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***POSITIVE
THINKING
GUIDE***

Positive Thinking Guide

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Can utilizing positive thinking techniques really change your life?

Positive Thinking forms a mental attitude that changes our perception of how we view reality. Do you see the glass half empty or half full? Are you an optimist or a pessimist?

The push on positive thinking has become immensely popular in recent years, many finding that such methods increase their levels of happiness and wellbeing.

Through the discipline of positive thinking, people train their mind to become more optimistic. They try to find the opportunity in a challenge rather than becoming disabled

by it. Approaching life's challenges and unpleasant situations in a more optimistic way ultimately allowing us to be more productive.

While positive thinking can certainly improve one's life, we must not view it as a total dismissal and removal of our negative thoughts. **No one can avoid all negative feelings in**

life nor should you think that you can or should.

People often misinterpret positive thinking as seeing the world through rose-colored lenses by ignoring negative thoughts, people and bad things. But using positive thinking techniques actually involves trying to see the best in other people.

It means viewing yourself and your abilities in a positive light. It involves finding a way to effectively deal with and get through life's inevitable tragedies rather than let them destroy all the good and great possibilities that we can incur.

Pessimistic individuals tend to blame themselves when things go wrong, or when bad things happen. However when things

go well for them they fail to give themselves any credit. When people view unfortunate events as expected, or lasting, and give up all hope, it can have a terrible effect on their state of mind and confidence.

This is no way to go through life.

Just because we cannot change all the circumstances in our lives doesn't mean we cannot change our attitude. Positive thinking can improve our wellbeing by helping us to change the way we see events in our life – ultimately altering how we feel about life.

Research has shown that there are many benefits of positive thinking. It is thought that by thinking in a more positive optimistic nature the impact of stress on our health is reduced. Positive thinking techniques can help us deal with stress in a more helpful manner thereby diminishing the harmful effects of stress and allowing us to enjoy a better quality of life.

Benefits of Using Positive Thinking Techniques:

- . A longer life span
- . Lower instances of depression
- . Reduced levels of distress
- . Greater resistance to ailments such as the common cold
- . Much improved and well-rounded psychological and physical well-being

- . A lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease
- . Better stress coping skills during hardships and times of high pressure

Positive Thinking Tips:

Stop Negative Self-Talk

Self-talk is comprised of the words and thoughts that endlessly run through our mind all day long. These thoughts may be of positive nature such as “I better make a list for the shopping” or “I better bring the

clothes in before it rains” but often they can be negative.

These negatives thoughts could include things like “I’m useless” or “I failed, I am just not good enough.” It is when our thoughts are negative that they can undermine our confidence, outlook on life and become self-defeating. Some of this negative talk actually arises from our misconception of

events that we do not have sufficient information about and may not even be realistic or true.

Our self-talk is contributed to by our conscious thoughts and our sub conscious beliefs.

You can change some of the negative thoughts that you are having. This can be done by

challenging the irrational parts and replacing them with more reasonable thoughts. This is where positive thinking techniques come in. By engaging in a more positive attitude we take any negative self-talk such as “I can’t” and “I’m not good enough” and we simply replace them with phrases such as “I can” and “with effort and time I will be good enough.”

It essentially enables us to be more productive rather than letting negative self-talk disable us from trying. With time and practice, you will be able to identify your own negative self-talk as it occurs, and consciously decide to think about the situation in a more realistic and helpful way.

Be Grateful

Being grateful for the things we already have in our life and the success that we have achieved is a great way to embrace a more positive attitude. Even spending a few minutes each day reflecting on all the good things currently in our life will undoubtedly have a tremendous impact on how we feel.

It is important that during this time that we do not let the pressures of the day-to-day stresses consume us. We should also try, just for these few minutes that we are engaged in gratitude, not to allow any negative thoughts jeopardize this moment.

When we are doing this, we want to **embrace the positive feeling of being grateful** for all

those things we have in our life and not focus on what is missing. Many people find that writing a gratitude list helps them to stay focused.

Laugh More

Laughter is one of the best things that we do for ourselves. Surround yourself with friends that will make you laugh, long and hard! Watch movies, funny TV shows and read books that you find funny. Research has indicated that **laughter can actually reduce stress** and make us feel better.

This is particularly important during the time that we are faced with challenges. Potential humor in the given situation can help us create a brighter outlook.

Control Your Reactions

We may not be able to control everything life throws at us, but we can definitely control how we react to these situations. Problems and circumstances will arise in life that is outside our control, however we are responsible for how we feel and respond to these circumstances. Our beliefs will determine how we perceive these situations.

