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# CHAPTER 1

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# INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 WHAT IS POSITIVE THINKING?

Before putting the powers of positive thinking to work in your personal and professional life, you must first understand exactly what positive thinking is. By definition, the word positive means dealing with matters of fact; expressed clearly, or in a confident or peremptory manner. However, in the concept of positive thinking, the word positive is meant to signify a manner of thinking: a manner that puts emphasis on processing thoughts in a more desirable, upbeat way. Positive thinking can be described as the practice of embracing the affirmative in our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, our reactions and our speech.

Positive thinking can also be described as a type of attitude. Happy, optimistic people are usually described as having positive attitudes and expressing positive thoughts. People who consistently "look on the bright side" are utilizing positive thinking.

Most importantly, positive thinking can be described as a skill that can be acquired by anyone. By learning the process of positive thinking, you can more easily reach your goals, whether they are personal goals or professional ones.

So, now you know how to describe positive thinking, but what is it? Positive thinking is the act of reviewing thought processes and personal actions for areas that need improvement and for areas with negative implications, and then using the appropriate tools to change those thoughts or actions in a positive, goal-oriented way.

## 1.2 HOW DOES POSITIVE THINKING WORK?

Positive thinking begins with a conscious desire to pay attention to and recognize the affirmative in any given situation. Once the affirmative, or positive trait, of a situation or thought can be recognized, then the process of positive thinking can be utilized. In essence, the ability to pinpoint and utilize the positive in your thoughts and actions enables you to better reach your goals, realize your dreams and make a positive impact on all of your endeavors.

The actual process of positive thinking works to bring about desired outcomes in both our personal life and our professional life in a variety of ways. By acting in a positive way we naturally draw positive people to ourselves. By believing in positive outcomes we more readily accept them as fact and open ourselves to their reality. By thinking positive thoughts we are better able to see alternate, more advantageous routes to take. By truly accepting a positive way of thinking we are better able to see the path to success and better able to use our know-how to get there.

The basic mechanics of positive thinking are simple. This simple process involves consciously searching for the affirmative in any situation, recognizing the benefits of each positive trait and then employing a can-do attitude to follow through on these positive thoughts.

In order to better understand how positive thinking can work, look at the following examples.

**Example #1:** Maria is a medical assistant who has put in over seven years of service at her place of employment. Last month, Maria applied for a supervisory position within her company; however, she did not receive the promotion.

In order to incorporate positive thinking into this situation Maria did three things. First, she searched for the affirmative. Maria discussed the outcome with her supervisors and found that she didn't possess a particular computer skill that they thought crucial to the position. Maria decided to look at this as a positive reason to secure new training instead of as a reason to become down on herself and her abilities to grow within the company.

Next, Maria sat down and made a list of all the positive outcomes that could be associated with pursuing computer training. Her list included possible jobs outside of her company that she could qualify for, possible jobs inside her company that she could apply for, ways that her new computer skills could enhance her current position and ways that new computer skills could benefit her personal life.

Then, Maria used the excitement and momentum created by the possibilities on her list to quickly enroll in a computer class and learn all she could from it. Six months later, Maria applied for and received a promotion within her company.

**Example #2:** Bill has been carving wood as a hobby for over twelve years. Recently, Bill decided to write a short, informational guide to woodcarving and sell it on the Internet as a source of extra income. Bill

used his savings to have the guide professionally written, to have a web site designed and to buy some banner advertising for his new site. Although Bill had a fair number of visitors to his site his guide was not selling. After one month Bill decided his idea was hopeless and was ready to give up. His wife, however, believed wholeheartedly in the guide and wasn't ready to see Bill quit. After convincing Bill to try it her way, they sat down and made a list.

First, Bill and his wife made a list of all the good points of the guide. After looking at the results of Bill's initial research they both decided that the guide was a good source of basic information for people who were new to woodcarving. Realizing this, Bill decided to focus his selling techniques on beginning woodcarvers.

Next, Bill and his wife looked for markets that catered to woodcarving beginners. Instead of deciding that the web site wasn't working and calling it quits, Bill decided to look for fresh and innovative ways to market his guide. During this search Bill happened upon a web site that specialized in woodcarving tool kits for beginners. Upon seeing the site, Bill's positive thinking wife knew two things. One, that there was a market for Bill's guide and two, that with a little creativity, the tool site's customers could become their customers.

