

THE JOY GAME takes just five minutes in a state of JOY can help quiet your brain and train it to amplify joy rather than fear. The JOY GAME helps you or a group of people to practice getting your mind into a joyful place. Each of these four areas of thought help our bodies, minds, and soul to focus on what we have to appreciate in the life God has given us as a gift.

PRAYER: God, shape me and us into people who are *joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer (Romans 12:12)*. Give me a lasting joy in Jesus. Amen.

G - GRATITUDE The “G” stands for gratitude.

Take a moment to think of your *present* situation and ponder something(s) that are worth appreciating. The goal is not simply to list reasons to be grateful but the goal is to let yourself feel the experience in your body and to stay in that experience for a few minutes.

Examples: sipping coffee, hanging with a friend, lunch with colleague, learning in class/retreat, being in nature, doing well at my sport/exam, etc.

A - ANTICIPATION The “A” stands for anticipation.

Take a moment to think of something you are anticipating with joy that will happen today, or into the future week, month, or year ahead. Looking ahead to something we are excited to do give us capacity to endure afflictions that happen in between. There is often more joy in the anticipation of what is coming than in the event itself.

Examples: hitting golf balls later today, going on said trip, binge watching my favorite show, graduating, getting a raise, etc.

M - MEMORIES The “M” stands for memories.

Take a moment to relive a past experience, and it can make us smile by bringing us joy. Spending time in those memories are a great practice for developing the habit of appreciation.

Examples: when I got my first car, traveled to Europe, got accepted into college, he/she said “yes” to me, hiking in national park, late night w/college roomies, etc.

E - EXPERIENCES The “E” stands for experiences.

Take a moment to be creative and plan out an activity today that will bring you joy. Maybe it is already planned or maybe you need to insert it into your busy schedule with some effort.

Examples: spending time playing pickleball with friends, reading a book, cooking a special meal, eating out, playing Xbox with a roommate, etc.

The 4 Habits of Joy-Filled People: 15 minute brain science hacks to a more connected and satisfying life by Marcus Warner and Chris Coursey.