

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Look on the Bright Side

It's no secret that optimists tend to be healthier than pessimists. Hope for, and confidence in, the success of our future endeavors definitely makes us feel good. And when we feel good, we're more likely to engage in healthier behaviors and produce less stress-related hormones that damage the body. Awesome, right? Why wouldn't everyone just be happy and expect the best, then?!

Well... It's a rare individual that learns "things always work out" from their personal experience. People often get the opposite life lesson, which can make smiles and affirmations more challenging to genuinely express. It's not all bad, though, there is some evidence that pessimists are better at realistically describing their circumstances than optimists; they're just not as good at changing them.

So, does that mean we need to be cheery all the time and out-of-touch with the hard realities of life to be optimally healthy? No, but it would probably feel pretty good if we could pull it off! For everyone else, we can still make substantial progress by focusing on the more practical and effective aspects of positive thinking.

The real strength of positive thinking is that it allows us to see different possibilities in our circumstances. It's not just delusional talk about how good things are! Understanding the possibility that things may go well is realistic if that possibility exists, right? And focusing our efforts toward that possibility is rational if that's how we'd prefer things. Note, we can still do both of these things in a perfectly bad mood. We still can be effective.

Here are a few tips that can help make positive changes in our lives, while being completely in accord with reality and our own emotions:

Identify areas of change—think about the things that we're not content with and examine the possibility for change. Even if it's not easy, if it can be changed, we can start doing something about it. It can be very helpful to make a list with specific goals.

Take a wider view—most circumstances are not all good or all bad. Take some time to find what good might be hidden in, or come out of, an unpleasant situation. Making a habit of this mental exercise trains us to see possibilities we might otherwise miss in our lives.

Move toward a healthier lifestyle—we might think our jobs or families are bothering us when it's really just lunch! Eating better and getting a little more movement in the day can put us in a much better place for our moods and energy.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/positive-thinking/art-20043950>

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**“Our company lost 900 million dollars last quarter.
Your job is to make this look like the best thing
that ever happened to us.”**

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Connect with Employee Wellness!

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