noticed this person, I always look at people, firstly, human level, so I don’t consider the importance of their rank or position. Only on the human level, this person is very nice, humble, I think very, very, joyful... I think, at the time of my death, I will remember you.”**

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

**TRY THIS:**


**DO YOU KNOW HOW IMPORTANT FRIENDSHIP IS? SCIENCE TELLS US THAT STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTIONS:**

- Strengthen your immune system
- Help you recover from disease faster
- Lead to a 50% increased chance of a longer life



Think of one strong connection in your life — friend, family, co-worker...

In pairs or small groups, talk about the importance of that connection. What about it nourishes you and brings you joy?



MISSION: JOY

www.MissionJoy.org

27

**“It’s no surprise that when the essence of their wisdom is distilled, the key to joy is to get in touch with your own natural compassion and find a way to live from there.”**

Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, author, and translator for His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

**TRY THIS:**

Hold the word “compassion” in your mind. As you focus on compassion, allow yourself to think of other words that feel connected to it.

Now write “compassion” in the middle of a sheet of paper. Write the connected words all around it, creating Create a word web.

Share your word web in pairs or small groups. Talk about the connections you see. How can you live with more compassion?

# JOY CARDS FOR YOUR INDIVIDUAL USE

**“Joy is our essential nature, something everyone can realize. We could say that our desire for happiness is, in a way, an attempt to rediscover our original state of mind.”**

Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, translator for His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

## TRY THIS:

**IN YOUR JOY JOURNAL** (SEEMS LIKE A GREAT IDEA TO HAVE!) **WRITE ABOUT A CHILDHOOD MEMORY THAT MAKES YOU SMILE. IT MIGHT BE:**

- ✦ a favorite holiday
- ✦ your favorite game
- ✦ someone who made you feel loved



You might also share your memory with a friend or family member. Do you think joy is something we're born with?

**“One study found that people who did acts of kindness for others became happier and actually stayed happier for about two to four weeks after the study was over. They also showed changes in their body that were associated with a stronger immune response — a kind of anti-inflammatory response.”**

Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky, UC Riverside, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

## TRY THIS:

**CLOSE YOUR EYES. TAKE A MOMENT TO RECALL A RECENT ACT OF KINDNESS THAT YOU PERFORMED FOR ANOTHER PERSON, OR THAT SOMEONE PERFORMED FOR YOU.**

- ✦ Try to remember the details. Where were you? How did it happen?
- ✦ Do you remember how it made you feel?



Does that memory affect the way you're feeling right now? Why do you think acts of kindness might cause physiological changes?

**“What the Dalai Lama and I are offering is a way of handling your worries: thinking about others. You can think about others who are in a similar situation or perhaps even worse a situation, but who have survived, even thrived. It does help quite a lot to see yourself as part of a greater whole.”**

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

## TRY THIS:

Take a moment to think or write about a situation that's been worrying you.

Now think of someone who has experienced a similar hardship. A friend, family member, or even someone you've just heard about.

Think about the ways they survived — even thrived — after their experience.

Allow yourself to feel empathy for them. And then feel empathy for YOURSELF, and know that you are not alone!

“There’s a concept that we have in South Africa, the concept of ubuntu. It says, a person is a person through other persons. I mean I could not speak as I am speaking without having learned it from other human beings. I could not think as a human being except through learning it from other human beings.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

#### REFLECT ON ALL THE PEOPLE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR LIFE...

- parents who gave you life
- teachers who taught you
- the people who grew your food and made your clothes
- the people who invented things that make your life better
- your ancestors, who worked to give you what you have today

“We really become something, something quite special... I think, at the time of my death, I will remember you.”

Archbishop Tutu: “Thank you”, *Mission: JOY*

#### STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTION:

- Leads to a 50% increased chance of longevity
- Strengthens your immune system
- Helps you recover from disease faster
- May even lengthen your life

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Friendship is SO important. Today – right now – send a friend a text message just to say hello.

#### Or better yet...

Connect with a family member or friend on the phone or in person. Tell them you’re grateful for their friendship.

Opening your heart to another will bring joy to BOTH of you. Even when you’re feeling down, you’ll feel so much better if you connect with a friend!

“It’s no surprise that when the essence of their wisdom is distilled, the key to joy is to get in touch with your own natural compassion and find a way to live from there.”

-Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, author, and translator for His Holiness, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Compassion is the impulse to help others. The action that follows that desire is generosity.

Think of generosity as giving time, treasure, or talent.

Now, think about a place or person that you can give time, treasure, or talent to.

Make it happen! Even if it’s a small thing. Because...

When we care for others, we experience the most joy!

**"Cognitive reframing is really a powerful technique to change your mindset, and in the Buddhist language we call it outlook. This is a fundamental insight... and that's why so much emphasis is placed in Buddhist psychology on changing the way you see the world. Instead of resentment and bitterness, reframing can help us, liberate us from that resentment and free us."**

Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist Scholar, Translator for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Write a few sentences about a recent time when you felt frustrated or upset.

Now - list three potential "bright sides" of the situation. Missed the bus? You also missed the annoying guy who sits next to you. You got a little exercise. You saw some great things you would have missed if you were riding.

It might be challenging, but give it some thought. Changing your perspective changes everything!

**"Wellbeing is a skill. Wellbeing can actually be learned, it can be nurtured, and it's a skill that can enable us to live a happier life. We know that if you wanna learn to play the violin, you've gotta practice. If you wanna learn a complex sport, you've gotta practice. If you want to learn wellbeing, you have to practice."**

Dr. Richard Davidson, Neuroscientist and Psychologist, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Journal about what "wellbeing" means in your life. What does it look like for you?

How do you practice wellbeing in your life? Make a list the things you regularly do to make yourself feel good.

**Or...**

Make a list of the ways you would LIKE to practice more wellbeing in your life!

Resolve to do at least one of those things today!

**"Mental health is actually not simply the absence of mental disease. It is something more."**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

Science is proving what many spiritual traditions have known for generations—our need for connection, happiness, and joy is a lifeline to our physical and mental wellbeing.

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Do something right now that you know is good for your mental wellbeing. It can be anything - taking several deep breaths, closing your eyes, going outside, thinking of someone you love, remembering a beautiful place you visited - ANYTHING.

Keep this mental image in mind for as long as you can. Carry it with you through your day.

"The two leaders had told us over the course of the week that there is no joy without sorrow, that in fact it is the pain, the suffering that allows us to experience and appreciate the joy. Indeed, the more we turn to suffering, our own and others, the more we can turn towards joy."

Douglas Abrams,, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

The Archbishop and His Holiness believe their own suffering has offered them opportunities for growth and transformation.

In your journal, or as a quiet meditation, remember a time when you or someone you know experienced suffering or difficulty that led to personal growth.

What are the good things that came from that transformation?

Acknowledge the growth that came from that difficulty.

"At age 24, I lost my own country. Because I became refugee, a new opportunity comes. If I still remained in Potala, in Lhasa, some people, you see, describe [this as a] golden cage. Dalai Lama, holy Dalai Lama would have been like that. So I personally, prefer the refugee life. It's more useful. More opportunity to learn, more experience."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

His Holiness's acceptance of the refugee life as an opportunity to learn is a perfect example of reframing and positive outlook.

Think of something in your life at the moment that feels challenging, and take the opportunity to shift your perspective – even if it's only for a moment.

Is there a potential opportunity that might come from that challenge?

"Taking care of what matters most is the way our mind functions, it is the ultimate thing that determines the quality of our experiences."

Mattieu Richard, *The Book of Joy*

MISSION:  
JOY

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

**We often get so busy that we neglect the things that are important.**

*What are the most important things in your life?*

**Make a list of your top 5 priorities. Then answer these questions:**

- Do you regularly devote time to each of your priorities?
- What are the things that most often get overlooked?
- How can you give more attention to the most important things in your life?

Think of joy as a more meaningful type of happiness. 'Hedonistic happiness' is fleeting, and only includes emotions we tend to think of as positive. 'Eudaimonic happiness' includes meaning, growth, and acceptance even of emotions we may call negative.



MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

BEFORE YOU GO TO SLEEP TONIGHT, TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON THE DAY.

- Notice whether you fulfilled your intentions.
- Think about your long term happiness - your Eudaimonic happiness - and how you have grown today.
- Express gratitude for what the day has given you.
- Look forward to the next day as a new journey!

"Meditation is a familiarization with a new way of being, a new way of perceiving things which is more in [accord] with reality, with interdependence, with the stream and continuous transformation which our being and our consciousness is."



