

# COURSE SYLLABUS



COURSE TITLE: PSYC-276: Positive Psychology

CLASS SECTION: 001

TERM: Winter 2025

COURSE CREDITS: 3

DELIVERY METHOD(S): Lecture

Camosun College campuses are located on the traditional territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. We acknowledge their welcome and graciousness to the students who seek knowledge here.

Learn more about Camosun's [Territorial Acknowledgement](#).

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## INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

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NAME: Marty Donatelli

EMAIL: donatellim@camosun.bc.ca

PHONE: 250-370-3220

OFFICE: Paul 220

HOURS: Monday and Wednesday 11:00am – 12:00 noon Fridays 12 noon – 1pm Or by appointment

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## CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

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This course examines the positive aspects of human nature, and how those characteristics can be used to create a good life, and a more positive world. Personal strengths, positive thoughts and emotions, relationships, work, leisure, money and consumption will be just some of the topics covered.

### PREREQUISITE(S):

All of:

- C in PSYC 110

And one of:

- C in PSYC 130
- C in PSYC 154
- C in PSYC 164
- C in PSYC 171

### CO-REQUISITE(S):

Not applicable

### EXCLUSION(S):

Not applicable

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## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES / OBJECTIVES

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Upon completion of this course a student will be able to:

1. Describe and explain the current models, theories, concepts and research in positive psychology.
2. Differentiate between scientific and non-scientific sources.

3. Explain the components of a positive life.
4. Identify human strengths and virtues.
5. Explain research, theories, and models of emotions, actions and cognitions that underlie positive experiences.
6. Describe and explain consequences and strategies that correlate with a sense of happiness and well-being.
7. Describe and apply strategies aimed at increasing one's happiness/subjective well-being and analyze the resulting experience.
8. Describe important steps and explain examples of initiatives designed to bring about a positive world.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS & RECOMMENDED PREPARATION / INFORMATION**

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Text: The Science and Application of Positive Psychology. Cheavens and Feldman, 2022. Cambridge University Press

Course Pack; Positive Psychology Readings (Digital version on D2L, or physical version in the bookstore)

Additional content on the D2L webpage for this course

**COURSE SCHEDULE, TOPICS, AND ASSOCIATED PREPARATION / ACTIVITY / EVALUATION**

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The following schedule and course components are subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

	Readings: Textbook	Course Pack	D2L
<b>PART 1 FOUNDATIONS</b> Science Psychology Positive Psychology Past, Present & Future Principles Pursuits	Ch 1 (What is PP?) Ch 2 (Myths)	Part I Introduction	
<b>PART 2 POSITIVE FEELINGS</b> Motivation Pleasure Mood Emotions Specific positive emotions	47-55 (pos emotions) 64-68 (pos affect) 85-98 (meaning) 174-178 (goals) 326-328 (elevation)	Part II Positive Feelings	
<b>Test 1 Jan 31st</b> <b>WBI Feb. 8<sup>th</sup></b>	3.5		
<b>PART 3 POSITIVE THOUGHTS</b> Processes Content Interventions	CH 5 (Mind, sav, flow) CH 11 (Grat, forgive) 178-195 (optim, hope) 375-377 (hope therapy)	Part III Positive Thoughts	
Feb 17-21– reading break			



DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTING
Well-being initiatives (10% each section) Well-being initiatives are experiential learning assignments designed to explore your life and improve your well-being. Details are provided at the end of this course outline.	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%

If you have a concern about a grade you have received for an evaluation, please come and see me as soon as possible. Refer to the [Grade Review and Appeals](http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.14.pdf) policy for more information.  
<http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.14.pdf>

## COURSE GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

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This course is an examination of human flourishing. The student will be introduced to the concepts, models, theories, researchers and research in the field of positive psychology. Topics to be addressed include; emotions, motivation, cognition, relationships, work, leisure, character, culture, money, design and social improvement. The course includes both academic and experiential components. The format of the course consists of lectures, discussions, in-class activities and out of class 'well-being initiatives' (assignments designed to illustrate course concepts and have a positive impact on student's life).

### Lecture Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes and be on time. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to acquire all information given during that class, including notes, hand-outs, changed exam dates, announcements, etc.

### Technology

Exams:

No electronic devices are allowed during exams. This includes but is not limited to; computers, electronic dictionaries, electronic translators, cell phones, tablets, smart watches, and other personal electronic devices.