Excited by the possibilities, Bill's wife contacted the owners of the tool site and struck an agreement. In exchange for providing a link to the woodcarving tool web site, that site provided a link for buying Bill's guide. Within a few weeks, Bill's sales increased dramatically. Buoyed by confidence, Bill began contacting other markets and increasing his affiliations and referrals.



As you can see from the two examples, positive thinking can work when you remember to follow the basics. In both cases the individuals decided to search for something positive in an otherwise negative situation. Maria decided to search for a positive reason when she didn't receive the promotion instead of just assuming she wasn't good enough or lucky enough to get it. Bill's wife decided to search for a positive trait in the guide instead of dismissing it as unwanted in the woodcarving field.

Then, both individuals worked to realize the benefits of the positive traits in their situations. Maria decided that although a computer-training course could not help her get the promotion that she had missed, it could benefit her life in numerous other ways. Bill and his wife decided to market the guide to a different group of people in order to increase sales.

Finally, both Maria and Bill used the power of positive thinking to follow through on their goals. By focusing on the positive benefits of their endeavors, both individuals were able to harness the confidence necessary to continue working towards their desired outcomes.

## **1.3 THE BENEFITS OF POSITIVE THINKING**

By learning positive thinking techniques and putting them into practice throughout every aspect of your life you can achieve many internal and external benefits.

The internal benefits that come from adopting a manner of positive thinking are a positive attitude, belief in alternative possibilities,

creative thinking, better problem solving skills, confidence, focus, determination, satisfaction and feelings of achievement.

Positive thinking leads to a positive attitude simply because thinking about the positive traits and aspects of your life causes your brain to operate in a "feel good" state. By constantly thinking positive thoughts, your brain is trained to look on the bright side of every situation, which in turn causes you to feel satisfied with your current position in life.

Positive thinking also leads to a positive attitude because it keeps your mind busy. If your mind is busy concentrating on positive thoughts, it is extremely difficult for it to dwell on negative thoughts at the same time.

Positive thinking also leads to a belief in alternative possibilities by its very nature. When faced with what seems at first glance to be a no-win situation, positive thinkers have the natural ability to look outside of the facts for off beat or less conventional solutions. This ability to look past the obvious facts opens more doors and possible outcomes for both personal situations and professional ones.

For example, a person who utilizes positive thinking skills has a better chance of overcoming a stressful situation like being fired from their job, than a person who possesses little or no positive thinking skills. A positive thinker will use their skills to broaden their new job search and ultimately find better employment in less time.

Since positive thinking makes the ability to believe in alternative possibilities a reality, it also leads to more creative thinking when faced everyday setbacks. By believing that the solution may not be obvious,

positive thinkers are more prone to draw their ideas from unusual sources.

Positive thinkers also express more creative thinking throughout everyday life. Self-proclaimed positive thinkers are responsible for a large amount of the inventions, discoveries and innovations that we enjoy today.

Since positive thinking promotes more creative thinking, it also promotes better problem solving skills. When positive thinkers are faced with a particularly stubborn situation they not only use their skills to envision an increased number of solutions, but they also use their belief in the affirmative to continue on until they have found a resolution.

As we learned from the previous examples, people who are faced with problems or failure are usually too quick to give up. However, by using positive thinking problem solving skills both Maria and Bill were able to tackle their problems head-on and seek out desirable outcomes.

Through the previous benefits, positive thinkers are awarded a boost of confidence. By utilizing the skills of positive thinking, you will begin to experience an increased belief in yourself and your abilities. After experiencing success after success with positive thinking, your brain will become trained to see each situation as a simple challenge instead of as a barrier that blocks your success.

As you develop your positive thinking skills, this new belief in yourself will lead to greater focus and determination. By simply believing that you will find a suitable solution you will gain the motivation necessary

to stay on task until that desirable outcome is achieved. Plus, a can-do attitude will help center your concentration enabling you to stay focused on the positive aspects of the situation until the problem is resolved.

Once you have used your skills of positive thinking to overcome a situation you will be rewarded with feelings of satisfaction and achievement. You will feel satisfied with yourself and the situation due to the pride that comes from a job well done. The feelings of achievement will come from your knowledge that you personally were responsible for believing in and working toward the final outcome.

The external benefits that come from adopting a manner of positive thinking are more positive relationships, higher trust levels from your customers, increased sales, increased success, higher employee output, quicker conflict resolution and increased opportunities.

