

The Brain Health Workshop Week 6 Transcript

Hey, my friends. It's Dr. Titus Chiu, and welcome to week number six of the Brain Health Workshop. I am thrilled for this week's session because I'm going to be teaching you about one of the most powerful tools in your journey to heal your brain—and it isn't an app. It's not the latest, newest breakthrough technology, and it's not even a brain-boosting supplement. It's your mind. If there's one thing that I've seen after working with thousands of patients over the years, the most successful patients that I work with had one thing in common, one common denominator. That was a healing mindset. I can't tell you how many patients I've worked with over the years who had dialed in their diets, as well as the personalized supplement routine, and even were training their brain and had worked on building these critical lifestyle habits I taught you in last week's session, and yet they were still struggling. And when we did a deep exploration of their health and their health history, I realized that one of the biggest missing ingredients for them, at least, was a healing mindset. Their negative thoughts and negative emotions were sabotaging their most valiant efforts at getting better. And they would feel so frustrated and discouraged, and many times be on the verge of literally giving up.

It was so sad and so tragic to see because I completely understood what they were going through because I struggled with negativity and a negative mindset for many, many years as well. I had already dialed in my supplements. I dialed in the best diet for me. I was training my brain. I was doing everything right, according to the book. All the mechanics of it, I was optimizing my neurochemistry. I was strengthening my neural networks. And yet, I still felt terrible because time and time again, I would end up back in the gutter.

And it wasn't until I reached a serious breaking point in my life and I hit rock bottom that it forced me to really do some deep soul searching and confront the deeper, darker aspects of my psyche. And it wasn't until I got a handle on and confronted the deeper parts of my negative mindset, my negative thought processes, that my health began to turn around, and deep and long-lasting healing began to take hold.

Don't get me wrong—I don't see the world through rose-colored lenses. And I still have bad days where I'm struggling with my mindset. But after cultivating the inner gardens of my mind after much process, much intentional processes—many of which I'll be sharing with you in this week's session—I was able to turn it around and shift my negative mindset to one of a healing mindset. I was able to do it. I helped thousands of patients begin to shift their mindsets, and I know the same is possible for you.

So, in this week's session, week number six of the Brain Health Workshop, I'm going to be teaching you how to unlock the power of your mind to heal your brain. Specifically, I'm going to teach you about your built-in negativity bias, what it is, and more importantly, how to overcome it with the five steps to silence your inner critic. And finally, we're going to talk about one of my most favorite things in the world, the brain healing power of gratitude. By the end of this week's session, you are going to be empowered with tools to begin shifting your mindset to one of negativity towards one of healing.

And as you know, I'm a brain health specialist, but I'm not your brain health specialist. Be sure to check with your doctor first before starting any new program. That being said, let's dive right into this session's key concepts.

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Isn't it a miracle, through our own thoughts and intentions and through the miracle of experience-dependent neuroplasticity, we could tap into the power of our minds to design the life of our dreams and achieve our wildest health goals? Isn't that amazing? Yes, it's true. With your thoughts, you can literally remodel your brain, and you can use your mind to heal your brain at its source through the miracle of experience-dependent neuroplasticity.

So, the question is, why are we still struggling? Why aren't all of us living the life of our dreams, and why do we still have health problems? One of the most common reasons for that is because of our built-in negativity bias.

Negativity bias refers to our tendency to perceive things in a negative light and to dwell on them as well. Negativity bias comes in many different flavors and colors. Things such as repetitive negative thinking, or feeling highly critical, or being highly critical of others or our own selves, or otherwise, the most infamous known 'inner critic.' This bias towards the negative leads you to pay more attention to bad things when they happen, as opposed to seeing the good in a situation.

Some aspects of a negativity bias will create these situations for us. We tend to remember traumatic experiences versus positive ones. We also recall slights and insults and criticism versus praise. And because of our built-in negativity bias, we also react more strongly to negative events, and we tend to dwell on them as well as criticism. Because of this built-in negativity bias, overall, negative events have a greater impact on our brains and neural networks than positive events do.

For example, we feel the sting of a criticism much more than being praised for doing something correctly. Or we perseverate on that look that we got from that person while we were parking our car in the grocery store parking lot. We get stuck in states of hopelessness and disappointment when our health doesn't improve in the way that we want it to. Those are all aspects and expressions of an imbalanced negativity bias.

And the thing is, though, negativity bias was really involved in our safety and survival. It allowed our ancestors to survive and kept them safe thousands of years ago. Because of their built-in negativity bias, they were able to pay attention to bad and potentially dangerous things and help them survive. And through that, they passed on those genes to us, and that's why we're around here today because of the built-in negativity bias. So, our negativity bias was very important for our ancestors as well as us for our safety and survival.

The problem is with an imbalance in negativity bias, we tend to dwell on dark and pessimistic thoughts. And an imbalanced negativity bias can also harm our relationship with others because we require trust and connection to be able to nurture our important relationships. In addition, it's really difficult to maintain optimism and resilience in difficult times with an imbalance in negativity bias, and finally, could really make us play small in this life—in our lives.

