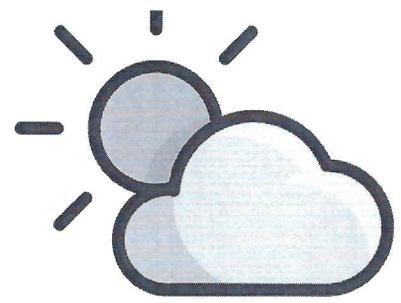


Optimism



Tips to help you feel positive & hopeful

Are you a positive person, or do you have a hard time looking on the bright side of things? Maybe you're a little of both. Either way, being more optimistic can make tough times easier and good times better.

What is optimism?

Optimism isn't just being happy all the time. Optimism means being hopeful and seeing tough times as temporary situations that can be fixed, endured, and/or learned from.

What are the benefits of optimism?

People who are optimistic enjoy life more, and studies show that being optimistic can help you overcome both physical and mental ailments.

How can you be more optimistic?

1. Reframe negative situations.

When there's something in your life that's negative, make an effort to look for the positive aspects and/or outcomes. For example, having to stay home during the pandemic may have given you extra time to work on a hobby.

2. Surround yourself with positive people.

If you're around people who are always complaining and negative, it's easy to fall into the habit of being negative as well.

3. Know there are things you can't control.

Sometimes bad things happen that you have no control over. That's part of life. *But what you do have control over is how you react to them.* While you can't change a bad situation, knowing that you can change your own thoughts and behavior can be empowering and freeing.

Your Bright Future

When you're optimistic, you have things to look forward to.

What do you have to look forward to in the coming days? If you can't think of anything, create something, even if it's something small. For example, you might look forward to making a favorite meal or watching your favorite movie.

What can you see in your bright future?

What great things do you see yourself accomplishing this year?

What great things do you see yourself accomplishing in five years? 10 years? 20 years?

Grit

The Key to Mental Toughness

Grit means being tough, and having what it takes to persevere through difficult times.

It means working toward a goal with a spirit that won't be defeated.

For some, this mental toughness comes naturally. Others have a harder time staying strong in the face of adversity.

What does grit mean to you?

Because we all have different challenges in life, grit means something different to everyone. If you have a hard time speaking up in class, it can mean participating in class discussions. If you're trying to get in shape, it might mean not missing a workout.

Think about a challenge you're facing right now. Define what it means for you to have grit as you deal with this challenge.

How can you build grit?

To help you build grit when facing a challenge, have a plan for what you'll do when it gets hard or you just feel like giving up.

Think of a challenge you're facing now, and of an obstacle you'll likely encounter. What is the obstacle and how will you deal with it?

When have you shown grit?

Think about a time when you stayed strong – a time when you were determined or resilient. How did you show grit during this difficult time?

Learn from others.

Ask a parent and/or relative to tell you about a time when grit helped them achieve a goal or deal with a difficult situation. What did they do?

Examples of grit

Most successful people have faced failure at some point in their lives, but like the people below, they found the grit and determination to keep going. They refused to give up.

Michael Jordan was cut from the high school varsity basketball team his sophomore year.

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because he had “no good ideas.”

JK Rowling received rejections from 12 publishers before her first *Harry Potter* book was accepted for publication.

Thomas Edison once had a teacher who told him that he was too stupid to learn anything.

Confidence

We all wish we could have more confidence. But for most, being confident is easier said than done. So, how can someone become more confident? Here are some ideas.

Recognize and develop your skills and abilities.

Being able to do something well gives you confidence. Think about what you like to do and are good at, and work to develop those skills. The better developed your skills and abilities are, the more confident you will feel.

What are three skills or abilities that you have?

Think about what gives you confidence.

Are you most confident when you're surrounded by friends? Or when doing something you enjoy, like a sport or a favorite activity?

When do you feel most confident?

Think about how you can take these feelings of confidence and apply them in other situations.

Visualize.

Visualization is a skill used by students, athletes, and leaders around the world. Close your eyes and visualize a situation that you'd like to feel more confident in. Then visualize yourself in that situation as a more capable, confident person.