Class:

Student's use of laptops/tablets in class is restricted to note taking. Students using their laptops/tablets for other purposes will have their laptop privileges revoked.

All cell phones must be turned off and put away during class. Exceptions for emergency purposes only must be discussed with the instructor ahead of time.

Students may not use recording devices in the classroom without prior permission of the instructor (students must complete a request form). Should permission for recordings be granted, these recordings are for the student's personal use only, and distribution of recorded material is prohibited.

### Exam Procedures

All exams must be written at the scheduled times with the exception of students requiring an accommodation by CAL (Centre for Accessible Learning). It is understood that emergency circumstances do occur (e.g. severe illness or family emergency); for such circumstances accommodation may be offered at the discretion of the instructor, provided the student: a) notifies the instructor in advance of the exam (not after), and b) provides documented evidence of the circumstance (e.g. medical certificate).

If an exam is missed with an excused absence, it is up to the instructor's discretion as to how the mark will be made up.

Be sure not to make travel plans for the end of semester until the final exam schedules are finalized and posted. Please ask any family members who might make travel plans on your behalf to consult you before booking tickets.

### Studying

You should plan on a weekly minimum of 6 hours outside of scheduled class time for the completion of readings, assignments, and for general studying.

Reviewing, filling out, and editing your lecture notes right after class is recommended.

Contact the instructor to clarify any confusing concepts.

Distributed studying has been proven to be far more effective than massed practice (cramming).

Testing yourself on the material (answering questions) is far superior to simply rereading notes/textbook.

Class PowerPoint presentations will be uploaded to the class website.

### FAQ

If I get a grade on an assignment or test I don't like can I redo it? No

Can I do the in-class assignment on my own at home? No

Can I do extra work to improve my grade? No

Can I just have more marks/percentage points to bump up my grade? No

Will the instructor remind of us of due dates for upcoming assignments and tests throughout the semester? No

Can I hand in work late without receiving a penalty? No. Late work is penalized 5% per day

Will you tell us what's on the test? No

If I complete an assignment and hand it in on time am I guaranteed to receive 100%? No

Can I use somebody else's words or ideas and claim they are mine? No, absolutely not. This is plagiarism and you will receive an F on the assignment, or an F in the course, or expulsion from the college, or all three.

Do I have to email/inform my instructor if I am going to miss a class? No, this is not required. But you may want to contact the instructor just to make sure there wasn't any important announcements about or changes to the course. Otherwise it is your responsibility to find out what happened in that class from another student or the instructor.

Do I have to share personal information about myself if I'm uncomfortable doing so? No

What is your expectation about sharing information in class? Students are encouraged to share information about themselves as relevant to the course. The expectation is that students will not share personal information learned about other people/students. As well, students must be aware that this is a public venue and confidentiality cannot be assured.

Can I ask questions and share thoughts/examples in class? Yes, absolutely

Can I stop by during your office hours to talk more about what we are addressing in class? Yes absolutely

Will you be covering material in class that is not in the textbook or coursepack? Yes

Can I use somebody else's words or ideas if I properly quote or cite the source? Yes

If I ask, will the instructor help me with the course requirements? Yes (but he won't do them for you)

Can I get feedback on written work from the instructor before I hand it in? Yes (general review. Submit at least 48 hrs before due date)

Can I get accommodation if I'm sick or experienced an emergency? Yes, if you have proper documentation.

If I choose to, can I withdraw from the course or switch to audit? Yes – prior to the change/audit date

If I am not clear on why I got the grade I did can I talk to the instructor? Yes, please do.

Can I talk to my instructor if I am unclear on what is expected for an assignment or course requirement? Yes

I missed last class. Did I miss anything important? Yes (It is your responsibility to ask a classmate to photocopy their notes)

Please come and see me during office hours if you need extra clarification and help.

No work will be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on **Apr. 19th**

## SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

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### Important Dates

Last day to withdraw or switch to audit without receiving an academic penalty – Apr 12th

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

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Enrolment at Camosun assumes that the student will become a responsible member of the College community. As such, each student will display a positive work ethic, assist in the preservation of College property, and assume responsibility for their education by researching academic requirements and policies; demonstrating courtesy and respect toward others; and respecting expectations concerning attendance, assignments, deadlines, and appointments.

## SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

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*As your course instructor, I endeavour to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me. Camosun College is committed to identifying and removing institutional and social barriers that prevent access and impede success.*

Camosun College offers a number of services to help you succeed in and out of the classroom. For a detailed overview of the supports and services visit <http://camosun.ca/students/>.

