



## The 7 Positives!

*"When there are so many positive things in life, why concentrate on the negatives?"*

(Michael Watson)

In the book "**Motivate me, motivate you**" the "seven positives" are listed as a way to stay positive and help us stay motivated during difficult times. These are especially important when trying to combat bouts of depression or just feeling low.

It may not always be possible for you to use all of them, but the more you deploy, the better you will feel. From the many comments received on "*Motivate me, motivate you*" it is clear that these seven positives really do help.

Here the "seven positives" are described in more detail.



### 1. FIND THE POSITIVES

**- find the good things and keep them to mind.**

*"Change your thoughts and change your world"*

(Norman Vincent Peale)

We can't all be natural optimists but we can change the way we view other people and situations. When we focus on the good aspects of people or situations rather than on the bad or negative things our approach can change dramatically.

For example, the grumpy shop-keeper may have a reason to be grumpy (or he or she may just be that way inclined!) but if you are provided with the goods you need then concentrate on that, do not let his or her negative character affect your day.

*Yesterday is dead,  
tomorrow hasn't  
arrived yet.  
I have just one  
day, today,  
and I'm going to be  
happy in it*

Groucho Marx

### 2. DON'T DWELL ON MISTAKES OR PROBLEMS

**- move on, be determined that things will get better, and they will! Every problem has a solution.**

*"Worrying is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do, but doesn't get you anywhere"*

(Van Wilder)

*The happiest  
people don't  
have the best of  
everything.  
They just make the  
best of everything*

Once we let problems occupy too much of our thinking it starts to

cloud our judgement on other matters until every situation we face seems worse.

Problems need to be accepted as challenges rather than letting them drag us down with worry and put us into a state of despair. If we can accept that we learn from our mistakes and can use painful experiences to strengthen our own ability to cope with such situations, we have turned the problem round on its head and can start to look for solutions in a more positive frame of mind.

The additional positive is to realise that such experience also enables us to help others overcome similar circumstances.

*Most folks are  
about as happy as  
they make up  
their minds to be*  
Abraham Lincoln

### **3. USE/DEVELOP YOUR OWN SENSE OF DRIVE to give you energy and to strengthen your 'CAN DO' approach.**

*"No matter what life gives you, you can turn it around"*  
(Louise Hay)

This really is a case of mind over matter. Think back to times when you have used your energy and self-control to keep going when facing adversity or difficulties. Now tell yourself that you can do what needs to be done to overcome the situation you face.

Accept that it may take time, you may need to be patient and hold your resolve, but YOU CAN DO IT!

Keeping a healthy body (see number 6) will also give you a feeling of well-being and that in turn will help strengthen your own sense of drive. But if you are suffering from ill-health then place even more emphasis on the other six positives to help give you a real lift.

*Be the change in  
the world you want  
to see*  
Gandhi

*Never dull your  
shine for  
somebody else*  
Tyra Banks

### **4. LAUGH & SMILE OFTEN - great tonics that are reciprocated.**

*"Laughter is an instant vacation"*  
(Milton Berle)

This is probably the best way of coping with stress in our lives. And it helps others enjoy their lives and lower their stress levels too. If your own sense of humour seems to have gone "absent without leave" (!) then use the humour of others to get it back. Meet up with people you happen to know that are great at cracking jokes in different or difficult situations.

Or watch some good quality comedy; the British have produced some of the world's best humour for radio and TV.

*A person is a  
person  
through other  
persons*  
Archbishop Desmond Tutu

*"A cheerful heart is good medicine"*

(Proverbs 17:22)

Make the effort to smile at people you meet in the street; 99 times out of 100 the smile comes back and both people feel better.

Try it, it works! You never know, you may have just helped make the day a little bit better for that other person too. They then wear a smile and someone else benefits and so it passes on.

*"Attitudes are contagious... is yours worth catching?"*

When you meet people who are miserable or hostile, do not allow that to affect how YOU feel. They may be facing all sorts of personal problems that you are not aware of.

You can **take charge of your attitude. Don't let someone else choose it for you!** Your cheerful disposition might even make them think about their own situation and whether they themselves should change...

