ZOE MEADOWS

POSITIVE THINKING



ELIMINATE YOUR STRESS WITH STRATEGIES YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW TO UNLEASH YOUR HAPPIER LIFE

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Introduction

Congratulations on purchasing this book. If you are reading this book because you feel like you cannot move forward and accomplish a goal due to negativity, then you are on the right track.

This book is written to suggest techniques and to give examples which show that you can attain happiness very easily. In short, if you used the strategies that are in this book, your life will be full of joy and satisfaction.

We have arrived at a time where our society has become the biggest bully on the playground. There is an abundance of stressful situations that would come attacking an individual left, right, and center. It is sad to see that people let themselves be defeated by the problems, care, and difficulties of human existence. Because we cannot change how our surroundings bombard us with things to worry about, it is important that we learn how to change the way we think and how to stay positive in every circumstance.

People who are positive thinkers tend to be more successful in life compared to those who think the worst about a situation. Being positive is not only a choice nowadays but a necessity. It is how you will survive in the jungle with a minimal scratch.

In this book, you will learn to see the positive side of every situation. You will know how thoughts, be it positive or negative, could immensely affect your way of life and how to start eliminating the negative ones. You will get realization on how important it is to acquire a habit of thinking positively and how you can apply it to your everyday life.

I encourage you to take that first step into becoming that positive individual that you have always dreamed about. Start turning the pages of this book and be on your way to a more successful and happier life. It all starts with you.

"*The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it.*"

– Eckhart Tolle

Thanks again for downloading this book, I hope you enjoy it!

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Chapter 1 – The Benefits of Positive Thinking

Chapter 2 – Assess Your Way of Thinking

Chapter 3 – Ways to Overcome Negative Thoughts

Chapter 4 – The Power of Optimism

Chapter 5 – Who Are You?

Chapter 6 – Strategies to be Happy

Chapter 7 – Take Away

Chapter 8 – Living The Life

Conclusion

Chapter 1 – The Benefits of Positive Thinking

Cliché as it may sound, that half-filled or half-empty glass of water says a lot about how we view circumstances. The way we respond to these circumstances is affected somehow by how we perceive the result. By simply changing the way we look at that glass and how it would benefit us, we are already gearing ourselves towards a more successful and positive mindset. People may say and may negatively dismiss it as being just “all in the mind” and it is true, but in a more positive connotation. The mind is a very powerful tool that would either take you places or land you stuck in a rut. The way we look at things and how we take action all starts from our head; it is a battlefield after all. Positive thinking is a state of mind where you try to teach yourself to perceive any situation as something of an asset or an advantage rather than a loss. It is a process of acquiring a certain viewpoint where all circumstances can be deemed as a great probability of success. It could be challenging to develop at first, but once it becomes a habit, you will be reaping all the benefits as listed down below.

What are the benefits of Positive Thinking?

Optimism or positive thinking has a variety of benefits ranging from physical, mental, and emotional. Here are some of them that you can acquire:

It increases your ability to cope with stress.

Compared to negative thinkers, people who think positively would be able to overcome disappointments and frustrations better. This is because their minds are already set into action about the things that they can do and control instead of the things that they have missed and cannot change anymore. Optimistic people would not stop on “what went wrong” but would also proceed to “what’s next”.

60,000 is the numbers of thoughts that a normal person has per day. If you tend to think negatively all the time, these thoughts are going to make you depressed. Studies have shown that inmates can improve their physical and psychological well-being by emphasizing positive aspects of the situation.

Optimism strengthens your immunity.

It has been found that our mind has direct influence and impact on our body. Researchers have studied that the area in our brain that is associated with negative emotions, has a weaker response of immunity to the flu vaccine.

Also, in another study, college students are injected a dose of dead mumps virus under the skin of the forearm. These simple cocktails trigger a cellular immune response, resulting in a small bump at the injection site. Researchers then can estimate the strength of the immune response by measuring the bump. When the students experience exams, homework, projects in the semester, their optimism levels rise and fall. The result of the study is not surprising. When optimism goes up, so did the cell0mediated immune response. When optimism drops, the immune system weakens.

It is good for your health.

Over the years, positive thinking has acquired some health benefits such as fewer tendencies for depression, reduced risk of fatality due to cardiovascular issues, and a longer lifespan. That is why it is important to take care of your thoughts if you want to take good care of your health.

Do you know that your thoughts can actually help you live longer? According to a new report in the *Annals of Family Medicine*, men who consider themselves at lower risk for cardiovascular disease are one-third lower than those who consider themselves at average risk.

Positive thinking boosts motivation.

An attitude that leans towards positivity would encourage a person to see a task through and take risks. This will help you reach your goals quicker and would have more chance to succeed.

Studies also show that negative self-talk can make you less likely to achieve your goals. Imagine you want to lose weight and all you are thinking is "I am already overweight, so eating another slice of pizza won't matter," then you will never lose weight, right? On the other hand, if you say to yourself "I can do it!" after you pass on ice-cream, it can keep your spirits up and your waist size down.

It opens up opportunities.

Because your mind is not stuck in the past mistakes, a person's optimism could view all situations, even failed goals, as opportunities for success. A positive mind would view fear as a challenge instead of an obstruction. For example, when you are hanging out with your friends in a bar, a cute girl smiles at you. You can either think she thinks that you are cute, or she thinks that you look stupid. Thinking the former one will make you want to start a conversation with her and who knows…

It allows a more harmonious relationship.

A positive thinker would see past a person's flaws and imperfections. This does not mean that you are someone who can be easily fooled. It just means that you take note of that person's negative character but would choose to look at their good side. People gravitate more towards a person whose personality is welcoming and not judgmental. Positive thinkers are also more likely to give another person a second chance, thus making a relationship more resilient to problems which could minimize the tendency for separation or could avoid breakups altogether.

Optimism increases your tolerance to pain.

