

Positivity Playbook

Printable Quick Reference Checklist

Introduction

- The call to think positive has echoed through the self-help and self-improvement industries since people first began to seek out improvement from within.
- No matter what holds you back and keeps you from realizing a positive and powerful life, you can learn to counter it and develop more emotionally intelligent and productive ways to move forward.

What is Positivity?

- When you look up the definition of positivity, you find that it means both the action or habit of being optimistic. It is the art of flourishing and thriving

Positivity Facts to Help You Flourish and Thrive

- One of the most popular research studies associated with positive thinking was completed by Barbara Fredrickson at the University of North Carolina.¹
- In the Fredrickson study, Groups who experienced fear and anger had a much shorter list than those who experienced joy and contentment.
- Positivity increases possibilities. You feel good, your mind expands into new possibilities, you take action, you achieve, and you feel even better as a result.
- Being positive is not just about making yourself feel good for the short term.

Positive Thinking vs. Positive Psychology

- Positive thinking is something that an individual does in order to increase their optimism, make themselves happier and more content, increase their efficacy and productivity in all aspects of their life, and better enjoy happy emotions and circumstances.
- Positive psychology is the study of these things and everything else that goes into a valuable life.²
 - Happiness and joy
 - Gratitude and appreciation

- Compassion toward others and selflessness
- Resilience and adaptability
- Self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of self-worth

Problems With a Positivity Mindset

- This potential problem with a positivity mindset flies in the face of the self-help adage "fake it till you make it."
- Your goal is not to be perky or energetic all the time.
- Positivity is not about creating a false sense of accomplishment or happiness magically out of nothing.
- Optimism itself is not some Band-Aid for feeling low or failing to thrive.

Benefits of Positivity

- The benefits of positivity go far beyond your mood, however. From both anecdotal evidence and in-depth scientific research, the world now understands that optimism has considerable effect on your physical, mental, and emotional health.
- Improve Physical Health
 - reduce your risk of heart disease
 - strengthen your immune system
 - lose weight
 - extend your lifespan
- A study conducted in the 1990s at the University of Kentucky measured the longevity of a group of nuns against their early life journals.
 - Those who had recorded more positive experiences and displayed high degrees of optimism lived longer.³
- The researchers looked at data collected from 70,000 women during an eight year period. They compared optimism with things like
 - blood pressure
 - level of physical activity

- disease percentiles.
- The results were quite impressive with the top 25% of optimistic women reducing their risk of death by 30% or more.⁴
- Improve Energy
 - Research has shown a 180% energy increase for happy employees than ones who do not have such a positive outlook.⁵
 - When was the last time you were happy at work?
 - Your brain becomes energized when you smile.
 - Happiness allows your brain to think about more things at once
- Boost Creativity
 - One study published in *Psychology Science*
 - concluded that happy, positive thinking individuals have a much more creative and agile mind than those stuck in a swamp of negativity.

Positivity Fundamentals

- The PERMA Principle
 - Originally formulated by Martin Seligman
 - P -- Positive Emotions
 - E – Engagement
 - R – Relationships
 - M – Meaning
 - A – Achievement or Accomplishments
- Flow and the Benefits of Optimal Experiences
 - Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi first discovered this state
 - Flow combines positive experience of doing something you like and are good at with a sense of accomplishment at the end of the process.
 - What can affect flow?

- The task before you has clearly defined steps or processes
 - It engages your skills yet presents intriguing challenges
 - Your awareness melds with the actions you take automatically
 - You are able to ignore distractions
 - All self-doubt, self-consciousness, and anxiety vanishes
 - You lose track of time easily
 - The task itself is as important as the goal
- Achieving Flow
 - Choose an activity that you truly enjoy doing.
 - Remove as many distractions as possible
- Positivity Ratio
 - A concept called the positivity ratio was developed by Barbara Frederickson, PhD in psychology from Stanford University
 - She chose a 3 to 1 ratio meaning that you should feel good three times more than you feel bad.
 - While being three times or positive than negative seems to make quite a bit of sense, other scientists have stepped in to state that the ratio should truly be 5 to 1 instead of 3 to 1

Positivity Playbook

- Take Care of Your Physical Health and Well-being
- Create a Positive Full-Day Routine
- Maintain Positivity Awareness
- Set Goals and Make Plans With Positivity
 - Surround yourself with positive people, and you are more likely to stay positive.
 - Stay conscious of negativity creeping into your mind and habits. Reframe or reject.
 - Seek out flow state whenever possible. Minimize distractions.

- Remember that perfectionism is the enemy of progress.
- Focus on the present and what you are supposed to do now rather than waste energy on the past or the future.
- 15 Ways to Add More Positivity To Your Life
 - Start Every Day With a Gratitude Routine
 - Engage in Mindful Meditation
 - Create Track Of Positive Forward Motion
 - Write Down Positive Experiences
 - Reward Yourself and Accept Compliments
 - Give Recognition and Appreciation to Others
 - Practice Compassion For Yourself
 - Give Yourself A Three Minute Breather
 - Take a Personal Vacation Every Day
 - Envision Your Best Possible Self
 - Meditation For Love and Kindness
 - Pop Pessimism Balloons
 - Remind Yourself of Your Strengths
 - Build a Positivity Support System
 - Throughout this process, remember to relax, forgive yourself for any slowdowns, bumps, or blocks along the way, and always improve your proficiency at getting back to the plan.

Conclusion

- Positivity has long been part of the playbook for living a happier and more successful life.
- Ultimately, it does not matter what gets in the way of living a more optimistic lifestyle. If you want to change and empower your life through positivity, all you have to do is understand the principles and take action.

- With the power of positivity on your side, you will expand beyond your perceived limitations and forge forward into a future where you can thrive.

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1693418/pdf/15347528.pdf>

² <https://positivepsychology.com/what-is-positive-psychology-definition/>

³ <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/psp805804.pdf>

⁴ <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2016/12/optistic-women-live-longer-are-healthier/>

⁵ <https://www.forbes.com/2010/08/13/happiest-occupations-workplace-productivity-how-to-get-a-promotion-morale-forbes-woman-careers-happiness.html#518af53eefb4>