These external benefits are, in part, due to the internal traits you now possess. For example, your new positive thinking skills will help you believe in and strengthen your personal relationships. When you feel good about something those feelings rub off on those around you causing them to also feel good about the situation at hand. When others are influenced to feel good around you they subconsciously seek your company.

Positive thinking can also enhance your personal relationships because it causes you to feel better about yourself. The more you like yourself and the better you feel about yourself, the more comfortable you are being with someone and being admired by them. By thinking positively

about yourself, you open your life up to closer, more rewarding relationships.

Your new skills can also help you win the trust of your customers even though your contact with them is initially limited to the sales letter that they read on your web site, or the content that fills each page. While every web site features some sort of "sales letter" on the home page, it's a fact of business that some of these letters are wildly successful while others fall dismally short of reaching their goal. The biggest problem with these unsuccessful sales letters isn't usually their content, but rather, the way that content is delivered.

As you will learn in later chapters, the way that you present your content and the positive feelings that your words evoke can do more to boost your sales than any other technique you utilize. Thus, by utilizing positive thinking in every aspect of your web content, you can influence your customers to trust in you and your product and service.

Once you learn how to use these positive words to influence your customers, you can write web copy, sales letters and email messages that inspire your customers to buy. Simply put, trust can be inspired through the written word, and that trust can turn shoppers into buyers.

As you can see, the benefits of increased trust levels with customers and increased sales will definitely have an impact on your success. But positive thinking can also help increase your business's success in other ways. Your confidence levels and positive attitude will help draw other business professionals to you. If you perceive yourself as successful, others will too. This, in turn, will make them more apt to

work with you or do business with you, thus awarding you more opportunities to expand your business and increase your prosperity.

If your internet business includes employees, your positive thinking skills can also have an impact on their production or performance. A positive attitude is contagious. If you set an example of positive thinking then your employees will be more apt to follow that example. Once they begin thinking in a positive manner their attitudes will improve and their job satisfaction will flourish, and that will lead to increased production and performance.

You can also increase employee performance by using positive terms in all of your communications. For example, instead of saying "This product description is not good enough, it needs to be redone", put a positive spin on the task by saying "I was impressed with the way you wrote the product description for the super contraption. Could you write this description in that same manner?"

By using positive terms you will help build your employees confidence and allow them feel valued at their job. Both of these aspects will encourage them to work harder and at a higher level of performance.

Finally, positive thinking can help you develop better conflict resolution skills. By believing that every conflict can have an affirmative outcome, you will be more likely to face conflict head on. By resolving conflicts immediately you will prevent them from growing and becoming negative problems. Even if the outcome of a particular conflict is not necessarily positive, you can still come out of the experience with positive thoughts by focusing on your quick resolution of the problem and then moving forward from there.

## CHAPTER 2

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# LEARN HOW TO THINK POSITIVE, AUTOMATICALLY

# EXERCISES THAT REINFORCE POSITIVE THINKING

In order to reap the personal and professional benefits of positive thinking, you must first train your mind to think positively automatically – without you consciously having to decide to “be positive”. To do this you will need to take certain steps. First, you will need to make a conscious decision to pursue positive thinking and then commit wholeheartedly to realizing that goal. In order for positive thinking to have an impact on your life you will also need to believe in its benefits. And, since there will be setbacks throughout your journey, you will need the power of your convictions to help keep you on track.

Once you have committed to learning the skills of positive thinking, you will need to use certain exercises to teach yourself the methods and to reinforce the affirmative thoughts in your mind. The following is a list of ways to learn and practice the art of positive thinking.

Review your self-talk- The first step to learning positive thinking skills is to review the type of thinking you are currently engaging in now. Think back to the last bad day that you had. How did you react? What types of things were you saying to yourself, both internally and out loud? What feelings did you have immediately about the situation? What feelings did you take away from the situation? How do you feel about the situation now?

The answers to the above questions will give you a pretty good idea of what type of self-talk you usually engage in. For example, did you beat yourself up about the problem? Did your mind search for ways in



which the problem was ultimately your fault? Did you blame the incident on bad luck?

In order to visualize the difference between positive self-talk and negative self-talk, let's compare the two habits using the same situation. For this example, let's assume that Sally, a stay-at-home seamstress, started an Internet business to sell her handmade handbags. Once the business began to grow, she hired another woman to sew some of the bags for her. Recently, ten of these bags were returned due to defects.