Although people would assume that negative thinkers would be more tolerant to pain because they are more likely to expect it, positive thinkers tend to bear and overcome it better. This is because they view pain as a “necessary evil” and would use it to better themselves rather than act and stay wounded.

It elevates energy.

A positive thinker holds a lot of energy because he perceives a favorable end to any goal. It brings about a rush of adrenaline to pursue the task at hand and enjoys the process of reaching it.

It encourages others to be in the same frame of mind.

Being positive is contagious. An optimist would be able to encourage the people around him to persevere and ultimately reach the same goal more successfully.

There are a lot more benefits that a person can gain from thinking and staying positive. Now that you have an idea on how optimism can vastly affect your life, it is time for you to start being aware of the flow of your thoughts and how it leads to a certain result. The next chapter would teach you on how you can assess your way of thinking and what you can do about it.

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Chapter 2 – Assess Your Way of Thinking

Have you thought about your thoughts? Does that question confuse you? Probably because you have not yet considered analyzing your own thought processes and how your mind takes you somewhere when you are confronted with unfamiliar things. Maybe you have wondered why a certain situation happened but have never asked yourself why and how you responded to that particular circumstance. A positive thinker does not only think about improving the situation but also deliberates on how to correct the attitude or the response towards it. This requires you to evaluate and later on, improve your way of thinking. Assessing your way of thinking is the first step towards acquiring a positive mindset. When you start to be conscious on how you respond to situations, you will be better in adapting and overcoming difficulties. And so knowing that you have the power to change the way you think, you would get a sense of security within yourself and would leave you unfazed no matter what you go through. Take note of a few tips to help you out in evaluating your own thoughts.

Be responsible with your attitude.

If you are familiar with the tale of the two wolves, it is exactly the way your mindset should be when it comes to being positive. As indicated in this story, whichever wolf gets stronger is the one that you choose to feed. Whether evil, anger, resentment and ego, or good, peace love, hope and serenity, it would always come down to your choice.

A lot of people would blame their failures on everything around them when in fact, they do not realize that it is their choice right at the onset of setting up a particular goal that actually influenced the result. Most of the time, people who think negatively would pre-empt an outcome that is unfavorable and would fill their minds with a lot of doubt. They would vacillate between pushing forward and pulling back and would get confused why it did not work out. On the other hand, if you set your mind right at the start as to having a successful goal, you will be able to attract positive factors that would contribute to the fruition of your desired outcome.

Whatever your thought is, it is your reality. That is why you should always take responsibility for your attitude towards any problem. No one else has that level of control in your mind but yourself. So if you want to take hold of your thoughts, first, learn to identify it.

Keep a journal or diary to reflect on your thoughts.

First, you have to catch your negative thoughts and figure out what they are. When you see that thought floating by, you have to catch it, look at it and ask “what’re you doing in my brain?” Some examples of the negative thoughts are “I am not worth of wealth” or “I don’t deserve to get promoted and earn higher wages”. These thoughts can be so ingrained in your brains since childhood to the point that you think they are just normal. What you need to do is to look at these thoughts and ask yourself how these thoughts are there? Where do they come from?

When assessing the way you think, it is important to have a substantial evidence of your thoughts and feelings. Keeping a journal is a classic way of assisting an individual for personal growth and personality development. By journaling, you will be able to peek into your own mind, gaining insight into your moods and behaviors. At first, you will feel a bit awkward especially if writing is not your best suit but after a while, you will be surprised by how much you will be able to learn about yourself just by a single entry. All you have to do is to take a few minutes at the end of each day to write down a situation and how you reacted to it. List or write down all your negative and positive thoughts all throughout the day. By doing this consistently, you will be able to notice a pattern emerging or stimuli that somehow trigger a negative thought. By tracing your thought processes at the end of each day, you can create action plans on how to manage it and how to turn your negative way of thinking into a positive one.

When you start journaling, you need to be honest about how you felt about a certain situation and how you responded to it. If you are not a natural writer, just create a list and be a bit more detailed. You can pick your top five most predominant negative thoughts as well as positive thoughts all throughout the day.

You also need to take the time to reflect on the thoughts that you have listed down. If you had time to journal every day, be sure to have your reflection

and evaluation at least once at the end of the week.

Now that you have learned how to identify your negative and positive thoughts, it would be easier for you to combat those that you need to eliminate and enforce those that you need to maintain. By understanding the way you think, you would be able to control your attitude towards any situation. The next chapter would provide you ways on how you can finally overcome your negative thoughts and teach you on how you can apply it to your everyday life.

Chapter 3 – Ways to Overcome Negative Thoughts

If you are a natural pessimist, you may think you have already hit rock bottom when it comes to perceiving the worst about a situation. Your mind might have brought you to the deepest, darkest and ugliest place when faced an unexpected change in your life. One simple challenge such as passing a driving exam would send you into a frenzy of anxiety due to the negative thoughts that you allow inside your head. A lot of people would find it hard to dismiss this way of thinking because they have been so accustomed to reacting this way that it is almost automatic.

Negative thoughts would come bombarding your mind and would overflow in your everyday life if you do not rein it in. As what we have learned in the previous chapter, you always have the power to choose which kind of thoughts you want to entertain. If you are the kind of person who has become exhausted with thinking about unfounded undesirable outcomes, then you can start overcoming negative thoughts in your everyday life. Here are a few tips that you can apply whenever you feel like pessimism is slowly taking hold of your mind:

Choose happiness

As with everything that we want to happen in our lives, whether it is a long-lasting relationship, or a meaningful friendship, or a way to lose those extra pounds, the key to being successful in all of these is to be intentional. Believe it or not, choosing happiness is intentional as well. Abraham Lincoln once said “Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be”, and it is true. You have to literally take those essential steps in choosing happiness. Mind you, doing this is not a once in a lifetime event. Like when you wake up in the morning and decide that today would be a perfect day, then forgetting all about it once you step out of the room to face a big pile of mess in the living room. Choosing happiness is when you decide to do it moment by moment of each day. You will find that in the

process, there would still be persistent negative thoughts that would creep back up but choosing to be happy again and again is a way to combat those.

