

# Emotional



# Wellbeing

Emotions are central to what it means to live life, to be human and to experience reality.

God himself is an emotional being. Jesus, the son of God, modelled this as someone who was and is intensely loving, sometimes joyful, sometimes righteously angry, and not afraid to cry.

Emotions help us to make sense of the world around us so why does our culture often devalue emotions.

Positive emotions help us to feel good, broaden our outlook, build new skills, fuel resilience, and improve our physical health.

Negative emotions tend to be associated with strong reactions which make us feel out of control, so we often try and avoid them.

Psychologists have long recognised that we have both 'positive' and 'negative' emotions and there is a place for both. Even the happiest people cry when they lose someone or something they cherish.

We need to be able to express all our emotions fully and healthily. For our human flourishing and wellbeing, we need a significantly higher ratio of positive to negative emotions. God of course knows all of this because he designed us this way and He wants to help us and heal us emotionally.

This month a list of 5 ways to increase positive emotions is included that are medically recommended, biblically based and practically accessible.



# BELOVED

God really, really loves you!

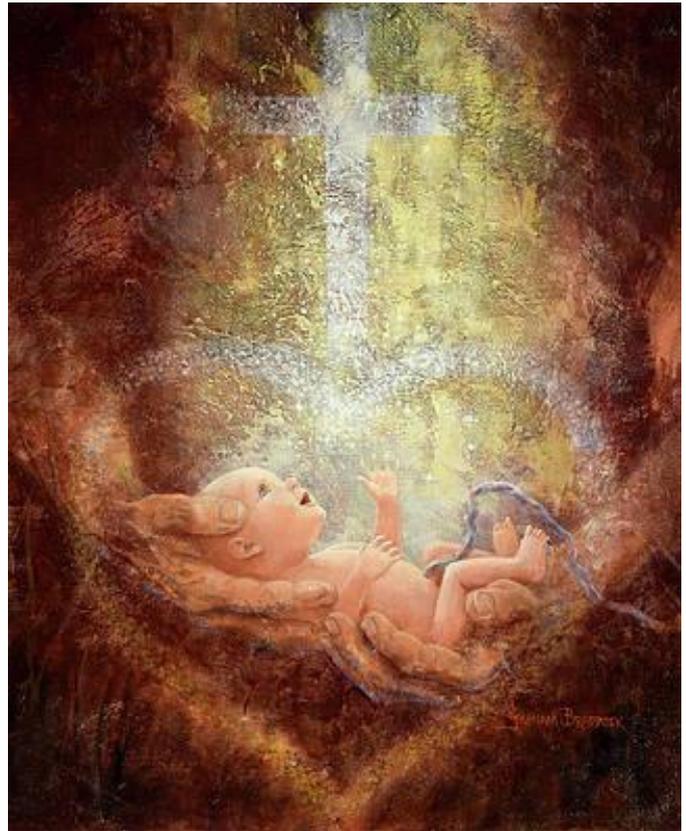
How do we know this?

## THE BIBLE

There are amazing promises in the Bible concerning God's love for us.

**1 John 3:1** See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we be called children of God! And that is what we are!!

**Romans 8: 38-39** None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing – nothing living or dead, angelic, or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable – absolutely nothing can get between us, and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.



## THE HOLY SPIRIT

When we receive Christ, God's love is poured out into our hearts through the holy spirit (Romans 5:5). This completely transforms us.

**Romans 8: 15-17** This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave tending life. Its adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike. 'What's next Papa?'

God's spirit touches our spirit and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children and we are going to get an unbelievable inheritance

## OTHER PEOPLE

We are designed for close relationship and for spiritual community – a place where we can be truly known and loved. Growing in love and grasping the love of Christ is best experienced 'together' with others. Adopting a loving attitude has been shown to create good health – as we care for others our neural networks form better connections. The Bible tell us we are to live a life of love.

