



Learning at Your Fingertips

Positive Thinking 101



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Overview

Over the years a lot of research has been done on the positive effects of being positive and the negative affects of being negative. The research is clear.



Overview

It really does pay to be positive and the benefits include enhanced health and longevity, order happiness, online career advancement, athletic performance, team building and financial success. Being positive is not just a nice way to live. It's the way to live.



The Benefits of Being Positive

We all have two dogs inside of us. One dog is positive, happy, optimistic, and hopeful. The other dog is negative, mad, sad, pessimistic, and fearful. These two dogs often fight inside us, but guess who wins the fight? The one you feed the most.



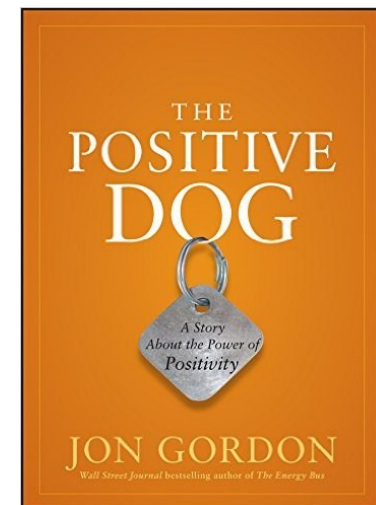
The Benefits of Being Positive

So begins the story about a negative mutt named Matt and a big dog named Bubba who teaches him how to feed himself with positivity each day and in the process Matt transforms his own life and the shelter they call home.



The Benefits of Being Positive

The Positive Dog by Jon Gordon is an inspiring, heartwarming story that not only reveals the strategies and benefits of being positive but also an essential truth for humans: Being positive doesn't just make you better. It makes everyone around you better.



11 Benefits To Being Positive

Being positive is not just a nice way to live. It's the way to live. In this spirit here are 11 benefits of being positive.

1. Positive People Live Longer – In a study of nuns, those that regularly expressed positive emotions lived on average 10 years longer. (The Nun Study)



11 Benefits To Being Positive

2. Positive work environments outperform negative work environments. (*Daniel Goleman*)

3. Positive, optimistic sales people sell more than pessimistic sales people. (Martin Seligman)

4. Positive leaders are able to make better decisions under pressure. (*Heartmath.org*)



11 Benefits To Being Positive

5. Marriages are much more likely to succeed when the couple experiences a 5 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interactions whereas when the ratio approaches 1 to 1, marriages are more likely to end in divorce. (John Gottman)

6. Positive people who regularly express positive emotions are more resilient when facing stress, challenges and adversity. (Several Studies)



11 Benefits To Being Positive

7. Positive people are able to maintain a broader perspective and see the big picture which helps them identify solutions where as negative people maintain a narrower perspective and tend to focus on problems. (Barbara Fredrickson)

8. Positive thoughts and emotions counter the negative effects of stress. For example, you can't be thankful and stressed at the same time. (*Several Studies*)



11 Benefits To Being Positive

9. Positive emotions such as gratitude and appreciation help athletes perform at a higher level. (Heartmath.org)

10. Positive people have more friends which is a key factor of happiness and longevity. (Robert D. Putnam)



11 Benefits To Being Positive

11. Positive and popular leaders are more likely to garner the support of others and receive pay raises and promotions and achieve greater success in the workplace. (Several Studies)



The Cost of Being Negative

1. Ninety percent of doctor visits are stress related, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
2. A study found that negative employees can scare off every customer they speak with—for good (Rath, 2004).



The Cost of Being Negative

3. At work, too many negative interactions compared to positive interactions can decrease the productivity of a team, according to Barbara Fredrickson's research at the University of Michigan.
4. Negativity affects the morale, performance, and productivity of our teams.
5. One negative person can create a miserable office environment for everyone else



The Cost of Being Negative

6. Robert Cross's research at the University of Virginia demonstrates that 90 percent of anxiety at work is created by 5 percent of one's network—the people who sap energy.
7. Negative emotions are associated with decreased life span and longevity.
8. Negative emotions increase the risk of heart attack and stroke.



The Cost of Being Negative

9. Negativity is associated with greater stress, less energy, and more pain.
10. Negative people have fewer friends.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

No matter how positive we may choose to be, we're always going to encounter others who aren't. Thankfully there are things that we can do to help overcome their negativity or redirect it in a way that helps them become more positive as well.