One thing that you can focus on to stay happy is to count your blessings. A lot of negative thinkers tend to forget about what they already have. Try to focus on the things that you can be grateful for, such as your family who, in your mind, created that big pile of mess, or the fact that you have woken up healthy and ready to face the day. When you shift into this way of thinking, it would be hard to look at challenges the same way again. You will find that in spite of the difficulties, there are still a lot of things to be thankful for.

Speak affirmation to yourself daily. It is one thing to believe that you are capable of something, but you could elevate this belief if you actually hear it from yourself. Try the “I am…” statements where you can choose from a list of affirmations that you can say. Just make sure that you carefully create an honest, truthful and relevant list that you can use.

Start your day on your terms. You may have let go of your control over that alarm clock, but that does not mean that you can lose control of your entire day. Establish an energizing and meaningful routine in the morning to set your whole day towards success.

Challenge your negative thoughts

It is always important to know what is true in your life. Sometimes, we get so caught up with negative thoughts that we forget that most of them are illogical and almost always…unfounded. You might think “this has happened to me before, and it did not go well.” While it is true that the premise may look familiar, that does not mean that it would yield the same result. One thing to take note of when you lean towards negativity is to think about a situation objectively. Say for example; your brain would tell you “you always fail exams.” Try to evaluate it or write it on a piece of paper and challenge it. “Always? How was I able to graduate if I always fail exams?" “How can I fail something that I have spent the time to prepare for?” These are some examples of truth that you can challenge the negative thought with.

Replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts

Recognizing and testing the accuracy of a negative thought is your first step into gaining an advantage over it. Once you have learned to identify and challenge these negative thoughts, it would be easier for you to turn these into positive. Keep in mind, though, that converting your thoughts should not mean that it is something that you will go blindly optimistic about. Being optimistic is not expecting something to turn out in your favor without any grounds. If you did not bother to practice driving, then you cannot expect to pass the exam by sheer luck. Be positive about a desirable outcome if you are 100 percent sure that you have done your utmost to acquire the best possible result. Hope for the best when you have done your best.

You can also challenge your brain by asking it questions. But make sure that you carefully construct your questions in such a way that it would require a positive answer. So instead of asking “why is it so difficult to pass this driving test?” try “How did I ever get this opportunity to drive my own car?” Make a conscious effort to direct the focus of your questions to positive thoughts.

Stop blaming yourself

Face it; not everything is about you. So if a task is not going your way because of unexpected circumstances that you cannot control, do not blame yourself. It is not your fault that a particular BMW cut you on the road. Nor is it your fault that the driver behind you is abusing his car’s horn because you are both stuck in traffic. Most likely, they are going through difficulties themselves that is why they are acting that way. When you personalize, you would have the tendency to get paranoid and would probably just sell yourself short. When you always think that everyone is against you and that everything is conspiring to take you down, then you will never reach your full potential. Rationalize and start focusing more on your abilities and your goal. This way, you will be able to divert your attention from things that would not benefit or affect you but only on things that you have control of.

No to filter thinking

Negative thinkers are guilty of filter thinking. This is when you tend to focus on the negative side of a situation or when you only hear the bad side

of a comment. When you do this, there would be no room for constructive criticism in your mind. Pessimists would never view criticisms as constructive, but only something that would limit them from progressing. This kind of thinking would annihilate all kinds of potential that could be developed, would exhaust any passion that you have, and would burn out all the hope that you might be clinging to. There is some truth in looking at the “brighter side” of life; you may not realize it but looking at both the positive and negative side of a situation would provide you a deeper insight and would help you in achieving your goals better and faster.

You are well aware now of the consequences of allowing negative thoughts in your mind and in your life. With this knowledge, you will be able to turn your pessimism into a positive mindset easily. Continue reading to the next chapter to learn more about optimism and how you can take steps into allowing more positive energy in your everyday tasks.

Chapter 4 – The Power of Optimism

A lot of people would try to water down or minimize the power of being positive, dismissing it as just a state of mind that would not have a permanent hold in a person's life. It may sound strange to a person who has been too accustomed to thinking negatively about a situation. But you will discover that optimism is a lifestyle that would give you an edge to any difficulty. It is that deciding factor between success and failure. Optimism could help you achieve your goals and could assist you in going through all the tasks whatever the result would be. Take a look at some of the steps below that would encourage you to look at your life with more fervor and positivity.

Start getting motivated

A lot of times, we look for motivation from the people around us. Making them accountable for whatever outcome a task would have. It is easy to blame people when our goals are not met, but motivation should never come from anyone but us. It could be easier said than done, especially when you have the propensity to think negatively. So how do you do it?

The first step to start getting motivated is to move. Physically, literally move. Stretch, jog, do some pushups, whatever it is that would get your blood pumping in the morning. When you are physically ready, it would establish eagerness in your mind and would prepare you to go through the rest of the day. Get inspiration from other people, watch videos from personalities who started small and made it through life due to perseverance and faith.

Just like those successful personalities, you also have to start small. A lot of times we find ourselves drowning in the middle of all our goals that we have set and cannot finish. It is better to start and complete one small task rather than take on a lot all at once and not finish anything. You will find that you will be motivated more when you see these small tasks being completed one by one.

One of the techniques to get motivated is to go public about a certain goal. Say for example you want to commit to losing 5 kilos in a month, post it on your close friends' and family's timeline to make them your accountability partners to your progress. Knowing that your loved ones are watching your every step and getting affirmations from them would surely get your feet glued on that treadmill.

Flashback your achievements

It may be strange to hear that you have to look at your past to move forward, but it is true and effective. But make sure that you only take note and retain all the positive lessons that you have learned from your past. If there is one thing that you can do a throwback on, it would be your former achievements. This would definitely provide you encouragement to take on whatever challenges you may be facing. You may discover the strategies that you have used before to achieve a goal and apply it to your current tasks. Have a meaningful conversation with people who have been with you for a long time and ask them their insight on how you were able to get past a certain difficulty before. These people would be able to provide you different insights about your character that you may not have noticed before. When you are able to give substance on your former successes, placing value on your current goal would be much easier.