**Ephesians 3: 17-18** Being rooted and established in love, may Christians have power, together with all the Lord's holy people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

is patient  
is kind  
it does not envy  
it does not boast  
it is not proud  
it is not rude  
it is not self-seeking  
it is not easily angered  
it keeps no record of wrongs  
it does not delight in evil  
it rejoices with the truth  
it always **Protects**  
it always **Trusts**  
it always **Hopes**  
it always **Perseveres**  
**Never Fails**  
1 Corinthians 13:4, 7-8

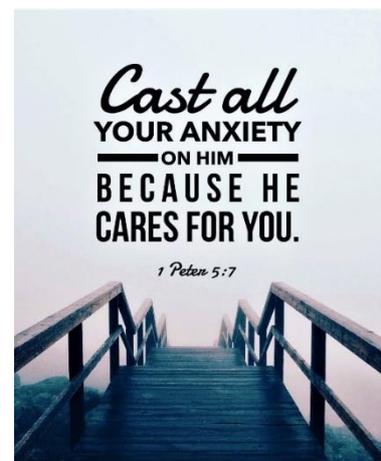
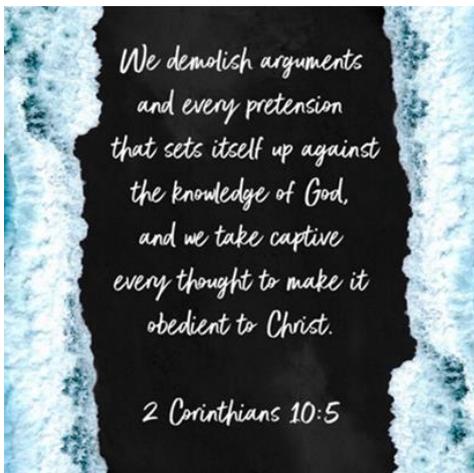
# HOPE

In 'Positivity' Barbara Frederickson (Professor of Psychology at the University of North Carolina) says:

“Deep within the core of hope is the belief that things can change. No matter how awful or uncertain they are at the moment things can turn out better. Possibilities exist. Hope sustains you. It keeps you from collapsing into despair. It motivates you to tap into your own capabilities and inventiveness to turn things around. It inspires you to plan for a better future.”

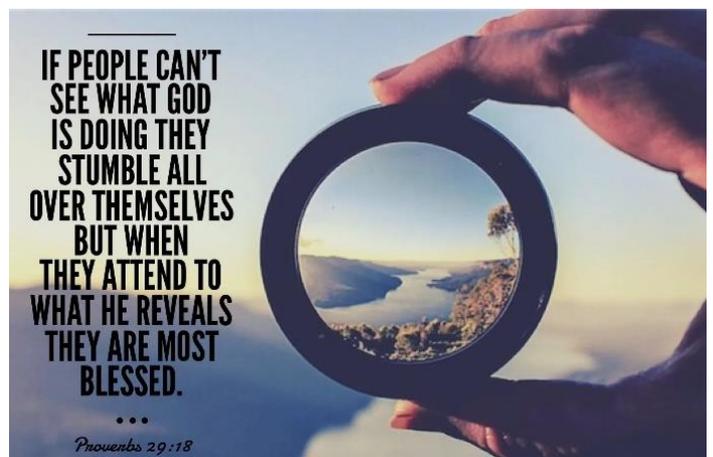
The NHS website on dealing with stress highlights the importance of challenging your thoughts and accepting what you have control over and what you cannot change.

Disappointment can overwhelm us, and we need space to mourn any sense of loss before moving on.



The website also advises that we set ourselves goals and challenges.

The Bible talks about the importance of vision and has an underlying theme of the need for us to live with true purpose.



# GRATITUDE

Modern psychology studies show that an attitude of gratitude helps our mental and physical health and increases our happiness by as much as 25%.