Here are few suggestions...



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

1. Make Your Bus Great - You may not be the leader of your organization. You may not be driving the "big bus," but you can decide to make YOUR bus great.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

Every day just focus on being the best you can be and bring out the best in others while tuning out everything else. Tune out the negativity. Tune out the damaging comments. Tune out anything you can't control. You can't drive anyone else's bus. Just drive your bus and make it a great ride.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

2. Your Positive Energy Must Be Greater than All of the Negativity - In the book *Power vs Force*, author David Hawkins, MD shares research that 80 percent of the population vibrates to a negative frequency. The fact is negativity is all around us. It's not just your coworker or boss. It's everywhere.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

You must remember that your positive energy must be greater than all the negativity. As country wisdom suggests, "Never wrestle with a pig because you'll both get dirty and the pig likes it." Instead, stay above the fray. Positive energy is much more powerful than negative energy. If you stay positive, the negativity can't touch you.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

3. Be The Seed - When you plant yourself where you are, with a desire to serve and make a difference, you will create very positive conditions for your growth.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

You'll be amazed at how others start treating you more positively when you approach your work with a service mindset. They will sense something different in you and they will change the way they behave towards you. I encourage you to read *The Seed* by Jon Gordon and let the growing process begin.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

4. Invite Your Boss or Co-Workers on Your Bus

- Give your boss or coworkers a book on positive leadership. There are many great books out there. It can change the way they lead. Best of all, this change in leadership will spread throughout the organization.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

So don't think you can't change your situation or organization. You can. I'm convinced that very few people want to be negative. Most people are negative because of stress, busyness, and fear. Most people just need a wake-up call to break out of their rut. This is your opportunity to help someone else break free. Decide to be a beacon of light that shines on others. You'll be amazed at what happens as a result.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

5. If They Don't Change, You Can - If all else fails you have a choice. You can decide to stay positive and outlast your boss or coworkers knowing that truth shines through and eventually a negative boss or coworkers won't last, or you can decide to change your job. Remember, the best cultures that focus on positive leadership attract the best employees.



Stay Positive When Others Aren't

Whatever you do, however, don't allow a negative boss or coworker to get you down. With 80 percent of the population being negative, we need positive powerful people like you to offset the negativity. So keep staying positive!



The Power of Positive Interactions

John Gottman's pioneering research found that marriages are much more likely to succeed when the couple experiences a 5 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interactions whereas when the ratio approaches 1 to 1, marriages are more likely to end in divorce.



The Power of Positive Interactions

Additional research also shows that workgroups with positive to negative interaction ratios greater than 3 to 1 are significantly more productive than teams that do not reach this ratio.



The Power of Positive Interactions

So what does this mean for you and me? For most of us it means we need to increase the number of positive interactions we have at home and at work and reduce our negative interactions.



The Power of Positive Interactions

We need to engage each other with more smiles, kind words, encouragement, gratitude, meaningful conversations, honest dialogues and sincere positive interactions.



The Power of Positive Interactions

And to foster these actions we need to create personal and team rituals that help us interact more positively. If we make them part of our organizational process and individual habits they are more likely to happen.



The Power of Positive Interactions

For instance, at home you might decide to take a walk with your spouse each night after dinner and talk about the positive things that happened at work. The more you practice this the more it will become ingrained in your life. At work you might make it a point to smile at your co-workers and customers more often.



The Power of Positive Interactions

As a manager you would spend more time praising your employees for the things they do right rather than always focusing on what everyone is doing wrong. A manager I know makes it a point to personally praise 5 people every week.



The Power of Positive Interactions

As an organization you might gather all of your employees on a call once a day to share a positive message. Or perhaps you might gather your sales team together each week and have your team members share success stories. The ideas are infinite. The key is to intentionally cultivate more positive interactions to fuel success.



The Power of Positive Interactions

Sometimes we need to confront a situation to move past it and, as we know, ignoring problems that stare us in the face doesn't work. Negative interactions are necessary so long as they should occur much less frequently than positive interactions.



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Summary

Positive interactions are essential to a healthy marriage, positive work environment and individual and team success. In this spirit when you are finished reading this, I encourage you to go thank someone at work or at home and let them know how they impacted your life in a positive way. Then make it a habit.