In addition to that, not only can negativity bias and imbalance in it lead to all these difficult and negative experiences in our everyday life, research has even shown that an imbalance in negativity bias can also increase our risk for serious neurological conditions such as Alzheimer's and dementia. In a 2020 study,

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researchers discovered that one form of an imbalanced negativity bias, also known as 'repetitive negative thinking,' was associated with an increased risk for Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Specifically, they found that repetitive negative thinking was associated with declining cognitive domains affected early in Alzheimer's disease, as well as with neuroimaging Alzheimer's disease biomarkers. Meaning, that people who had repetitive negative thinking, it increased their risk factor for not only developing Alzheimer's disease but also for specific objective biomarkers that we find in early stages of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

So, not only can repetitive negative thinking and imbalanced negativity bias create and impact our experiences now, but they can also lead to an increased risk for serious neurological disease in the future as well.

I actually work with a patient; her name is Sarah, and she was struggling with brain fog and brain fatigue. And through this whole process that I taught her, many of the things that I had taught you in our Brain Health Workshop, she applied to her life. She changed her diet. She took supplements. She even dialed in her lifestyle practices. But the thing was, she was so focused on what was not right in her health. So, every time we checked in, and I'd see how she's doing, and I'd ask her, "So, how's your brain fog doing?" And she said, "Well, yeah, my brain fog is better, but ..." And I'd ask her, "So how's your fatigue?" She's like, "Yeah, I've actually noticed more energy, but ..." So, everything, all the improvements that she had made in her health because of all the hard work she put into, she wasn't able to see them. She wasn't able to acknowledge them because she just focused on what was going wrong, not what was right in her situation. That was a sure-fire prescription for feeling bad, no matter how much improvement she actually had in her health. Even specific biological markers—testing, lab testing, functional brain testing—all those were showing improvements. And even she was reporting back to me that her brain fog and fatigue were improving, but she was so focused on what wasn't working that she couldn't experience the benefits of everything that she put into her health goal.

And what's worse is because what we know of the research, that type of repetitive negative thinking would then set herself up for a serious neurological disease into the future. Because your perception creates your reality. Your thoughts have a powerful impact not only on your mindset but research has actually shown that your thoughts actually impact your specific physiology. As you know, through experience-dependent neuroplasticity, through your thoughts and your emotions and physical experiences, you can change the structure of your brain and your experience of yourself in the world around you. But that can go the other way as well. It's a burgeoning field known as 'psychoneuroimmunology,' how our thoughts and our emotions can have a very powerful impact on our brain and our immune health. So, it can become this vicious, vicious cycle where through negative thought processes, it can create inflammation and stress response in our brain, as well as our bodies. And through that, that can impact our symptoms, and then it becomes this vicious, vicious cycle.

Although Sarah was improving in some of her biomarkers, her repetitive negative thinking—her imbalanced negativity bias—was for sure going to put her back into this up and down rollercoaster, similar to my experience. Sabotage my own best efforts. That was the case for her.

A big part of our work was teaching her how to begin shifting her imbalance negativity bias to that of a healing mindset. So, an imbalance in negativity bias, the first step is really an awareness—Is developing

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an awareness that we do have, in fact, an imbalanced negativity bias. So, do some, if not all of these resonate with you? Do you tend to get focused on what can go wrong in a situation versus what can go right? Do you get stuck thinking about the negative aspects of a situation? Do you dwell on criticism more than on praise? Do you focus on other people's flaws more than their positive qualities, or do you focus on your own flaws? If that's the case, then an imbalanced negativity bias can be one of the biggest obstacles to your healing success.

But the great news is, again, although this is part of our natures as human beings, and although it can be a big, massive obstacle when out of balance, there are simple things that you can do to begin shifting your negativity bias to that of a healing mindset.

Thus far, in this week's session, we talked about how your built-in negativity bias, although it's part of our human nature, it can actually be a very big obstacle in your journey to healing success. Next, we're going to share— I'm going to share with you specific things, five steps that you can take to begin silencing that negativity bias and unlocking the power of your mind to heal your brain.

Do you guys hear that? "Hear what, Dr. Chiu?" That voice. "What voice, Dr. Chiu?" That voice in your head. "What? There's no voice in my head." Yes, there is. It was the one that just said, "What? There's no voice in my head." Just like breathing, just like your heartbeat, just like digestion are automatic and constant, so are your thoughts. The problem, as I mentioned a minute ago, is that when your thoughts become constantly disempowering, overtly negative, and inwardly or outwardly critical most or all of the time. One of the most common expressions of an imbalanced negativity bias is what's known as the inner critic—the infamous inner critic. One of the most common of our internal voices that we hear time and time again that sabotage our most valiant attempts at living an enjoyable and happy life. Many patients I've worked with were plagued by their inner critic, as was I. They were so critical of themselves and of others. And just like my patients, I found that my inner critic was a massive obstacle to my healing success.