**Example #1-** Negative self-talk: In this example, you will read some things that Sally said or thought to herself upon receiving the returned handbags.

- "I should have looked the bags over more carefully, I knew I would mess this up."
- "Why did I think I would ever be able to succeed in this business?"
- "This is the end, now no one will want to buy these bags."
- "Everyone said I couldn't make it and they were right."
- "I am such an idiot, how could I make a mistake like this."
- "If it wasn't for bad luck I wouldn't have any luck at all."
- "Why I am so stupid?"

**Example #2-** positive self-talk: Here, you will read some affirmative things that Sally thought or said out loud to herself.

- "Well, of course, this is a setback, but it will give me the opportunity to sharpen my customer service skills."
- "While I did forget to pay attention to the details for a moment, I have learned a valuable lesson."
- "Luckily, it was only ten bags and the problem was caught before it was serious."
- "Every business has its pitfalls. I am going to use this one to help me do better next time."

As you can see from the examples, how we choose to see a situation can make all the difference in its outcome. When our mind talks, our attitude listens and responds. Because of this correlation, we have the power to literally "talk" ourselves into or out of success and satisfaction.

When we engage in negative self-talk we convince ourselves that our efforts are futile. This belief leads to feelings of worthlessness and failure. These feelings make it easier for us to fall victim to even more negative thoughts, which eventually snowball into feelings of despair and defeat.

However, when we engage in positive self-talk, we convince our minds and ourselves that all things are possible. By focusing on the positive we are able to believe in and realize a desirable outcome. If you truly

believe that you can turn a negative situation into a positive asset then you will. Through repeated positive self-talk you will see any possible affirmative outcome as a fact of life not as an impossible dream.

To begin changing our self-talk from the negative to the positive, we must first look to the truth of the situation. When you find yourself faced with a problem, begin your thought process with a review of the facts. This initial review should not include any feelings or predictions. To help with this process, ask yourself the following questions.

1. What was the actual, physical cause of this problem? In Sally's case, the physical cause of the problem was not her lack of attention to detail; rather, it was a mistake in the construction of the handbag.
2. What factual events lead up to the problem? Again, using Sally's case, the actual event could have been miscommunication in the sewing instructions, a misunderstanding of the process on the part of her employee or an oversight by her employee. In any case, the event was unintentional and in no way a reflection of Sally's overall performance or business success.
3. How bad is the situation, really? While a situation may seem overwhelming at first, rational thought usually leads to the realization that the problem is not as bad as it seems. Use this question to help you brainstorm some possible outcomes, both good and bad, which could realistically stem from the problem. In Sally's case, her first thought was that everyone would stop purchasing her handbags. Rationally, however, Sally could focus on the number of currently satisfied customers, the small

number of unsatisfied customers and the knowledge that she still had the opportunity to make the situation right and win over the upset customers with exceptional customer service.

Once you have determined the facts of the situation, you need to review your feelings about the situation and determine the root of those feelings. To help sort your feelings out, ask yourself the following questions.

1. What part of the situation has upset you the most? Many times, the actual problem is not the source of a person's negative feelings; instead it is how the problem makes them feel about themselves. In Sally's case, the defect in the handbags wasn't the real problem. The real problem was that the defect caused Sally's biggest fear to seem substantiated. Upon deeper examination, Sally realized that the problem with the handbags brought out her feelings of insecurity. The moment that she was made aware of the problem she began to focus on her perceived lack of business skills.
2. Are your feelings based on the reality of the situation or on how you believe the situation to be? This is an important question to ask yourself, in that it will help you differentiate between fact and fiction. Is this problem truly a representation of who you are as a person and professional? Or, are you over dramatizing the situation and placing unrealistic expectations on the subject at hand?
3. How have you handled feelings such as these in the past? In other words, are you truly reacting only to the present situation

or are you falling back on old feelings and insecurities and letting these feelings cloud your judgment?

4. If this situation were happening to a colleague or friend of yours, how would you view the situation? Sometimes it helps to step away from a problem in order to view it more objectively.

Now that you have determined the reasons behind your self-talk habits, you can use that knowledge to shape new positive self-talk habits.

