

Managing Your Own Negativity

We all have had days where we just feel downright negative. Nothing seems to be going our way and as the day rolls on we start feeling worse with no end in sight. When you become overwhelmed with feelings of negativity it can be really hard to turn your attitude around for the better. Negativity not only affects your own mood but it also has a tendency to spread to others like a virus.

While any one of us can be hijacked by our own negativity at any time we do have the ability to shut it down and force our brains to think more positively.

Here are a few tips for replacing negative thoughts:

1. **Do a daily positivity scan** at the end of each day think of at least three positive things that happened that day and reflect on them. They can be anything from experiencing beautiful weather to receiving some positive feedback from your supervisor.
2. **Do something to help others** when you start to feel overwhelmed by your negativity, one of the best ways to start feeling better is to do something to help someone in need. This can be as simple as holding a door for someone at work to volunteering your time at a local animal shelter.
3. **Turn a negative into a positive** by challenging yourself to see a stressful situation from a positive angle. Stop yourself when you find yourself thinking negatively about a situation and challenge yourself to think creatively to put a positive spin on the situation. Ask yourself, *what is the positive in this situation?*
4. **Keep your thoughts in the present** by avoiding thinking traps like *hindsight thinking* ("This would of never happened if I would have gotten that promotion") or *anticipation thinking* ("If I don't get this promotion I will never be happy again"). Pay attention to your thoughts and make efforts to keep them in the present. You can do this be regularly practicing mindfulness.
5. **Use the AAA approach** when presented with a negative situation by asking yourself the following questions: Can you *alter* the situation in any way? Can you *avoid* the situation in any way? Can you find a way to *accept* the situation for what it is and move forward?