Eliminate Distractions

Sometimes it is difficult to focus on solving a particular challenge when your mind is bombarded with different things. Just as fast as you decide to focus on a task that your mind betrays you and your thoughts fly away. This gives you a feeling of defeat because your mind cannot seem to control all these thoughts floating around your head which then leads to pessimism.

Take charge of your mind by knowing your own style in overcoming challenges. If you are a person who needs music to concentrate, go ahead and turn up the volume. On the other hand, if the music is a distraction, then make sure that you work in an environment that is peaceful and would free your mind from any outside noise. You can also try to double-check your routine and behavior. You know that having social media up in your browser while trying to do some work would only tempt you to check your feed and totally divert your attention from your goal. If this is the case, then

make sure to log out of all your social media applications while you are working.

In addition to this, technology has been the biggest distraction in achieving a certain goal. It has the power to sidetrack you no matter how great your resolve is in accomplishing a task. Remember to control technology and not the other way around because when used correctly, the technology could aid you in reaching your goal faster and with more efficiency.

Be competitive

One of the essential factors in reaching a certain goal is to have competition and a healthy one at that. Being competitive in a positive way would push you to reveal skills that you thought you did not have and would teach you to be more assertive. Competition sans hate and greed would lead you to become an achiever. And when you are constantly giving yourself trust when tackling a task, it would be easier for you to look at challenges and difficulties in a positive manner. Eventually, time will come where you would even welcome challenges and look forward to solving one.

Don't be afraid to ask for help

One of the characteristics that an individual should possess is being able to establish trust with the people around them. Remember that it is okay to be weak at times especially when anxiety sets in. When you have people around you whom you trust, it would be easier for you to ask for help when negative thoughts continue to prevail in your mind. Trying to be positive is a good thing, but there are cases when negative thinking leads to a certain kind of anxiety that would already require medical attention. If this happens, take that step to reach out to someone who has professional experience when it comes to battling the worst kind of pessimism.

When you acquire the power of optimism, you will have the capacity to take control of your thoughts. Once you have learned all these tips and try to apply it in your everyday life, it would be impossible for you to look at a challenge and not feel secure that you will overcome it. Optimism is a great factor in finding happiness in this otherwise selfish world. Let’s move on to the next chapter to learn more strategies for reaching that happiness that you have always dreamed of.

Chapter 5 – Who Are You?

Now that you have an idea on what happiness is and what its types are, it is now time to understand yourself better by taking the time to evaluate yourself. Do you love yourself enough that you are able to be happy? Here are some of the self-help questions you can ask yourself and how to be able to evaluate your answers.

Are you happy at the moment?

Do you like the way your life is right now? Are you satisfied with your job, your family and the state of your life? If the answer is yes, then you might be happy at this very moment. Asking yourself this question helps you to evaluate if you are happy so you can keep doing the things that make you happy and to know the things that are not making you happy if you found out that you aren’t happy. This way you can continue being happy or stop the things that make you unhappy.

What are the things that make you happy?

Once you've already figured out if you are happy or not, you should now find out what the things that make you happy are. When you find them out, you have to check it with the things you are currently doing. If it seems you are doing them already, then you are doing a good job. If you've found out that you are unhappy, and you seem to be doing the things that make you happy, you have to figure out if they really make you happy and if not, you have to search for the things that will make you happy.

Are you at peace?

Now that you know the things that can make you happy are, it is now time to ask yourself if you are satisfied with the way your life is going right now. Do you think you are headed in the right direction, and you are not worried about the things that might happen on the next day? If your answer is yes, then you really are at peace.

Are you suffering?

If you seem to not be at peace, you might want to think twice. Are there things that are keeping you away from being at peace? What are these things that are making you suffer? Figure them out so that you can dissect them and find out a way to deal with them.

Are you ready to decide on the kind of happiness you really wanted?

You are now aware of how you really are at the moment and what you feel and why it is now time to decide about the kind of happiness you are going to pursue. Do you think you can handle some major changes in your life as long as you are assured that you will be happy? If yes, then you can proceed to decide what kind of happiness you want to pursue.

Now that you have evaluated yourself, and you know how the state of your emotions are and how you really feel, it is now time to know how to pursue your desired outcome. How do you pursue true happiness and achieve it without having too much trouble? Here are some of the things you should consider if you really want to be truly happy.

Acceptance & Living the Now Onwards

The very first thing you have to understand when you are pursuing your true happiness is that you should be able to accept the things you have done and accept your past. You have to completely embrace your past even if bad things have happened then. Focus on the present and remember that the important thing to be happy and achieve true happiness is to realize that you are in the present, and there are still a lot of things you can do in your life as long as you accept the things that come along the way.

All men have sin

This is the part of pursuing that you have to accept that you are human too and that there are times you will commit mistakes, and these mistakes can be seen as sins to the rest of the people watching you. Realize that this is normal and that these things are bound to happen. The temptation is always right there, and there will be times that you will give in to that. The secret is to make sure that there are more times that you are able to do the right thing. You have to do your best in keeping temptation out of your door and out of your heart just as well.

Whatever done is done

The things that have already happened in your past cannot be changed, and the impact it has on your present will always be the same. You do not have the capabilities to change the things that are already done. What you do have is the ability to change the way things are going by not repeating the same mistakes that you have already done and always doing your best in everything you do. You can always try to live a better life by doing the things you want to do the most at the right time. It is all in your hands, and all you have to do is to play the right cards.

