

Easy Steps to Positive Visualization



Is there really such a thing as "waking up on the wrong side of the bed"? Is our day predetermined by fate or do our perceptions directly impact the type of day we will have? You may have noticed that if you think you wake up on the wrong side of the bed, you may begin to believe that the day will continue to spiral downward, and sometimes it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There is an expression that says "perception is everything" and there just may be some truth to that old adage.

A person can become crisis oriented if she believes her life is surrounded by a black cloud. The thought process can start with one feeling unlucky, progressing to feeling downtrodden - to eventually feeling one's life is "doomed and hopeless." A crisis lifestyle develops when someone lacks self-awareness of their thoughts and feelings and does not learn coping strategies to confront negative thoughts. When a person begins to believe they are powerless over their feelings and thoughts, they become vulnerable to believe that life is nothing more than a repetitive cycle of stress.

How do we begin to break the cycle of negativity? Positive visualization is a great start!

You can begin to practice basic steps of this skill by participating in the following steps everyday:

1. Choose 5-10 minutes every morning to have your own "start of the day ritual". Enjoy your favorite cup or tea or coffee and sit in a quiet place, repeating the following mantra "I have the potential to make this a good day." Repeat this mantra at least 10 times.
2. After you are done verbalizing your mantra, visualize one small interaction that would make your day more pleasurable, such as having the ability to ignore a difficult co-worker or seeing yourself make progress on a work task. (Remember- when we practice positive visualization, we want to keep the visions simple and obtainable. If our goals are too lofty, we will not meet them, and we will feel unmotivated to try the next time)
3. After you choose your goal, envision the action steps of completing the goal, When you first start practicing, write down your action steps so that you may take them with you during your day. For example, you may write down the following action steps.."I visualize myself driving to work in a good mood listening to my favorite CD, then I see myself walking to my desk and smiling at others, then I see myself interacting with a co-worker who insults me and I respond positively to her by gently laughing her off and walking away with confidence. I then see myself driving home from work smiling and listening to music, feeling great about my ability to ignore negativity and I look forward to spending the evening relaxing with my family."

Visualization takes practice. It does not usually work the first time you try it, so you must practice daily. You also need to practice confronting negative thoughts when they happen with rebuttals such as "what evidence is there this thought will come true?" or...."This negative thought does not need to define me."

Here is a review of how your positive visualization daily outline should look:

- ✓ Choose a 5-10 minute reflective time each morning to contemplate and visualize
- ✓ Set one goal per day to visualize (something you want to see in a more positive perspective)
- ✓ Write down the action steps of the vision-what will it look like and how will it play out?
- ✓ Celebrate your success when it is done and keep practicing daily!



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