Practice positive self-talk- In order to turn your thinking around, you will need to consciously practice positive thinking. An excellent tool for this is the positive thinking game. In this game you will be required to state a positive outcome in response to a negative scenario. The following are a few examples to get you started. Each example contains a negative scenario and a possible positive response. Once you understand the technique, you will be able to create an endless supply of your own scenarios.

- The negative circumstance is that I lost the Wilbur account, however the positive circumstance is that I now have more time to devote to the Moore account.
- The negative circumstance is that my initial product is not selling very well, however the positive circumstance is that I can now devote my expertise to improving its original design.
- The negative circumstance is that sales in my field are at an all time low, however the positive circumstance is that this period

will give me the motivation I need to explore other, alternative markets for my product.

**Make a list of the positives in your life-** Once you are able to determine the positive in any given situation, you are ready to create a tangible reference list. Take a moment to jot down all of the positives in your life. Include such things as your health, your family, your previous education and training, any goals that you have realized, your personal and professional accomplishments, and the good points of your current business. List everything that you have to be thankful for or that you are happy about. List just as many small things as big things. You will want this list to be as complete as possible as you will be using it daily to keep your positive thinking training on track.

As the days and weeks go by, take the time to add new things to list as they happen or as they occur to you. Better yet, add to the list each night before you go to bed in order to end each day on a high note and prepare yourself to the start the next day in a positive state of mind.

**Make a positive to-do list-** Every morning, before you begin your day, make a positive to-do list that accentuates your goals for the day. For example, if you need to make a call to a client, do not simple write "call client" on your list. Instead, write the task in a positive manner, such as "call Mr. Williams and close the deal".

By writing out the task in an affirmative manner with a concrete positive outcome attached, your brain will be influenced to think of the task as completed and positive instead of as pending and open for failure.

You can also use the wording of each task to promote action. By being specific in your terms, you can turn a vague objective like "rework sales letter" into an action-orientated goal such as "rewrite the second paragraph of the sales letter to include two new benefits and change the deadline for membership to promote immediate ordering".

The goal of this type of to-do list is to positively influence your attitude and outlook for the day while strengthening your belief in desirable outcomes in order to keep motivation and focus high.

And, although it may seem silly, be sure to apply this same technique to your personal to-do list. Not only will this habit give you plenty of opportunities to practice your positive thinking skills, but it will also help you keep your energy and positive attitude up while you complete the necessary and sometimes mundane tasks of everyday life.

**Take care of yourself both physically and mentally-** In order to retain a positive outlook in life you need to feel good about yourself, both inside and out. In order to feel good about yourself you need to take care of yourself.

To meet this goal, it is usually easier to start with the physical aspects. If you don't already exercise daily, begin now. If you often skip breakfast, begin making it an integral part of your day. If you need a haircut, get one! Every step you take to improve your life or fix your self-perceived flaws will help build your self-confidence. Then, once your self-confidence is boosted, your positive thinking skills can flourish.

For internal change, begin by looking at your attitudes about yourself. Do you feel as though you need to learn more about a certain topic, such as Internet marketing? If so, take a class or read a book about the topic. By increasing your knowledge you will decrease the severity of any insecurities that you may be harboring.

Do you have certain goals that you had planned to accomplish by this time in your life? The act of harboring unfinished business and unrealized dreams has a tendency to make us feel bad about ourselves. Start today with a small step toward your goal and commit to following through on the project. Just by beginning the process, you will immediately feel better about the situation and once you have attained the goal, your self-confidence will skyrocket.

Do you feel as though you never have enough time to accomplish your goals? Start by re-evaluating your time. First, delete time-wasting tasks from your daily schedule, and then carve out periods for finishing tasks. When rewriting your schedule, make sure to include time for relaxation and fun. Without downtime, your creative thoughts are unable to flourish.

The point of all of these exercises, both the positive thinking exercises and the self-improvement steps, is to put yourself in the correct frame of mind to accept a positive point of view. Through continued use of these exercises, you will eventually train your brain to think positively, automatically.



# USE VISUALIZATIONS AND AFFIRMATIONS TO IMPROVE YOUR POSITIVE THINKING SKILLS

Visualizations and affirmations are key tools in the quest for positive thinking skills. While the two exercises differ in technique, they both work to accomplish the same goal. Both exercises help to change your positive thinking goals from lofty dreams to achievable reality, however, visualizations work through imagery, while affirmations work through spoken statements.