Repent and learn to let go and relief oneself of any emotional burden or guilt

A good thing about achieving happiness is that it is a process. You do not immediately become happy, at least true happiness is not that way. And because it is a process, you can do things bit by bit in order to keep your sanity intact. Repent for the things you did wrong and accept that you have caused these things. Let go of the things that are bothering you and the things that are hurting you. When you relieve yourself of any emotional burden and guilt you have, you will be able to live a better life and a happier one at that. So let yourself be relieved from emotional stress and take things easy. Do not let your life be messed up because of the things that have already happened. You have to learn when to let go and when to hold on.

The key is doing more good each passing day.

In order to free yourself from the things that are hurting you or are bothering you, doing good things might help you. Once you learn the art of selflessness, things will be a whole lot easier to you. There are things that you will only be able to feel when you do good deeds. Let your heart say the things it wants to say. Once you receive the thanks from the people you've helped and see the smiles on their faces, you will realize that helping other people and showing kindness and generosity is something that pays off really well. You will be able to sleep better at night and have dreams that are far better than you've always had.

Believing and practicing the Universal Laws

There are things called: universal laws that govern Zen happiness. They are your guide to achieving the happiness that lasts for a long time, if not forever. The key is to believe in these laws and practice them by trying to incorporate them into your daily life. Some of these laws are the law of Karma, the law of giving, the law of attraction and much more. The next chapter will give you more details about these laws and discuss them thoroughly. For now, you just have to get an idea of what they are. As you know, karma is a force that gives you back what you have given to other people, the law of giving is then one that tells you to give to other people in order to be happier.

Optimism and the law of attraction

Optimism is definitely a key in being happy. When you always look on the good side of things, you are able to see the hidden beauty that others do not see because they do not bother looking. You have to live an optimistic life because it makes you less depressed and happier. It helps you to not think negatively about other people so that you can get along with them better. On the other hand, the law of attraction is like attracting the things that you want by doing things that are related to it. This will be further discussed in the latter chapters.

This chapter has taught you some of the things you can do in order to achieve the happiness that you desire so much. It is up to you to figure out how you are going to follow these things in order to be happy. At the end of the day, your happiness still lies on your hands because only you can pull the trigger to be a happier person. The next chapter will tell you what to do once you’ve grabbed the happiness you’ve always longed for.

Chapter 6 – Strategies to be Happy

Who wouldn't choose happiness? No one would allow himself to be lonely when life is offering him an opportunity to live his life the best way that he can. We are born to actually to live our lives and to live it abundantly. Happiness could be elusive for most people. You can be someone who has been through a lot of suffering and disappointments and have been accustomed to expect pain and loneliness as inevitable as day and night. Because of this, we try to find happiness in the wrong places and the wrong people.

Why does it matter, anyway? Is it not enough to have the perfect job that pays a lot? Is it not okay to settle with someone who possesses great qualities but does not make you happy? Is happiness overrated?

On the contrary, happiness contributes a lot to a person's success whatever endeavor he or she is taking. According to research, doctors who are happy tend to provide more accurate and efficient diagnoses and could give patients a sense of hope. Schools that are more focused on the emotional and social well-being of students tend to acquire more academic attainment and improve students' behavior. Happier people contribute more to society positively and are more likely to be willing to reach out and help each other. They are more likely to do volunteer work, vote and create a healthy community.

Happiness matters so much because it is our ultimate goal in life. It might be pushed too often at the backseat but deep in our subconscious, it takes precedence over all the material things that we have. If you want to take that first step towards happiness, take note of the following strategies that could jumpstart your life:

Setting up your goal

The first step to finding real happiness is to know what you want and work to achieve it. There is nothing better than setting up clear goals and visualizing the steps to reach them. When you anticipate something, like the fruition of a particular dream, you will feel your blood pumped up and get

you excited about all the possibilities around you. Anticipation could light up a light bulb in our brain whenever you think about all the things that you are looking to achieve. When you have a goal to look forward to, you will get a sense of purpose and meaning in your life. Setting up a goal makes you responsible and accountable with the path that you would like your life to go. Just like a compass that would always remind you where north is, a goal would keep you grounded and sane amidst all the craziness in the world.

Be specific about what you want. It doesn't matter if it's that European tour or a significant weight loss, it is important that you are specific when you are creating your goals. If you have something precise and concrete that you can focus on, it would be much quicker for you to get back on track when you feel your focus declining. When you know what you really want, you will be able to rally all your resources behind this particular goal. This means that you would make use of all that you have that is related to that goal the best way and would avoid wasting time on things that are not as important or as related to achieving it. A very simple example would be sacrificing that 3rd Starbucks coffee of the day and instead keep the money for your dream vacation. Investing on healthy food instead of junk and processed food would definitely level up your weight loss goal.

Break down your goals into workable chunks. Avoid being too grand when you think about doing a certain task to reach your goal. If you are planning on wearing a size 6 bikini this summer, then maybe you need to focus your attention first on shedding 5 pounds a month. When you break down a goal, you will avoid getting too overwhelmed and disheartened that you will not be able to reach it. When you reach these smaller goals, you will also feel a sense of satisfaction that would motivate you to press on and go the extra mile. Maybe a little more than 5 pounds next month is an additional $10 for your dream vacation. Also, when you make a mistake, it would be easier to clean up and redo.

Vision Board and Inspirational Tool

Did you know that our brain would respond better to visual stimuli? For example, you know because you have already learned from school what red looks like. You are very much aware that the red color sets off an intense

emotion be it love, anger or hate. But why is it that we feel offended or panicky when we receive an email with a subject line that is in the red font? Seeing something visually invokes an emotion that a simple thought of it could never do. The same principle can be applied to your goals. It is one thing to think about all the marvelous dreams and aspirations in your head, and another to actually see it written down. So how do you create a vision board?

Take time to visualize and write down your goals. It would motivate you to take more assured steps into reaching them. It also puts you in the right frame of mind when you get distracted by things around you.

Relax and have fun. A vision board which is also known as a life collage should be an activity that would put your mind and your spirit in the same and correct perspective. Do not put too much pressure on yourself especially when you are not a natural artist. You are not trying to magically make those images manifest in your life right now, find your flow and make this activity fun for yourself.