## **5. MAINTAIN HUMAN CONTACT: HELP & APPRECIATE OTHERS**

**- change from fault finding to appreciation finding.  
Be better company to be with.**

*"Any fool can criticize, condemn,  
and complain; and most fools do"*

(Dale Carnegie)

This is similar to number 4 above. Contact with other people is probably the most important and positive aspect of our lives. We don't always realise this; especially if we have friends or relatives who cause us trouble and strife.

However other people form the basis of our lives and making positive contact with those we already know and new people we meet is essential for getting out of the rut of feeling down.

*"Of all the things you wear, your  
expression is the most important"*

(Janet Lane)

Think about how you come across to other people; especially when you're feeling low. By taking a positive and appreciative approach to others we meet, work and live with makes for a much more pleasant environment for everyone. We all benefit.

*We all look more  
attractive to others  
when we're happy*

*Be kinder than  
necessary.  
Everyone you  
meet has some  
kind of problem  
you don't know  
about*

*Faces are the most  
interesting things  
we see*  
David Hockney

*Friendship isn't a  
big thing, it's a  
million little things*

The 2,000 year-old golden rule, *"treat others the same way as you would want them to treat you"* (New Testament, Luke 6:31) is a powerful way of improving your own outlook on life as you develop better relationships with those around you.

*A good friend is cheaper than therapy*

## 6. HEALTHY OUTLOOK

**- eat healthily, have good posture, and take regular exercise (even a short brisk walk can make you feel more alive and alert).**

*"Health is better than wealth"*

PE (Physical Education) teachers often tell their pupils that *"A healthy body makes a healthy mind"*. This highlights the importance of eating a healthy diet and taking moderate exercise everyday - these do have a positive impact on our state of mind.

*Wherever you go,  
no matter what the  
weather, always  
bring your own  
sunshine*

Anthony J D'Angelo

Our brains need food and oxygen, obviously. A brisk walk - including an incline or stairs if you can to maximise the overall benefit to your body - is an easy way to get yourself out of a state of mind that is stuck in a rut. As oxygen levels increase in your brain through physical activity you will feel your mood start to lift.

This is even more important on days when it is wet and cold outside; don't neglect the need for physical activity in your daily routine on those grey and dismal days.

*Age is strictly a  
case of mind over  
matter. If you don't  
mind, it doesn't*

*matter*

Jack Benny

Look at all the short trips you do in the car and see if those could be done on foot or bicycle instead. This will save you money, reduce the environmental impact of your lifestyle, and benefit your health at the same time! And when you're out walking rather than travelling by car, you have more opportunity to share a smile with others you pass in the street.

## 7. AMBIENCE

**- listen to music and/or have inspiring artwork in view.**

*"Nature can do more than physicians"*  
(Oliver Cromwell)

Our moods are also affected by our local environment; both when we are indoors and when we are out and about. Many people find the colour green soothing and calming; they associate it with the site of healthy lush vegetation in spring and early summer.

*Beauty awakens  
the soul to act*

Dante Alighieri

For others the bright colour of flowers brightens their day. Or being by water - the sea, a lake or a river - can inspire and clear the mind to think of new things and solutions to difficulties.

*If you cannot be a  
poet, be the poem*

David Carradine

Music can inspire and lift our state of mind, whether it's pop, jazz,

rock or classical. If you haven't listened to your favourite song(s) for ages, do so. This will evoke happy memories and lift your spirit.

*"Art is a harmony parallel with nature"*  
(Paul Cézanne)

For some people, and this may be you, a favourite and inspiring picture or sculpture may lift your mood when you gaze upon it. This might be an expensive and famous artwork beyond your means to purchase but an affordable print of it could be hanging in your home.

*Everything has  
beauty, but not  
everyone sees it*  
Confucius



**Phil Harding**

*"Life is like riding a bicycle  
- in order to keep your balance,  
you must keep moving"*  
Albert Einstein

*Live younger*

This version of the "7 positives" information leaflet is published by Phil Harding on **philharding.net**.



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