



EXPLORABLE
Think Outside The Box

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Positive Problem-Solving

Everyone has problems and luckily, every problem has solutions. However, when you are struggling with negativity, it may seem like the challenges in your life are unsolvable.

What is important to keep in mind is that one of the crucial characteristics of optimistic individuals is their active approach to solving problems. Passive problem-solving techniques include avoiding to realize you are being pessimistic, procrastinating to find help, or denying that you may need change.

The banner features the Explorable logo and the text "Quiz Time!" at the top. Below are three quiz cards:

- Quiz:
Psychology 101 Part 2
- Quiz:
Psychology 101 Part 2
- Quiz:
Flags in Europe

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Waiting for Change

This is a passive approach since it doesn't include engaging with the problem and working actively to solve it. Waiting for the circumstances to change may be quite common when you are dealing with negativity.

However, there is no room for despair or self-blame, since we humans are naturally inclined to avoid change, even if our current circumstances are unfavorable.

What you can do is be completely honest with yourself and discover if this is the strategy you have been applying to your life and problems. Waiting for change to come from outside is a full-time job – a tiresome and frustrating one at that.

Often, situational factors may not change at all, unless you do something to either change them or change your position within them.

Being Your Own Change

This strategy implies investing efforts into changing the behavior that fuels your negativity. You can picture it like a character in a book, who says, "I guess no one is coming to rescue me from life, so I will have to do it."

This is an effective strategy, especially if there is an obstacle, or several, between you and your goals.

For instance, if you have been feeling especially pessimistic because you are currently unemployed, an invoking change would represent even more active job searches. You would think outside of the box, tailor your CV to each job, seek contacts and recommendations, etc.

Changing the Environment.

People who have a negative outlook may often find themselves thinking and saying, "I can change myself, but I can't change what's surrounding me." In fact - you can. Although you might not be able to change the entire world overnight, with some effort and creativity, you can certainly change your micro-world.

However, if it turns out that there truly is nothing you can do to change your environment in a positive way, and you are certain you have done your best, then there are other options.

Remove Yourself

First and foremost, you can look into opportunities for removing yourself from that environment. Finding a new, more stimulating environment, where you can accomplish your goals, can help you become a happier person.

Removing yourself from the environment is not always as literal as moving to another city or country. It might mean breaking up with your partner, finding a new group of friends, starting your own business, etc.

Reinterpretation

Whatever we do in life and whatever the circumstances may be, there is one basic premise of psychology. According to it, it is not important what happens to us, but rather how we interpret it.

Therefore, whatever might be going on in your life right now, a difficult, yet liberating truth to realize is that your ways of perceiving it is what is making you negative and possibly unhappy.

How you define your situation is both influenced by your negativity and fuels that negativity. The good news is that whatever meaning you attach to your settings, it can be changed.

A Fresh Angle

One of the techniques you can use is reframing. All you need to do is change the negative angle from which you are observing. In other words, you need a fresh pair of optimistically

inclined eyes.

If you don't want to ask someone for their optimistic outlook on your circumstances, try to role-play. Pretend to be an actor who has been given the part of their life, and comes up with the characteristics and opinions that an extremely optimistic person may have. Then try to look at your situation from that perspective.

It may not be easy, and might even feel silly at first, but if you are persistent, you may be surprised by the results.

Investing More Effort

Upon reading this headline, you might have felt a bit frustrated, if you believe that you have already been investing a lot of time and effort into becoming a more positive individual. If that is the case, you may not like the sound of our next tip, but if you decide to apply it, you'll certainly see the benefits.

Whatever you have been doing, invest at least slightly more effort. Spend 15 more minutes a day engaging in something positive, talk a bit more often to an optimistic person, engage more keenly in changing your pessimistic thoughts into optimistic ones, etc.

The more effort you put into having a positive, yet realistic outlook that is helpful for your goals, the better you would feel.

Find a Different Goal

Sometimes, whatever you do, despite the time and effort you put in, an environment might turn out to be unchangeable or a goal - unattainable. Those moments are the ultimate test of what you've learned about bringing more positivity into your life.

These are the times when you need to think about all the valuable lessons you've learned from the experience and be appreciative of your efforts.

Realizing that you cannot receive what you have been aspiring to is certainly challenging and unpleasant. However, it is up to you not to let it overwhelm you. Instead, mourn your loss for a while, consider what you'll do better next time, and find another, more positive and productive goal.

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