

# **SUCCESS SERIES**



## **Revolutionary Positive Thinking**

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# Introduction

*“The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind.”- William James*

In the fast-paced world we are living today, life is busier, more hectic, more stress-filled, more tension-filled, and much more demanding than anything humankind has ever encountered in any previous era.

Life now requires more concentration, more stamina, and more energy than ever before. Technology has given us more free time and yet has filled those extra hours with more noise and confusion than any other time in human history.

So how are we supposed to handle this kind of demanding, busy, noise-filled stressful life? We need something that will help us get through our busy days and nights, help us to relax, and help us to handle our lives in a more graceful way.

That’s where this report comes in. In this information-packed special report, I’ll show you how to make it through each day, with your nerves and peace of mind intact. Read each chapter to find out how you can not only make it through life more calmly, but also influence others to find their own positive energy.

# Chapter 1

## Positive Thinking and Relationships

*“A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort.” - Herm Albright*

Positive thinking, in its most simplistic form, depends on your attitude. It makes you a winner or a loser. It's up to you. Whatever you think you can or cannot do, you're right! And your thoughts and attitude totally control your path, your destiny, and your future.

Charles Swindoll said, “The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes.”

Attitude is a choice. Remember Shakespeare's Hamlet, who said, “To be or not to be, that is the question.” Your very attitude will determine whether or not you will be. It's all in your mind.

“A man’s mind may be likened to a garden, which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild. But whether cultivated or neglected, it must and will bring forth. If no useful seeds are put into it, then an abundance of useless weed-seeds will fall therein and will continue to produce their kind,” according to James Allen, from *As A Man Thinketh*.

“You can accomplish anything, if you just put your mind to it,” said George McFly from “Back to the Future.”

It is essential that you develop strength of character. When you do, people around you will admire your fortitude. You must accept life as it comes and avoid a constant pity-party. Be strong and cope well, and the world will stand with you. But whine and you stand alone! So no more excuses, no more whining. Stop telling yourself what you can’t do; and do what you know you must do. Then do it to the best of your ability.

Positive thinking means also putting effort in order to fulfill your true potential. Life is about you and how you feel about yourself, not about whether you’re born to riches or poverty. It’s not about a list of relationships you’ve been in and it’s not about what you look like. It’s not about how much stuff you’ve accumulated or your status in the world’s eyes.

It’s about your self-image. So, what’s important to you? You must choose it or it will be chosen for you. You snooze, you lose! Many are capable of greatness, but they fail not because they didn’t have what it takes, but because they held back on their ability. Maybe they’re afraid to just let go and give it everything they’ve got. Too many use the half-minded approach - they never

really give it their all. Don't approach anything with half your mind engaged. William James told us, "There's no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision."

You must learn to trust yourself and give life everything you have. You might be asking, "What if I make mistakes?" Well, what if you do? You're human, aren't you? You are going to make mistakes, lots of them. Who cares? What's important is whether or not you learn from those mistakes. When you do, pat yourself on the back and remind yourself that there is no such thing as impossible. Impossible is doable, it just takes a little longer.

So, we've learned that a more positive attitude can literally change your life and make you happier and successful, but only if you choose to do so. Attitude is everything.

And with that in mind, let's talk about how you can start changing your attitude. For some, it might be as simple as flipping a switch. But for many, it takes practice, and lots of it. Each detail must be explored and added to your day. Do you wake up in the morning, jump out of bed, and say, "Good morning, Lord!" or do you drag yourself from the bed, muttering, "Good Lord, it's morning!"

Facing the day is a good place to start. For many, that's where it all starts to come apart. We dread getting up in the morning and having to face our day. Many people especially dread Mondays. They resist giving up that weekend and going back to work (many call it drudgery).

In order to turn that around, you need to find something good about getting up and starting your day. If you're married, or otherwise involved with

someone, try spending some time with that significant other. Have breakfast together, talk a few minutes, and smile at each other. I guarantee it will make a huge difference in the way your day starts. If children are a part of your life, spend some time with them too. Children have a way of looking at the world that can change your attitude forever, if you let it.

Spend a few extra minutes on your appearance. It's true that "clothes make the man, or woman." What they don't tell you is that clothes make you feel different about yourself. Taking care of your appearance makes you feel more confident. If you know you look good, you'll feel good too. It's a real spirit lifter! There's an old Hasidic saying that goes, "The man who has confidence in himself gains the confidence of others."

Watch your words and thoughts. Instead of saying to yourself, "Oh great, another Monday morning to get through!" try seeing the more positive side to things. Monday morning could mean another new start, a new week to make a difference and be more productive.

Quit telling yourself what you're doing wrong and start building yourself up with more positive thoughts about what you're doing right. Your significant other loves you, your children love you, and your friends think you're great. Find some fun things that you and your friends/ family can do together this week.

The more often you say negative things to yourself, the stronger those thoughts become, and the more you'll believe them. If you've ever experienced a loved one who beat you down with negativity, you understand that it can become a part of your own self-talk over time. Whatever happened in your past, in your



childhood or early adulthood, it's time to start talking nicer to yourself. You deserve it; be kind to yourself. Don't pick up that loved one's negativity and carry it any further. "If you think a certain thought long enough and hard enough, it becomes a fixed belief and you will find yourself behaving on the outside in a manner consistent with it," said Brian Tracy

If you find it difficult to be nice to yourself and you often forget to say positive things, write optimistic messages down on small cards and carry them in your pocket or purse. Then, when you feel discouraged and need a pick-me-up, pull out a card and read what it says. Remind yourself of accomplishments and how well you're doing. Say a nice thing to yourself; and pretty soon, that's what your subconscious mind will believe.

Before you start whining about how you can't think of any good things to say to yourself, stop and remind yourself that your attitude change is not caused by some mysterious outside force. Change is caused by you and your own thoughts. You're the only one who has control over what you think and say. Don't blame your attitude on anyone else. You can choose to think and act differently.

Don't let another's attitude affect your own. Too many are led by another's negativity. "Everyone was sure in a bad mood today," you tell your friend. "I guess it just rubbed off on me too." You can choose to be in a bad mood; or you can tell yourself that just because others are not happy today, doesn't mean you have to be too. Maybe if you choose to be in a good mood, a happy mood, you can influence others as well. Choose to be a good influence.

You can make that positive attitude a habit each day too. It can make a

difference in others' attitudes too and influence them to choose positive thinking. Any way you look at it, you can't lose when you choose the positive side to thinking.

Keep in mind though that you can't control what other people say, do, or think. You can influence their attitude, but you cannot dictate it. They will be the ones to think what they want to think, and so do you. You can only be a good example to others of what positive attitude is capable of bringing about. Rest assured, as an example to others, that you will annoy some, but you will definitely influence many others.

