

OPTIMISM

Hopefulness and confidence about the future or the success of something.





- **Optimism** is a form of positive thinking that includes the belief that you are responsible for your own happiness, and that more good things than bad will continue to happen to you.
- Optimists believe that bad or negative events are temporary.
- People who are optimists tend to focus on the positive side of things rather than the negative



- For example, an optimistic female who is dumped by her boyfriend does not blame herself, but instead may believe that the relationship just wasn't meant to be.



The Definition of Optimism

- Optimism comes from the Latin word ***optimus***, meaning "**best**," which describes how an optimistic person is always looking for the best in any situation and expecting good things to happen.
- Optimism is the tendency to believe, expect or hope that things will turn out well.
- Even if something bad happens, like the loss of a job, an optimist sees the silver lining.



- The emerging field of positive psychology studies the positive impact that optimism has on mental health.
- Other research shows that optimism may be good for my physical health too—optimists are sick less and live longer than pessimists.
- Apparently, a positive outlook on life strengthens the immune system (and the body's defenses against illness), cardiovascular system (optimists have fewer heart attacks), and the body's ability to handle stress.



- Optimists believe that their own actions result in positive things happening, that they are responsible for their own happiness, and that they can expect more good things to happen in the future.
- Optimists don't blame themselves when bad things happen.
- They view bad events as results of something outside of themselves. I didn't blame myself for losing my job, but saw it as a business decision that had nothing to do with me personally.



- "People might be optimistic for a variety of reasons.
- For example, twin studies show that about 25% of optimism is heritable, which does mean that some of it can be controlled by thinking patterns and things that we do by ourselves, but also a lot of it might be due to social and structural factors,"



- For instance, how much warmth and attention your parents gave you during childhood have been associated with levels of optimism later in life.
- The opposite of optimism is known as pessimism.



- Pessimists think the opposite way, however.
- They blame themselves for the bad things that happen in their lives and think that one mistake means more will inevitably come.
- Pessimists see positive events as flukes that are outside of their control—a lucky streak that probably won't happen again.



- Because of their thought processes, optimists have much brighter futures.
- A bad circumstance or event is taken in stride, viewed as a temporary setback—not a permanent way of life.
- Even if something bad happens today, a positive thinker believes that good things will come again in the future.

Optimists tend to share several other positive characteristics that increase overall happiness and promote health, while reducing depression and chronic stress:

- They think about, reflect on, and emphasize the good things in life.
- They are grateful and thankful for all their blessings.
- They don't complain when something bad happens.
- They feel that nothing can hold them back from achieving success and reaching their goals.
- They believe in abundance.
- They are confident that the world offers plenty of opportunities for everyone to succeed.



- Optimism is a skill of emotional intelligence, which translates to a better career and greater success in life.
- Life is too short to be miserable, so start turning your thinking around!
- The **power of positive thinking** can advance your prospects for work, relationships and other life experiences.



Learned optimism



- **Learned optimism** is the idea in positive psychology that a talent for joy, like any other, can be cultivated.
- It is contrasted with **learned helplessness**.
- Learning optimism is done by consciously challenging any negative self talk.

Why is it important to be optimistic?



- **Optimism** is a key to success.
- It gives meaning to our life.
- **Optimism**, on the one hand, allowing one to have an **optimistic** outlook on life, lets a person gain confidence.
- On the other hand, it brings positive change to one's mind, so that he can overcome his own problems successfully.

Martin's Method



- Seligman contends that anyone can make use of learned optimism, regardless of how pessimistic a person's outlook.
- Not all pessimists are the same.
- So, as a first step a person's base level of optimism must be determined.
- As a means to get some hard data, Seligman developed a test.



- If your base level of optimism isn't very high, it means that you are at the level where learned optimism can be the most beneficial.
- The next step is to assess people's reaction to negative situations. To do this, Seligman created a system based off Albert Ellis' ABCs. His system, ABCDE, adds two more steps.
- The first three letters stay the same: Adversity, Belief, Consequence. The additional two in the new system stand for D-Disputation and E-Energy.



Adversity

This is the event that causes stress.



Belief

This is how a person interprets
the event



Consequence

The resulting action from the belief caused by the adversity.



Disputation

Using evidence to challenge negative thoughts from A-C.



Energizing

Once a person is able to condition themselves into positive thoughts and behaviors in response to A, B-D will eventually lead to a person feeling more energized.

EXPLORATORY STYLE



EXPLANATORY STYLE

PESSIMISTIC THINKING STYLE

PERMANENT

THIS WILL LAST FOREVER

PERVASIVE

THIS IS GOING TO UNDERMINE EVERYTHING

PERSONAL

IT'S ME. IT'S MY FAULT

UNCONTROLLABLE

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT

OPTIMISTIC THINKING STYLE

TEMPORARY

THIS WILL PASS

LOCAL

RELATES TO JUST THIS ONE SITUATION

NOT PERSONAL

THIS IS NOT (ENTIRELY) MY FAULT

CONTROLLABLE

THERE IS SOMETHING I CAN DO



- Seligman begins by identifying the **three types of happiness** of which our favorite psychology grab-bag term is composed:
- For the 'Pleasant Life,' you aim to have as much positive emotion as possible and learn the skills to amplify positive emotion.
- For the 'Engaged Life,' you identify your highest strengths and talents and recraft your life to use them as much as you can in work, love, friendship, parenting, and leisure.
- For the 'Meaningful Life,' you use your highest strengths and talents to belong to and serve something you believe is larger than the self.