

# Time For An Attitude Makeover

Are you missing out the fun in life? Do you have a sullen disposition or a shrivelled sense of humour? Try tapping into your optimism and you're more likely to overcome pain and adversity.

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Whenever our parents tell us that success comes with hard work, they nail down only half the equation. What they miss out is the ability to see the glass as half full instead of half empty.

We all know that a pair of rose-tinted glasses isn't going to see us through a bed of roses, but what we DON'T know is that positive thinking or optimism can be a powerful resource if we practise and harness it correctly.

As our society becomes more affluent and demanding, we are weighed down with anxiety and stress, which upset our outlook and bearings in life. Success slips away eventually and we find ourselves stuck in a rut.

To extricate ourselves from the tidal pull of such negativity, we need to develop a positive attitude to help us create, reinforce and prolong the joyful, affirming moments in our lives. There are many other benefits too. Positive values and beliefs help shape our perceptions and behaviour, enabling us to attract positive energy and people.

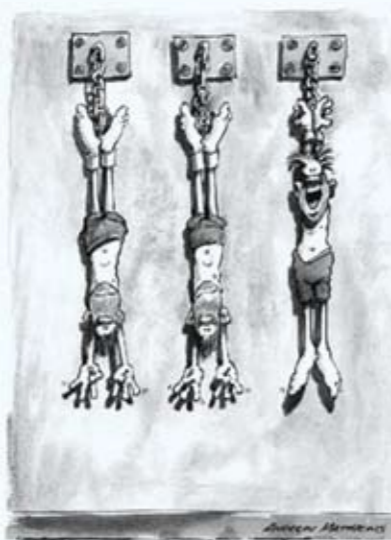
Opportunities, thus, come our way because people know that they can count on us in finding new ways of doing things no matter how difficult the situation may be. Such confidence creates trust and builds relationships. So, the million-dollar question is: how can we develop a positive attitude?

## Look On The Bright Side

Short-circuit negative thoughts by training our minds to flip nimbly, especially in tough times. We'll be amazed by the expansive horizons that greet us when we're able to view situations from different perspectives.

Consciously make the decision to embrace joy, for this helps us to move on and take on greater visions. Happiness broadens our perspectives and helps us recognise ways to cope with adversity. Though this may be difficult to master at first, constant practice will enable us to become adept in fostering a positive attitude.

Unpleasant situations are inevitable but they provide a fertile learning ground nonetheless, honing our wisdom and ability to become better life coaches.



"Sometimes I ask myself, 'Why am I the lucky one?'"



Our brains aren't hardwired for pessimism, so why not learn to accentuate the positive? A businessman who loses a deal can choose to be frustrated over the effort and time spent on a failed negotiation, or simply think, "Well, at least I've gotten a new acquaintance; perhaps there're other opportunities in store for me!"

## Simplify, Not Magnify

We tend to complicate matters and clutter up our lives with information, desires, material possessions, work, etc. As a result, we end up being confused, dissatisfied and unproductive, simply because we can't scale back our commitments.

Sure, the latest technological gadgets are cool but are those fanciful functions really necessary? Only by separating our wants and needs can we

make clearer and better decisions. The same applies to the way we plan our work and manage our projects. Are we dedicating too much resources when a simple system is all it takes to do the job?

Simplification is really about gaining control over our lives and rewarding ourselves with the most precious resource - time. We feel more empowered when we're in control - don't we just relish the prospect of having more time for our family, interests and goals?

Writer, speaker and simplicity guru Elaine St James says the first step is to make a small investment of time. Free up one hour daily for a month to engage in self-reflection: What is it that's complicating my life most? Am I working too hard? Are my kids draining all my energy? Then start thinking about how and what we can cut back. Ask the right questions, and be amazed by what we discover.

## Stay Away

Negative influences, be they apparent or subliminal, pervade our lives constantly. The media, our family members, friends and people around us all have an impact on us.

Even at work, people who naysay about our company

and colleagues can affect us. If we don't stand firm and let our emotions sway according to what we hear, we may get sucked into rumour mills, office politics and ultimately, soured relations.

We have the right to decide what's right or wrong, stand up for our principles and avoid negative people. Remember that unconstructive influences will hinder our thinking and route to personal success.

## Pep Talk For The Soul

Fear and doubt about our capabilities and possible outcomes indirectly restrain our performance and behaviour. To succeed, we need to believe in ourselves.

A powerful technique, positive self-talk creates self-worth, which instills confidence and assurance. Project a steady stream of affirmations internally by making strong, favourable statements about ourselves, such as "I can do it" or "I've done a good job". Constructive emotions are natural boosters.

For example, if you're going to deliver a presentation for the first time or to a panel of superiors, brace yourself by thinking, "What have I got to lose? This is the opportunity to show them my excellent work" or "I'm sure this is the best presentation they've ever seen".

## Believing Is Achieving

In his book *Think & Grow Rich*, famous author Napoleon Hill asserts: "What the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve."

Believing is one of the most difficult things to do. Many claim that seeing is believing but this is a reactive attitude. A proactive attitude is an attitude of faith - believing that we can take up the challenge despite the odds.

However, a strong belief must be supplemented by a well-conceived plan to ensure credible success. And even if the plan doesn't work initially, by learning from experience, making necessary changes and upholding the faith bring us closer to our goals.

Imagine a world without dreams - there won't be airplanes, light bulbs, telephones and modern luxuries, so dare to dream big.

## The Gift

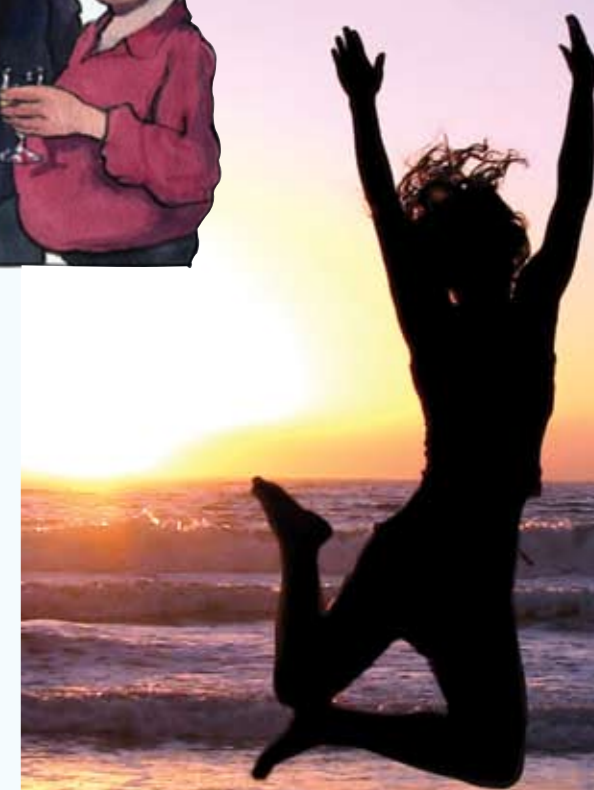
Self-doubt, pessimism, unrealistic demands, scepticism and discouraging talk all gnaw away at our endeavours to become more positive, turning us into inconsiderate people preoccupied with safeguarding our interests.

The question is: how can we hold on to this special gift? The answer lies within us. It's a choice we make - we need to take responsibility for how we want to lead our lives and make that conscious effort to live it.

Choose to make a difference today. If not now, then when?



All cartoons are taken from *Happiness In A Nutshell* by Andrew Matthews.



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