Go creatively crazy. When you have a specific goal written down, back it up with pictures, quotes, inspirational texts and visual affirmations. Go all out with the images, anything that inspires you to reach your goal should be pinned on your board. Let the excitement that you are feeling about achieving your dreams fuel your creativity but make sure that you are creating one cohesive board. Once done, go ahead and hang this in a conspicuous place in your room or your desk. This way, it would always remind you of your purpose when life gets in the way.

Changing your mindset

Changing your perception has a lot to do with pursuing your goals and achieving happiness. During the process of reaching for your dreams, you will find that there will be a lot of roadblocks and frustrations that would pull you down. It takes a person with a positive perspective to actually pull through and accomplish any goal. Changing one’s mindset may not happen overnight, but being intentional and making a conscious effort to look at the bright side of a situation would help you get to your goal quicker.

Try to fight fear. This is the biggest enemy of true happiness. When you succumb to fear, you will sell yourself short and would settle for mediocrity. It would make you develop tunnel vision, closing yourself off from better opportunities around you.

Love yourself

This may be the most basic thing to do to acquire happiness but loving yourself is something that could be hard to attain. At times, it is easier for us to accept another person's weaknesses and flaws so long as they do not point to our own. We lavishly give gifts to other people, spend time with them and put their needs first before our own. Although this in itself isn't really bad, when you lose yourself in the process of making other people happy, then you need to re-evaluate your priorities. It is impossible to give something that you do not have an abundance of. So keep in mind that you also deserve to be loved and pampered.

Be aware of your reactions and feelings towards certain situations. Do not ignore or dismiss your natural responses and try to listen to your gut. When you are self-aware, you will gain more insight and understanding of how you are as a person and would be more effective in providing outward love.

Do not misconstrue self-love as self-worship. Loving yourself is accepting that you have flaws and weaknesses, at the same time you excel on certain characteristics and attributes. Self-love does not mean that you are above everyone else, on the contrary, it means that you fail at times and accepting that it is okay. It means giving yourself 100% respect.

Visit a peaceful place

All of us crave that one happy place whenever negativity surrounds us. It is important then that you have a spot where you can unwind and where you can look at a particular situation in retrospect. It does not have to be a faraway destination, a quiet spot at the rooftop, a park near your place, anywhere where you can have a downtime and refresh your mind. This is a great way to start turning your negative thoughts into positive. When your mind is free from all the clutter in your life, it will lead to a better and more positive perspective.

When you attain happiness, you will find that negative thoughts have no power over you. Living a more positive life would be easier and more gratifying now that you have overcome negativity.

Chapter 7 – Take Away

Knowing the strategies of happiness and how to be positive do not end with mere knowledge. Embracing the everyday motions of living a positive life takes a lot of endurance and consistency for it to work. It does not matter if you have committed mistakes in the past or if you have failed miserably in attaining happiness once or twice. What is more important is that you move on from this day forward. Do not expect a knight and shining armor on his white horse who will rescue you and sweep you off of your feet, or any other person who will create your own happiness or achieve your own goals. Strive to be the hero of your own life story.

Give yourself some time to change

As with any habit, it takes time for a person to acquire completely. The same thing goes with living a positive life. With dedication, practice and consistency, you will be able to master the skill of thinking positive. This does not happen overnight; you will find that you will go through a lot of ups and downs, and it is okay. It is how you will be able to grow as a person.

Be healthy

It is impossible to have a positive mind if you do not feel physically well. Try to alter your bad physical habits into good ones first, this way your mind will be convinced that you are indeed ready to live a positive life. Just by standing up straight and practicing correct posture would give you a sense of confidence that would get you meeting any negative thoughts head on.

Smile often. You will find that just by smiling, you are sending signals to your brain that you feel great about your overall well-being. Aside from that, people around you will benefit from your smile; it could be the one thing that will brighten up their otherwise horrible day.

Practice mindfulness

Be at one with your emotions, thoughts and sensations. By practicing mindfulness, you will have a deeper insight and awareness of who you are and what is presently happening around you. When you have mastered this, you will be able to harness greater control of your life and ultimately your own happiness.

Meditating for just a few minutes each day would take your mind away from the worldly buzz. This would help you gain more perspective on issues that you are having a difficult time addressing. You will also be able to give your mind some rest that would lead to a feeling of happiness.

Be creative

You may not think you are inclined to be creative, but even you would have a certain aspect of yourself that yearns to create, to be artistic or to work with your hands. Exploring your creative side would give you a sense of freedom. It would make you realize that there is another way of doing things that might be unfamiliar, but would still yield great results. Knowing that you are not stuck in the conventional way of thinking would get you to feel more positively towards a difficult issue.

Not everyone has a natural propensity to be artistic. But that should not stop you from taking classes to learn about a certain art that you have never done before. Taking up painting, poetry, pottery or woodwork would be a great way to start.

Go online and find tutorials about almost everything. If you feel the need to knit, sew or crochet then, there are a lot of websites and videos that provide useful information on how to start.

Draw or sketch whatever comes to your mind. Write poetry or a short story. Take a faithful leap and start a novel. You'll never know what kind of talent you have been hiding all along unless you try them out. Exploring your creative side provides a cathartic experience that allows your mind to reboot and be more effective in dealing with situations.

Surround yourself with positive people

It is true that positivity is contagious. Negativity is the same way. As with the story of the two wolves mentioned in this book, you have the choice to

feed whichever behavior you want to acquire. You also have the power to choose the type of people you want to surround yourself with. When you frequently hang out with positive people who would provide encouragement and affirmations, you will be setting yourself up for success whatever path you decide on.

But of course, in reality, there are people who are close to us who might have a negative outlook on life. If this is the case, then you have the responsibility to pull them back up and provide encouragement to go on a journey with you to positivity. Since you now have the knowledge on how to live an optimistic life and are now reaping its benefits, it is only fair to pass it on to your loved ones who may need it the most.