What do you do if someone says unkind or hurtful things to you? This may be surprising, especially if you have adopted an attitude of positive thinking. If you've found the positive side of the situation and have shown kindness, this could very well mean that it's not really about you at all. Remember, you're not responsible for their attitude, although you might be able to influence it. They have to find their own path towards a positive way of thinking. They may be facing obstacles that are unknown to you and others, but which they have to deal with on their own. Be persistent in your positive attitude for yourself and others.

All people are entitled to their own opinion, which may differ from yours. It doesn't mean it should upset you; it's simply their opinion. There are as many opinions in the world as there are human beings. Not everyone is going to agree with you on any particular issue. But your truth is your truth, no matter what anyone else says. It works the other way around as well - your truth is not necessarily theirs.

You must follow your own inner guidance. Shakti Gawain said, “Every time you don’t follow your inner guidance, you feel a loss of energy, loss of power, a sense of spiritual deadness.”

Marcus Aurelius said, “If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.” No one can hurt your feelings or make you feel less valuable as a person, unless you allow it. It’s your life; make it what you need it to be.

To keep that positive attitude flowing, spend time with friends and family who are of like mind. Be with non-judgmental people who accept you just the way you are. You don’t need a lot of friends, just a few really true friends. They are the ones who will love you no matter what, and can be depended upon through trials and jubilations.

As soon as you allow yourself to develop that positive attitude, your life will begin to change for the better. Positive thoughts allow for personal growth and success in all aspects of your life. As you practice being positive, you will anticipate happiness and favorable outcomes more and more. You won’t automatically wonder what bad thing is going to happen next in your life.

At this stage, the most important thing to remember is to be persistent. This is not something you can do every now and then. This is a lifestyle change. Instead of telling yourself what you can’t do, begin to tell yourself what you can indeed accomplish. Say it everyday; practice the positive attitude in every scenario, in every situation. Remember the joke about how to get to Carnegie

Hall — “practice, practice, practice!”

The best part is that as human beings, we think all the time. It’s just a matter of training your brain to think the correct way, to think in a positive manner. Want to change the way you feel about things? Then change your thoughts. Change your thoughts and you change your emotions. Which means you can be happy if you truly want to be, you just have to think it first. Now, this is not Peter Pan’s thinking happy thoughts; this is more important than that. This is the secret to change the way you feel about everything in your life. Your thoughts and emotions are tied together. They influence how you will live your life every single day. So why not make the most of it?

So what is your priority in life? Do you want to be happy and successful, to love and be loved? Do you want to grow and develop as a person? Then you must be persistent in your positive attitude, no matter what happens. Practice, practice, practice.

Keep in mind too, that since we’re only human beings, we will have some downtimes - times when we don’t feel very positive. This is normal, so don’t feel downhearted when it happens. It doesn’t mean it’s all been for nothing and that you have to start from square one. Give yourself the leeway to have a bad day, once in a while. It’s not the end of the world. Tomorrow will be a better day and you can start again. Just pick up where you left off. This self-improvement thing is a day-to-day project; all good things take time. You can’t just wake up one day and be completely changed. Remember that it’s the journey, not the destination, that matters.

Each day, there are choices to make. Bad days will happen; it's a given. So, get up the next day and make the choice that it's going to be a good day. Make it happen.

Be dedicated to a life of positive thinking and decision-making, then take action on those decisions. Beware of homeostasis or just plain laziness.

Eric Hoffer said, "The remarkable thing is that we really love our neighbor as ourselves; we do unto others as we do unto ourselves. We hate others when we hate ourselves. We are tolerant toward others when we tolerate ourselves. We forgive others when we forgive ourselves. We are prone to sacrifice others when we are ready to sacrifice ourselves."

## **Chapter 2**

# **Positive Thinking at Work: Happy Employees = Productive Employment**

*“Work is either fun or drudgery. It depends on your attitude. I like fun.” -  
Colleen C. Barrett*

*You only have a minute,  
Only 60 seconds in it,  
Forced upon you, can't refuse it,  
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it.  
You must suffer if you lose it.  
Give account if you abuse it.  
It's just a tiny little minute,  
But your whole future is in it.*

Dr. Benjamin E. Mayo wrote that poem and it says it all. Don't waste any minute, your whole future is in it. In order to utilize your life well down to the last minute, you must apply positive thinking any way you can to your life.

Positive thinking is one of the keys to success in the business world. And it starts with how you think about yourself, in relation to your work. If you're not as successful as you want to be, who's stopping you? Who's holding you back? Most likely, the only one stopping you from attaining success is you.

Are you thinking that you're just average in everything? Being average

isn't a bad thing, just limiting. If that's all you think you can accomplish, then that's all you will accomplish. Why stop at average? Why stop growing at all? There's always room for improvement. It could be that your thoughts are keeping you from being where you want to be, where you deserve to be. Maybe you're dissatisfied with your job, or the level you're working at. You know you're capable of more. Maybe your job is stressful, or maybe you're not making enough money. What do you do?

You start with your thoughts on the matter. Are you constantly telling yourself that you can't do any better, or make any more? Are you telling yourself that stress just comes with the territory? Do you feel you don't deserve something better? Has your self-esteem taken a beating? Why would you settle for that?

Once again, you need to change your thoughts. It's not up to somebody else to change things for you; it's up to you. The stress, the dissatisfaction, the low self-esteem, and the negative self-talk are all things you can change, because they are all things you've brought to the party, so to speak. In your mind, you've told yourself all the lies, or you've blamed other outside influences on your lack of success.

How do you turn things around? Start by setting yourself some goals; figure out what you want. Don't tell yourself you can't do it or you don't deserve it. Don't convince yourself that the boss simply doesn't like you, and that's the reason you haven't advanced in your job.

If you don't like your job, but don't feel that changing is a possibility right

now, you have to find something about your job that you do like. Maybe there's an individual that you enjoy working with, or there's some facet of the job that you don't mind so much. Focus on that and find a reason to do your best. The more you convince yourself that your job is dreadful, the harder it will be to go to work each day.

A positive attitude can make the job seem less stressful or less overwhelming. A change of attitude at work will change the emotions you feel as well. Finding the upside to the work place will make all the difference in how you feel, in your productivity, and in your interaction with others.

Find out what you need to know to improve the entire situation. If what you need is to learn new skills, approach that with a positive attitude and learn all you can. The irony is that the more you think you know, the less you actually do know. Go in with an open mind and a good attitude, and improve your skills. This will make a huge difference in your work life.

The brain is a wondrous machine, but requires sustained effort to maintain it. You must train your brain to consider all possibilities before making decisions. Let your mind explore new places and probabilities. Learn to take what you see and hear, roll it around in your mind, and see what you can make of it. Learn from others; wisdom shared is wisdom expanded. When faced with something different and difficult, don't give up and say you can't do it. Consider it a challenge.

To develop your intellect, you must use your mind constantly. If you don't think for yourself, but allow others to make your decisions and choices, you lose



your place in the destiny reserved for you.

Consider your gifts; and yes, you do have them. Ask yourself what you can accomplish with those gifts. What can you offer? In order to develop positive thinking skills, you must list your talents and abilities. If you're honestly not sure what they are, ask some friends and co-workers. They'll have no trouble enumerating them for you.

