



**THE DAILY
OPTIMIST**
THE WORKBOOK

The Daily Optimist: WORKBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Why is Optimism Important?

Optimism plays a vital role in our ability to lead a happy and successful life. If you constantly find yourself with self-defeating thoughts in your mind, you will most likely become a victim of such thinking in the future. If, however, you focus your mind on positive things, you will most certainly attract all such positivity into your life.

By consciously developing an optimistic outlook on things and promoting only positive thoughts in your mind, you will enjoy the many benefits that come along with it.

Can Optimism Be Learned?

The good news about optimism is that it is a skill that can be taught and learned. Research shows that there are various strategies that we can use to learn optimism.

Being optimistic is a skill that can be simple to learn but requires consistent effort and practice. There are several ways to learn optimism, and one such way is through the ABCDE model proposed by psychologist

Martin Seligman. The ABCDE represents Adversity, Belief, Consequence, Disputation, and Energization. These are the phases you need to go through for each problem.

Optimism is ultimately more about resilience than temperament. Most people have experienced difficulties and failures in their lives. It's the reaction to these adverse situations and what people tell themselves in their subconscious minds that matter.

Differences Between Pessimists and Optimists

Pessimists can learn to be optimistic about failures by analyzing their reaction to adversity and handling things differently. An optimist might look on failure as an unlucky situation (therefore not personal), only a setback (not a permanent issue) and just one failure in one of many goals (& therefore not pervasive).

So, we can see differences between pessimists and optimists and how they explain events to themselves in either a positive or negative way.

To explain this a bit further look at three primary differences between pessimists and optimists:

Personalization: Optimists believe events occur due to causes outside of themselves. Pessimists blame themselves for problems. So, optimists internalize positive events, and pessimists externalize them.

Permanence: Optimists see issues as temporary and good things happen for permanent reasons. Pessimists see problems as permanent and good events are only temporary.

Pervasiveness: A pessimist assumes failure in one area will replicate through their life. An optimist would take a positive outcome and use that to brighten the rest of their lives.

ABCDE model by Martin Seligman

A - Adversity: When someone dashes past you, bumps into you and knocks your drink to the ground.

B - Belief: You exclaim (and believe), “That person is deliberately callous and selfish!”

C - Consequence: Feelings of bitterness and anger gradually overwhelms you and continues with you for the rest of the day.

D - Disputation: You realize that the negative feelings you are experiencing will not yield any good for you, and so you decide to take a stand against it. You place yourself in the other person’s shoes and begin to find reasons for their action. Perhaps they needed to rush to the emergency room or to stave off another pertinent crisis. You allow yourself to forgive and forget, then move on.

E - Energization: Upon overcoming the negative feelings you once experienced, you feel energized and happy to have successfully taken control of your thoughts and calmed your mind. It is such an exhilarating feeling to realize that you are getting better at thinking optimistically.

In an optimist’s eyes the adverse event would be explained thus:

Personalization: External

I was going about my business, and someone bumped into me.

Permanence: Temporary

It was just a one-off occurrence, unlikely to happen again and no lasting effects.

Pervasiveness: Specific

The problem was due to that specific person bumping into me. Not everyone bumps into me.

A pessimist would explain the same event like this:

Personalization: Internal

I was in the wrong place and wasn't watching what I was doing.

Permanence: Permanent

I'm clumsy, and I'm always bumping into people.

Pervasiveness: Global

I'm like that with everything I do. I'll never manage to be good at anything.

So, the path to learned optimism is to learn to consider alternative reasons for the adverse event and chose one that has least **Permanency** (i.e., temporary) and least **Pervasiveness** (i.e., specific).

EXERCISE 1)

In this exercise, we're going to help you recognize Adverse experiences that happen to you and reason with yourself about your Beliefs. You will investigate the Consequences of the pessimistic beliefs and then bring into question your pessimistic beliefs by Disputing them. Having done that successfully you will feel more Energized and optimistic and better able to overcome adversity.

What you need to do complete the following five Debate sheets over the next two or three weeks. Note that the Adversity can be brought about through negative thoughts about a positive event. For example, you might have a promotion at work - a positive event. But, it brings about Adversity because you're worried that you cannot do the job.

So, you must write down the event that causes the Adversity. Ask yourself about your Beliefs and what the evidence is for those beliefs. Think about the Consequences of your pessimistic beliefs, what it means, what's the outcome likely to be. Then you must Dispute the beliefs. You must argue with yourself. It may help you to step outside of your involvement at a personal level and think of someone telling you about their beliefs. Can you tell them why they are wrong and why their beliefs are wrong? Ask a friend what they think if you're stuck for ideas.