Visualizations are key to the process of positive thinking because they offer you a way to "see" your goals as an actual outcome. This ability to see an outcome will give you control over that outcome. For instance, imagine that you are preparing to write the copy for your internet business's home page and you are not thinking positively about your writing skills. If you just use the facts about your product or service and transfer those facts to a written page, your copy could come out sounding flat and uninspired. However, by using visualization first, you will be able to prepare not just the facts but your attitude as well. Once you can visualize yourself writing the perfect, trust inspiring, buying motivated web copy, you will be able to write that copy.

The point of visualization is to use all of your senses to "see" yourself completing any task or solving any problem in a perfectly executed manner. By imagining an event in great detail and focusing on the desired outcome, you will program your mind and body to respond as if the visualized scenario was an expected event. By repeating this

visualization frequently, you will train your mind to follow a pattern that leads to the desired outcome.

Thankfully, visualization is easy to learn. Take a moment to think about something that you are currently struggling with either in business or in your personal life. Now, concentrating on that situation, use the following steps to learn and practice the skill of visualization.

1. Clear your mind of all other thoughts and distractions. This step is important because it will enable you to fully concentrate on the image and allow you to follow the imagery to the positive outcome without interruption. In the beginning, it will be easier to complete this step in a quiet environment where you can close your eyes, relax and be completely alone for several minutes.
2. Picture yourself completing the task or solving the problem in a positive way. Start at the beginning and actually envision yourself going through each step in the most positive, desirable way. Envision every detail about the situation in order to make the image seem more like fact than fantasy. Give attention to the clothes you are wearing, the people you are with, the actual words you are using and the words others are using in their responses to you.
3. Keep the outcome positive and perfect. The most important thing to remember when practicing visualization is that you must only picture the outcome in a positive way. Never picture yourself failing or even faltering. During visualization, always picture yourself performing in a perfect manner.

4. Once you have reached the end of the visualization, review it in your mind. Look for areas that you can improve upon during your next visualization session. Add details where necessary and increase positive steps where you can.
5. Repeat the visualization often. While visualization can be a key step in positive thinking, it only works well when used frequently.
6. After you have accomplished the goal or solved the problem in real life, review the actual event and use visualization to change any negative circumstances into positive ones. If any detail of the actual event did not play out perfectly, envision that detail in a way that does. This step will help prime your mind to perform in a more desirable way the next time.

Now that you know how to practice visualization, it is time to learn more about affirmations. Affirmations are spoken statements that focus on the positive achievement of a goal. Affirmations differ from positive self-talk techniques in that they concentrate on more specific statements and are action-oriented. For example, if you are nervous about pitching a new idea to a customer your self-talk statement may be something like "I know this idea is a good one and my customer will be happy to hear about it." However, with an affirmation your statement would be more action driven, such as "Tomorrow morning I am pitching my new idea to Mr. Clark by pointing out the cost-saving benefits."

With positive self-talk you are attempting to bolster your positive attitude and belief in yourself. With affirmations you are stating a goal in a way that makes your subconscious believe that the event is already a fact. This subconscious belief is accomplished through three unique steps. First, affirmations are always spoken in first person narrative. This personalization of the fact allows the subconscious to more readily accept the statement. For example, instead of saying, "My customers are happy with my service", you would say "I know that my service/product makes my customers happy".

Second, affirmations are always stated in the present tense. By using words such as "I am" or "I know," you are tricking your mind into believing that the statement is already happening. Whereas, using statements such as "I will" or "I think" allows doubt to creep into your subconscious.

Third, affirmations are always positive in nature. For a statement to qualify as an affirmation it has to be worded without any negative language. For example, the statement "I am qualified to write excellent web copy" is an affirmation. The statement "I will try to write decent web copy" is not.

Now that you understand the nature of affirmations, you need to practice using them. First, you need to identify an upcoming goal that you would like to accomplish. Then, you need to write out that goal in simple language. Once you have a clear, concise goal statement written down, you need to transform that statement into an affirmation using the previous three steps. The following is an example of how to turn goal statements into affirmations.

**Statement:** "In the next few weeks, I will add another product to my internet business."

**Affirmation:** "In the next few weeks I am adding a terrific new product to my successful internet business."

Notice the differences in the two sentences. By changing the word will to the word am, and by adding the positive terms terrific, new and successful the goal statement becomes an affirmation.

If you do not have a specific goal that you are trying to accomplish, you can still use affirmations to improve your positive thinking skills. In this case, you need to choose a positive statement that is general but upbeat in nature. Some examples of these affirmations are...