Now don't get me wrong. It's important to have a healthy dose of skepticism and be discerning in our lives. But what happens when your own thoughts and beliefs become the major obstacle in your own healing? When they're constantly critical of yourself or of others? It's what I call the 'dark side of neuroplasticity.'

Just like we have the ability to shift our neural networks and trigger experience-dependent neuroplasticity through positive thoughts and emotions and specific physical brain training exercises, the same exact opposite process that can heal your brain can also destroy it. The dark side of neuroplasticity. So, the more we allow destructive negative thoughts and critical voices to go unchecked, we strengthen our inner critic, and we grow deeper connections in the neural networks of criticism, despair, and hopelessness. The good news is that there are simple things that you can do to begin shifting and silencing your inner critic.

I'm going to be sharing with you the five steps to silence your inner critic. By using these five simple steps, you'll be able to balance your imbalanced negativity bias and unlock the power of your mind to heal your brain. So, without any further ado, here are the five steps to silence your inner critic.

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Step number one: awareness. You have to become aware that you have an imbalanced negativity bias in the first place. One of the best ways to become aware is just becoming aware of the most common thoughts. As an example, here's a list of the most common thoughts of the inner critic: Have you guys heard this one before? "I'm not good enough?" Or how about this one, "I don't matter." Or the very common one that I used to hear a lot was, "What's wrong with me?" Or, "My needs don't matter." A very common one as well, "I don't deserve to be happy or healthy." "I'll never get better." How many of those thoughts sound familiar to you or some permutation of those?

So again, the first step in silencing your inner critic is becoming aware of them. And in addition to reviewing this list of the most common thoughts, I've actually found becoming aware of our breath and using our breath as an anchor is a fantastic way of developing that awareness. As an example, when I practice mindful breathing exercises, I become very aware of my breath. Similar to what we had done in a previous session, simply becoming aware of the in-out movement of air coming in and out of your nose, that's a fantastic way of training your awareness. When I practice mindful breathing, so many times, my thoughts start intruding upon that peace and tranquility that I'm trying to create. So, the breath becomes a fantastic anchor to then become aware to contrast all the thoughts that continue to pile into our consciousness all the time constantly.

But again, those are natural reflexive responses. Just like our heartbeat, just like our breathing, and just like our digestion. So, by using breath as an anchor, by practicing mindful breathing, it's a fantastic way of becoming aware of the thoughts, number one. And then number two, becoming aware of the content of our thoughts. And if you do this and you practice this consistently over time, you're going to find that there's certain patterns, and again, I've listed some of the most common ones for you. So, that is step number one—the five steps to silence your inner critic is to develop awareness.

So, what are your inner critic's most common thoughts? I want you to take a few moments right now and just reflect on this. And if you want, just jot down in the notes section of your brain health roadmap a few of your most common thoughts of your inner critic. I'll give you a few moments right now. Just brainstorm or think about it, reflect on it. Or, if you want to, even jot right now in your brain health roadmap a few of your inner critic's most common thoughts. I'll give you a few moments to do this exercise.

Okay. Great work. That is the first step, developing awareness. Fantastic work for beginning to reflect on this or even jot this down. Step number two in the five steps to silence your inner critic is challenging your inner critic. Once you become aware of a disempowering thought or thought patterns, the next step is to begin challenging it. Because many of these habitual, lifelong thoughts or beliefs we have about ourselves, or the world, or others, we have them because they've gone unchallenged for so many years. So, let's take this very common inner critic thought, "What's wrong with me?" So as an example, once you've identified that's a common one for you as it was for me, you then want to challenge it. You ask yourself, "Is there something wrong with me?" "Prove it!" Make your inner critic prove it. And through that process, you can discover, *Well, actually, there isn't anything wrong with me.*

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Defend yourself, protect yourself from these intruding negative thoughts that influence the way you see yourself and your ability to heal or your ability to succeed at anything in your life. So, that's the second step in the five steps to silence the inner critic. After developing awareness of those thoughts, you then want to challenge them.

My question to you is, how will you challenge your inner critic? Once you've become aware and identified certain common threads, how are you going to challenge your inner critic? Are there certain things that you can respond to? Is there certain things you can do to shift away from those negative thoughts? Maybe even not just having a conversation, maybe writing things down and journaling. Or, perhaps just shifting your energy, getting up, and going for a walk. Or listening to happy, positive music, something that makes you feel good so you can start breaking that pattern. My question to you is there's no right or wrong, right? It's just what works for you. What are some things that you can think of? How will you challenge your inner critic when it rears its ugly head?

So, take a few moments right now and reflect on this. And if you have your brain health roadmap as well, write down a few notes that come to mind. I'll give you just a few moments to do this exercise. And like I said earlier in previous exercise, don't worry if you can't get a bunch of ideas right now because you can always come back, rewatch this session, and continue filling out your brain health roadmap. I'll give you a few moments right now.