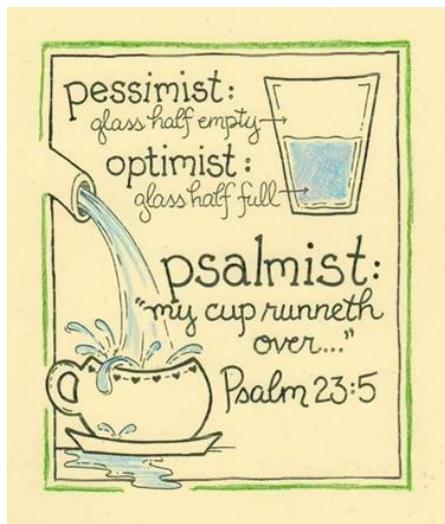
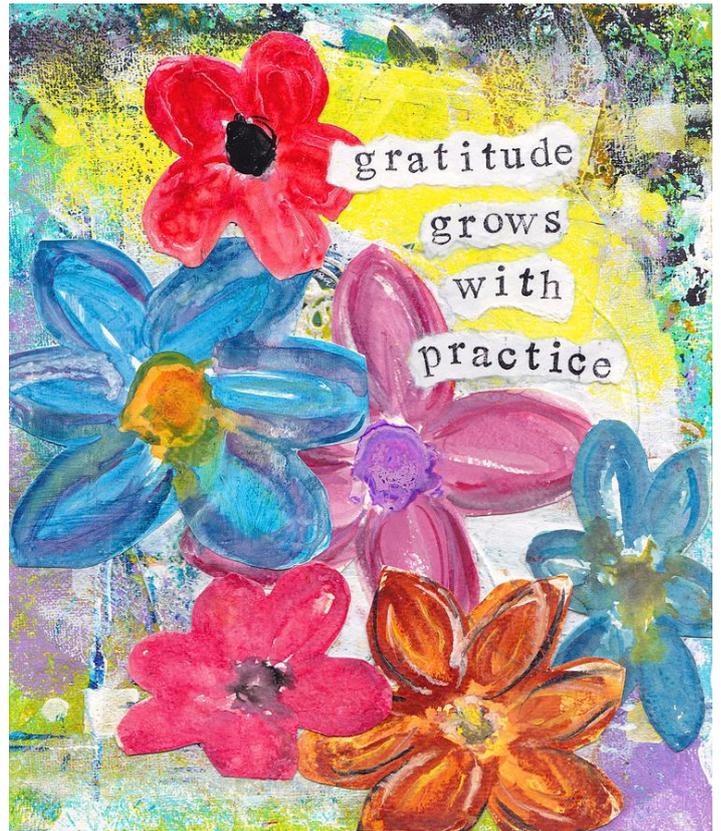
It is not enough however to feel grateful; we need to learn to express our gratitude.

Create a gratitude journal.

Write a gratitude letter to a friend.

Why not do a gratitude visit.

Find out about the prayer of Examen (the Prayer of Awareness)

