

Bad – good session plan

Before session:

- Stick bins on walls + Write up criteria on whiteboard

Welcome

Today: We've all faced hard moments in life — some small, some big.

Seeing as we're still here and smiling and laughing we might be sometimes tempted to say, a little bit flippantly, 'what does not kill me makes me stronger'.

But then some bad things just stay bad and it's important to acknowledge that and keep them in the bad bin;

For other things they might seem bad at the time but they end up actually turning out to be quite positive;

And there might be a third class of things, that only seemed to be bad in the first place, but they ended up being good all along.

Question

When can something bad turn out to be good?

First Thoughts

Use three categories, e.g. could be three pieces of butcher's paper on the wall, three hoops on the floor, or just three labels on a table. Label them:

1. Bad – bad
2. Bad led to good
3. Thought bad, actually good

One example for each bin:

Bin 1 — Bad and stayed bad (no redemption story required)

A friend (or family member) did something that permanently damaged trust. The relationship never really recovered.

Bin 2 — Bad, but later led to good (growth / new path / meaning through response)

I didn't get the job (or role) I wanted, and it stung — but it pushed me toward something that suited me better.

Bin 3 — Thought bad, actually good

Just to be clear: Bin 3 is for **false alarms** — not for real harm like violence or cruelty.

The “wrong turn” that was right: “I got lost on the way somewhere and thought it ruined the day — but I discovered a place I loved and went back often.

Clarify Thinking

Provide helpers with clipboard and paper.

Your group will create **1–2 examples per bin** (Bin 1, then Bin 2, then Bin 3).

Keep examples **general and safe** (no graphic detail; no pressure to share personal stories).

1. Keep examples **general + safe** (everyday life; no graphic detail; no pressure to share personal stories).
2. Write **ONE example per page** in **BIG LETTERS**.
3. Bring pages to Andy. He'll place them in bins **with the group** (unless it's obvious).

Weigh Them Up

Reconvene as a group and ask:

- What can we learn from these events?

Start scribing criteria on whiteboard for each of the three bins:

- Bin 1: clear harm + pattern/severity + no remainder + not justify-able
- Bin 2: truly bad at time + good later via response + specific good + no excusing
- Bin 3: incomplete info + later evidence flips it + "badness" was interpretation

Conclusion and Reflection

I've been trying out a rule to train my reactions when something feels bad, a rule that I can live by and maybe teach my kids as well, and it goes like this:

"Safety first — then curiosity."

When not sure: curiosity → judgment → commitment.

But I'm wondering if you could help me improve it or if anyone here can change the wording to make it something that feels more comfortable for you like how would you say this in your own words?

Ask if it's okay if I take a video of this so I can count later: Ask people in the room how they're feeling: five fingers for great, one finger for bad and anything in between.

Thank you everyone for your wisdom and for a thoughtful and caring session. Next time we're gonna think about what to do with our memories: is it better to make peace with them and just let go, or hold on to them as warnings?



The Bad-o-meter in action

CARDS FOR THE GAME

(Print these out in BIG FONT, ONE PER A4 Page)

Moving into residential care

Hearing loss / getting hearing aids

Letting go of driving

A change in routine (meal time / seating / activity schedule) that first feels like "they're messing with my day," but later you see it makes things calmer or works better

A gentle safety rule (using a walker, waiting for assistance, fall-prevention)

A nurse/GP raises a concern (medication review, hydration, nutrition, hearing aids) that first feels like fussing or bad news, but later prevents a bigger problem and you feel better

An annoying fly / mozzie in the room

A cup of tea goes cold before you get to enjoy it

Someone pinches your good seat

Misplacing your glasses