

THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING

PROGRESS TAKES PRACTICE



The Power of Positive Thinking

Is it science or wishful thinking?

Psychoneuroimmunology – the study of the interaction between psychological processes and the nervous and immune systems of the human body. What we think or believe can actually affect the biochemical makeup of our bodies and affect our immune system.

Benefits – Positive thinking has many benefits:

- Psychological and physical health
- Builds coping strategies
- Improves healthy behaviours
- Widens our perspective

Are You Proactive or Reactive?

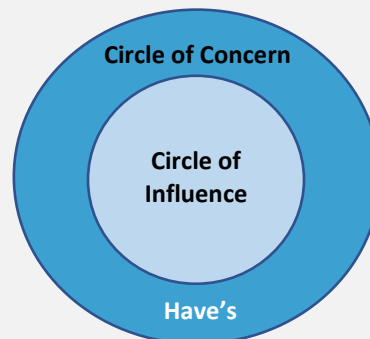
Some of these things we have **no real control** over such as; the past and other people's behaviour.

- Let's call these things our **Circle of Concern**

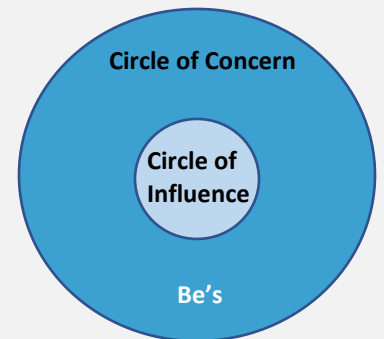
Some of these things we can **do something about** such as; our own behaviour, attitude and thoughts.

- Let's call these things our **Circle of Influence**

PROACTIVE FOCUS



REACTIVE FOCUS



What Keeps Us Stuck?

- **FEAR** – Fear is not a real thing. It is a result of our beliefs.
- **THE PAST** – Learning to change patterns from the past is tough work but worth the effort.

HOW DO WE PROGRESS AS POSITIVE THINKERS?

Our behaviour is a function of our decisions, not our conditions.

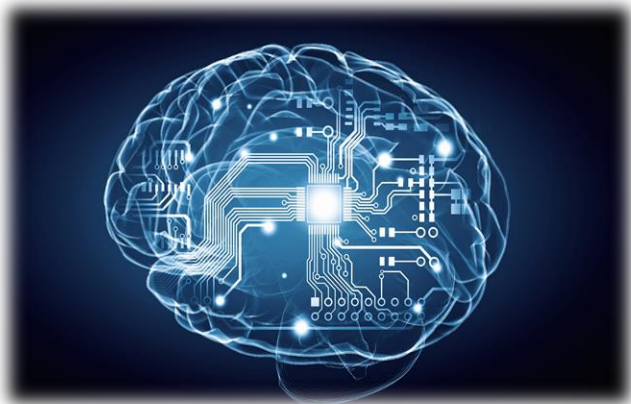
Neuroplasticity “opens up the possibility to reinvent yourself and move away from the status quo or to overcome past traumatic events that evoke anxiety and stress. Hardwired fear-based memories often lead to avoidance behaviors that can hold you back from living your life to the fullest.” (Bergland, 2017)

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WHAT IS NEUROPLASTICITY?

The brain's ability to adapt and create physiological changes through a reorganization of brain structures based on interactions with the environment.



YOU CAN TRAIN YOUR BRAIN!

- Neurons adapt and grow.
- When one cell fires another there is growth, change and a strengthening of relationship between the cells.
- New neural patterns are formed.
- Habits – positive and dysfunction are created by neural patterns.

WE ARE WIRED TO BE NEGATIVE

Negative information has a greater impact on the brain because of the implication of danger. The distress experience outweighs the pleasure experience because of the body's fight or flight response. Train your brain to move in a positive direction with this handy checklist!

- Build your brain by trying/learning new things.
- Develop a positivity focus by recognizing the positives within your day.
- Reduce stress. Stress damages the brain.
- Laughter! Humour can put us in a positive mindset when we need it most.
- Feed your brain nourishing fuel from good fats, protein, and dark leafy greens.
- Make the negative a positive. 3 R's – Rename, Reflect, and Redirect.

BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE

Start with Yourself -Then Extend it to Others	Be a Positive Influence	Create a Positive Environment
Positive Self-Talk	Attitude of Gratitude	Set a Positive Intention
Positive Affirmations	See Different Perspectives	Speak Positively About Others
Positive Relationships	Compliment Don't Criticize	Share Yourself but Also Create 2-Way Relationships

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SELF TALK AND POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS TASK

Check off the negative self-talk you currently use in column A. Over the next week, practice exchanging those statements for the positive words of affirmation in column B.