Set achievable goals in your life

Remember that regardless how small your steps are; they would still get you one step closer to your dreams. Continue to work on reaching your goals. You will find that you will be able to gain confidence once you start checking your list, and you will have more positive energy in life.

Chapter 8 – Living The Life

Now that you already have an idea about how you are going to pursue the happiness that you want from the previous chapter, it is now time to learn a new lesson in order to maintain the happiness that you will be able to have. You have to stop taking things for granted and be sure that you will be able to treasure the things that you have and the love that has been given to you. Here are some of the things you can do to stop taking things for granted.

Be content with what you have

Every person has their own share of blessings that comes from the higher being, but if you are at the bottom of the food chain, it is only natural to ask for more, for a better life, for a better tomorrow. The problem is that most people are not contented with what they have and try to pursue happiness and success even if they have to step on other people. It is not right to disregard other people just because you have a goal you have to achieve, and they are not part of it. You have to love the things you have and be contented with them.

Pay it forward

Learn how to share the blessings you've received to others even if it is a small one. For example, if you happen to be blessed with good food and an abundance of them, then give food to those who need them. You should know that the blessings you received are meant to be shared with other people and not just keep for your own sake. You have to pay the things you received forward to the people who might need them. Donate to charity; spend some time with your family and friends to make them happy.

Appreciate the little things

People love it when you take note of the little things they do for you. They are sensitive creatures that love being praised and being appreciated. While most people do not have the manners to appreciate the things other people do for them, you have to keep in your mind that the people around you are all fighting a battle on their own so you cannot blame them for the things they never really dead.

What you do onto others will come back to you

Have you ever heard of the quote from the bible that says, ‘Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you.’ So be generous and give people the things you can provide for them and yet set a limit in doing so. Help those in need so that when you are the one in need, they will help you as well. What it really wants to say is that you have to believe in Karma and realize that what goes around comes around.

See the good in everything and everyone

It is normal for people to tend to focus on the bad instead of the good. Our minds tend to cling to the negative without giving much attention to the positive. It is so easy for people to spot the negative. Thus, seeing the good in the bad is a skill. Veer away from the norm. Go teach yourself to stop focusing on the negative. Don't look for weaknesses, but look for areas of improvement. Don't look for threats, but look for challenges. Don't look at failures, but see the motivation to try again and do better. See the point? There is always something good in everything. Be thankful for all the "bad" things in your life because they are blessings masked as adversities/crisis that you are supposed to unmask and see and experience the beautiful changes they bring into your life.

This goes to people as well. See the good in everyone no matter how hard it is because you have no idea what they have been through, or what they are going through that made them the way they are now. Drop the judgment, and understand where the other person is coming from. There are reasons why people are the way they are.

Seeing the good in everything and everyone might not be easy, but the happiness you'll get out of it is worth it, not to mention that it takes maturity to be able to learn this beautiful skill. If each of us know how to see the good in everything and everyone, imagine how better off this world could be.

Stop worrying about what others might think

You have only one life to live, so don’t spend it worrying about what others might think. Immature people will criticize you anyway, so just do the things that make you happy. Never ever let people’s perception of you be much more important than your happiness. The only person who is allowed to judge you is yourself. Why worry about what others might think? You don’t need them to like you anyway. Be so focused on living your life that you have no time to think about whether or not others think you are doing it right. If you depend your happiness on people’s judgment of you, I assure you, you will live miserably for the rest of your life. The sense of gratitude comes the moment you stop worrying.

Take risks

Go out there and expose yourself to the world no matter how scary it may seem. Taking risks is part of life. Do something you have never done before. Do something that really scares you. Staying in your comfort zone gives you convenience, but going out of your comfort zone gives you a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment that will lead to happiness. You don’t get say thank you to missed opportunities, you just regret them. Save yourself from the regret and say thank you for the experience.

Make mistakes

There is nothing wrong with being wrong. What is wrong is always being right. Imagine your life without the mistakes you have made, do you think you'll be the person you are now? Do you think you'll be where you are now? The wrong decisions you've been beating yourself for are the ones that actually lead you to the right place. Don't be so scared to commit mistakes. If you don't commit mistakes, how will you be thankful for the things you thought you have done right? How will you be thankful for what you have now? Mistakes will make you realize that there is always something to be thankful for.

Be the light to people’s darkness

People find meaning and purpose. This is natural. You have one and only purpose in this life, and that is to be a blessing to people. Make your existence beneficial for others. Even if you are going through the darkest days, even if there is too much on your plate, even if the world gives you all the reasons to hate your life, always choose to be the strong one and find ways on how to help others despite your personal difficulties. Be the candle that can light people’s darkness. By being a blessing to others, you will see how blessed you are in life. Being a rock for others even if you yourself feel like falling apart is a measure of true strength, and that strength is definitely something to be thankful for.

Always give yourself some alone time

Being surrounded by people is healthy especially if these people are those who are very positive, motivated and happy in life, but make it a point to give yourself some silence. Give yourself some time to meditate. Your me time are the times you can stop, sit back, relax and see how far who have come now, and see how beautiful your life is despite all the challenges you are facing. At the end of a rough day, give yourself the time to regroup even for at least 10 minutes. Your alone time is your time to put yourself together. Your alone time is the time you get to appreciate who you are and what you are now. After spending time with yourself, you'll find yourself grateful for where you are, what you are, and what you have now.

Life won't give you rainbows and butterflies, you have to create them, and going through the storm is part of the process. It's easy to be thankful for the good things, but it is the "bad" things we should really be thankful for because they bring out the best in you, they bring out the strength you never thought you have. If you maintain a sense of gratitude despite all adversities, you'll find yourself genuinely happy and contented with your life.