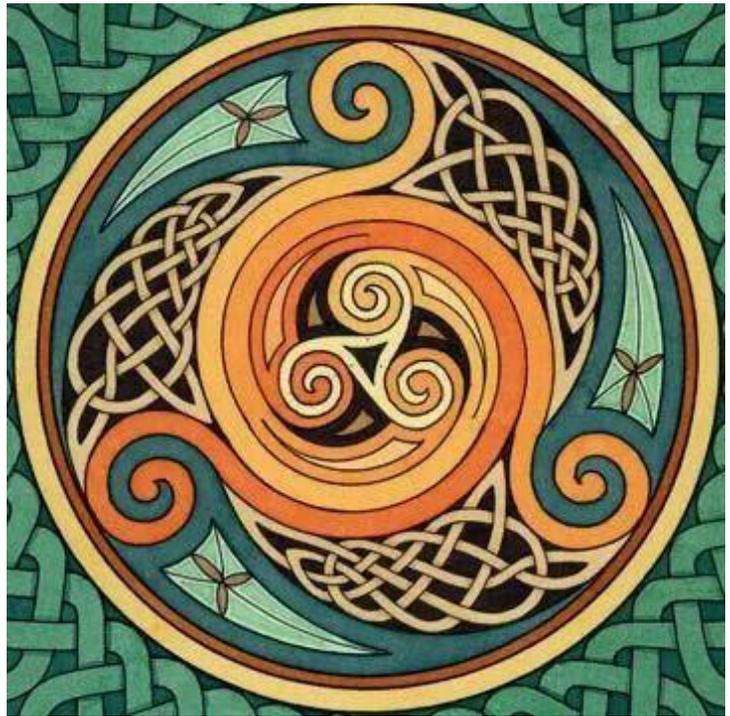


The Bible talks about the fruit of God's presence in our lives. How could you help others experience more positive emotions.?



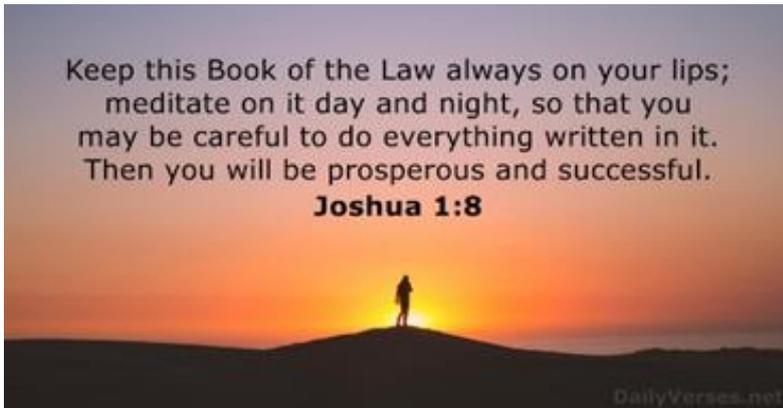
# BEING PRESENT

Being mindful is a practice frequently recommended for increased mental wellbeing. The Christian approach to being mindful includes the call to be present to ourselves but is founded on something much deeper and ultimately more liberating, which is being present to the God who is always present to us. Christian meditation focuses on the Word of God.



Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips;  
meditate on it day and night, so that you  
may be careful to do everything written in it.  
Then you will be prosperous and successful.

**Joshua 1:8**



Mindfulness and Meditation together produce

## SHALOM

a wonderful Hebrew word meaning peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare, and tranquility.

You will keep in perfect  
*peace*

all who trust in you,  
all whose thoughts are  
fixed on you!



ISAIAH 26:3

# REST

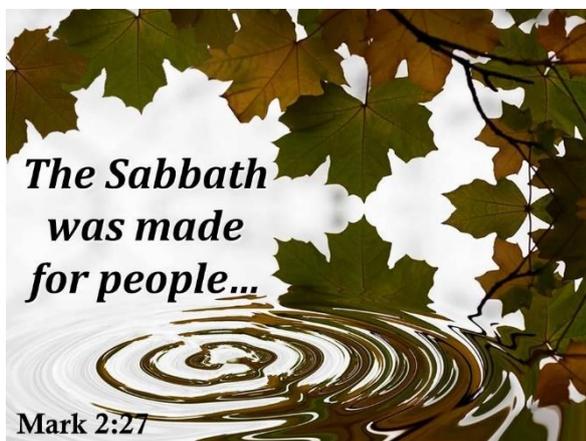
What do you do to recharge?

Two Christian leaders were chatting – John Ortberg, feeling overwhelmed by pressure and busyness, sought the following advice from the philosopher and Christian teacher Dallas Willard: “What do I need to do to become the me I want to be?” Dallas’ reply was simply: “You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life.”



Rest is about learning, along with the psalmist, to “*be still and know that I am God*” or in another translation for those who cannot be still “*cease striving and know that I am God*” *Psalm 46:10*

A day of rest is just as important now as it has been since the creation of the world. If the Creator of the Universe took a day off how much more do we need to take a day of rest to be refreshed.



Our world was created by God to provide us with everything for enjoyment.

The NHS website on stress suggests we list 10 things we love to do and then do 3 of them in the next week.

