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The Real Power of Positive Thinking

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Positive Thinking is, arguably, the most accessible, most effective re-framing tool there is. And despite it also being the simplest and, in many cases, the first such thinking tool that people ever think of adopting, it should never be overlooked or dismissed by anyone—however learned or experienced. If for no other reason than it simply always works.

Even Winston Churchill had to find ways to cope with the continuing burden of life and death decisions other than, of course, resorting to champagne, brandy, or a good cigar. Had to find ways to overcome “the Black Dog” of depression, as he termed it. Ever the master of the positive reframe—he never sugar-coated anything, even to himself—he laid out the facts, simply, plainly, often devastatingly bluntly, but also never failed to point to “the sunlit uplands” that could be reached with diligent and sustained effort.

‘Reframing’ is when you consciously look at a problem and you deliberately expand your view of it. And if performed correctly, it can almost immediately give you a firmer grasp of an issue or a clearer view of unfolding events. It can even lead you to change your entire feelings about a problem, person, or situation.

And perhaps never more so than when the issue concerns you and you. Especially, if you’re experiencing self-doubt or being plagued by negative thoughts—an all too common event for many people, but a state of mind that anyone can find themselves in at one time or another. But the simple truth is you don’t have to put up with it. Not for one bit. You can ‘think’ your way out of it.

So is the idea here for you simply to think more positively? You bet your life it is. And for you to continue to ‘think positive’ as often as you can remember to remember to do so—as like everything else worth adopting in life, practice makes perfect

Once adopted, it’s certainly a simple enough practice to employ on a daily—even hourly—basis. As however bad a situation at first appears—every negative seeming event provides a clear opportunity for a positive reframe. Half full? Half empty? It’s entirely up to you. You’re the judge and jury—executive or executioner—of all your subsequent thoughts and actions.

It’s not merely a question of you pinning a label on yourself: optimist or pessimist. It’s more a matter of the mindset you adopt when confronted with a problem—from now on. Whether you choose to take control or simply go with the flow. Whether you set yourself up for success or prepare the road for failure.

Positive thinking is akin to compound interest for the mind.

I don't know who first said that, but they're awfully clever. Positive thoughts lead to more positive thoughts. And the more positively you think the more you'll establish a more positive mindset that will automatically look for the opportunities in any problem.

What's more—positive thoughts give rise to more contented emotions; a wonderful example, of course, being the practice of meditation.

Conversely, negative thoughts lead to even more negative thoughts and—as night follows day—a veritable slough of despond.

Is it any wonder that the positive or negative emotions you adopt on an on-going basis affect your biological state of mind and very being?

So the prudent next step should be: Beware what you think about. And—very important this—how you think about yourself and your present or future possibilities.

“No I can't.” “I could never do that.” “That's impossible.” “I'd fail before I even started.” “That's much too hard.” “I've always been a complete failure in all I've done—everyone's told me so.” And so on. And so forth.

So. Best. Beware. Because. There. Go. You.

“Problems cannot be solved at the same level of thinking at which they were created.”

— **Albert Einstein, fully accredited genius**

In the end, however large or insignificant it might all seem, at first, every little thing—every thought, idea, belief, or act—everything adds to or takes away from you. Pulls you up. Or pushes you down. Limits your possibilities or enhances them.

The way we think of ourselves—our self-esteem or lack of it—affects the way we think about everything else in life. It colours all our perceptions, attitudes and beliefs—our hopes and dreams. It affects every sin-

gle thing we do. The way we feel. The decisions we make. The actions we take.

This in turn affects the way we think about ourselves all over again. Adding more and more weight to the biases—conscious or unconscious—that we all carry to some degree. Causing us to spiral ever up or spiral down—to enhance ourselves or to limit the as yet unseen possibilities.

And all of it by the power of our very own thought.

Being positive with yourself is the easiest and quickest first step to effect positive change. And if that sounds too good to be true or too simple to be truly effective—trust yourself—you really can fly to new heights of possibility. All you have to do is ‘think positive’.

Look for the silver lining. See the glass half-full.

Say to yourself: “Yes.” “I will.” “I can succeed.”

And say it to yourself over and over again. Hear yourself saying it. Say it in the shower. Say it in the car. Say it as you’re walking.

Look for times to say it to yourself. Make it a personal mantra. Until even you start to believe in the more positive you. But don’t go mad—just enough for you to remember to remember to remind yourself you’re trying to do better as a matter of course.

“*Every day, in every way, I’m getting better and better.*”

— **Émile Coué, a truly encouraging French psychologist**

This is all of course nothing new. But you’d be surprised at how many people still haven’t cottoned on to just how powerful the simple art of positive thinking can be in their lives.

It’s not the beginning and end-all of the matter by any means. But it is a good beginning. A hundred years ago the French psychologist Émile Coué urged people to be positive by daily affirming to themselves:

“*Every day, in every way, I’m getting better and better.*”

Simple though it may be—such sentiments certainly can’t hurt. And who knows—they very possibly might do you some good.

But if Coué seems too simplistic—too rote—for your taste, then perhaps what the ever-popular Norman Vincent Peale said some thirty years later in *The Power Of Positive Thinking* might be more to your liking:

“When you get up in the morning, you have two choices—either to be happy or to be unhappy. Just choose to be happy.”

Timeless wisdom. As is something else he wrote:

“Change your thoughts and you change your world.”

The longest journey begins with the first step. The rest of your thinking life begins with your very next thought. So there’s no better time for you to ‘think positive’.

I know for a fact that I already believe in the more positive you—otherwise you wouldn’t have read all the way down to here.

Think about it.

Think positive.

Then be positive.

Do.

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Tony Broadbent

Creativity

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