



Do Lectures [Follow](#)

The Encouragement Network

Apr 9 · 6 min read

## Should you Zig or should you Zag when it comes down to you and you?

Do Contribute | Creativity



*“Positive thinking will let you do everything better than negative thinking ever will.”*

## — Zig Ziglar

I'm a huge fan of Zig and his many works on personal development. His very name always reminds me to *Zig* when others *Zag*.

The late, great Zig Ziglar—who died in 2012 at the grand old age of 86—made presentation after presentation on the subject of self-motivation and improvement. Stood on stages from here to Timbuktu. That's a metaphor by the way. Though if anyone has ever given a speech on 'How to think' or 'How to become a better you' in Timbuktu, you can be pretty sure it was Zig or someone greatly influenced by him.

Zig also wrote and published mountains of self-help books in his lifetime. And a lot of people still buy and read them and take them very much to heart, because the very smart things Zig had to say will never date. They're as meaningful today as they were fifty years ago. His thoughts and ideas—wonderfully pithy and often very humorous quotes—all still hugely relevant and all just waiting for you to steal and make your own.

If anyone is Zig's successor, today, it's Seth Godin. A brand name you can always rely on. And who fits my own definition of a brand perfectly: *All promises made. All promises kept*. (No kidding, I even have an action figure of the man sitting on my desk to remind me to always remember to think *Zig* when I'm stuck in a rut thinking *Zag*. Or is *Zag* when I should *Zig*? Doesn't really matter. It's remembering to remember to adopt a new and different point of view that's important.) Seth Godin's insights—some so sharp you won't even know you've felt the keen edge of his mind until you move your head and the old one falls off—ever invaluable. And, better yet, always primed and ready to be put into practice. (i.e. steal and make your own.)

Zig Ziglar and Seth Godin two of the very best resources you'll ever come across on how to deal with the business of life and the business of business. I can't recommend them highly enough.

Trouble is. If you're not open—if you're not in the proper frame of mind to 'get' what it is they're saying—even Zig Ziglar's and Seth

Godin's inspired wisdoms can't hit you. They'll just slip and slide right on by. Everyone loses then—especially you.

So, to succeed, you do need to be 'in' and 'open' and 'ready to learn'—and mindfully so.

And there's simply no better way to achieve that than to Think Positively. Even go so far as to say to yourself out loud: "I want to learn. I'm open to learning. And I will do whatever I have to do to learn." Or words to that effect—as again it's the thought that counts.

*Think positively and positive things will happen.*

To think positively as opposed to negatively is all anyone really needs to start enjoying a better life.

Yet most people seem oddly resistant to the idea that a simple shift in mind-set can be so very beneficial.

Think positively and nine times out of ten you'll enjoy a more positive outcome. Negative thinking almost invariably leads to negative outcomes.

Both positive and negative thoughts are self-fulfilling. Think positive. You open yourself to more possibilities. Think negatively. You close down—setting yourself up to be a shadow of your possible future self.

So ask yourself: Why in heaven's name would you ever want to 'throw shade' upon yourself?

*Your 'Point of View' determines the entire scope of your thinking*

A person's 'Point of View' heavily biases their thinking output. Anchors all subsequent thoughts. Holds them tethered—shapes their ends—rough-hew them how you may.

The sad truth is that 'Negative Thinking' is nothing more than a bad habit for most people. The true tragedy is that they remain unaware of it for the rest of their lives. Negativity becomes the baseline for everything they do.

Which means the 'idea-frame' a person has of his or her self all but determines the success or failure of any and all their future actions.

That's why, at almost every level of personal development, the one thing standing in the way of a person's future success is themselves—or rather their 'old' selves.

How do you get out of your own way and start to take control of your life? Here's an idea: *Zig* while the old you *Zags*.

Start by looking at your situation, circumstance, or whatever problem you're facing from a new and different perspective.

And the simplest way to do that is to adopt a more positive and optimistic point of view.

Here's one of Seth Godin's many thoughts on the matter:

*“Optimism is the most important human trait, because it allows us to evolve our ideas, to improve our situation, and to hope for a better tomorrow.”*

And think—you can immediately use your more positive thoughts to re-shape the negative ones that will invariably emerge, out of old habit, because it's true, 'Old habits die hard'.

Thinking Positively is simple and effective. But it does take work. Not all at once. It simply calls for you to take one small step at a time. Then for you to take many more small steps all going in the same direction.

The hardest part is you having enough patience with yourself to do it and not give up.

Seth Godin again: *“Positive thinking is hard. Worth it, though.”*

### *Zeroing in on Kaizen*

Another great benefit of ‘Positive Thinking’ is that you’re already zeroing in on the very idea of success. You’re not setting yourself up for failure from the very start.

That first step away from the ‘old’ you, leads you on to the next step and the next—and so on—hopefully—*ad infinitum*.

A lot of little steps—little efforts—all made in the same direction—to help you achieve your desired goal. A better you—a more open you—a more positive you—a more productive you—a more happier you.

‘Thinking Positively’ is always a good thing. It can’t hurt. It can only help. And the only cost to you, initially, is a little effort—the first step.

The Japanese call it ‘Kaizen’—The deliberate and mindful daily practice of ‘Continuous Improvement’. That the small step you take today to be a better you, will make you a better person than you were yesterday, and will help keep you on the path to the even better you of tomorrow.

Here’s Zig’s take on daily improvement: *“People often say that motivation doesn’t last. Well, neither does bathing—that’s why we recommend it daily.”*

The daily practice of ‘Continuous Improvement’ has another incredibly positive benefit. Taking small steps—to improve one’s self—every single day—acts as a constant reminder that the mind is almost the only thing we have control over every single moment of our lives.

Encouragement enough, surely, for us to get out of the way of ourselves, if we ever want to improve ourselves—knowing that we have the perfect tool for the job—our very own minds.

Another thought from Seth Godin: *“You have everything you need to build something far bigger than yourself.”*

Which, not surprisingly, puts me in mind of ‘it’s time to suggest we all need to wake up and smell the roses and/or Third Wave coffee again’ and Woody Allen’s absurdly cogent definition of human life:

| *“Infinite darkness. Blip! Infinite darkness.”*

Reason enough, surely, for everyone to want to ‘Think Positively’.

So...

ZIG while the old you ZAGS.

THINK positive.

BECOME a better you. DO.

. . .

## Creativity

### Tony Broadbent

*Writer. Author. Designer. Illustrator. Idea-tor. ReThinker. | Born in England. Lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.*

*Sign up to our weekly Do Lectures newsletter here. It’s free.*

*Illustration by Tanya Griffiths*



Tony Broadbent