What did your more confident self do differently?

Select an area to improve.

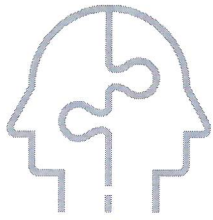
Confidence might seem like a thing you either have or you don't, but confidence tends to vary depending on the situation.

Perhaps you feel confident talking with family and friends, but you'd like to feel more confident speaking up in class.

In which area(s) do you want to build confidence?

Whenever you're feeling unsure, shy, or awkward, remember that those feelings are temporary. As you learn and grow, you will feel stronger and gain confidence. We are all works in progress!

Self-Awareness



Self-awareness is having the ability to understand your thoughts and feelings and how they affect what you do.

Self-awareness includes:

- ▶ **being able to name your emotions.**
- ▶ **understanding and demonstrating honesty.**
- ▶ **recognizing when you're judging others.**
- ▶ **developing your skills and interests.**
- ▶ **seeing the positive side of negative situations.**

How well do you know yourself?

Complete each sentence as honestly as you can.

1. I feel happy when _____

2. I feel stressed when _____

3. I learn best when _____

4. I really need to work on _____

For more on self-awareness, watch this quick video.



Name _____

Overcoming Obstacles

Your life and—eventually—your career will not be without tough times. How you choose to tackle those obstacles makes all the difference.

Obstacles to success

Reflect on each strategy for overcoming obstacles and how it can be applied to your career journey. Write an example of how each strategy can help you overcome challenges.

Resilience: bouncing back from setbacks and staying positive

Example of how resilience can you help you overcome challenges: _____

Growth mindset: believing that skills and abilities can be developed through effort and practice

Example of how a growth mindset can you help you overcome challenges: _____

Seeking support: asking for help and guidance from others

Example of how seeking support can you help you overcome challenges: _____

Continuous learning: always learning and improving skills

Example of how continuous learning can you help you overcome challenges: _____

Adaptability: being flexible and open to change

Example of how adaptability can you help you overcome challenges: _____

Think about it

How can a mentor's guidance and support contribute to your long-term career goals and success?

Name _____

Building a Winning Mindset

Discover effective ways to overcome challenges and stay motivated on your path to success.

Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset challenge

A fixed mindset is the belief that either you are or are not good at something. On the other hand, having a growth mindset means you believe that, with effort, you can develop and improve your skills and abilities. Read the statements below and identify each as a growth mindset (G) or a fixed mindset (F). Circle the appropriate letter for each statement.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Statement 1: I'm not good enough for that job. | G | F |
| Statement 2: I can learn and improve my skills with practice. | G | F |
| Statement 3: I will never be as successful as others in my career. | G | F |
| Statement 4: Mistakes are opportunities for learning and growth. | G | F |
| Statement 5: If I take risks, I might fail. | G | F |
| Statement 6: Feedback helps me improve and reach my goals. | G | F |
| Statement 7: I should stick to what I know and avoid challenging myself. | G | F |

Personal mindset assessment: exploring your mindset

We all have a fixed mindset about something, including our careers. Think of some fixed mindsets you have that are related to your career path, and then rewrite them to reflect a growth mindset.

Fixed mindset	Growth mindset

Name _____

Embracing Your Strengths

Your unique strengths and qualities are assets that can guide you toward a fulfilling and successful career!

List a few of your unique strengths or qualities below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Making the match

Draw a line to match each strength or quality listed on the left with a career type on the right that aligns with that strength. (Some strengths may apply to multiple job types.)

Strength/quality

creativity
empathy
problem-solving
leadership
analytical thinking
organization
communication
creative problem-solving
spatial reasoning
mechanical aptitude

Job type

a. entrepreneurship and innovation
b. counseling and therapy
c. consulting and strategy
d. human resources and management
e. data analysis and research
f. operations and logistics
g. public relations and communications
h. landscaping and horticulture
i. architectural drafting and design
j. carpentry, plumbing, and electric

Think about it

1. Which of these strengths/qualities do you possess? _____
- _____
- _____