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First Steps Into Positivism

Filip Teovanovic 3.3K reads

One of the most trying aspects of negativity is struggling to seem well, in front of others. However, an essential part of becoming happier is to take the time to care about yourself. People who truly love you will be there to support you, but your fight with your fruitless thoughts and behavior, is ultimately just your own.

It can be very helpful to detect specific cognitive and behavioral difficulties, which individuals that struggle with pessimism are facing. Furthermore, learning how to apply more stable self-control skills will reinforce your efforts.

The goal here is to see how anyone fighting negativity can use certain techniques to their life, to come out stronger and happier.

The banner features the Explorable logo and the text "Quiz Time!". Below this, there are three quiz cards:

- Card 1: Image of roller skates on a wooden deck. Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
- Card 2: Image of a fan of colorful pens. Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
- Card 3: Image of a Ferris wheel at sunset. Quiz: Flags in Europe

[See all quizzes =>](#)

Slow and Steady

You don't need to turn your life around overnight. In fact, unrealistic goals like that may be setting you up to fail. What is more important, is making small, yet sustainable and realistic steps every day, so that you can improve your happiness levels over time.

Depression and Its Symptoms

The first step is to determine if your negativity and inability to feel happy may be the cause of a psychological disorder, such as depression. To do that, the most important task before you right now is to learn about the nature of depression.

Even if you don't think it is necessary, or if you are afraid of what you might find out, remember that this step can catalyze positive change in your life.

Depression can manifest in many different forms, so you might be surprised by some of the things you learn. Therefore, in order to be able to understand your particular case better, you need to educate yourself about the symptoms of depression, on an emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral level.

A therapist, a counselor, or your physician, could help immensely with such problems. You can also [learn about depression here](#). [1]

What Can You Do?

Make an appointment with a therapist or your physician. You might not have realized before.

Once you understand what depression is, in its entirety, you can keep track of your thoughts and behavior, as well as the behavior of loved ones, so that you can react in an adequate way, if you notice an issue.

Keeping Track of Positive Activities and Positive Thinking

The ultimate goal of this process is to become aware of the idea that your thoughts and behaviors control your mood. Beliefs, such as, "It's not me, it's my negative thinking" are not helpful.

This step encourages you to reflect on all the obstacles you experienced over the last weeks or months, and gain an objective perspective on them.

People are often shocked by the daily fluctuations of their mood because it contrasts with their belief that every day seems\feels the same.

Life in Dark Hues

Pessimistic individuals tend to have a selective attention to negative events. Furthermore, they tend to ignore everything positive that is happening in their lives, subconsciously of course. The result is domination of negative thoughts.

Positive behavior and positive thinking trigger a more optimistic mood. On the other hand, punishing behaviors and pessimistic thinking, cause negative attitudes.

Therefore, you will come to the conclusion how you can influence the way you feel, by working on thoughts and behaviors congruent to those feelings. We are all born naked, and the rest is perspective.

What Can You Do?

We can change our thoughts indirectly by changing how we think or do things. So, your task is to keep track of positive thoughts (especially those about yourself) and the emotions related to those thoughts. Positive thoughts are the password for an emotional connection with yourself. You just need to learn how to sign in.

Mood and Events

Evaluation is the key word here. Positivity is the ultimate safety word. Are you able to see the correlation between mood, on the one hand, and thoughts and behaviors on the contrary? Pay attention to specific activities that have affected your mood. Then distinguish the specific, positive thoughts you were focusing on.

What Can You Do?

To make this task more effective, write it all down. Even better - create a chart. Put the quantity of positive thoughts and actions on one axis, and the degree of good mood on the other axis. Spoiler alert: the final result will make you happy.

Short-Term vs. Long-Term Outcomes

Each activity, which you have engaged in during the past week or month, could have had either a positive or a negative outcome, either short-term or long-term. When you summarize those activities, they can lead to a general positive feeling, or to negative feelings.

One of the most common negative experiences is that of helplessness. When in the clasp of negativity, most individuals unwillingly prevent themselves from engaging in behaviors that lead to long-term benefits, due to demotivation.

Even though it might feel awkward and challenging to perform some activities at the very beginning of the process, it could only lead to long-term prosperity. Meaning, your battle for happiness will become increasingly victorious.

What Can You Do?

Identify at least one activity per day, for which you need to invest a lot of energy, but it will eventually pay off. Naturally, it doesn't need to be a different activity every day.

Quite on the contrary – you can work with the same activity every day, or a few times a week/month so that you can gradually improve.

Write down all the positive thoughts related to that pursuit. For example, “I have walked three miles today, and I feel good because it will help me lose some weight.”

Positive Attribution Style

Despondency has a negative attribution style. What does that mean? When you are focused on what is negative in life, you tend to find reasons for positive events in something external and unstable. Alternatively, the attributions can be internal, stable and general.

For example, if you pass the test you have been preparing for and get an excellent grade, you might say, "It is probably because the test was easy," instead of thinking it was diligence and intellect that got you there.

Or – if you get only ten likes on your new Instagram selfie, you might be inclined to think that it is because no one likes you, while it might be that you have posted your photo at 4 am, when everyone is sleeping.

What Can You Do?

Your task is to think about some positive events\experiences and then to write at least one of your general personality traits that took you to that experience.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/e/first-steps-into-positivism?gid=21499>

Links

[1] <https://explorable.com/e/depressive-disorders>