Okay. Great work. That was step number two, challenge your inner critic. Step three now is explore other possibilities. What does that mean? It means once you've identified and become aware of this disempowering thought or thought pattern and then step two, you begin to challenge it, then you want to explore other possibilities. Again, back to that example of, "What's wrong with me?", you begin to explore other possibilities. Well, maybe there's nothing wrong with me. And then typically, there'll be some back and forth with the inner critic of, "Obviously, there's something wrong with you. Why else would you be struggling with your brain health?" You can explore other options. One reason I might be struggling with my brain health is because I haven't identified what the root causes are or the hidden forces. And now that I've learned a bunch, I can actually begin to implement them and begin to heal my brain.

The point is, you're exploring other possibilities for whatever your inner critic is bringing to the table. One thing, as they say, don't believe everything you see. What I believe, one of my mantras in my life is don't believe everything you think, including your own thoughts. So, step number three in the five-step process to silence your inner critic is to explore other possibilities of whatever the disempowering thought is bringing to the table. My question to you, is there another way you can see this situation— whatever thought is coming up? Is there another way you can look at the thought, or whatever situation you're stuck on, or this idea if there's something wrong with you? Is there another way you can see the situation and shift the energy away from the disempowering thought?

So, go ahead. Take a few moments right now, and give yourself some time, jot down a few notes, or just reflect. Is there another way for you to see the situation or see the thought for what it is and give a different explanation, one that's more empowering? Those are questions you want to ask yourself as you're exploring these new and other possibilities. So, take a few moments right now and just imagine to yourself, is there another way you could see the situation or the thought, the disempowering

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thought, or the event or experience that you're stuck on? I'll give you a few moments. Take a few minutes right now and jot down a few ideas to different ways of exploring other possibilities and seeing the situation or thought in a new light.

Okay. Great work. And don't worry. If you weren't able to finish right now, again, you can always go back and rewatch this part of the video or download. Make sure you download the brain health roadmap, and you have that, and you fill in the exercises there. That's step number three, explore the possibilities. Step number four in the five steps to silence your inner critic is to refocus your energy.

So, different ways of refocusing your energy is just literally getting in touch with how you want to feel or what you actually want. For example, in the example I gave earlier, "What's wrong with me?" I didn't realize when I thought that all the time, I would just feel terrible about myself. Because I would answer that question, "Oh, yeah. What's wrong with me?" But the interesting thing is when you actually take apart that question, "What's wrong with me?" It's assuming something's wrong with you. So, through that assumption, I already just felt terrible. It was this trap of an assumption and then a question brought on by the inner critic. I had no fighting chance. In those situations, I'd just end up feeling terrible.

So, in step number four, refocusing your energy is all about getting clear as to how you actually want to feel in a situation. If you catch yourself through awareness feeling bad and do negative thinking, you just begin to refocus your energy and think about how you actually want to feel. The most common thing I would imagine is you want to feel good, or other ways you can refocus your energy is to make positive affirmations or statements. Here's a great one. One that I use often: I intend to manifest healing and wholeness into my life. Or, a very powerful statement is: Healing is possible.

These are just examples of ones that I've used in my journey and I've shared with my patients and students. The whole point is once you've identified and become aware of the disempowering thoughts and once you've challenged it and explored other possibilities and shifted that energy away from the negative, then you want to refocus the energy that's generated from that internal dialogue and shift it towards something that you want in your life—shift it towards the positive.

My question to you is: What do you want to feel? How do you want to feel? What do you want in your life? It's all about getting clear as to what the things you actually want and the feelings that you want to experience are, and begin becoming very clear. Once you go through that process, you can easily refocus your energy away from the negativity and away from the terrible feelings that you might be experiencing.

Take a few moments right now. And I just want you to jot down on the brain health roadmap and the notes section, as well as just reflect on it if you'd like if you don't have the brain health roadmap. What do you want? What do you actually want with your health? Or, what do you want to feel? So, take a few moments to think about that, brainstorm. I'll give you a few moments to do this exercise right now.

Do you want to feel good? Do you want to feel healthy and whole? Do you want specific things in terms of your health, or do you want to find the right practitioner to work with, or the right people to surround

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yourself with, to help support positivity? What do you want with your health? And more importantly, how do you want to feel? So, take a few moments right now. Jot those down or just reflect on them.

Okay. Great work. So, that is step number four of the five-step process, to refocus your energy. And finally, step number five is to steep in the positive experience. Because it takes so much more energy to focus on the positive and to develop that practice because of our built-in negativity bias, it's so important that when we do experience positive emotions or experiences, we really put energy and effort into steeping in them. Because of our built-in negativity bias, it's so easy for us to remember the negative and the criticism and the terrible situations we find ourselves in our lives, isn't it? It's so easy to just put energy there. It virtually doesn't take any energy at all. It's a reflex.

