

The MANY Health Benefits from Positive Thinking

by Brian Hazelgren

Let's be candid with each other and agree that we need to Stop negative self-talk in our lives. It's destructive, and causes more stress. Our goal must be to reduce stress - since it is linked to all kinds of illnesses.

Positive thinking helps with stress management and can even improve your health. Can you answer to the age old question "Is your glass half-empty or half-full?" affect your health?

How you answer this question about positive thinking may be a reflection about your outlook on life, your attitude towards yourself, and whether you're optimistic or pessimistic. According to the Mayo Clinic — yes, this outlook may very well affect your health. "The positive thinking that usually comes with optimism is a key part of effective stress management."¹

Fast Fact: Positive thinking that comes with optimism is a key part of effective Stress Management. This will literally play a key role in improving your health!

I'm sure we are all aware where some studies show that personality traits such as optimism and pessimism can affect many areas of our health and well-being. Effective stress management is associated with many health benefits. If you tend to be pessimistic, don't worry — you can learn positive thinking skills - and that is what *Master Positive Thinking* is all about.

Understanding positive thinking and self-talk

Back in the 80's I did some work with Shad Helmstetter who wrote a book called "*What To Say When You Talk To Yourself*." Shad also held seminars and workshops that would bring in 30-100 people who wanted to learn more about the positive self talk that they could learn to improve their lives. I was able to witness the transformation of many people as they took this topic seriously and wanted to make a change in their life. I also learned that positive thinking doesn't mean that you keep your head in the sand and ignore life's negative situations. Positive thinking just means that you approach unpleasant situations in a more positive and productive way.

Let's face it - we all have had to deal with negative situations to one degree or another at some point in our life. It's all part of life's glorious plan to have opposition in all things. If you don't currently do this, then make it a goal to change your negative thinking and negative self talk to thinking that the best is going to happen, not the worst.

Positive thinking often starts with self-talk. Self-talk is an art form that you can learn to be a benefit to you - instead of a hinderance. The endless stream of unspoken thoughts that run through your head end up creating automatic thoughts that can be positive or negative. It's also true that some of your self-talk comes from logic and reason - or from

¹<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/positive-thinking/art-20043950>

experiences that you have had. However, other self-talk may arise from misconceptions and misunderstandings that you create in your own mind when there is a lack of information.

It's a simple fact that if the thoughts that run through your head are mostly negative, your outlook on life is more likely to be pessimistic. If your thoughts are mostly positive, you're likely an optimist — someone who practices positive thinking.

The health benefits of positive thinking

Researchers have conducted thousands of studies over the past couple of decades that have proven how our thoughts and self talk can affect our health. They continue to explore the effects of positive thinking and optimism on overall health. There are many health benefits that positive thinking may provide in each of our lives, and they include:

- A more productive life full of optimism
- Increased life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress
- Greater resistance to the common cold and other illness
- Improved psychological and physical well-being
- Better cardiovascular health and reduced risk of death or stroke from cardiovascular disease
- Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

Let's be realistic, if all of those studies prove that your life can improve and you will experience better health and well-being - then why not stay on that side of the line? If you have more positive thoughts and self talk, then you can potentially have less stress in your life. Too much bad stress causes health problems. When you laugh more, and think of positive outcomes, these help bolster your outlook and will help you to be a more healthy, fun-loving person.

It's unclear why people who engage in positive thinking experience these health benefits. One theory is that having a positive outlook enables you to cope better with stressful situations, which reduces the harmful health effects of stress on your body.

The reduction of Cortisol in your system is a good thing. Cortisol is a natural chemical that does severely destructive things to you body and mind. It clogs arteries...and creates plaque in your arteries and your brain. It produces the gunk and buildup that you don't need. Cortisol comes from stress, and the sooner we recognize what it does and how destructive it is to our bodies, the better equipped we become to fight against it. The best way to fight against it is to have a positive outlook on life and to engage in positive self talk.

It's also thought that positive and optimistic people tend to live healthier lifestyles — they get more physical activity, follow a healthier diet, and don't smoke or drink alcohol in excess.

Let's get ready for the next section to this discussion, and highlight a few areas that are detailed out in the next article...

The list below is a simple discussion about a few ways to think and behave in a more positive and optimistic way:

- Identify areas to change.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Follow a healthy lifestyle.
- Check how you're doing.
- Be open to humor.
- Practice, Practice, Practice.

*Brian Hazelgren is a Best-Selling author, Motivational Speaker, Podcast Host, and CEO of RX2Live - a medical services company. This excerpt is from his book **Mastering Positive Thinking**. To learn more about this training system please visit www.positific.com or www.rx2live.com.*