

# The Power of a Positive Attitude

We all carry on an internal dialogue with ourselves that continues more or less nonstop throughout our waking hours. But for many of us, much of our internal dialogue is negative which, in turn, can have negative consequences on our actions (e.g. quitting at tasks instead of persisting, becoming creatures of habit rather than trying new, unexplored things). In contrast, positive internal dialogue focuses on hope and positive outcomes. Someone with a positive attitude may acknowledge that there are some possible negative aspects to a situation, but they remain optimistic (i.e. positive) that things will turn out well.

In this issue of *Change Your Way to Health!* we provide some of the known benefits of choosing to develop a positive attitude, and how to go about becoming more positive in your outlook if it's not your natural tendency.

**Enjoy improved health and well-being.** In recent years, a growing body of research into 'positive psychology' has revealed the power of positive attitudes to change health and well-being. Some of the benefits of a positive attitude are: increased life span, lower rates of depression, lower levels of distress, greater resistance to the common cold, reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease, and better coping skills during times of stress.

**Have more energy.** Thinking negative thoughts depletes your energy reserves. Choosing positive thoughts, and letting go of the negative ones, can be self-liberating and energizing.

**Achieve goals and realize success quicker.** There is no doubt that one of the most important keys to succeeding at reaching your goals is a positive attitude. This is because a positive attitude can open your mind to a wide variety of options, motivate you to take reasonable risks, and propel you to take action.

**Inspire others.** People with an optimistic and 'can-do' attitude are inspiring to be around and their energy is contagious.

**Encounter fewer difficulties along the way.** Positive, optimistic people tend to be convinced that setbacks and obstacles are temporary and they try to learn from these events rather than avoid them or complain.

**Depend less on others for happiness.** Positive people tend to have more self-confidence and feel more at peace.

**Keep life in perspective.** Thinking positively does not mean putting one's head in the sand, nor is it being unrealistic. A positive attitude allows us to focus on the hopefulness of a situation, rather than letting a sense of hopelessness get us down.



# Make a change!

Anyone can learn to be a more positive thinker. If you have a tendency to be negative in your outlook, perhaps now is the time to make a change! It's important to remember we always have choices in life. We can choose to look at life negatively and see the dark side of situations, or we can choose to be positive and live a happy and fulfilling life. Here are some suggestions on how to do that:

- Rather than living your life on autopilot, make a conscious effort to fill your mind with positive thoughts.
- Keep a journal and at the end of the day write down all the good things that happened to you.
- Find something positive to say about everyone you meet.
- Use positive words and phrases in your internal dialogue with yourself and in spoken conversations with others. Talk about what works rather than what doesn't.
- Take action even if you aren't certain things will go well. When you challenge your fears, you build self-confidence. If things don't go well, look at the situation as a learning experience.
- Find reasons to smile more often. And if you don't have a reason to smile, try smiling anyway.
- Surround yourself with other positive people.
- Read inspiring stories and quotes.
- Learn to be more conscious of your thoughts through meditation and concentration exercises.
- Be appreciative of all that is good in your life.



If you would like help becoming a more positive person, you might investigate our E-learning course *Responsible Optimism*. Other related e-courses that include lessons and exercises about positive thinking are: *Taking Control of Stress*, *Taking Control of Your Mood*, and *Resilience: Facing Life's Challenges with Courage and Conviction*.

## Keep in touch



We want your questions, comments, and suggestions.

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