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POSITIVE ATTITUDE CAN CHANGE LIFE

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How many times have you heard a friend, co-worker, spouse or significant other say, “Think positive” when you are feeling depressed, angry, anxious, frustrated or just down-right negative? Usually it’s the last thing you want to hear at the moment, but it could possibly be the best thing you could do for both your emotional and physical health! Positive attitude, positive thinking, and optimism are now known to be a root cause of many positive life benefits. Studies show positive people can experience an increased life span, lower rates of depression, lower levels of stress, greater resistance to the common cold, better overall well-being, reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease and better coping skills during times of hardship and stress. It seems people with a positive attitude simply live longer, happier, healthier, more successful lives... and who doesn’t want that!!

Attitude is defined as the mental position that represents an individual’s degree of like or dislike for an item - a generally positive or negative view of a person, place, thing, or event. A positive attitude is, therefore, the inclination to generally be in an optimistic, hopeful state of mind. However, attitudes are expected to change as a function of experience - so someone with a typically negative attitude can change! Overall, people with a positive attitude are optimists and believe they are accountable for good things and that good things will generally come their way. If something bad comes instead, optimists tend to write it off as an isolated incident, an anomaly, or something out of their control. They continue to believe things will be better in the future. A pessimist is a person who nurtures a consistently negative attitude, expecting the worst of people and of situations. This outlook can persist regardless of facts or circumstances that might indicate a more balanced or positive reality.

It is your attitude, not your aptitude that determines your altitude. Sure you need skills, but you can learn skills - in fact a positive attitude will make it much more likely that you will learn the skills necessary to succeed. If you take two people with an equal skill set the person with the

better attitude will win. Unfortunately it is not always easy to stay positive and keep a good attitude. As things go wrong throughout your day, it is easy to let negative thoughts start to take over. Thankfully there are many things that you can do to help maintain a positive attitude. However, your way of thinking, whether positive or negative, is a habit... and habits can be changed! But it takes practice. If your first thoughts about the meaning of something that has happened are negative thoughts, take the first step toward a positive attitude by simply recognizing your thoughts as negative and trying to create a more positive thought. Thoughts are always under your control and can be changed! The following steps can also help you create a more positive attitude.

Remember that YOU control your attitude: Attitude does not emerge from what happens to you, but instead from how you decide to interpret what happens to you. Take, for example, receiving the unexpected gift of an old automobile. One person might think: “It’s a piece of junk!” a second might think: “It’s cheap transportation,” and a third might think: “It’s a real classic!” In each case, the person is deciding how to interpret the event and therefore controlling how he or she feels about it (i.e. attitude).

Adopt beliefs that frame events in a positive way: Your beliefs and rules about life and work determine how you interpret events and therefore your attitude. Decide to adopt “strong” beliefs that create a good attitude rather than beliefs that create a bad attitude.

Create a “library” of positive thoughts: Spend at least 15 minutes every morning to read, view, or listen to something inspirational or motivational. If you do this regularly, you’ll have those thoughts and feelings ready at hand (or rather, ready to mind) when events don’t go exactly the way you’d prefer.

Avoid angry or negative media: Unfortunately, the media is full of hateful people who make money by goading listeners to be paranoid, unhappy, and frightened. The resulting flood of negativity doesn’t just destroy your ability to maintain a positive attitude; it actively inserts you into a state of misery, pique, and umbrage. Rather than suck up the spew, limit your “informational” media consumption to business and industry news.

Ignore whiners and complainers: Whiners and complainers see the world through crap-colored glasses. They’d rather talk about what’s irreparably wrong, rather than make things better. More importantly, complainers can’t bear to see somebody else happy and satisfied. If you tell a

complainer about a success that you've experienced, they'll congratulate them, but their words ring hollow. You can sense they'd just as soon you told them about what's making you miserable. What a drag (figuratively and literally)!

Use a more positive vocabulary: The words that come out of your mouth aren't just a reflection of what's in your brain – they're programming your brain how to think. Therefore, if you want to have a positive attitude, your vocabulary must be consistently positive. Stop using negative phrases such as “I can't,” “It's impossible,” or “This won't work.” These statements program you for negative results. Whenever anyone asks “How are you?” respond with “Terrific!” or “Never felt better!” And mean it. When you're feeling angry or upset, substitute neutral words for emotionally loaded ones. Rather than saying “I'm enraged!” say “I'm a bit annoyed...”