Attitude is what will help you find your wings and fly, or keep you grounded for life. Learn the discipline you will need, not only to survive, but to thrive as well. Set your determination level to high and never allow yourself to be thwarted in your goals.

Another way to positive action is to watch the words you speak to others in your work life. Honor those words; if you make a promise, stand by your word.

As an employee, how do you respond to a request? Is your response, "No problem," or "Consider it done!" If your first response is to look aggrieved and mutter, "I can't do it," or "that's not my job," you need to stop and consider an attitude adjustment. It's important to always show up for others and for yourself. Brian Tracy said, "Your attitude is an expression of your values, beliefs and expectations." Expect more of yourself. Maybe that's what's been missing. According to a Harvard Study, "Success in life is 85% attitude, 15% aptitude."

In order to achieve the success you crave, you need opportunities. These opportunities begin to show themselves as soon as your attitude changes. You will become just easier to be around, to work with, and to talk to. Everyone loves being around a positive person. They're happier, they smile more, they're more

confident, and they tend to make the people around them feel more confident too. You'll find more people will come to you for advice and help, because they can see you're a can-do kind of person. If you feel good about yourself, so do those with whom you come into contact each day.

So how do you do this attitude shift at work? Start by looking your co-workers in the eye and smiling at them. Give praise lavishly. If some co-workers did a good job, tell them and show them. When they did some tasks or favors for you, say thank you. This shows respect and appreciation; and who doesn't enjoy that?

Instead of the usual negative discussion at the water cooler, why not keep it more upbeat. Discuss positive subjects. Be encouraging with co-workers. You'd be amazed at the difference you can make in your workplace when you display a more positive attitude.

Another way to success is to make plans and write them down. Is there a special job you desire? Write it down; but don't stop there! Figure out the steps necessary to attaining that particular position. What do you need to do to get from Point A to Point B? Do you need to upgrade your skills, take classes, get certified? Write all the details down; but still, don't stop there either. Take inspired action. Robert Ringer said, "Nothing happens until something moves." So get moving!

Maybe your dream job is actually working for yourself. You can make this dream come true; use that new positive attitude. Figure out what you want in life, your purpose. What do you want to be when you grow up? Write it down, make a

plan, and find out what you need to get started. Then get moving. Act with enthusiasm and faith. And don't forget to take advantage of any and all opportunities; you never know which one will be the key to your success. "Small opportunities are often the beginnings of great enterprises," said Demosthenes.

Here too is a place where you may run into critics and naysayers. They will try their best to dissuade you in your efforts to attain your dream. They mean well, but do not listen to them. Many times, they attempt to change your mind about your dream venture, because deep down in their hearts, they are jealous that you're brave enough to try it and they are not. Subconsciously, they know if you try it and succeed, it means they're wrong; and they don't want to admit that.

It's not wrong to dream big, to want more, and to strive towards success. As for the naysayers and the critics, don't tell them what you're going to do, show them; just do it! They can't criticize you for succeeding; no one argues with success that's an accomplished fact.

As Patty Hansen said, "You create your opportunities by asking for them."

## Chapter 3

# Positive Thinking & Happy Children: How to Build Their Self-Esteem

*“One of the most important things we adults can do for young children is to model the kind of person we would like them to be.”- Carol B. Hillman*

It's a well known fact that children learn what they live. Ask Dr. Phil or any number of child psychiatrists to corroborate this. Too many parents and guardians think children, especially young children, don't know what's going on around them at home. Anger and negativity are not beyond their understanding. The younger children may not understand all the words, but they do understand the underlying emotions. They can feel those emotions.

Negativity thrown from one adult to another is bad enough, but when that negativity is directed at children, it can be devastating. Young children want so much to please their parents; they want and need acceptance, love, and understanding.

Charles Thompson, in his book “What a Great Idea!” quotes a study showing that at home, parents used eighteen negative statements for every positive one. These are usually directed at their children and can add up to a shocking 432 negative statements in one day!

According to James L. Hymes, Jr., “Young children scare easily - a tough tone, a sharp reprimand, an exasperated glance, a peeved scowl will do it. Little signs of rejection - you don't have to hit young children to hurt them - cut very deeply.”

The moment you begin to change your attitude from negative to positive, you will undoubtedly notice an immediate change in the children's attitude as well. When children are around calm, happy, positive adults, they absolutely blossom. We've discussed the fact that you can influence others with your attitudes and be influenced as well. Well, that goes double for your child.

The Law of Attraction is seen here more than just about anywhere else. If you are feeling happy and positive about life, and you interact with your child, they pick up on that very quickly and will respond in kind. Like attracts like. And just as easily, that child can pick up on your bad mood, your unhappiness, and your negativity, and respond just as quickly.

A word of warning on this point. Children cannot be fooled with false attitudes. You can't pretend to be positive and upbeat. Believe me they know the difference. If it's not genuine, they'll know; children hate to be lied to just as much as the rest of us do.

So, if you want your children to be positive in their outlook towards life, they have to see it from you; they have to live it every day. It has to be a part of their daily life. They need to breathe it in from all around them constantly. It must become a habit with you, to become a habit with them.

Equally as important is their sense of values. They must learn to value themselves and others for who they are, not for what they possess. It doesn't matter how many video games you give your children to enjoy, but their behavior towards others and their feelings are the ones that count. They must learn to judge other people for what's inside them - not on how they look, where they live,

or what they own. This is something that requires a lifetime of training for them to learn the lessons.

In our world of status symbols, it's not easy to teach these values. There's a lot of competition out there in the media and in the schools. It's up to you, as a parent, to instill good values in your children; and that starts with you as a role model. Do you constantly talk about money and buying things? Is possession of riches more about things than relationships? Teach them about being there for friends and relatives, rather than buying things for them. Encourage your children to find out what's unique and special about their friends, rather than the size of the television that friend owns. It's essential at an early age that they learn through your attitudes, words, and behavior that the important things in life can't be bought.

This is where you begin to instill your beliefs in your children as a standard in their life. As they grow, they will develop their own belief system, based on what they've been taught and the world around them. Make sure what they learn from you is positive and rich in value. Teach them about giving and doing for others less fortunate than themselves. Learning gratitude from an early age is always a good lesson. Children can contribute in their own little ways.

Unfortunately, these lessons aren't always taught in school. They must be taught in the home. As your children get older, you can even discuss positive thinking with them, showing them how to apply it in their own lives. You can even point out the difference between positive thinking and negative thinking, using television programs as examples.

Many parents think that a child's life is all happiness and joy, that negativity and worries couldn't possibly be a part of it when they're so young. They couldn't be more wrong. Children can become very anxious, even at an early age. Self-criticism comes next. While some children never seem to worry about things at all, others are filled with self-doubts.

They worry about school and doing well. They worry about having friends. Sometimes, they worry about being different than the other children. You must show them how to focus on good things - happy things - rather than focusing on what might happen if things go wrong.