Column A - Negative Self-Talk	Column B - Positive Words of Affirmation
<input type="checkbox"/> I can't remember anything; my memory is terrible.	My mind is sharp and I am able to remember everything.
<input type="checkbox"/> It's going to be another one of those days.	Today is going to be another great day. I am happy, healthy and ready to enjoy all that life has to offer me today and every day.
<input type="checkbox"/> There is no problem I cannot conquer.	I'm just not creative.
<input type="checkbox"/> Nothing ever goes right for me.	I am strong in mind, body and spirit. My will, my strength and my determination are always greater than any problem I face.
<input type="checkbox"/> I can't ever make a decision.	I am really good at making clear, precise, beneficial and pro-active decisions whenever necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/> I hate my job.	I am thankful for and enjoy my aspects of my job. I focus on the things about my job that I enjoy.
<input type="checkbox"/> I just can't handle this, it's too overwhelming.	I am good at breaking large obstacles down into smaller pieces that are easier to handle. I never make any problem appear larger than it actually is.
<input type="checkbox"/> If only I were smarter.	I am an intelligent person who is completely capable of understanding and solving any problem I encounter.
<input type="checkbox"/> I'll never lose this weight and get fit – I'm really out of shape and never have any time to exercise.	I am at my desired weight and always find the time to eat healthy and exercise regularly. I keep myself fit and healthy and enjoy a life filled with energy and vitality.
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm so stressed out.	I give myself permission to relax, feel good, breathe deeply and fully and enjoy the feeling of stress leaving my body.
<input type="checkbox"/> I am so tired and exhausted. I have no energy.	I have more energy than ever before. I feel very alive!
<input type="checkbox"/> I'll never reach my goal.	I set goals and I reach them. I know what I want out of life. I go after it and I get it.
<input type="checkbox"/> This traffic is making me crazy.	Slow moving or traffic jams are not a problem to me. I now enjoy the time I have to organize my thoughts. I will get there when I get there.
<input type="checkbox"/> Great it's raining, this is such crappy weather	It's raining today and that's fine with me I'm going to have a great day and a little rain isn't going to stop me.

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GRATITUDE TASK

List 3 things that you are grateful for:

I am grateful for.....

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Who is someone in your life that you consider to be a positive influence?

I will do the following:

- Thank You Note
- Email
- Phone Call
- Kind Gesture

Resources

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychoneuroimmunology>
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2016/06/24/this-is-what-negativity-does-to-your-immune-system-and-its-not-pretty/#6137f5ae173b>
<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-power-of-positive-thinking>
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/positive-thinking/art-20043950>
<http://andrewrudinmd.net/can-a-positive-outlook-lower-your-risk-of-heart-problems/>
<http://uthscsa.edu/gme/documents/Circles.pdf>
<https://garfunkleexecutivecoaching.com/articles/build-positive-work-relationships/building-positive-relationships-at-work>
<https://psychcentral.com/blog/humor-neuroplasticity-and-the-power-to-change-your-mind/>
<http://www.awarefulness.com/neurons-that-fire-together-wire-together-but-why-hebbs-rule-and-synaptic-plasticity/>
<https://www.psychology-lexicon.com/cms/glossary/41-glossary-h/2466-hebb-s-rule.html>
<https://content.acsa.org/articles/how-does-positive-thinking-affect-neuroplasticity>
<https://psychcentral.com/blog/get-unstuck-from-negative-fearful-thoughts-with-6-simple-steps/>
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201702/how-do-neuroplasticity-and-neurogenesis-rewire-your-brain>
<https://meteoreducation.com/how-does-thinking-positive-thoughts-affect-neuroplasticity/>
<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/neuroplasticity/>
<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2014/10/07/353292408/why-saying-is-believing-the-science-of-self-talk>
<https://anniewrightpsychotherapy.com/neuroplasticity/>
<https://remedygrove.com/wellness/Brain-Training-Improve-Your-Neuroplasticity-with-10-Easy-Tips>
https://epublications.marquette.edu/theses_open/354/
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/22/opinion/sunday/choose-to-be-grateful-it-will-make-you-happier.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&r=1>
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2014/11/23/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-of-gratitude-that-will-motivate-you-to-give-thanks-year-round/#6615f0da183c>
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0005796705000392>