That's why it's so important when we do have positive experiences that we really put a concerted effort in steeping in those experiences. So, when something good or great happens, I really encourage you, take a moment to really focus your energy on it. Steep in that experience of joy you might've had, or in a positive memory, or even in some positive feedback you got, or a compliment someone paid you. Or, if a certain situation turned out in a way that you wanted to, or in the very least, not in a terrible way, steep in that. Because the more you do that, then you begin to build the neural networks of positivity and of a positive healing mindset, as well as resilience.

So, replay that. There's great ways to approach and replay the moment several times. Right now, even. How will you remember to steep in positivity? Because it's so hard for us because of our built-in negativity bias. Like I mentioned a second ago, it's this reflex we have to focus on the negative.

How are ways— What are ways, and how will you remember to steep in positivity? So, you can think of certain triggers. For example, for me, I have certain rituals throughout my day. Like when I wake up in the morning or before I sit down for a meal, I take a few moments to steep in positive emotions. Whether they're gratitude, whether it's being thankful for the food that I'm about to eat, and just steeping in that. Or even having positive memories like looking through photo albums. So, setting aside a special time where me and my wife, as an example, we look through our photo albums, things that we really enjoyed in our experiences together. Or, even things I looked through, my own memories and photo albums of things that I really enjoyed in my life and really steeping in those memories and experiences.

Again, my question to you is, how will you remember to steep in positivity? Because it's so easy to forget to do those things and so easy to focus on the negative. So, take a few moments right now and write down, jot down in your brain health roadmap, or even just brainstorm in your own mind how will you remember to steep in positivity and steep in these positive emotions? Give yourselves a few moments right now to do that, and I'll be right here waiting for you.

Okay. Great work, everybody. So, there you have it. The five steps to silence your inner critic. Step number one, becoming aware of your inner critic. Step number two, challenging your inner critic. Step number three, exploring other possibilities of those common thought patterns. Step number four, refocusing your energy to what you want or how you want to feel. And finally, step number five, when those positive experiences do come up in your life, steeping in them. So, it's so important to do that. To

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steep in those positive experiences because that's how you build those neural networks of a healing mindset.

And one thing I recommend for all of you out there—I know this might be a lot to begin to process—there's a lot of different steps, a lot of different parts. I recommend as a shortcut, just start with the end goal in mind. What do I mean by that? What are the things that you want with your health? How do you want to feel? And start there by starting just shifting your energy to focus on what you actually want in your life and how you want to feel. And when you do that, and then to steep in those experiences, that's what I found to be a very powerful shortcut to stop feeling negativity and negative emotions. Whenever I'm feeling stuck in my life, and I just catch myself after having that awareness, I immediately go, "Well, how do I want to feel? What do I want to put my energy into? Do I want to stress out about things that I don't have any control over, or do I want to focus on improving my health and doing the things that I know help me feel better?" focusing on my antidotes versus worrying about all the different triggers that could impact my health.

That's just an example of how to approach that, but it's really important. And what I've found to be a very effective shortcut almost through this whole process is by starting with the end goal in mind. And even if you're new to this and you're new to even step one, just developing that awareness through the breathwork by focusing and starting with the end goal in mind. Then when you actually go through those steps, it'll be really easy to begin shifting away from an imbalanced negativity bias towards a healing mindset and begin to feel good right there in that moment.

Because the amazing thing is when you practice these things, and you imagine things that you want to feel, and you imagine and visualize the things that you want for your health and in your life—even if they don't happen and you start with this end goal in mind, even if they don't actually manifest in your life—the amazing thing is when you actually visualize events or emotions, the same neural chemical reactions get triggered in your brain and get released throughout your body. So, you actually receive the benefits—the health benefits of that positivity, even if those things never come to fruition. Remember to start with the end goal in mind.

So, there you have it. The five steps to silence your inner critic. A powerful tool to unlock the power of your mind so you can heal your brain. Before we wrap up this week's session, I want to share with you one of my favorite practices in my journey to heal my brain and shift my negativity bias to one of more of a healing mindset. And that is gratitude. Gratitude. What more can I say? I am grateful for gratitude. It completely transformed my life. And gratitude has—in addition, to be a simple and practical, powerful tool that you can do anywhere, any time. And by the way, it's completely free. It has a whole host of health benefits. Here are some of them:

The practice of gratitude increases the perception of social support, meaning you have people that have your back no matter what. So, when you practice gratitude, you feel like you have more people that have your back and you have social support. Isn't that so important in those times when you're on the healing journey, and you feel so alone in that process? It's invaluable.

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In addition to that, gratitude also has been shown to improve your overall self-esteem and mental wellbeing. And on top of that, a consistent gratitude practice has also been shown to improve the quality of your sleep, one of the most critical lifestyle habits that I taught you about in last week's session. And finally, gratitude has also been shown to boost resilience against stress. And boy, do we need that these days, don't we?