Teach them about the Law of Attraction. Teach them to stop worrying about what might happen. Instead, teach them to think about what they would like to happen. Show them the importance of saying good things about themselves and others. Remember, you are their role model. Sometimes, you're even their hero. Don't let them down. And don't tell them how they should behave, show them. That's how children learn. If you're constantly worried or putting yourself down, they will pick up the same habits. Children learn what they live.

What do you do if your son comes to you one morning and announces that he doesn't want to go to school? "Why not?" you ask. "Because no one likes me; they might make fun of me," he counters. This is where you can begin teaching him to imagine what he wants to happen. What if he made a new friend the very next day, someone who liked him a lot and wanted to play the same games as he did? What if he became your son's very best friend? If he doesn't

go to school, he misses the opportunity of meeting that new friend. Point out the positive side, what good things can happen.

Find some children's books about kids overcoming problems and finding the good things in life, and read them with your children. A couple of good choices would be "Oh the Place You'll Go" by Dr Seuss, and Watty Piper's "The Little Engine That Could." Or make up your own stories about kids facing their fears and coming out as winners. You may have to do a lot of storytelling before they're feeling braver, but it will happen. Relate some stories of your own courage and perseverance in school, to show your child it is possible to overcome fears and live happily. Teach them early on to consider the positive side to problems rather than the negative; that changing your attitude changes your life.

There does seem to be a growing awareness amongst teachers in the schools these days concerned with building children's self-esteem. Rewarding the children for showing patience/kindness, for listening attentively, and for improving their communications skills, is being used in many schools, most especially pre-schools.

For the younger children, a program of star building works very well. The children earn stars for each accomplishment. Something tangible, that they can hold in their hands and show to their parents, works wonders for them. It's constant reinforcement, constant praise, and a real confidence booster for children.

If you start the self-esteem boosting regimen early enough in their life, you



can save yourself a lot of irritation later on. As children grow older, you have to deal more and more with adolescent emotions. By the time they hit their teen years, it's important to have that self-esteem firmly in place, if you can.

By the time your children hit the mid teens, they're seeing everything in black and white. If one of their friends inadvertently hurts their feelings, they could see that as meaning that no one likes them. Keep in mind that teen emotions are more intense and extreme than in early childhood. Your teens see themselves in a completely different way than your young children do.

Teens are undergoing cognitive and emotional development, and this can lead to them feeling depressed and moody. You'll find they have trouble developing a general idea based on a specific idea or experience.

As children become teens, the biggest issue is developing their own personal independence. They are trying to master skills they need day to day and finding some control over their environment. They're accepting the fact that they're growing up and deciding if they feel safe in their little world.

They're searching for their own identities. In the process, they can sometimes go to extremes, going deliberately against your wishes and even your beliefs. Because of the changes taking place in their bodies and their minds, it can produce some depression and moodiness. This should not be confused with clinical depression. Keep in mind that teens express their emotions very differently than younger children. It may even seem to be a little overly dramatic in some cases.

As they strive towards self-understanding, they may see themselves as

completely helpless, without talents and skills, hopeless cases; but as your teens learn to increase their own competence and self-understanding, the histrionics will diminish.

The best ways to handle the dramatics is to remain calm and continue to boost your teens' self-esteem. Show them that they do indeed have talents and skills; everyone does. At that age, they just haven't had a chance to discover them yet, but they will. As they show an interest in one subject after another, simply encourage them in each one. You'll never know when one will turn out to be the driving force in their life and become the dream for their future.

## Chapter 4

# Positive Thinking and Your Health: Are You Making Yourself Sick

*“You can’t get much done in life if you only work on the days when you feel good.” - Jerry West*

While everyone seems to know that negative feelings can eventually damage your health, there’s a new theory that a positive attitude can help you sustain good health and maybe even make you feel a whole lot better. Can it chase away illness? It sure can.

If a person has the ability to control good health, even a little bit, it’s worth looking into, wouldn’t you say? If you don’t have anything to lose by maintaining a positive attitude, and all the good health to gain, then why not maintain that optimistic spirit? At the very least, you’ll be happy, contented, and able to handle anything life throws at you.

A good start is with some regular exercise, which brings with it great benefits already. It will clear your mind, take care of stress, give you energy, and build up your stamina. That alone will improve your health and make you feel good about yourself. As your body improves in strength and tone, you’ll begin to feel proud of your ability and feel good about how much better you’re looking.

Want to minimize the risk of cardiovascular problems? Think positive! According to a 15-year study by Dutch doctors, involving 545 men between the ages of 64 and 84, optimism and just an overall great positive attitude reduced the health risk by half! That even beats the “laughter is the best medicine” cliché.

So, why is it that people with a negative attitude or a feeling of hopelessness seem to sicken, while people with a more positive attitude can recover more easily? Doctors have done studies on the human immune system trying to figure out exactly that. Unfortunately, the immune system cells of people who are hopeless and sad are unable to fight off diseases.

When these people are given hope and are able to think in a more positive manner, they develop stronger immune systems. A healthy immune system stands a better chance of fighting off diseases and allowing the person to regain good health. Part of the reason for this is that positive thinking and emotions give a person more energy and stamina; and that helps the immune system.

Doctors have discovered a biochemical connection between the brain and the body. According to the National Institute of Health at Georgetown University, emotions play a huge part in helping us maintain healthy bodies. Believe it or not, the psychological and chemical processes that control the neural, hormonal, and immune systems all use the very same neuropeptides in order to communicate. Since the brain and the body use the same chemicals, it makes sense that these elements would affect the mind as well as the body. It's all tied together. Scientists used to refer to it as psychosomatic illness, but didn't understand how the mind could make the body ill.

It makes perfect sense that if you can improve the mind, making it more hopeful and positive, it would then affect the entire bodily system, helping to cure what ails you.

Unfortunately for us all, hope isn't something your doctor can prescribe for you; you have to find it on your own. So, before you give in to that constant pity party, consider your health. And never trivialize the power of positive thinking.

Prevention would seem to be the ideal way to go. Work on that attitude adjustment now, before you become ill. A change of attitude will help your immune system work at peak efficiency, effectively preventing most illnesses. Let that positive thinking and emotion energize you and make you happier right now. Then learn to maintain that positive flow. The life you save could be your own.

Not only will positive attitude help you stay healthier, but it can even delay the aging process. A study done at the University of Texas uncovered the fact that people who viewed life more positively showed fewer signs of frailty than those who have a pessimistic outlook in life.

This is good news to the Baby Boomer generation. Thanks to modern medical breakthroughs, more and more folks are living past their 60s, 70s, 80s, and some well into their 90s. Modern medicine may be responsible for part of the longevity, but could it be possible that a positive attitude and more recreational activities are the reasons so many are experiencing long life?

Retirement age used to be 65, at which point a person stops working and starts sitting around, trying to find something useful to keep themselves busy. Boredom and loss of purpose may have ended many lives. Without a useful reason for being on the planet, many just withered away.

