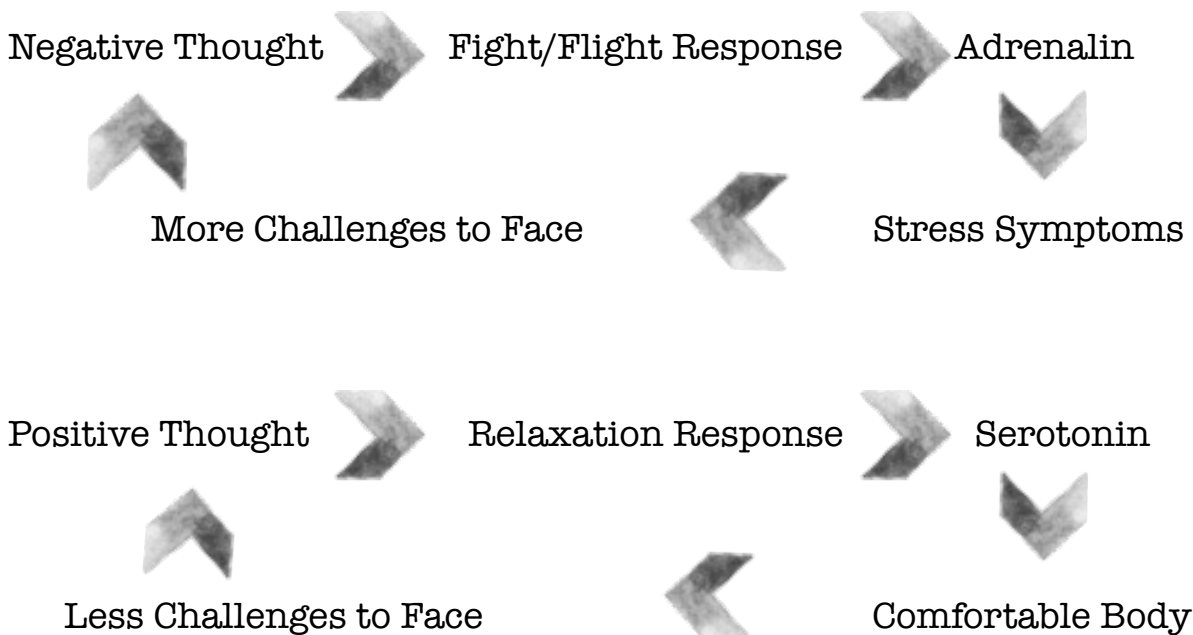# The Power Of Positive Thinking

Thinking positively is not just a nice idea, it actually changes how things are working in your body and how you experience your life.

If helps to reduce your experience of stress and anxiety and safeguards you against the stresses of life on a day to day basis.

Your body does not know the difference between what is real and what is imagined, so it reacts to thoughts as if they are real. Therefore, your thoughts directly affect the way your body is feeling, the situations you put yourself in and ultimately your life.

Negative Thought ➤ Fight/Flight Response ➤ Adrenalin

More Challenges to Face ◄ Stress Symptoms ◄

Positive Thought ➤ Relaxation Response ➤ Serotonin

Less Challenges to Face ◄ Comfortable Body ◄

Luckily for us, we have the power to change our thoughts by choosing one thought over another.

We are likely to still notice that we have negative thoughts and negative expectations sometimes as life throws challenges at us, but the key is to recognise the negative thought and aim to reframe it to find the positive perspective.

Once we have found the positive perspective, we can choose to put our focus and energy into the positives and therefore limit the impact of negativity on our wellbeing.

Although positive thinking can take a bit of effort at times, once you have felt the benefits you will know it is an effort worth making for the rest of your life.

In order to work on becoming more positive in your outlook, it is first important to become aware of your thoughts and how they might be impacting your experience of yourself and the world.

Use this thought tracker for one day to begin to monitor the activity of your mind. Try to notice the occasions where you have negative expectations about a situation, you focus on the negative perspective or you find that you are being judgemental about yourself or other people. Jot your negative thoughts down below.

Situation	Thought

'The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude' - Oprah Winfrey

Identify all the people in your day to day life. This will include friends and family but also work colleagues and anyone else you interact with on a regular basis. Then fit each person into the lists below according to whether they feel like a positive or negative influence in your life. This might be based on the way they make you feel, their outlook on the world and the types of things they like to talk about.

Positive people	Negative people

There might be some people on your negative people list that you want to limit contact with in order to reduce the negative influences in your life. For other people this is not always possible or you may not want to limit contact with them.

Instead, try using the protective shield visualisation (available in the Members Area) to protect yourself from negativity in any situation. You can spend time with the person but protect your positivity and optimism by not allowing their negativity to affect you.

Letting go of negative people doesn't mean you hate them, it just means that you love yourself

Think about an average day or week in your life. What situations do you find yourself in that seem to create negative thoughts or promote a negative outlook? You may need to really take notice of how you feel for a while to identify your trigger points for negativity.

For each of the situations you have identified, come up with ideas on how you could either change the situation, or change your outlook on it. Brainstorm alternative positive perspectives here.

'Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, tho choose ones own way' – Victor Frankl

If you struggle to find an alternative positive perspective to your negative thoughts, ask yourself

▷ What is there to be grateful for?

▷ What are the positives?

▷ What can I learn?

▷ If I was a positive person, what would I be thinking about this situation?

These questions will help you to reframe your negative thoughts or your perception of a situation as negative and find a more helpful perspective.

Here are a couple of examples of negative thoughts and one possibility of how to reframe them in a more positive and helpful way.

Negative Thought

'I can't cope with this'

Positive Reframe

I have managed to overcome many challenges in the past and each one has made me stronger. I have control over the way I feel so I choose to take one hour at a time, breathe deeply, remain calm and before I know it I will have coped.

Negative Thought

"I am too old to try to get a job I will enjoy more, no one will want to employ me'

Positive Reframe

I have a wealth of knowledge and experience to bring to any role and I deserve to spend my time in a job I enjoy. Any employer would be lucky to have me so I will make sure to accept a job that is right for me.

The positive perspective that feels right for you will be unique to you. It is shaped by your personality, experiences and values. When you are first experimenting with reframing negative thoughts into positive ones, you may need to brainstorm until you find the perspective that suits you.

What activities make you feel positive/ inspired / optimistic or enthusiastic? How can you weave some of these activities into your life more regularly?

What songs do you want to put on your positivity playlist?

'A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty' - Winston Churchill

What are the most important positive thoughts for you to hold onto in your life?

You might like to use some of these affirmations for positivity. Use them as often as you need to to give yourself a boost.

I think positive thoughts and radiate positive energy

Positive thinking is becoming more natural every day

Each day, my thoughts are becoming more and more positive

I can handle anything that comes into my life

I enjoy being, feeling and thinking positive

You can't live a positive life with a negative mind