In addition to all those wonderful health benefits of gratitude, the practice of gratitude actually has specific impacts on your brain and neural networks. It activates your limbic system, a key neural network related to our emotional experiences. But practicing gratitude activates specific regions of your nervous system that are related to reward, enjoyment, and connection with others. There's regions of your limbic system we call the 'nucleus accumbens,' that's part of your basal ganglia, as well as the ventral tegmental area that sits at the top of your brainstem. And finally, the medial prefrontal cortex located right here. So, when you practice gratitude, there's this entire neural network that becomes activated and releases neurotransmitters like dopamine that help us experience the feeling of reward and enjoyment in that moment. This is what I was alluding to earlier. You can train your brain to feel better right now. And one of the best ways I found of doing that is through the practice of gratitude.

Here's how I recommend practicing gratitude. This is what I do: Every morning, first thing in the morning, I wake up. I think of one thing that I'm grateful for. And from there, I think of three reasons why. So, as soon as I wake up in the morning, obviously, I get my bearings on where I am in terms of the transition from the sleep state to awake state. Once I have my wits about me, I immediately think of one thing that I'm grateful for. For example, I feel grateful for being able to teach so many people and give them tools to empower them to heal their brains. That's one thing that I'm grateful for. And from there, I list three reasons why. Number one, I love teaching. Number two, I've been through it. I've struggled with my brain health, and I feel so grateful that I can share this with other people. And number three, it's such a fantastic way of expressing my purpose and meaning in this world, by teaching others and helping them empower their brains for better health.

So, that's just an example of three reasons why and one thing that I'm grateful for. That's a wonderful way for you to begin practicing gratitude. First thing in the morning, as soon as you wake up and you get your wits about you, think of one thing that you're grateful for, and then three reasons why.

For those of you who are getting started and have never practiced any type of gratitude rituals or practices before, I actually recommend starting with a gratitude journal. Because that's the thing, I've been doing the practice that I've described to you for many years now. So, it's built into my everyday routine and rituals. It's pretty habitual. But if you're new to the game, I recommend actually starting a gratitude journal and having special time, sacred time, where you write in your gratitude journal. The same thing. Write it down. Write one thing that you're grateful for, and then three reasons why. When you think about the three reasons why you're grateful for that thing, it helps to deepen the therapeutic effect on your brain and your neural networks.

In addition, I actually recommend to keep it fresh. So, don't think about the same thing over and over again, even though you do feel grateful. For example, I feel very grateful to be able to teach you how to empower your brain, to heal your brain, and transform your life. Honestly, I feel so grateful for that. But it's good to keep it fresh. Some days, I might wake up and search my brain and think, *Okay, I already did*

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that. I'm grateful for my family, and here's three reasons why. So, it's important to keep it fresh. And if you can't think of multiple things that you're grateful for, then come up with new and creative reasons why, as an example.

For example, I'm often very grateful for my family. And three reasons why I'm grateful for my family is number one, they got my back. Number two, they love and support me. And number three, I absolutely love having them in my life. That's an example.

The next day I might think of *I'm grateful for my family. And here's one reason why, because I get to connect with them and talk with them every day or every week. I'm grateful for that. I'm also grateful for my family because they really know and understand me. And I'm grateful for my family because they cook delicious food.* So, those are just three reasons why.

As you can see, though, the point is keep it fresh. So, even though it might be the same thing you're writing down in your journal that you're grateful for, if you can't think of multiple things or a bunch, then come up with new and creative reasons why you are grateful for that thing, or those people, or person, or that experience, or memory.

And again, like I mentioned before in the previous section, steep in that experience. So, once you become conscious or you're able to get to that thing that you are grateful for, really feel it and steep in that experience. Because research has shown that writing down the things that you're grateful for is very impactful, but when you actually think about it, and steep in those experiences, and have that embodied feeling of gratitude, that creates a much deeper impact on the neural networks of gratitude.

These are some tips for people who are just getting started. Instead of just thinking of the first thing you're grateful for when you wake up in the morning, I recommended and encourage that you start a gratitude journal. And for those of you who have practiced gratitude in the past but have fallen off the practice, I recommend to dust off your journal and begin again. Don't worry if you haven't done it in a while because as soon as you get back on that, you'll continue to reap the rewards of gratitude. Because I understand that we hear about gratitude all the time, and this is probably not news to you hearing about the benefits of gratitude and keeping a gratitude journal, but common knowledge is one thing. Common practice will change your life.

And for those of you who do have a consistent gratitude practice and are doing it as part of your brain-healthy rituals, keep up the great work. Because not only are you contributing to your wellbeing, you're also contributing to, I believe, our collective neural networks as well.

A lot of people, when I tell them about gratitude practices, they say, "I can't think of anything that I'm grateful for." So, if that's the case, guess what? That's all right. Do it anyways. Sit down at your journal, sit down at your desk and write in your gratitude journal. Or even think about it. Because research has shown merely the action of searching your mind and your memories in your brain for things that you're grateful for triggers the same areas of your brain as if you found that thing that you're grateful for. So, you will still reap the benefits.