Support Service	Website
Academic Advising	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/academic-advising">camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/academic-advising</a>
Accessible Learning	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning">camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning</a>
Counselling	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/health-and-wellness/counselling-centre">camosun.ca/services/health-and-wellness/counselling-centre</a>
Career Services	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/co-operative-education-and-career-services">camosun.ca/services/co-operative-education-and-career-services</a>
Financial Aid and Awards	<a href="http://camosun.ca/registration-records/financial-aid-awards">camosun.ca/registration-records/financial-aid-awards</a>
Help Centres (Math/English/Science)	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres">camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres</a>
Indigenous Student Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/programs-courses/iecc/indigenous-student-services">camosun.ca/programs-courses/iecc/indigenous-student-services</a>
International Student Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/international">camosun.ca/international</a>
Learning Skills	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills">camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills</a>
Library	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/library">camosun.ca/services/library</a>
Office of Student Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/office-student-support">camosun.ca/services/office-student-support</a>
Ombudsperson	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/ombudsperson">camosun.ca/services/ombudsperson</a>
Registration	<a href="http://camosun.ca/registration-records/registration">camosun.ca/registration-records/registration</a>
Technology Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/its">camosun.ca/services/its</a>

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Support Service	Website
Writing Centre	<a href="https://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills">camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills</a>

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If you have a mental health concern, please contact Counselling to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. Counselling sessions are available at both campuses during business hours. If you need urgent support after-hours, please contact the Vancouver Island Crisis Line at 1-888-494-3888 or call 911.

## COLLEGE-WIDE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, REQUIREMENTS, AND STANDARDS

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### Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all College policy regarding academic integrity; which is about honest and ethical behaviour in your education journey. The following guide is designed to help you understand your responsibilities: <https://camosun.libguides.com/academicintegrity/welcome>

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.13.pdf> for Camosun's Academic Integrity policy and details for addressing and resolving matters of academic misconduct.

### Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The College is committed to providing appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations to students with disabilities (i.e. physical, depression, learning, etc). If you have a disability, the [Centre for Accessible Learning](#) (CAL) can help you document your needs, and where disability-related barriers to access in your courses exist, create an accommodation plan. By making a plan through CAL, you can ensure you have the appropriate academic accommodations you need without disclosing your diagnosis or condition to course instructors. Please visit the CAL website for contacts and to learn how to get started: <https://camosun.ca/cal>

### Academic Progress

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2023-02/e-1.1.pdf> for further details on how Camosun College monitors students' academic progress and what steps can be taken if a student is at risk of not meeting the College's academic progress standards.

### Course Withdrawals Policy

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.2.pdf> for further details about course withdrawals. For deadline for fees, course drop dates, and tuition refund, please visit <https://camosun.ca/registration-records/tuition-fees#deadlines>.

### Grading Policy

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.5.pdf> for further details about grading.

### Grade Review and Appeals

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.14.pdf> for policy relating to requests for review and appeal of grades.

### Medical / Compassionate Withdrawals

Students who are incapacitated and unable to complete or succeed in their studies by virtue of serious and demonstrated exceptional circumstances may be eligible for a medical/compassionate withdrawal (see [Medical/Compassionate Withdrawals policy](#)). Please visit <https://camosun.ca/services/forms#medical> to learn more about the process involved in a medical/compassionate withdrawal.

### Sexual Violence

Camosun is committed to creating a campus culture of safety, respect, and consent. Camosun's Office of Student Support is responsible for offering support to students impacted by sexual violence. Regardless of when or where the sexual violence occurred, students can access support at Camosun. The Office of Student Support will make sure students have a safe and private place to talk and will help them understand what supports are available and their options for next steps. The Office of Student Support respects a student's right to choose what is right for them. For more information see Camosun's Sexualized Violence Policy: <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.9.pdf> and [camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence-support-and-education](https://camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence-support-and-education).

To contact the Office of Student Support: [oss@camosun.ca](mailto:oss@camosun.ca) or by phone: 250-370-3046 or 250-370-3841

### Student Misconduct (Non-Academic)

Camosun College is committed to building the academic competency of all students, seeks to empower students to become agents of their own learning, and promotes academic belonging for everyone. Camosun also expects that all students to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to a positive, supportive, and safe learning environment. Please review Camosun College's Student Misconduct Policy at <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.5.pdf> to understand the College's expectations of academic integrity and student behavioural conduct.