In the new generation, senior citizens are proving that they still have contributions to give to this world. Several decades of experience shouldn't be

wasted. We can learn a lot from our Boomers. Many are enjoying life, keeping up with what's going on in the world, traveling, and yes, still working at what they love to do.

And this is where the positive attitude comes in. After several decades of dealing with change, problems, and whatever life throws at them, they are still here showing us how it's done, and learning more. Muhammed Ali said, "The man who views the world at 50 the same as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life." Moreover, according to Patricia Neal, "A strong positive mental attitude will create more miracles than any wonder drug."

## Chapter 5

# You Are What You Believe You Are

*“Man is what he believes.” - Anton Chekhov*

What determines who you are and what you believe? Your upbringing, your parents' values and standards, and your experiences so far in life all blend together to make you the person you are right now. That's not to say that we're all experiencing family life the way it's being seen on television. Most of us didn't grow up with the Cleavers.

If you didn't experience great parenting, your upbringing brought with it different standards and beliefs. This directly affects the way you deal with challenges. A person with more positive attitudes and beliefs will deal with adversity differently than a more pessimistic personality. What one person considers a failure or a loss will be viewed as just more of life's many changes to another. It's a fact, however, that you will learn more from adversity than triumph.

What makes one person turn that adversity into positive energy, while another wants to turn up their toes and be done with it? This is where your belief system comes into play. Those who believe that nothing good will ever happen to them have doomed themselves from the start. Virgil said, “They can conquer who believe they can.”

This is where you need to change your self-talk, as well as your focus. Stop telling yourself what you can't do and start convincing yourself that you can do whatever you put your mind into. What you say about yourself will affect your whole life and everything you try or attempt to do. If you've already made up your

mind that you can't do something, it's all over; the handwriting is on the wall and the fat lady has sung.

Things not working out exactly as you hoped or planned? Maybe it's time to try something new. A positive attitude makes the transition easier and less painful, not to mention less scary. Taking risks is pretty scary; but if you don't try, you'll never know if you have the right stuff. Give yourself the wake up call before it's too late. Taking a risk can make you feel alive and eager to move on. Let's face it. Just getting up in the morning is a leap of faith some days. Have confidence in yourself and your ability to handle change and risks.

Handling things well when everything is going along smoothly is one thing. Maintaining a positive attitude when everything is falling apart is the real challenge. And when things are not going well, it's easy to wish you were anywhere else, doing anything else, than where you are. We've all heard the old homily about the grass being greener on the other side of the fence. But the truth is, the grass is greener wherever it's been watered. Handle things where you are; make them better, rather than wishing you're elsewhere.

Accept the situation as it is, then find the positive side. That's how we grow and learn from our experiences. Acceptance makes it easier for us to see how we can improve that situation. Then change your attitude and watch as your life begins to change as well. Katherine Mansfield said, "Could we change our attitude, we should not only see life differently, but life itself would come to be different."

Martha Beck said, "Any transition serious enough to alter your definition of



self will require not just small adjustments in your way of living and thinking but a full-on metamorphosis.”

You must never say never. Believe you can have whatever you want in life; and understand that doesn't mean wishing and hoping. It means working, learning, and striving for what you want in this life.

At the same time, don't be too hard on yourself. Don't think that if everything hasn't come out right, that it's just because you didn't think hard enough. Developing a positive attitude doesn't happen overnight. It's a life long process, but it will happen.

Start by removing negativity from your life as much as possible. Watching television news and reading the newspaper will unfortunately fill your life with bad news on a daily basis. Try taking a newsbreak; turn off the set and put away the paper for a while.

It's sad to say, but another source of negativity comes in the form of friends and relatives. There are those that constantly put out negative vibrations. Every thought and emotion from them is negative and becomes more than we can bear. They never find a positive side to anything. For them, the glass is always half empty and they never see the silver lining to that cloud. They don't mean to do it, but they make it very difficult to develop that positive side of ourselves that's so important to our well-being.

And it's human nature for them to pour out more and more negativity. Due to their influence, we also tend to put out positive vibrations. You may have to spend much less time with these toxic folks, at least until you find your footing in

the positive side of the world.

## Chapter 6

# How to Stay Motivated!

*“Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.”- Lou Holtz*

Okay, you’ve decided that the positive living approach is definitely the way to go. You’ve started greeting the new day as positively as you can. You’re meeting and greeting the world with a whole new attitude and your life is starting to show the signs already. People are actually being influenced by your new attitude and responding in kind. It really works!

Then something happens to trip you up just a little. You receive some bad news and wham! You’re right back where you started. How could this happen? What happened to your resolve? You need something you can do on a regular basis to keep yourself motivated, but what?

Take yourself over to the nearest public library or bookstore and find yourself some good titles about positive thinking. Start with Norman Vincent Peale’s “The Power of Positive Thinking.” He has several other volumes expanding on the subject; all are worth a read. When you start to feel alone in this journey, pull out a book and read about others changing their lives, and how you can too.

Another way to keep yourself motivated is to go online, if you can. Find other people of similar minds and talk to them. Listen to their stories and how they handled things, and then try a few techniques to get yourself back on track.

Find some activities that give you real pleasure, things that excite you and

allow your talents to shine. This makes you feel good about yourself and promotes positive emotions. Find something that interests you, something you'd like to learn to do and take lessons in. Each time you succeed at something, it builds your self-esteem and motivates you to try more, thereby succeeding often.

If you've figured out what you want to do and put it in writing, along with the plans to help make it happen, now's the time to remind yourself of those goals. Take the steps necessary to make your goals a reality. When you need some motivation, look at those plans and dreams, see how close you are and how much closer you can be if you stay motivated.

Above all, stay away from negativity in any form. Avoid the cynics and pessimists, and any who only want to complain. They will eventually drag you down to their level, and your motivation will disappear like dew on a hot morning.

Most importantly, don't ever give up. Keep dreaming about what you want; keep that image in your mind, night and day. Work hard at what you want to achieve and never let negative thoughts cloud your mind. If you have faith in nothing else, at least have faith in yourself. And when the going gets tough, find ways to keep your spirits up and keep going. Keep moving forward.

Avoid boredom and stay active. When you're motivated, you can't be bored. Hang around with excited, motivated people and it will rub off on you too. Dream about your future. Charles Kettering said, "I am not interested in the past. I am interested only in the future, for that is where I expect to spend the rest of my life."

There are going to be some days that will take every will power to feel

motivated and move forward. What can you do? Try thinking of past successes - things you've accomplished that make you feel good about yourself, things you're proud of yourself for doing. You may need to sit down and write them down on paper, to make them more real for you right now. You may need some proof that your life hasn't been a waste of time and energy.