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Just sit down, take action, pull out your pen and your gratitude journal, and get started. Even if you can't think of anything that you're grateful for, the mere act of sitting down and trying to, you will still reap the benefits. And in my experience, that was the same thing for me. It was hard at first to think of things that I was grateful for, but the more I sat down and committed to that practice, it became a lot easier for me.

Again, it's the whole idea behind this entire workshop—experience-dependent neuroplasticity. Your physical, your mental, and emotional experiences. The more you practice them, the easier they will get.

Here's a pro-tip for you guys. Again, when you actually steep in your experiences and practice gratitude, I recommend you steep in happy memories. Because when you steep in memories that are happy and have positive associations with you, you actually boost your brain's levels of serotonin. Serotonin is otherwise known as the 'happy brain chemical.' It gives us our feelings of joy and of happiness. So, when you steep in your happy memories, memories that you've had from the past that had a positive association, you actually boost your levels of serotonin. Isn't that amazing?

And again, you can train your brain to help you feel better right now in this moment. Not weeks from now, months from now, or years from now, literally, you can train your brain to feel better now. One small positive thought in the morning can not only change your whole day; it can transform your entire life.

So, let's do it right now. I want you to pull out your brain health roadmap, and I want you to literally right now think about one thing that you're grateful for. So, take out your brain health roadmap, or if you don't have it with you, just brainstorm. Think about one thing that you're grateful for. And then once you figure out what that one thing is, write down three reasons why you are grateful for it. I'll give you a few moments right now for this most powerful brain-healing exercise.

And that one thing could be a person. It could be an event that happened in your past, an experience, or could be a happy memory. It could be a book. It could be this course. So, think of one thing that you're grateful for. Remember, there's no right or wrong. It's just what's true for you and your brain. Take a few moments right now. Write down one thing you're grateful for.

Okay. Now for the second part, write down three reasons why you are grateful for that. Take a few moments. Doesn't have to be complicated. It doesn't have to be life-changing or earth-shattering. It could be the simple things I've learned over the course of years practicing gratitude. It's the simple things sometimes that I'm grateful for that really shifted my perspective instead of looking for some big, momentous, life-changing event in my future. It was just like, *Wow, I'm grateful to have a comfortable bed that I can sleep at night.* What is one thing you're grateful for and write down three reasons why you're grateful for it. Again, doesn't have to be anything complicated. Keep it simple. The simpler, the better. As long as you feel that, you have the experience of gratitude.

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Okay, everybody, there you have it. I taught you some powerful strategies to unlock the power of your mind to heal your brain. We just wrapped up the brain healing power of gratitude. I also taught you the five steps to silence your inner critic. And you also learned about an imbalanced negativity bias and the importance of a healing mindset. Before we wrap up here, here's a few things to pay attention to and be aware of as you go through these processes of shifting away from an imbalanced negativity bias to that of a healing mindset:

Be gentle with yourself. It takes time to shift your mindset. It doesn't happen overnight. I've been working on this for years now. And even our more enlightened human beings on this planet, they meditate, and they practice these rituals every single day, sometimes for hours at a time. Be gentle with yourself as you're beginning this process, or even if you've been doing it for a while. Don't beat yourself up because that's just your negativity bias being negative about your negativity bias. So, watch out for that trap and be gentle with yourself. And don't beat yourself up as you go through this. Again, it takes time to shift these things.

And remember, it's not your fault. We all have this built-in negativity bias. It's what has allowed you and us to be here right now—present and alive—because our ancestors were able to survive. So, remember, it's not your fault. And finally, shifting your mindset—it takes time. It doesn't happen overnight, like I just said. It's a lifetime practice and commitment to cultivating the inner garden of our minds.

And one thing I want to say about this is it's not about lying to yourself, about ignoring the things that happen in this world, and the suffering, and the bad things. It's more about removing the additional psychological burdens that our own minds place on ourselves. The beautiful thing is through the power of experience-dependent neuroplasticity, you have the ability to shift your brain from one of an imbalanced negativity bias to that of a healing mindset. It does take time, but I was able to do it. Thousands of my patients were able to do it. And we're still working on it, right? It's about progress, not perfection. We were able to do it, and I know the same is possible for you and your brain. All it takes is the simple practices that I taught you in this week's session, as well as the commitment to cultivating your brain and your mind. You totally got this!

Before we wrap up this week's session, let's go back to Sarah. If you recall, at the beginning of this week, I introduced you to Sarah. She was struggling with issues with brain fog and brain fatigue, and she had changed her diet supplements and built in all these lifestyle prejudices. She had dialed everything in. She was doing everything to the T correctly. And even though we saw improvements in her brain fog and her fatigue, as well as objective markers in testing that we had done, she was just focused on what was not right. All I kept hearing from her was, "Yes, but there's this ..." "Yes, but there's this ..." "Yeah, I'm feeling better, but I'm also this, this, and this ..." It was really difficult for her to actually reap the benefits of all the hard work that she had placed in that and to steep in those positive experiences. A big part of her journey was developing that awareness of her imbalanced negativity bias. I pointed out—I made her become aware of this phrase that I kept hearing her say, "Yes, but ..." So, every time she would say the phrase, "Yes, but ...," I taught her to—if she caught herself doing that to instead say, "Yes, and ...," That completely changes the energy of that statement and of that feeling of those thoughts.

