

The Power of Positive Thinking

Harness your positive power

A negative outlook usually leads to negative experiences, but taking an optimistic approach to life, and everything it throws your way, can reap dividends and lead to positive experiences. Some evidence even suggests that being positive makes us happier, and happier people generally live longer!

Be in control of yourself

The biggest difference between people is their attitudes. We can be positive or negative, and this is reflected in our enthusiasm for doing things, or our response to certain situations. Although you can't necessarily control the things that happen to you, you can control how you react to them. For example, if an accident holds you up on your way to work, you are likely to be late and quite possibly very angry — but getting angry is wasted energy. Have a coping mechanism or strategy — just accept you are going to be late and deal with it.

Dwell on the past

What is gone is gone, and how you deal with the aftermath is the most important thing. There is no point apportioning blame, either on yourself or others. You have the power to change a situation and move on. It is so easy to say 'I should have done things differently with the benefit of hindsight. However, if bad things have happened, look at tomorrow as exactly what it is a new day in which good things can happen, if you let them.

Get off to the right start

On waking, take some time to lie there and think about the day ahead and your feelings about it. Think about your attitude to each aspect of the day and consider if there is any part that you feel particularly negative about. If so, think about the best way to deal with the event in this situation, but more importantly, where possible, think about how you will manage in the future — is there a way of not putting yourself in this situation again in the future?

Enlist help

If there is any particular task that you really can't face alone, then enlist some help. There is nothing like getting someone else on board to help out to make you feel more positive about tackling a job, be it at home or at work. You could even try enlisting the help of your family, be a martyr and end up feeling miserable about your chores and responsibilities.

Be pro-active

If there are things in your day that you are truly going to struggle to be positive about, try and work out what is it about them that makes you feel that way. Is there anything you could do that could change your attitude towards it? If you regularly dread your commute to work, then perhaps you could consider a different mode of transport. If it is your job that is the problem, then is it perhaps time to start looking for work elsewhere.

Carry happy memories

If you are ever feeling negative, nothing quite perks you up like a happy thought. Think of the positive times in your life and when you were at your happiest. You might be able to prompt your memory and happy feelings by carrying a cherished item or photograph, or even by listening to a favourite song with positive associations.

Tomorrow is another day

Aside from famously being the last line in *Gone with the Wind*, this truism should be used in your daily approach. However bad your previous day may have been (and you might be feeling your previous optimism didn't pay off), it is worth persisting rather than letting yourself turn towards your dark side.

Thinking positively is about making a commitment to yourself to get the most out of your day. It is about being enthusiastic, keeping your mind focused on important things and developing strategies for dealing with problems. The best advice is to do your best each day and try not to look back at things that happen to you along the way just reflect on them in a positive learning way.

Of a person's mood, Abraham Lincoln once said, 'Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be'. It's up to you as to how you feel, and how you act. In turn, this will affect the way in which others react towards you. Remember, if you always do what you've always done, then you'll always have what you've always had.