Yes, I know, it's a lot to do, and it's not easy, but it is the key to successfully using the ABCDE technique and turning you from a pessimist into an optimist.

Example Debate Record - Positive Event

Debate Record	Date: June 30, 2018	Time: 15:22
<u>A</u> dv ^{er} sity	<p>I wrote an article on my blog, and it was picked up by the press. That resulted in loads of hits to my website.</p> <p>Now the organizers of a huge international summit have asked me to give a presentation. Nearly 1000 attendees will be there.</p>	
<u>B</u> elief	<p>I'm not good enough to give a presentation; I don't know enough about the subject. I've never given a talk in front of an audience before. I'm going to be completely out of my depth, will get a terrible reception and the organizers probably won't pay me. I wish they hadn't asked me to talk and I wish I'd not written the article.</p>	
<u>C</u> onsequence	<p>I'll have sleepless nights about this. The press will pick up on my dreadful presentation, and I'll be the laughing stock.</p> <p>If I say I'm not going to accept the request, the organizers will think I'm a fraud and don't know what I'm talking about.</p>	

Disputation

But hold on. I must be pretty good, or they wouldn't have asked me. Thousands of people talk in front of audiences without any problem. I do know my subject well, I've been learning about it for years and have written a very successful book. It will be a great promotion for me & could be the making of me.

Energization

I can do this, I'm now feeling relaxed about it and know that I'm more than capable. I can use the book I've already written as a guide for the presentation. This will give me a wonderful opportunity to expand my business.

Example Debate Record - Negative Event

Debate Record	Date: June 30, 2018	Time: 15:22
<u>A</u> dv ^{er} sity	I wrote an article on my blog, and quite a lot of people commented on it saying that I was wrong and my writing was poor.	
<u>B</u> elief	They are right. I don't know my subject very well. I failed English at school so there's no way I should be writing blog posts. In fact, the whole website is poor.	
<u>C</u> onsequence	I've lost all my enthusiasm now. I'll close down the site. It was going to be a site I earned money from, but I'll have to go and get a job now.	
<u>D</u> isputation	But this was just one post I made. I've posted dozens of articles over the past year, and people have always commented about how good they were and how much they learned from me. Besides, it's good to cause some controversy from time to time. It makes people react and take note. Anyway, It wasn't badly written.	

<u>E</u> nergization	This should make my blog even more popular, why on earth should I want to stop now. Controversy is good, and I should write more articles where people question whether I'm right. That could open up a real debate and bring in a lot more readers and potentially money.
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Debate Record 1

Debate Record	Date:	Time:
<u>A</u> dversity		
<u>B</u> elief		
<u>C</u> onsequence		

Disputation

Energization

Debate Record 2

Debate Record	Date:	Time:
<u>A</u> dversity		
<u>B</u> elief		
<u>C</u> onsequence		
<u>D</u> isputation		
<u>E</u> nergization		

Debate Record 3

Debate Record	Date:	Time:
<u>A</u> dversity		
<u>B</u> elief		
<u>C</u> onsequence		
<u>D</u> isputation		
<u>E</u> nergization		

Debate Record 4

Debate Record	Date:	Time:
<u>A</u> dversity		
<u>B</u> elief		
<u>C</u> onsequence		
<u>D</u> isputation		
<u>E</u> nergization		

Debate Record 5

Debate Record	Date:	Time:
<u>A</u> dversity		
<u>B</u> elief		
<u>C</u> onsequence		
<u>D</u> isputation		
<u>E</u> nergization		

CONCLUSION

Learning to be an optimist is simple, but not easy. It takes daily practice. However, the good news is that it's possible and you can turn yourself into the optimist you always wanted to be.

If you've followed this workbook, you will be able to start to lay really good foundations and start to look at the way you think and why you think that way. Make sure every time you feel pessimistic about anything fill out one of these Debate Records. Don't rush the exercise, take your time and properly debate with yourself about your beliefs.

If you feel that you need to ask someone else about issues, that will genuinely help. It will benefit you to see outside of your beliefs and bring an extra dimension to your thinking.

Within a short while, you'll begin to understand where your pessimistic thoughts originate from and turn them around. You'll see the many benefits of being an optimist, and why cultivating an optimistic and positive outlook on life is essential to your wellbeing, relationships, and career.

To your success!