For example, we may pick up on something that someone has said as directed at us. This type of scenario can leave us dwelling on someone's intentions, automatically jumping to the worst conclusion. However, by applying positive thinking techniques we must accept that we do not know the person's intention.

Even if we did, that is just someone else opinion of you, does it really matter? Maybe that person is going through something that is, wrongly, causing them to lash out. Our first thoughts on a situation are often ripe to be challenged, and by being in control of how we react to certain situations we **become in control of our emotions.**

First Impressions Suck!

This technique shows us that our immediate judgments are often wrong. Notice, in certain situations you might jump to an immediate judgment and not budge from it. This can also be referred to a 'first impression'. First impressions are usually wrong and are also called assumptions, and we all know

the saying about those! Let's look at a certain situation.

You run in to your local cafe for your morning wake-up coffee. Just as you are about to place your order, someone cuts in front of you. Your initial thoughts might run along the lines of "How rude! They must think they're too good to queue" or something like that. This is your initial judgment.

What we want to do now is **add at least 3 more reasons** in which this person acted the way they did.

1. Perhaps, they're going through a relationship crisis, they've been up all night arguing and didn't see you at all as they dragged themselves to grab their caffeine boost?

2. Maybe, the person is short of sight, you both approached at the same time and they didn't see you were ahead of them?

3. Are you sure you were really first? I mean, you just entered, perhaps the person had been waiting to the side, deliberating on what they wanted.

The point is that we will very rarely know why a situation happens as it does and there are many reasons why it could have happened, not everything will be focused on you. We have all had unpleasant days where we're not thinking straight and we certainly aren't looking to upset people surrounding us.

So why do you think this person is?

Take a time to **develop reasoning beyond initial thoughts** and you will notice these reasons take on a more positive note.

Positive Thinking Meditation

Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years and it is a fantastic method of bringing our thoughts to the present. Quite often negative thoughts are regrets, or what if's of things that have happened in the past. Or they are fears of things yet to come. Stop living in the past and future, live in the now. If you are not then you are not

truly living or experiencing moments. Meditation teaches us to focus on our breathing, **concentrate our thoughts**, and observe both ourselves and the goings on around us.

Try to learn a form of meditation and practice it for 20 minutes a day. There are many forms of meditation, but simply deep breathing in a comfortable

position is a great way to start. Pulling in this oxygen ensures our brains are reaching their most positive areas. When the brain is starved of oxygen, it automatically reaches for negative areas of our brain, hence our thoughts will be of a more negative nature.

Exercise

Exercise releases endorphins, increases oxygen levels in our blood stream and increases mental agility. Try to do at least 30 minutes of exercise, at least 3 days a week. This can be as simple as taking a brisk walk. Exercise also allows us to focus on our breathing and a lot of runners would even say that

running is their own personal form of meditation.

Try to practice being mindful and analyze your thoughts while you are exercising. With the release of feel good hormones, you should notice that your thoughts take on a more positive spin.

Team sports are also a great idea. As well as all the benefits above you can also include a social aspect. This camaraderie is excellent for building self-esteem which can be a factor in how positive our thoughts are. Growing together as a team also leads to a fantastic sense of accomplishment which will **increase your mood and positive thoughts.**

Practice Makes Perfect!

You are not going to get it straight away, but don't let that stop you! Learning positive thinking techniques is a learning process that will take a while to get the hang of. You will not master everything straight away. Instead focus on one of these points at a time, get comfortable with it and then incorporate the next.

If you slip, don't be hard on yourself. You are trying and that is what truly matters. You are trying to take control of your thoughts and that is what will make the difference.

Don't let that little voice in your head tell you you're doing it wrong. Instead take time to **feel proud that you are trying**, recognize the improvements no matter how small, and be amazed at all the differences

that will eventually appear in your life.

These are just a few examples of *Positive Thinking Techniques*, but they will get you off to a great start in trying to readjust the thoughts our mind reaches for. It takes skill, patience and a focus on what thoughts are currently running through the mind.

Don't get overwhelmed by the vast amount of thoughts we have and try to monitor them at all times during the day, that's not possible. Instead, **learn to recognize the negative thoughts**, question how realistic they are, and change them into more positive and productive ones. This is the key to successfully practicing positive thinking techniques.

About

Kamala Adhya is a Certified Yoga Teacher and she is also certified to teach Yoga Thrive, a therapeutic yoga program for cancer survivors.