INSPIRED
To Make Healthy Choices

Be enthusiastic, focused & optimistic.

Reduce stress to enjoy life more.

Practice positive thinking every day.

Aim high and do your best.

One of the biggest differences between people is their attitudes.

Research by psychologist Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania revealed that optimistic people are happier, healthier and more successful than those with a negative outlook on life.

Researchers continue to explore the effects of positive thinking and optimism on health.

Health benefits that positive thinking may provide include:

* Increased life span
* Lower rates of depression
* Lower levels of distress
* Greater resistance to the common cold
* Better psychological and physical well-being
* Reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease
* Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

All of us have the power to turn negative thinking into positive thinking.

It takes time and practice to create this new habit. Try the following ways to think and behave in a more positive way:

O **Check yourself.** Stop and evaluate what you're thinking periodically during the day. If you find that your thoughts are mainly negative, try to find a way to put a positive spin on them.

O **Be open to humor.** Give yourself permission to smile or laugh, especially during difficult times. Seek humor in everyday happenings. When you can laugh at life, you feel less stressed.

O **Surround yourself with positive people.** Make sure those in your life are positive, supportive people you can depend on to give helpful advice and feedback. Negative people, those who believe they have no power over their lives, may increase your stress level and may make you doubt your ability to manage stress in healthy ways.

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Whether in school, work or at home, negative thinking damages confidence, harms performance and paralyzes mental skills.

When something upsets us, there's a split second when we can decide to be miserable about it, or not.

Of course, this may not apply when something deeply upsetting happens, but even then we can develop an ability to view things in a more positive light.

Positive thinking doesn't mean that we keep our heads in the sand and ignore life's less pleasant situations.

It just means that we continually practice approaching the unpleasantness in a more positive and productive way.

For more information:
ATTITUDE
www.guideinc.org

Here are more ways to practice positive thinking:

O **Practice positive self-talk.** Start by following one simple rule: Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to anyone else. Be gentle and encouraging with yourself.

O **Focus on the future.** You can't change the past, but if you decide where you want to go in the future, you will give yourself the best chance of getting there. Always aim high and you will make it a winning life.

O **Keep a daily gratitude journal.**

O **Take time to play.**