To be able to forgive others and yourself

You can’t claim to have forgiven a person when you still hold grudges. Your ability to forgive is a true strength that you should be very proud of. Forgiveness entails understanding where the other person is coming from. When you forgive, you are choosing to be the better person. Forgiveness is also a sign of maturity. Moreover, forgiving others means forgiving yourself. Forgive people because you deserve that peace in your heart. Forgive yourself for forgiving others. Sometimes, forgiveness takes time, and that is okay. You don’t forgive in an instant, and that is normal. Don’t pressure yourself because that will make forgiving much harder. Give yourself some time. For others, it might take a really long time to forgive, but what’s important is the willingness to forgive. Just forgive others even if it is much easier not to.

To shed baggage

When you hold a grudge against someone, there is that feeling of heaviness in your heart. The heavy heart will stop you from being happy. Stop carrying that heavy baggage. You just have to let it go. Release the bitterness. You’ll just make your life difficult if you keep on carrying the baggage. Be strong enough to leave all the baggage behind and move forward. I assure you, you’ll be surprised at how happy you are after letting go of all the baggage in your life.

To avoid burning bridges

It is so easy to burn bridges when you are really mad at someone. Sometimes, burning bridges is the first thing you'll think of when you hate the person at that moment. Do not allow this to happen. Do not let your emotions eat you up and cause you to burn bridges. If you think burning bridges will make you feel good, think again.It might make you feel good temporarily while all the emotions are there. In the long run, you'll regret burning bridges. Don't let something temporary cause you to cut something or someone out forever. If you're mad, just get mad, but don't burn bridges. You'll never know when you'll need to pass that bridge again.

To avoid making your world smaller

When you are at war with someone or when things aren’t so good between you and someone or some people, it feels like you are living in a much smaller world. At some point in your life, you have felt this way, right? Did you feel good about it? Exactly. The answer is no. Nobody gets to feel good when he or she makes his or her world smaller. Those who think it is okay to make their worlds smaller are missing so much out on life. Those who feel good about making their worlds smaller are just faking it. Believe me, the world is already small, so why make it smaller? There will be a time when you’ll meet the same person you hate again. There will be a time when you’ll see your ex again. See, in this life, things happen repeatedly, and it’s a small world after all. Do not let something or someone have that much power over you that you will resort to making your world smaller.

To avoid disappointments

Most of the time, you tend to hold a grudge against someone when that someone means so much to you. That is because you felt betrayed because that person or that something mattered to you. After everything you've done for the person, disappointment is what you'll get. It sucks, doesn't it? Now, avoid getting disappointed by not holding a grudge. See, if you are holding a grudge against someone, and that someone has wronged you, or you felt wronged by the person again, you'll feel disappointed again over that person until everything that he or she does seems to disappoint you. It is as if every little thing the person does disappoints you. It will now be a cycle of disappointments even if there is nothing to be disappointed about. Save yourself from the disappointment. Do not hold grudges.

To totally detach yourself from the hurt

Holding a grudge over someone is planting the hurt he or she has done to you.It’s okay to feel the pain, savor it if you want, but eventually, detach yourself from that pain. If you keep on holding a grudge, you’ll keep on remembering the pain. Detach yourself from the hurt to free yourself from the pain, but don’t forget the lesson pain has taught you. Just detach yourself from the pain, the feeling, not from the person. Detaching yourself from the pain is different from detaching yourself from the person who has caused the pain. Most of the time, people get this wrong because they detach themselves from the person, not from the pain causing them to be bitter despite cutting ties with the person. Don’t cut ties with the person, cut ties with the pain itself. Forget about the pain, not the person.

Holding grudges won’t make you happy. It makes you the loser since you are the one who’s bitter and unforgiving. Holding a grudge will make you feel bad not only for other people but yourself as well. Do yourself a huge favor, stop holding grudges.

Remove the negativity in your life

The first thing to do to cut that baggage you are carrying is to cut it completely. Remove it; erase it or whatever you want to do with it as long as it disappears. Negativity is awful because it is contagious, it passes from one person to another, and it can affect your mindset as well as it spreads throughout your body. Here are some ways you can get rid of the negativity in your life.

Throw your negative thoughts away

Most people often do not realize that it is natural for them to think of negative thoughts. What you have to do is be aware of these thoughts so you can throw them out of your mind and give some space for the positive thoughts to come in. Sometimes, these negative thoughts overpower us, and we give in without a fight. Examples of this are pride and envy. The best thing to do is be aware of it, and just completely stop thinking about them. It may not be easy at first, but once you give it your best, you will overcome it.

Ask yourself what you want

This is an important way to get rid of your negativity. Ask yourself whether you want to be happy or not. If you want to be happy, you can start by doing things that will make you happy as discussed in the chapters before. In the case that you do not want it, try to think more clearly. Once you have taken the time, you can ask yourself again until you come up with an answer that will satisfy you.

Look for people who are positive

One of the best ways to remove the negativity is to surround oneself with positive things. Friends who are positive influence their friends to be positive as well go find this type of people. Be around positive people and it will surely rub off on you, the longer you hang around them.

Conclusion

You have reached the end of the book. I would like to thank you once again for purchasing this book and for taking the first step in living a positive life. I hope that by now you are starting to realize the benefits of optimism and how it would turn your life around.

Once you have set your mind to thinking positive, you will find it easier to combat negative thoughts and to eliminate them completely. You now have the power to face any situation and come out of any difficulty with fewer cuts.

In a perfect world, there will be no challenges, no strongholds to break down, and no walls to climb. But as we are living in the real world, it is important to keep fighting and continue pursuing the life that we dream of and that we deserve. Positive thinking is a way of life that should be consistent and persistent. Only then will we be able to achieve a happy life. Remember that you have a choice and that it is all up to you. To attain happiness, you have to choose consciously it over and over again.

Again, thank you for reading the entire book and may you always look at the bright side of life.

"Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning."

~ Mahatma Gandhi

-- ***[Zoe Meadows]***

Finally, if you enjoyed this book, then I ' d like to ask you for a favor, would you be kind enough to leave a review for this book on Amazon? It ' d be greatly appreciated!

Click here to leave a review for this book on Amazon!

Thank you and good luck!