Be thankful: Take some time and be thankful. Be thankful about what you have, who you are, and what your life is like. Think through all of the things that you can be thankful for. Even if you are in a tough time in life there are many things you have that you can be thankful for. You need to look for them and recognize them. The very act of focusing on what you are thankful for will help you maintain your positive attitude.

Surround yourself with positive people: The people around you have a big impact on you. They impact who you are, how much money you will make, and what you value. They also impact how you think. If you surround yourself with negative people you will be negative as well. You can't help it. Hearing negativity all day leads you to negativity. The opposite is also true. Surround yourself with positive people and you will be more positive.

Smile: Many studies have demonstrated that even a forced smile can lift one's mood! We may also share positivity with others by flashing them with a brilliant smile. Smiling is a reward, not a risk. The only thing we risk when smiling is a giving ourselves a little more happiness.

Understand that we all need and deserve time to recharge: If we just got out of a bad relationship, or we simply need a break from the hustle and bustle of your life, we mustn't be afraid to take some time off and recharge. It can be stressful being with other people, even people that we really like. Being independent can help us regain our perspective. One simple thing to do to recharge is to take a short trip somewhere. Have you always meant to climb to the top of that mountain outside the city? Do you want to explore the river-valley that feeds into the lake? Communing a little bit with nature if we can, provides an wonderful tonic!

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. If you tend to have a negative outlook, don't expect to become an optimist overnight. But with practice, eventually your self-talk will contain less self-criticism and more self-acceptance. You may also become less critical of the world around you. Plus, when you share your positive mood and positive experience, both you and those around you enjoy an emotional boost. Practicing positive self-talk will improve your outlook. When your state of mind is generally optimistic, you're able to handle everyday stress in a more constructive way. That ability may contribute to the widely observed health benefits of positive thinking. You can learn to turn negative thinking into positive thinking. The process is simple, but it does take time and practice – you're creating a new habit, after all. Here are some common forms of negative self-talk.

- **Filtering:** You magnify the negative aspects of a situation and filter out all of the positive ones. For example, say you had a great day at work. You completed your tasks ahead of time and were complimented for doing a speedy and thorough job. But you forgot one minor step. That evening, you focus only on your oversight and forget about the compliments you received.
- **Personalizing:** When something bad occurs, you automatically blame yourself. For example, you hear that an evening out with friends is canceled, and you assume that the change in plans is because no one wanted to be around you.
- **Catastrophizing:** You automatically anticipate the worst. The drive-through shop gets your order wrong and you automatically think that the rest of your day will be a disaster.
- **Polarizing.** You see things only as good or bad, black or white. There is no middle ground. You feel that you have to be perfect or that you're a total failure.

Here are some ways to think and behave in a more positive and optimistic way.

- **Identify areas to change:** If you want to become more optimistic and engage in more positive thinking, first identify areas of your life that you typically think negatively about, whether it's work, your daily commute or a relationship, for example. You can start small by focusing on one area to approach in a more positive way.
- **Check yourself:** Periodically during the day, stop and evaluate what you're thinking. If you find that your thoughts are mainly negative, try to find a way to put a positive spin on them.

- **Be open to humor:** Give yourself permission to smile or laugh, especially during difficult times. Seek humor in everyday happenings. When you can laugh at life, you feel less stressed.
- **Follow a healthy lifestyle:** Exercise at least three times a week to positively affect mood and reduce stress. Follow a healthy diet to fuel your mind and body. And learn to manage stress.
- **Practice positive self-talk:** Start by following one simple rule: Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to anyone else. Be gentle and encouraging with yourself. If a negative thought enters your mind, evaluate it rationally and respond with affirmations of what is good about you.

Table 1

Examples of Negative Self-Talk and How You Can Apply A Positive Thinking Twist to Them

Negative self-talk	Positive thinking
I've never done it before.	It's an opportunity to learn something new.
It's too complicated.	I'll tackle it from a different angle.
I don't have the resources.	Necessity is the mother of invention.
I'm too lazy to get this done.	I wasn't able to fit it into my schedule but can re-examine some priorities.
There's no way it will work.	I can try to make it work.
It's too radical a change.	Let's take a chance.
No one bothers to communicate with me.	I'll see if I can open the channels of communication.
I'm not going to get any better at this.	I'll give it another try.

