

# FEELING IN CONTROL

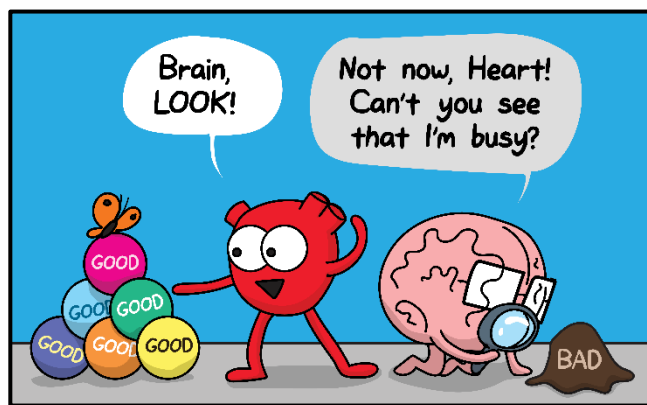
## our negativity bias



Do you ever find yourself dwelling on the negative? You've had a great day and received plenty of compliments on your new haircut, but you keep thinking about the less-than-flattering comment your mom made. Your presentation went extremely well, but there was that little mistake at the beginning. You watched an interesting documentary, but can't stop thinking about the depressing news story you heard this morning. An odd fact about people is that, although we prefer positive experiences and the associated positive emotions, we have a natural tendency to gravitate towards the negative. Why is this the case?

### OUR NEGATIVITY BIAS

Research has demonstrated that we have a cognitive bias towards the negative. This causes our emotional response to negative events to feel amplified compared to similar positive ones. Our natural bias toward the negative can also lead us to pay much more attention to the bad things that happen, making them seem more important than they really are. It can impact how we feel, think, and act, and can have some less-than-desirable effects on our emotional well-being.



### THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BEAT THE BIAS

In addition to affecting how we feel, the negativity bias can significantly impact how we make decisions, motivate ourselves, and interact with others. It's, therefore, helpful to look for ways to manage our brain's natural pull towards the negative.

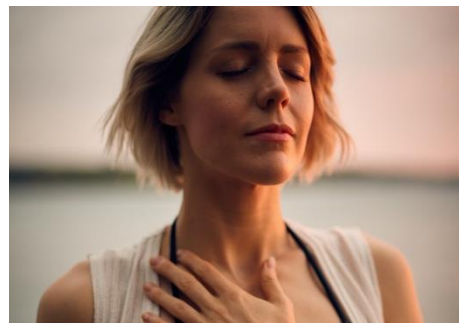
#### Challenge Negative Self-talk

Pay attention to the thoughts that run through your mind – both helpful and not. Challenge negative self-talk and reframe negative events in a more positive way. Instead of fixating on mistakes or what you “should have done,” consider what you learned and how you can apply that in the future.



#### Practice Mindfulness

Practicing mindfulness is a good way to become more in tune with your emotions. Breathing, reflection, and guided meditation can allow you to observe your feelings and thoughts more objectively. Studies show that mindfulness helps to increase positive judgments and levels of optimism



#### Establish New Patterns

Use positive activity to help pull yourself out of a negative mindset when you find yourself ruminating on past events that can't be changed. Go for a walk, read a book, journal, or call a friend. Redirect your attention and focus on something that brings you joy to remind yourself of the positive.



Sources: <https://theawkwardyeti.com/comic/focus-on-the-good/> | <https://positivepsychology.com/3-steps-negativity-bias/> | Images by Freepik & Unsplash