### Looking for other policies?

The full suite of College policies and directives can be found here: <https://camosun.ca/about/camosun-college-policies-and-directives>

**Changes to this syllabus:** Every effort has been made to ensure that information in this syllabus is accurate at the time of publication. The College reserves the right to change courses if it becomes necessary so that course content remains relevant. In such cases, the instructor will give the students clear and timely notice of the changes.



## WELL BEING INITIATIVES/POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY INTERVENTIONS

Well-being initiatives are experiential learning assignments designed to help you explore your life and improve your well-being. Each student will choose and complete initiatives from the 3 sections below. Students may choose to do any number of assignment(s) in each section. Pick the ones that are right for you: Something you can do, resonates with you, and are not currently doing.

**Journaling:** For many initiatives, you will record your experiences in a journal. Make sure you date each entry. Include who you were with (First name and last initial), what happened, any thoughts and feelings that occurred. Each entry will not exceed a paragraph. This will constitute part of your grade. Append the journal entries to your write-up.

**Write up:** Many (not all) of the initiatives ask you to complete a write-up. Describe what you did then reflect on your experience. What was it like? What effect did it have? How did it make you feel emotionally and physically? What would you do differently? And most importantly of all - What did you learn/realize about yourself/your life? (These are questions to stimulate the reflection process. Do not simply answer these questions. Your paper should have a coherent, logical flow)

**Length:** Most write-ups will be between 350 - 450 words (not including journal entries) unless otherwise specified. Include a word count at the end of your write up.

**Grading:** Projects will be graded on accuracy, completeness, writing/grammar/organization, and especially level of reflection/ insight.

Each assignment is assessed a point value. Earn at least 100 points to receive 10% possible for that section.

They have assigned due dates. Late assignments/projects are penalized 5% per day.

Note: No assignments/projects will be accepted 1 week after due date.

Submit assignments via D2L drop box unless otherwise specified.

The assignments within a section can be handed in 2 days or more prior to the due date for feedback from the instructor. Please email the instructor if you wish to receive feedback. Students can then resubmit an assignment prior to the section due date.

### 1. Foundations and Feelings. Due Feb 8<sup>th</sup>

#### Passion pursuit 70pts

Select a passion project: Something exciting and important to you that you'd like to accomplish in life. Make it something active (not passive). Make it concrete, measurable and achievable. Not something like 'be successful', this is too vague. A career or family/relationship goal is important in life, but not the type of passion project I am looking for in this assignment.

Outline:

Answer each of the following in 1-3 sentences each:

1. Provide a detailed concrete description of the project
2. Outline the tasks/steps/sub goals that are required to reach it
3. Outline the resources/supports you will need to achieve it
4. Outline likely obstacles to reaching this goal, and methods for overcoming them

Story:

People like stories. Create a fictional autobiographical story using the elements above describing your journey completing your passion project. Include twists/unexpected surprises, the people/characters along the way, your emotional experiences, things you learned, things you learned to appreciate, etc. Make it fun and exciting. Do not exceed 1500 words for this story.

If you complete this activity you cannot complete "best possible life" below.

### Best possible life 40pts

Imagine and describe the best possible life you could have. Think about various areas of your life; career, income, relationships, personality, physical condition, where you live, how you live, leisure, etc. Write-up maximum 400 words. If you complete this activity you cannot complete "Passion pursuit" above.

### Positive emotions 40 pts

The student handbook/course pack/readings includes a list of 16 positive emotions. Select 8 that you've experienced and in 1-3 sentences each, describe how you experienced it. What happened to trigger that feeling?

### Laughter yoga. 40pts

Attend a local laughter yoga group meeting. Journal and write-up as described above.

<https://victorialaughteryogaclub.wordpress.com/laughter-schedule/> Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays  
<http://www.victoriayoga.com/class/laughter-yoga>

Some may suggest a donation for each session. The schedule and availability of these groups is subject to change.

### Pleasant events therapy 70pts

Think about and list the things you enjoy. Schedule at least one of these pleasant events/experiences into each day for a minimum of 30 minutes. They must not be things you typically do, and do not do the same pleasant event each day. They must not be; laughter yoga, spending time on social media, or watching TV. Complete a total of 7 days. Journal and write-up as described above.

### Nonverbal actions 40pts

Most assume that our actions are the result of how we feel. Sometimes it is the other way around – our actions trigger feelings. For one day, regardless of how you feel initially, nonverbally act like you are very comfortable and happy. Stand tall, breath deep, smile regularly, have a spring in your step, make friendly eye contact with others, if appropriate; wave, hug, skip and/or whistle/hum.