In addition to that, I had her begin practicing mindful breathing. Because as I shared with you before, practicing mindful breathing is a fantastic way of anchoring yourself. Then when these thoughts do

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come in, it becomes very obvious of the thoughts coming into your consciousness. As well as the more you practice that, the content of those thoughts becomes very clear to you. So, I had her practice those two simple things to help her develop the awareness of her inner critic and negativity bias. And then, on top of that, I had her commit to a daily gratitude journal. Five times a week, I'd have her write in her gratitude journal one thing she was grateful for and three reasons why she was grateful for that.

And that's the thing. It didn't change overnight for her. She had to work on it over the course of weeks and months, and she's still continuing to work on it. Because, like I mentioned earlier, these thoughts that we have, these thought patterns, they're habitual. Because most of our lives, they've gone unchallenged and unchecked. So, for Sarah, she started to make some breakthroughs in her progress. And through that, she also noticed that her memory continued to improve through these new practices.

She's doing everything she was already doing correctly—the mechanics of it—but she began to add these mindset practices. And she noticed her memory continuing to improve on track, similar to what it was already, the track that it was on to improve. Her brain fog was improving. And her mood became brighter as well. But most importantly, for Sarah, and her experience, and what I was most excited for, was that even though her health problems weren't completely solved—she was still struggling with them—but the thing was, she was actually able to begin acknowledging the improvements, number one. Steeping in those positive experiences and being grateful for them, number two. And finally, cultivating and training her brain's ability to feel better in the moment to feel better now. She reported back to me after months of working with her. And months later, when I checked in with her, she reported back to me that although she was still struggling with some of her health symptoms, her experience had completely transformed her life, and she started to see this new way. And she started cultivating that healing mindset.

Again, it's not a cure-all. It's not a magic pill or bullet. It takes constant, consistent effort. But through these practices, she was able to begin feeling better in the moment and creating and nurturing that healing mindset. She was able to do it. I was able to do it. Thousands of my patients and students were able to do it. And I know the same is possible for you. And now, you are empowered with some very powerful tools and practices as well as secrets to unlock the power of your mind so you can heal your brain.

A quick review of this week's lesson: I taught you about your built-in negativity bias, what it is, and why it's important to develop the healing mindset. I also shared with you the five steps to silence your inner critic. And finally, I left you with my personal favorite—the brain healing power of gratitude.

Before we wrap up, here is your homework for this week's session: Number one, complete the negativity bias quiz. You can find that right now in your member's area. Just go to your member's area, click on the document, and you'll find a link to the negativity bias quiz. Complete that, and get a sense of where you're at with your negativity bias. Because then you can always check on this again, check your progress when you practice gratitude, or you practice the five steps to silence your inner critic. So, you can celebrate the improvement that you've made over time. Number one, complete the negativity bias quiz that you can find in your member's area.

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Number two, spend five minutes this week steeping in one positive memory. So, search your memory banks, think of one positive memory. Again, it doesn't have to be a massive life-changing thing that happened. Just one positive memory that you have. I want you to identify it and then spend five minutes steeping in it. And you can do that either by thinking about it and really feeling those emotions, or you can do that by journaling about it, what the experience was, why it was positive, why you chose that. Just explore that. The whole point again, though, is to steep in that positive memory. Either through talking about it with somebody, a friend, or a loved one, or writing about it, or even simply just remembering that in your memory. That's the second piece of homework for this week.

And then, finally three, I challenge you to ten days of gratitude. I challenge you for the next ten days to write one thing that you're grateful for every single day and three reasons why. And to help you with that challenge, you can also find in the member's area a bonus gratitude journal that we have made specially for you. So, grab that, download that ten-day gratitude journal. And part of your homework assignment is to complete this ten-day gratitude challenge. Fill out the gratitude journal, write down one reason, one thing that you're grateful for, and three reasons why.

So, there is your homework assignment for this week. And that being said, with that, we have now wrapped up your Brain Health Workshop. This is week number six and our final week together. So, congratulations! And I want to thank you for your commitment to your health, making this decision to commit to the Brain Health Workshop, and to showing up for these lessons, and these workshops, and this series.

I acknowledge you. I honor you. I celebrate you. And again, congratulations for wrapping up this week's session as well as the entire Brain Health Workshop. So, I'll see you! We actually have a bonus final wrap-up session where I'm going to do a quick review of the key concepts as well as the best practices and do a formal celebration of your completion of the Brain Health Workshop. I will see you in that final wrap-up video. Have a wonderful rest of your day. Congratulations for completing week number six, and we'll see you really soon. Bye for now.