Now list all the plans you've got going for you right now - dreams that are in the works, so to speak. Let yourself get excited over the prospect of realizing those dreams in the near future. See if you can find new ways to bring about those dreams even sooner. That's sure to motivate you when all else fails. But try not to get too impatient with yourself here. The impulse is to throw caution to the wind and get what you want immediately, but simmer down and let it happen as it's supposed to, as you've planned for it to unfold.

While it's important to work within your plan, don't wait for everything to be perfect before you make that move, otherwise you'll be forever in limbo, waiting, waiting for a perfection that will never be. Don't wait for the perfect moment. Work within your plan and take that first step. Make that first move. Frustration sets in when you make all the plans you want, make lists, detail every step, but take no action.

Is it possible to be positive all the time? Can optimism be maintained on a continuous basis? The answer is no, of course not; but if you work at it, trying to keep yourself on track, you will have many more up days than down. Positive thinking and action can actually start to multiply around you, one thing leading to another, like a wave building up before it hits the beach. According to Colin

Powell, "Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier."

Another great motivator and one, which most busy people seem to completely forget about, is to take a vacation now and then. You need to recharge those batteries, refresh your attitude, and renew your commitment to yourself. Without sufficient rest and relaxation, you will burn out fast. Taking time off from work is essential to your mental, physical, and emotional health. A change of scene is refreshing especially to your mental state, and is essential to maintain your positive attitude towards life.

## Chapter 7

# Are You An Optimist or a Pessimist?

*“The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true.”- James Branch Cabell*

Noticing the difference is easy. An optimist, when faced with a problem, tends to find the up side to the situation and starts figuring out ways to solve that problem, or ways to turn it around. A pessimist, however, immediately throws up his hands, and yells, “That’s it; it’s all over. I can’t handle this anymore.” Or he will distance himself from the problem, pretending it doesn’t matter. This is denial, and it never works. Pessimists see the glass as half-empty, rather than half-full. They see the hole, instead of the donut; the cloud, rather than the silver lining.

An indication that you are dealing with a pessimist is in a simple phrase they will use in stressful situations. “I can’t.” The pessimist feels helpless, powerless in that situation and it shows in their response. The optimist responds with “I won’t.” This shows that they are making a conscious choice, not just reacting.

A pessimist is afflicted with the “what if” disorder. He constantly thinks, “what if something bad happens, what if I lose my job, what if co-workers don’t like me, what if, what if, what if...”

An optimist prefers to think more positively. What if nothing bad happens, what if everything comes out fine? They tend to focus on what they really want, not what might happen to them.

What exactly are the benefits of being optimistic, rather than pessimistic? For starters, an optimist is more likely to achieve their goals, because they never give up. They may even achieve goals faster than their more pessimistic counterparts. Optimists are just naturally happier, sunnier, and more energetic individuals; and they actually encounter fewer obstacles along the way. They also tend to inspire others to a more optimistic behavior and greater achievement.

Optimists are easier to be around, and can even make others feel more energetic and positive. Pessimists are very difficult to deal with and can make people around them feel very depressed and hopeless too.

Now true optimism is not sitting back, thinking positive thoughts, and hoping everything will turn out all right. It's how you see the world, positively rather than negatively. You face each situation, each problem, and each occasion with a positive attitude; and you always look forward to the benefits you will derive from it. The pessimist focuses on the problem, rather than the solution. They don't find a solution, because they're not looking for one. They're totally focused on failure. "That's just the way it is; there's nothing we can do," they'll tell you.

An optimist really believes they can make a difference in the situation or the problem, that there is a solution. They tend to bounce back quicker from losses and other life challenges than the pessimist. The pessimist sees failure as inevitable and never moves forward to reverse it.

What's most difficult to take from pessimists is their judgment of others.



This is the only way they can feel good about themselves. With so much self-hate, it's no wonder that they have so little confidence in themselves or any self-esteem. This attitude brings everyone down to their level. Dr. Phil would tell you they do this because there's a payoff somewhere. So, what is it? They don't have to take responsibility for their own lives; they take no action to pull themselves from this pessimistic mindset.

Sidney J. Harris said, "A cynic is not merely one who reads bitter lessons from the past, he is one who is prematurely disappointed in the future." And Peggy Noonan said, "Cynicism is not realistic and tough. It's unrealistic and kind of cowardly because it means you don't have to try."

What it comes down to is that your attitude is a conscious choice. If you choose to be pessimistic, you're choosing to see the down side of every situation, judge people unfairly, and live unhappily the rest of your life. What an oppressive existence!

On the other hand, if you choose optimism, you're empowering yourself to see the positive side of each challenge, seeing the good in people, helping them to see the good in life too, taking action to further improve your own life, and living happily with friends and family who care about you.

Choosing to be more optimistic and positive does not mean you won't encounter difficult times, trauma, loss and many challenges. What it does mean is that you will have more power on your side to help you through those tough times. You'll bounce back faster and make better choices, rather than letting life just wash over you. You'll learn to be proactive, instead of reactive.

If you're not naturally optimistic and positive, don't worry. You can learn how to use your thoughts to change your attitude and emotions. It won't be easy; some days will be very challenging, but you can do it. Each time your mind produces a negative thought, stop right there and turn it around to find the positive aspect of the situation. Do this each time and soon, it will become a habit to be positive and upbeat about your life.

It's your choice. "Change your thoughts and change your world," said Norman Vincent Peale

## **Chapter 8**

# **Got Problems? Congratulations, You're Alive!**

*"You can come out of the furnace of trouble two ways: if you let it consume you, you come out a cinder; but there is a kind of metal which refuses to be consumed, and comes out a star." - Jean Church*

If you have problems, congratulations, it means you're alive. A person with no problems is not really alive; they just think they are. In order to tackle those problems, you need knowledge; knowledge is power. And when a problem suddenly tackles you, remember the first words of the "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" - DON'T PANIC! Take a deep breath and look at the problem from all angles, gather your information, and study the problem. There's always a solution; it's just a matter of some creative deduction. Don't let yourself get flustered. Emotions won't solve the problem; you need to have a cool head and a keen eye for the solution, which may be closer than you think. Stanley Arnold said, "Every problem contains the seeds of its own solution."

So, when you don't know where to turn when faced with a problem, turn to yourself. Everything you need is already within you. Start organizing. Instead of getting tensed and stressed out, calm yourself. You can't think and focus when you're emotionally overwrought; and you certainly can't solve a problem in that

state. Your decisions in that moment will be completely off-kilter and out of focus.

Sigmund Freud said, “The chief duty of a human being is to endure life.” Thank goodness there’s more to it than that! How awful to go through life simply enduring! Don’t just endure life — enjoy it!

A sign, hanging on the laboratory wall of Charles Kettering of General Motors, contains these words: “Do not bring me your successes; they weaken me. Bring me your problems; they strengthen me.”

The first thing you must acknowledge is that life isn’t necessarily a bowl of cherries. Things might be difficult, but not impossible. Remember, the impossible just takes a little longer to solve. Life is not for the faint-hearted. It can sometimes be very tough, very hard to take. John Lennon told us, “Life is what happens while you’re making other plans.”

