N**egativity bias** is our tendency not only to register **negative** stimuli more readily but also to dwell on negative experiences. N**egativity bias** means we feel the hurt of criticism more powerfully than we feel the joy of praise.

Our evolution and specifically the necessary survival instincts from many years ago, served us well in the days of saber-toothed tigers prowling and potential attack from our neighbouring tribes. The human brain developed a natural tendency to give weight to (and remember) **negative** experiences or interactions more than positive ones.

In an experiment in which participants gained or lost the same amount of money, the distress participants expressed over losing the money was greater than the joy that accompanied the gain of other participants.

Put another way, you are more upset about losing £100 than you are happy about gaining £100!

Too much focus on the negative can make us overly cautious, cynical, closed to others and to their ideas. It can mean that we learn less, we are less creative, less supported and we feel meh!

**Activity: Try this activity when you want to feel more open to possibility and generally more positive about yourself. Take a piece of paper and brainstorm all of your positives…**

Start with the things you like about your age, gender and looks.

Go on to list the positives in terms of your education and life experience.

Write down your skills and work experience.

Make a note of your positive relationships.

Make a note of any other positives that come to mind about you and life in general.



Now read the list back to yourself…slowly…take in every positive…take it in through your eyes as you read the words on the page and through your ears as you hear your voice speak the words out aloud. Or even better speak the words out aloud. Notice how you feel as you go through the list. Anchor these feelings with a mantra such as “I am awesome” or “I am resourceful” or “I am me” or something of your own choosing.

You can always add to this list by asking others for positive feedback and write this down or better still ask them to write it to you or send you a video with them sharing their feedback for you. You can go to this feedback when you need to inject a boost of positivity.