At the end of the day reflect on (write) what you did, how easy/difficult it was, others reactions, your feelings, how well you carried out the task. DO NOT do positive things for others; that is a different assignment.

(Caution; females, happiness towards unfamiliar males may be misinterpreted)

## **2. Thoughts and Character.** Due March 12<sup>th</sup>

### Meditate. 70pts

Choose a form of meditation (see below) and meditate each day for 10 consecutive days. Meditate for at least 5 minutes the first day and progressively add at least one minute each day. After each session, describe your experience and progress in your journal. Also include a write-up as described above.

How to: Follow the directions in the course pack. In general: Find a quiet comfortable place. Empty your mind. Let all thoughts and images disappear. If something pops into your head let it in and pass right through - empty your mind again.

Try one of four different kinds of meditation.

- Focused meditation. Some people find it easier to prevent other thoughts by focusing on one simple thought; a word, image, their breathing.
- Mindfulness meditation. Watch your thoughts and feelings without judging them. Nonattachment.
- Loving-kindness meditation. Fill your mind and heart with love and kindness for others.
- Guided meditation; find an audio file on the internet that takes your through a meditation session.



### 3. Lifestyle and world April 12<sup>th</sup>

#### Physical activity: 70pts

Select one new physical activity. Join a dance class, a new sport, visit weight room, take up swimming, or establish a walking schedule (complete a minimum of ½ hour each day, 5 days a week). Choose something you do not typically do. Do this for 8 sessions. If you have health concerns consult your doctor beforehand. Ease into the activity. Journal entries should include; date, what you did, where and with whom. Also include a write-up as described above.

#### Seven conversations. 70pts

Have a pleasant conversation with seven different family members or friends. Each conversation should be at least 15 minutes and include just the two of you. No phoning, emailing nor texting. These conversations must be with 7 different people and must be important/meaningful conversations. Focus on asking them what brings them happiness or meaning. Provide a brief overview 2-3 sentences, of each conversation. Then complete a write-up as described above.

#### Positivity portfolio 40pts

Compile a photo album of the positive and meaningful things in your life. You can organize it chronologically or by category. Be sure to include possessions you enjoy, places you like or would like to visit, people (family, friends) activities you engage in, pets, foods, and other categories. No more than 3 photos per category. Be selective. Write-up; some comments, feelings, observations about your portfolio and the process of completing it. Max 150 words. (Fredrickson p.214)

#### Forest bathing *shinrin-yoku* 40pts

Find a green space (or ocean front) near your residence. It must have trees and bushes (and ideally water). Complete a 30 minute (minimum) walk in nature by yourself on 2 different days. Let your attention focus on the natural world. No journal for this one. Write up: In 3 or 4 sentences, describe the nature areas you visited. then describe your mental, emotional, physical experiences. 200 - 250 words.

#### Positive world: social innovation. 70pts

Research and write about one social innovation. This could be a new technology, idea, social initiative or program. It must be something new, something that helps the world, and something you are interested in. You will give a 2-minute verbal presentation to the class, answer questions, and hand in a one-page report (in point form) with at least one reference.

Some possible sources of ideas: Clinton global initiative, Gates foundation. On YouTube: TED talks, Idea City, Undecided with Matt Ferrell, Huga if True, Good news

Every student has to complete a different initiative so inform your instructor of your topic early.

#### Conscious acts of kindness. 70pts

Each day, for 10 consecutive days, commit a conscious act of kindness. For example: Make dinner for someone, look after their kids for an evening, do one of their chores for them, express gratitude, sincere compliment, help out, do a favour, etc. Plan out the acts ahead of time. It has to be something you do not ordinarily do. You have to complete 5 different acts before you can repeat an act with a different person in a different place. Journal entries; date, what you did and where, what happened. Then write up as described above. Write up 300 - 350 words.

#### Fun with friends 40 pts

Plan an event/outing with friends. You will collectively engage in a fun activity. It has to be something you haven't done in a long while or ever. There must be at least 4 of you. It has to be active (not passive like watching a movie together or sitting and talking). Examples include: horseback riding, board game night, dance club, skiing, build your own pizza night, escape room, pool/billiards, canoe/kayaking, skywalk, pottery class, dart tournament, bowling, ax throwing, poker night, climbing wall, etc. Write up as described above.