The important thing is to never say die. Shakespeare said, “A coward dies many times before his death, the brave man only once.” Be courageous!

Sometimes, it’s not enormous challenges that frighten us, but just the idea of doing something different - stepping outside the comfort zone. The trouble with a comfort zone is that it can turn into a very deep rut and we become trapped in it. Don’t stay in the rut. Pull yourself out; challenge yourself. Try something completely different. Get out of your comfort zone. Does it terrify you to step outside that very comfortable zone? It doesn’t have to be a giant leap forward. Try just taking baby steps. Just don’t be afraid to take the next step and the next. Don’t start backing up or the beeping noise will give you away. Before you know it, all those baby steps will add up and you’ll discover you’re on your

first road trip!

Rudyard Kipling said, “We have forty million reasons for failure, but not a single excuse.” So don’t be afraid of failing. Failure isn’t fatal or permanent; and it can actually help you towards success. At the very least, you learn how not to do something.

Fear is a nasty habit that eventually develops a defeatist attitude. If what you’re trying isn’t working, try something new and different. It’s the old “if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again” attitude.

The word “worry” is actually derived from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning “to strangle or choke.” Being a worrywart means literally choking yourself. Time to give it up. Robert Frost said, “The reason why worry kills more people than work is that more people worry than work.”

Some days, you’ll feel like you’re on the road to nowhere and you’re getting there really fast. There will be days when you’re just bored or frustrated, asking yourself if this is all there is. It may even feel like you’ll never be happy again. Tough times are going to come, that’s just part of life. You’re going to get frustrated and disappointed, and you will be faced with problems. That’s life. There’s no way things will be wonderful all the time.

How would you learn to appreciate wonderful times if you don’t experience bad ones now and then? You can’t appreciate being high on a mountain top if you don’t occasionally encounter the valleys in between. You can only enjoy rainbows after a storm.

So, how do you avoid the defeatist attitude? For starters, don’t talk defeat.

Whether it's defeat or acceptance, you can talk yourself into either one. Use good, hopeful words, and never talk down to yourself or to others. Remember, you can if you think you can. You've heard the expression, "he's his own worst enemy." Don't be your own worst enemy; be kind to yourself. Find your own potential. You have it within you, it's there if you just look for it.

Find a way to take advantage of the adversity that happens in your life. J.C. Penney said, "I would never have amounted to anything had I not been forced to come up the hard way." William A. Ward said, "Adversity causes some men to break; others to break records." And even Shakespeare stated that, "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

Do you often feel fearful? Do you feel inadequate or inferior? Do you feel you need to be doing something exciting all the time, or be around other people constantly, to avoid the fear of being alone?

When faced with a fear, do not shrink from it. This allows that fear to increase in size, making you even more fearful of it. Face it squarely, look it in the eye, and take action! Then watch as that fear begins to shrink and diminish right in front of you.

After you conquer that fear, you'll smile and ask yourself why you were ever afraid of it in the first place. After all, look how tiny it is now, almost not worth bothering with at all. Theodore Roosevelt said, "I have often been afraid, but I wouldn't give in to it. I made myself act as though I was not afraid and gradually, my fear disappeared."

The most ridiculous fear of all is of what might happen, what might occur.

Don't let fear paralyze you. Think hopefully. Just being on the planet means a miracle happened already. Think, believe, work, and help those around you to be brave.

In the words of Jack London, "I would rather be ashes than dust! I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry rot. I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time."

Look at problems in your life in a positive way. They allow us to come up with solutions, encouraging us with success, thereby promoting self-confidence in our own abilities. Use positive thinking to help you overcome obstacles, defeat any difficulty, and build yourself up.

Life can be a bed of roses. Instead of telling yourself that those roses have thorns, try it this way: those thorns have some beautiful roses!

According to Zig Ziglar, "You cannot tailor make the situations in life, but you can tailor make the attitudes to fit those situations before they arise."

## Chapter 9

# Expect Miracles

*“Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful, it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.” - King Whitney, Jr.*

The dictionary says a miracle is a wonderful or surpassing example of some quality. We should expect great things, and stop expecting the worst in every situation. Expect something miraculous, and you might just be happily surprised. Thomas A. Edison said, “If we did all the things we are capable of, we would literally astound ourselves.”

You can actually create happiness. You can be happy, but you must first choose to be happy. Abraham Lincoln once said, “Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”

The best way to show your happiness, and indeed to increase that happiness, is to show gratitude. Show gratitude to the people in your life who have touched you, lifted you up, and taught you the important life lessons. This will increase the positive flow and will influence others to be grateful too.

When the days seem dark and you’re wondering what happened to the positive sunshine in your life, think of those who taught you how to enjoy life. Expect miracles. Learn to count your blessings; find some every day and write them down. Listing your blessings will magnify your positive attitude and emotions. Each day, see if you can find ten things to be grateful for in your life. It



may be large blessings some days and tiny ones the next, but they all count.

Keep your dreams alive. Set your goals and keep them. Each time you accomplish a step towards a goal, make a note of it and pat yourself on the back; congratulate yourself. Your self-esteem will improve and you'll strive even harder towards your dreams.

Once you've decided what your ultimate dream is, begin to take steps to get you where you want to go. Take inspired action. Now, begin to see that ultimate goal; that dream in your mind. Whatever it is, picture it in your mind in detail. If it's your dream home, see it in your mind, expand it, decorate it, even picture yourself walking inside it. If your goal is a dream job, picture that - see yourself in the job, doing the work you love, interacting with others. If your dream is to own your own business, see it in your mind, figure out all the steps to achieving that goal. But always see yourself succeeding at whatever that dream happens to be. There will be struggles, but always picture a successful outcome. Expect a miracle.

If your ultimate goal is to meet the exact perfect person for you, someone special in your life, you have to put yourself out there, in order to meet that special someone. Hiding at home won't find you that significant other you desire. You need to put yourself in what Dr. Phil calls a target rich environment. Go places where you'll meet people. Find places to have fun and you'll find others looking for that fun too. Be willing to meet and greet.

Apply what you've learned about a positive attitude and avoid negativity by all means. Be your own positive, creative self and enjoy having fun. Your

attitude will draw other people to you like a moth to a flame. Someone with a happy, joyful nature automatically attracts others. They just naturally want to be around someone who exudes joy and happiness. Who knows — you might just find your soul mate!

Another way to show gratitude is to exhibit appreciation to those who make a difference in your life, even in little ways. Notice even the little things they do for you. Compliment them on their appearance or their great ideas. Make note of their efforts, even if those efforts don't produce positive results. Say thank you, remember their birthdays, send them flowers. Most importantly, tell your friends and family how important they are to you.

On the subject of gratitude, Marianne Williamson had these words for us, "Gratitude has a cleansing effect on the soul, healing us from the inside out. When something good happens and we give thanks for it, then its positive effect expands within us." She also encourages us to keep gratitude journals, stating that "gratitude is an opener of locked-up blessings." She said, "Gratitude journals are not just lovely, they work. When we say 'thank you' we are reminded of our place in the great and grand design of things."

