

## Happiness Sharing Exercise

Based on research findings, people who share more often their pleasant experiences with others have more positive emotions and better mental well-being. In addition, how others respond to this sharing also affects their positive emotions, well-being and relationship quality<sup>1</sup>. It is summarized in the literature that there are two dimensions of communication:



### 1) Constructive – Destructive

Constructive communication means responding by showing support, understanding, affirmation and encouragement; while destructive communication means responding in a way which makes the one who shares feel rejected, negated, degraded or with their enthusiasm dampened.

### 2) Active – Passive

Active and passive responding refers to the involvement and engagement of the listeners during the interaction. It also takes into account the listeners' manner and facial expressions. Active responding also includes earnest follow up questions and expressing resonance; while passive responding involves the listener reacting as if they are unconcerned, unmoved and indifferent.

Below are some examples:

	 Constructive	 Destructive
Active	<p>"Great! Your hard work deserves this reward! You must be too excited to sleep!"</p> <p>"I always knew you would succeed. I knew it!"</p>	<p>"Promotion means more work is coming. You will have less time with me later on."</p> <p>"The management is ruthless. Don't be excited too soon. Don't relax."</p>
Passive	<p>"Oh, great..."</p> <p>"Keep up the effort!"</p>	<p>"Ah, perhaps you sort your stuff out first." (redirect attention/ change topics)</p>

As the old Chinese saying goes, "joy shared with others are more enjoyable". When others share with you their positive experiences, happiness will be amplified and the interaction will be more enjoyable to both if you are more attentive, affirmative and earnest in responding. Let yourself and your treasured ones to enjoy some precious moments in which positive and pleasant experiences are shared. In addition, showing gratitude, appreciation and care concern to others, or even act of services treating others nicely in return, improve one's well-being as well as the quality of the relationship. From now on, cultivate your relationships with those you appreciate or love. Let positive interaction become your daily "330 micro break" habit.

#### Reference:

<sup>1</sup> Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2004). What do you do when things go right? The intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits of sharing positive events. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 87(2), 228.