A positive thinking can produce positive attitude and positive attitude leads to positive results. It will also make things become easier and even enjoyable. Here are other tips to have benefits from positive thinking because it can help you realize things that are never thought to be possible. Thinking big and positive is a success habit. By having positive thinking, you will face the world and every challenge more easily and wisely, and also you are more motivated and believe that you will achieve your success ahead that has waited to be reached.

Believe that you create your own destiny. No one can decide and create your future except you. You are responsible for your own life. There is no end to how much you can accomplish in a lifetime.

Keep your sense of humor. Laugh at and with yourself when possible. It will entertain you and your mind will be clearer and can finally make your thought more possible.

Make a commitment to yourself to think in positive ways and make a commitment not to think in negative way. Always fill your mind with positive things. Don't pollute your precious mind with something useless.

Be grateful or have gratitude in what you have today. Learn to utilize what you have in your hands and make use of it in the most constructive way.

Avoid everything that can affect you badly. Your environment is one of biggest factors that influence your thought. If the environment is negative, you will be surrounded by it and then your thought will be affected too. If it is positive, you will be surrounded by positive things that can support you for having positive thinking.

Try not to worry. If something bad happens or everything doesn't go well, do not worry. By adopting this attitude, you are going to believe that everything will be OK and fine.

Don't expect tomorrow to be perfect. If tomorrow is perfect, all of us should go straight to heaven or hell today.

Don't treat your loved ones as your slaves. They are ordinary human beings who have all your strengths and weaknesses and they cannot please you 24 hours a day. You have to learn to be affectionate too.

When you fall, you must understand that everyone falls no matter how great or how stable they may look. When everything seems to fall apart, tell yourself that if you could get out of this mud of sufferings, you could be one of the greatest persons on earth.

Positive mind begins with you. If people around you can't be as positive as you, don't feel disappointed and don't force them to be like you. Perhaps, your positive change can inspire them to be like you.

Avoid taking things personally. People who speak negatively oftentimes have a bad habit of doing so. It may be aimed directly at you, but more likely it is merely about the myriad of other factors which are going on in that person's life.

Be the bigger person. It's never fun being the subject of another person's negativity, but consider how miserable that person must be to be intentionally treating you this way. They may see themselves as a victim of the world, and they may be scared or hurting in some way. Anger

is one way that people use to hide their true feelings from others, as well as from themselves. Attempt to be compassionate and give them the benefit of the doubt.

All thought, good and bad, is creative and tends to lead to a material thing. That is why we must learn to be more positive. The environment and all the experiences in life are the result of habitual and predominant thoughts. Negative thoughts can tell us about something that needs attention. So, thoughts lead to discovering what needs to be done, and one can think positively or negatively to take care of it. Many people fail to see a negative occurrence as a learning experience and continue to feel victimized and helpless, ultimately blaming others for what they drew to themselves.

There is no greater joy in life than being positive. A positive mind anticipates happiness, joy, health and a successful result. Whatever the mind expects, it finds. A positive attitude helps to cope with the daily affairs of life. It brings optimism into your life and makes it easier to avoid worry and negative thinking. Adopting positive thoughts for your way of living will bring constructive changes into your days and make you happier and more successful. Positive thinking is a mental attitude that brings the mind thoughts, words and images that bring you to growth, expansion and success. It is a mental attitude that expects good and favorable results. Remember to.....

“Watch your definitions, they become thoughts.

Watch your thoughts, they become words.

Watch your words, they become actions.

Watch your actions, they become your destiny.”

Positive attitudes lead to happiness and success and can change your whole life. If you look at the bright side of life, your whole life will become more optimistic. According to medical research optimists are sick less and live longer than pessimists. Positive outlooks on life strengthen the immune system, cardiovascular system and the body's ability to handle stress. Optimistic, happy people believe that their own actions result in positive things happening and that they are responsible for their own happiness. They never blame themselves when bad things happen. So next time instead of dwelling on the bad, analyze it to figure out what good can come of it.

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