If you're on the path to success and positive thinking, gratitude is not only a good idea, it's essential in your personal and professional growth. Gratitude will dispel the negative feelings and keep you on the right path.

By spending your days expecting miraculous things to happen, thinking in your mind that miracles will start to occur, you actually bring them into your life. You're focusing on the positive rather than the negative. It's similar to abundance

- you begin to draw it towards you, instead of chasing it away. You have more emotional strength available to you than you ever dreamed possible.

Remember to give yourself time and space to grow and learn, to believe in your own special power, and to be happy. Don't discount your personal value and don't let anyone else de-value you either. Know in your heart what you're capable of; know your strengths and weaknesses. Enjoy life and all it has to offer. There will be bad times, but there will always be good times too. Keep in mind that you can't have one without the other.

Life may slap you in the face now and then, but learn from your mistakes. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and start again. Don't make the same mistakes. Make different ones this time. You'll be stronger each time something happens and you'll be better able to handle things the next time. Learn constantly. Stretch your mind! As Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "A mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions."

## Chapter 10

# Positive Thinking Hawaiian Style: The Seven Principles of Huna

*“Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.” - John Homer Miller*

In an effort to give you all the information available to help you develop a positive attitude towards your life and others, we are including this wisdom from the Hawaiian Islands - knowledge they refer to as “Kahuna.”

This is not an occult system, but is based on human psychology. Huna simply emphasizes basic, normal living in every aspect of life. It's a day to day road map for traveling through life.

The basic beliefs of Huna can actually be summed up in two simple ideas: ‘no hurt’-‘no sin.’ Sin would be anything hurtful to yourself or to others. And the other idea basic to Huna belief is that you must serve to deserve. This means you must be of help to others in order to feel worthy of goodness in your own life.

Believers of Huna are taught that the human being consists of: (1) the body, (2) the mind, which encompasses the conscious (uhane - the middle self) and the subconscious (unihipili - low self), and (3) the aumakua (super conscious - high self). The concept of a deity was considered one step above the high self and is actually believed to be a part of the human personality; we have a divine connection.

Believers use the triangular symbol to denote that once we have all three

of ourselves working in harmony; we are in perfect communication. All the selves must do their separate jobs and work together in order to achieve our potential as humans and spiritual beings.

When all three are working harmoniously together to solve a problem in the here and now, or striving towards a better future, and things begin to happen, it may appear to be a miracle. Believers, however, do not believe that this is in any way supernatural, but simply the natural order of things working as they are supposed to work.

### **1. Eke': The world is what you think it is.**

Everything in our world, everything in our own reality, comes from our thoughts. We share this with friends, family, co-workers, and everyone else. According to the Huna belief, if we would change our world, we must change our thoughts. It is a waste of time and energy to try and change the outer world on our own. We must begin by changing ourselves, if we wish to help change the world. It begins with us. We must change the way we think, going from a belief in lack to a belief in abundance. This is Eke' working within to create the outer world. All the other principles of Huna stem from this one.

### **2. Kala: We are all connected; there is no separation and no limits.**

Everything in the universe is connected. Our minds and bodies are connected, as well as earth to man, plants, animals, sky, and ocean. We are all connected and the separation we perceive is merely an illusion. It's only our

thoughts that make us believe we are separate from the rest. According to the Huna belief, this causes an illness in humankind. Underneath this sense of separation is the connection. If we rid ourselves of these thoughts of separateness, we will reconnect, become one again, and be healed. The expression they use in the islands is “hang loose,” which simply means when you get uptight, you create a tension, which in turn causes the separation. When you “hang loose,” you relax, you feel better, your relationships become better, and you go with the flow. Kala does not mean that you must accept things as they are; only that if you relax with them, you can change them more easily.

### **3. Makea: Energy flows where attention goes.**

Events are created wherever there is a flow of energy and attention. Focusing your attention on a particular object or idea causes the energy to flow in that direction. Whatever the nature of your thoughts is, you feel that flow in return. Positive energy put out into the universe, means positive energy flowing back to you. The same goes for negative energy. If you put negative energy out into the universe, it will return to you as well. If you put out thoughts of abundance, not occasionally but consistently, then abundance flows back to you. You can develop the skill that will begin to bring the positive energy back into your life. Do not focus on anger or fear, but on happiness and joy. Change your attention and you change your world.

#### **4. Manoua: Now is the time of power.**

This is to teach you to remain in the moment. There is no power in the past and no power in the future. There is only power in this moment, right now. The past has no power over you, so you must release the burdens of the past. Whatever thoughts you possess are what you will bring with you into this moment. If you have beauty in your life, you will create beauty. And you must increase that beauty by appreciating it right now. If you stop appreciating the beauty, you will lose your sense of beauty and it will disappear from your life. Appreciating what's around you causes it to increase. The more you take pleasure in what's around you, the stronger it becomes. According to the Huna belief, the future does not lay waiting for you to move forward and run into it. It is created in every present moment by what you think right now. Getting rid of the past creates a new future.

#### **5. Aloha: Love, pure and simple**

The root of the word means, "to be happy with." The secret here is that to love is to be happy with something or someone. The degree of your happiness dictates the degree to which you are in love. The expression of love is important. Letting criticism, anger, and unhappiness in will diminish that love and cause pain around you. Love does not mean inflicting pain, hurting people, or getting yourself hurt. Love means savoring the happiness, the joy, and the pleasure in any relationship.

## **6. Mana: Divine, creative power or life force**

This belief presupposes that there is only one source of power and that the source flows through each of us on the planet. It flows not only through human beings, but through the earth and everything that lives on it or above it. Mana is considered the inner power that gives each thing its own creativity. Mana is the power of the sea, and the wind through the clouds. It is the power of human beings to be creative. The important idea here is that power comes from within. Nothing outside of yourself has any power over you. Your very existence stems from this power within; and if you believe that something else has any real power over you, it diminishes your own power. Holding it back, trying to tamp it down, or pretending you don't have the power, also diminishes it. By allowing yourself to experience this power, to feel it, to use it, and claim it, gives you the power to reach your highest potential.

## **7. Pono: Effectiveness is the measure of truth.**

There is no one way to do anything. There is always an alternative. We are not stuck doing things one way forever. There is no one truth, or one method or technique. There is no one kind of medicine or one way to be happy. The ways you can use to achieve your goals and attain happiness are myriad. And nothing is carved in stone. Your purpose or plan may be of paramount importance, but the methods to achieving them are vast. Use the proper means to achieve the goal. For instance, if what you desire is peace, you must use peaceful means to achieve that goal. Violence is inappropriate, because it only



begets more violence. According to this principle of Huna, if you start out with peace in your heart, you will move towards peace in your life. This principle is a practical truth and may be used as a way of living with others and yourself.

According to Max Freedom Long, “If you are not using Huna, you are working too hard.”