



wee changes can make a **big difference** tips to feel more optimistic about the future

An optimistic attitude finds ways round challenges

Being optimistic doesn't mean you don't recognise there can be threats, but your belief in a positive outcome is stronger and this belief makes you more likely to find out more about the threat and ways to manage it or overcome it.

An Optimistic attitude can affect your lifestyle choices

People who are optimistic about the future often make healthier lifestyle choices too. They may avoid unhelpful coping strategies such as misuse of drugs, gambling, alcohol, cigarettes, sugary foods, as their joy for life and hope for the future draws them towards eating habits and life-style choices which support wellbeing.

Optimists can have more social connections

Everyone has challenges at times and people who constantly focus on the negative, others can sometimes find exhausting. That doesn't mean at times we don't need to recognise there is an issue and do something about it. However, going in circles with how awful everything is, can wear yourself and other people out. Optimistic people are more upbeat and hopeful, so more people are drawn to them, which means they have more connections. And if life is proving challenging, more people to offer them support and help manage the stress of what they may be facing. Be the person that brings cheer to others as well as knowing at times when we need someone to help cheer us up.

How to develop more optimistic attitudes

If we grow up surrounded by challenges and people who aren't optimistic, then it means we need to work harder as adults to see the world in this way. We also need to find ways to adjust to life adversities in a way which doesn't leave us thinking, "there is no point nothing ever works" as we all are challenged at times. So yes, some people may find it easier than others to be optimistic, however, this is an attitude with effort we can all adopt even in a small way. If you are facing a life challenges which requires professional support, please speak to someone.



An optimistic attitude can offer a greater sense of control

Being optimistic means if life is challenging, as it can be for everyone at times, you are more likely to engage in the problem. As opposed to being overwhelmed by the emotions the problem offers and pretend it doesn't exist. That doesn't mean if receiving bad news, you won't initially reel from this which is totally natural. Just you will be more likely to focus on what are the solutions, or thinking who else can help you get through this challenging time.

Having a purpose helps you be optimistic

If we feel we have a purpose either in our home life or work life this can help us feel more optimistic. Living with purpose can help us feel more fulfilled and we start our day on a positive note as we have a focus, a belief in something we are doing, something that matters and is bigger than ourselves. These links maybe useful www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/finding-meaningfulness-in-the-everyday and www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/taking-the-time-to-think-about-what-matters-to-you

Believing you can cope can increase optimism

Being optimist and being happy aren't the same thing, that's not to say optimistic people aren't happy, pessimistic people can be happy at times. Optimism is more than happiness, it's a belief you can cope with whatever life throws at you and are able to seek support where you know that's going to help. If you feel being more confident would work for you check out www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/self-confidence-and-personal-leadership



Retrain your brain to look on the bright side

There is a heap of research about right, left hand brain activity. We won't cover that here; you will know if you tend to see the glass as half empty or half full. Affirmations are one tool which can help us develop a more optimistic outlook. You may find this helpful www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/changing-the-script



Appreciate what is there, focus less on what is missing

Often, we put conditions on how we feel and if all the conditions we wanted weren't in place we feel it was all a waste of time. Focusing less on what we didn't like and more on what we can appreciate can help us become more optimistic. If life has been challenging this can be hard as our mind keeps drawing us towards the pain or disappointment we have experienced. Trying to view situations through a more optimistic lens can help us suffer less and be more open to what we can learn when things haven't went as planned. This wee piece may be helpful to reflect on how we can learn from things that don't go as planned and not give up www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/time-for-something-new-and-remember-rarely-anyone-gets-it-right-first-time Maybe also doing a daily journal on what you appreciate and what is good in the world, can help?

Check out your inner voice

We all have an inner voice, chats away to us all the time. To develop a more optimistic attitude we need to learn to become aware of that inner voice and what it's saying to us. If we find it is not helpful for our wellbeing, then learning to change it to a kinder more encouraging inner voice can help us feel more optimistic. You may find this helpful www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/what-are-you-saying-to-yourself-because-you-are-listening-1

Learn to manage the what if's

Helping manage the 'what if's' so that we don't feel overwhelmed by all the things we think could go wrong, is a useful way to help adopt a more optimistic attitude. As we recognise when we are thinking this way and either do something to mitigate the impact, or, if there isn't anything we can do, wait and see what happens and not become so overwhelmed that if a problem does arise, we are so tired we find it hard to overcome it, or manage it. You may find this helpful www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/dealing-with-the-what-if-s

Be aware of your mind diet!

Be careful what you feed your mind with. While keeping up to date with the news is important, have a balance. Sadly, too often the news and papers report on things which are sad, or alarming. The thing is, this is just one view of the world and if that's the only view you have, it can be challenging. If you are interested in switching your focus, this maybe of interest <http://www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/latest-blog/switching-what-we-focus-on-and-lighting-the-candles-of-hope-for-ourselves-and-each-other>

Keep it real

Optimism isn't living in a fantasy and not seeing the world as it is. If we are in a toxic relationship, stressful job that no amount of positivity is going to change then putting on blinkers and pretending it will all work out isn't being optimistic. Optimism is seeing the world as it is, including the challenges, and having the confidence and internal coping strategies to decide despite what life throws you will find a way to work through this so either overcome it, or, not let it ruin your day. These tips are for general wellbeing and do not replace professional intervention where a mental illness or life event needs addressed before you can move on. You matter so speak to someone if you need to. **The Samaritans** are there **24/7 365 Tel 116 123**, or find out about services near you.