MISSION:  
**JOY**

Matthieu Ricard, Buddhist Monk, Photographer, Author, Ph.D in Cell Genetics

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS: THIS IS A VERY DIFFERENT KIND OF MEDITATION:

- Take a walk! You can make even an ordinary walk into a meditative, awe-inspiring moment.
- Breathe deeply. Feel your feet on the ground.
- Listen to the sounds around you.
- Try to look at things as if you are seeing them for the very first time.
- What inspires you? Gazing toward the horizon? Noticing patterns of light and shadow? These are opportunities to experience awe.

"If your health is strong, when viruses come they will not make you sick. If your overall health is weak, even small viruses will be very dangerous for you. Similarly, if your mental health is sound, then the disturbances come, you will have some distress but recover quicker. If your mental health is not good, then small disturbances, small problems will cause you much pain and suffering."



MISSION:  
**JOY**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*


[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

### TRY THIS:

Wellbeing is a skill that can be developed with practice, and one of the simplest ways to start is to focus on gratitude.

Make a list of 8 things that you feel grateful for today. People, events, feelings - anything! As you write, let yourself really feel the good feelings you associate with each thing on your list.

I'll bet you finish with a big smile on your face! You'll feel even better if you do this once a week!



**MISSION: JOY**  
www.MissionJoy.org

**“His Holiness and my dad are both people who have very strong disciplines of prayer and quiet time. When I went to seminary... I had the experience of learning my dad’s language in a way.... The most important lesson that I have taken is taking time for prayer and taking time for quiet. For him, that’s the first priority, and everything else flows from that.”**

*Mpho Tutu, Desmond Tutu’s daughter, Mission: JOY*


**TRY THIS:**

Find a place to be quiet and focus your attention inwards.

Close your eyes; quiet your mind. Take several deep breaths. What thoughts and feelings come to you?

From this place of quiet, open your eyes or bring your focus back to your physical space.

Consider adding quiet time to your daily routine. Celebrate the connection with your inner being!



**MISSION: JOY**  
www.MissionJoy.org

**“We have to take care of ourselves without selfishly taking care of ourselves. If we don’t take care of ourselves we cannot survive. We need to do that. We should have wise selfishness rather than foolish selfishness. Foolish selfishness means you think only of yourself. In fact, taking care of others, helping others, ultimately is the way to discover your own joy and to have a happy life. So that is what I call wise selfishness.”**


*His Holiness, Mission: JOY*

**TRY THIS:**

If it makes you feel good to help others, you already know about being “wise-selfish.”

Think of a specific incident when you took the time to help another, but you benefited from the good feelings too.

Tell the story in your journal. Remember the details. Especially remember how it made you feel. Remembering it gives you a taste of that good feeling all over again!



**MISSION: JOY**  
www.MissionJoy.org

**“Joy subsumes happiness. Joy is a far greater thing. Think of a mother who is giving birth. Almost all of us want to escape pain. And others know that they are going to have pain, the great pain of giving birth. But they accept it. And even after the most painful labor, once the baby is out, you can’t measure the mother’s joy. It is one of those incredible things that joy can come so quickly from suffering.”**

*Archbishop Tutu, The Book of Joy*

**TRY THIS:**

Can you think of a time in your own life when emotional or physical pain was combined with joy? Maybe something that required great effort, but resulted in great joy?

Journal about your experience, or about an experience you saw someone else go through.

Be sure to celebrate the joy that comes at the end of the story!

"I was actually with my dad when he and the Dalai Lama first met at a museum in, of all places, Newark, New Jersey. Honestly, the energy between them is eight-year-old boy. I look at them and I think, I am so glad that I was not your third-grade teacher because they're so playful. So much fun and teasing."

Mpho Tutu, Desmond Tutu's daughter, Priest, Author *Mission: JOY*

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

#### YOUR MISSION...IS TO HAVE A LITTLE FUN!

Turn on a funny movie, listen to a favorite comedian, or get together with an old friend and share some laughs.

Laughter is important - especially in times of stress and challenge. Laughter will bring you joy! We know that from our own experiences, and it's also proven by science.

"Joy is the reward really of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another."

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission Joy*

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

#### IN THE *BOOK OF JOY*, HIS HOLINESS SHARED, "IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY CHANGE OUR WORLD IS THROUGH TEACHING COMPASSION."

- Open your journal and write about what "compassion" means to you.
- What other words do you think of when you think of compassion?
- How would you teach someone compassion? What would you say to someone who didn't understand what compassion is? group.

"Neuroplasticity describes the fact that the brain changes in response to experience and in response to training, wittingly or unwittingly. Our brains are constantly being shaped and we can actually harness the power of neuroplasticity. It turns out that when we cultivate wholesome qualities of our mind, our brains change accordingly."

Dr. Richard Davidson, Neuroscientist and Psychologist

MISSION:  
**JOY**

[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Your brain is changing, whether you know it or not!  
How would you choose to change your brain?

One of the easiest ways to start a new thought pattern is to prompt yourself with something you do every day.

#### For example:

- When your feet touch the ground each morning, set an intention for the day.
- When you brush your teeth, think of 3 things you're grateful for.
- Find a joy ritual that works for you!



**“Forgiveness does not mean forgetting. You should keep the memory about those sort of negative things. But because of that, there is possibility to develop anger or hatred. That control, that’s the meaning of forgiveness. So it is totally wrong that the practice of tolerance and practice of forgiveness are signs of weakness. Hundred percent wrong. A thousand percent wrong.”**

His Holiness *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Is there someone or something in your life that needs forgiveness?

In your journal, or with a friend, explore this simple process of forgiveness written about by Archbishop Tutu and Mpho Tutu:

- Think about a person or an event you want to forgive.
- Tell your story.
- Name the hurt.
- Grant forgiveness.
- Then renew - or release - the relationship.

**“What really was important about kindness was that you’re connecting with another person by doing acts of kindness.”**

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Connection is the essential key to a joyful life.

Reach out to connect with someone important in your life. It can be as simple as a quick text or a phone call. Maybe you can visit together in person.

If it’s not possible to actually reconnect with that person, find a photograph or memento that reminds you of the deep connection you once shared.

**“The ultimate source of a meaningful life is within our own self. Usually everybody seeks happiness, joyfulness from the outside, from money, from power, from a big car, from a big house. The ultimate source of a happy life, even physical health, is inside not outside.”**

His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

MISSION: JOY [www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

What are you paying attention to?

Studies have shown that our behavior is affected by our attention.

**Take some time to think about where your attention is most often drawn and ask yourself:**

- Is my attention aligned with my values?
- Is my time being spent the way I want it to be spent?
- If not, how can I make changes?

"The equivalent of neuroplasticity in genomics is epigenetics, or how genes are regulated and expressed. Think of genes as something with volume control that can be turned on or off. Studies have shown that with eight hours of meditation from skilled practitioners there is evidence of a measurable difference in gene expression from purely mental practice. In other words, our brains and genes are dynamic and have a great deal of plasticity."

Dr. Richard Davidson, TED talk



[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

**YOU HAVE AN AMAZING BRAIN THAT IS CONSTANTLY GROWING AND CHANGING! HERE'S A CHALLENGE:**

- Learn something new. Something big or something small. Learn to play Hearts. Learn to speak another language.
- And if you want to double-down on the joy – teach your new skill to someone else. That way you'll be growing your brain, making a connection, and helping another. \_\_\_\_ A joy trifecta!

"Suffering [is] the opportunity testing you. There is someone who is a Tibetan who spent many years in the Chinese gulag. [The] Gulag is difficult. Hard labor, torture. He told me during those 18 years, it was a difficult period. He faced some dangers. I thought there was danger to his life. I ask, what kind of danger? He told me, the danger of losing compassion towards those Chinese perpetrators."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*



[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

Think of someone who has been particularly challenging in your life. What are some of the problems you faced with this person?

Now think about the difficulties this person might also have experienced. Can you put yourself in their place for a moment?

As you keep this person in your thoughts, say to yourself: "May you be happy, and free from suffering."

How do you feel after thinking of this person with compassion?

"Every day we have the opportunity to create, and re-create our lives. This is the power we yield. No dark fate determines our future."

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*



[www.MissionJoy.org](http://www.MissionJoy.org)

#### TRY THIS:

**JOURNAL OR THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS:**

- At this moment, how happy or unhappy are you?
- If you could recreate the moment you are in right now, what would you change?
- What are the obstacles that keep you from making a change?
- Can you take one small step towards creating a new experience for yourself?