*"I am using my positive thinking skills to succeed in business."*

*"I am accomplishing great things with positive thoughts and a winning attitude."*

*"I am an outstanding entrepreneur."*

Once you have two or three well-written affirmations completed, you can begin utilizing them on a daily basis. Just as with visualizations, affirmations work best if practiced repeatedly throughout the day. To get the most out of your affirmations it is best to repeat them at least three times a day, usually once upon waking, again in the afternoon and then, once more before bed each night.

By using your new visualization and affirmations skills frequently, you will be better able to set and reach your positive thinking goals.

## **HOW TO SET POSITIVE THINKING GOALS**

Once you have begun to adopt a positive attitude, it is time to set positive thinking goals. These goals differ from your regular goals in that they concentrate specifically on your quest to learn the art of positive thinking and the benefits that you will enjoy from this quest. These goals should spell out the details of what you wish to accomplish with positive thinking and also contain the specific outcomes of these accomplishments.

There are four steps involved in setting positive thinking goals. By using all four steps, you will create goals that are both attainable and beneficial.

Identify a specific, outcome-oriented goal. This goal will be different from your earlier action-oriented goals in that the goal will concentrate on an eventual positive outcome, not on an immediate task. However, this goal will still need to be specific and detailed. To help determine your goals, ask yourself the following questions.

1. What do I want to accomplish most with my positive thinking?
2. What area of my life could benefit most from the powers of positive thinking?
3. What do I expect to gain from my positive thinking skills?

Once you have an honest answer to each of these questions you can begin to shape your goals. For our purposes, let's assume that the answers to the questions were

1. I want to increase my Internet sales,
2. My relationship with my spouse and
3. Better problem solving skills.

Each of these answers affords you the basis of a positive thinking goal. For the rest of the steps we will concentrate on defining a goal for the first one.

Now that you have a basic goal idea in mind, you need to state that goal in a specific, outcome-oriented manner. For example, instead of saying, "I want to increase my internet sales" you could say "I am going to use my positive thinking skills to determine my customer's needs in order to increase sales".

Break down the goal into short-term and long-term steps. In order to make the goal more easily attainable, you will need to break it down into a few steps. These steps should contain achievable and realistic outcomes. The first step should include a way to make short-term progress on the goal. For this step you could say, "I am going to include a simple survey on my homepage that will enable me to gather information about my customer's likes and dislikes".

For the second step, you will need to include a long-term outcome prediction for the goal. Your second statement could say, "I am going

to use my positive thinking skills to interpret the survey data in a way that allows me to be open to new ideas and suggestions. I am then going to use those new ideas to increase sales."

As you can see in this step, we have taken a lofty goal such as, increase internet sales, and with a few simple changes turned it into a positive thinking, outcome-oriented goal.

Set up a way to measure your progress. Now that you have a goal in place, you need to set up a way to measure your progress as you work toward attaining that goal. Without a system of measurement you would be forced to wait until the end to gauge your success. In that instance, you would be unable to use your positive thinking skills to boost your motivation and keep your attitude in check.

The form of measurement that you choose will depend mainly on the type of goal that you have set. In our case, the form of measurement could be an increase in the percentage of sales. In order to accurately gauge your progress, you would first have to gather data about your current sales rate and then determine a suitable increase for your goal.

Let's say that you have decided to aim for an overall increase in sales of 25%. This would mean that by the time you have attained your goal, your Internet sales will have increased from their current rate by 25%. As you work toward your goal you can now monitor your success by tracking the increase in percentage increments.

Set a time limit. The next step in your goal setting would include a time limit. Without a time limit in place, your goals can easily turn into distant dreams. In our case, the time limit serves two purposes. One, it



gives you another way to track your progress. And two, it gives your plans a deadline.

To help you focus on your goal and keep you motivated to finish, you need to establish a realistic time frame in which to accomplish your goal. For our goal, we might choose a deadline of six months. While this deadline may seem long, it will give you plenty of time to create a survey, gather data information, review the information and then make changes toward your goal. Plus, the deadline allows for a period of time for your new plan to work.

Now that we have an outcome deadline, we need to set progress deadlines. These deadlines are set to help keep you on task and ensure your continued progress. For our goal we may set a deadline of two weeks for creating the survey. Then, set a deadline of one month to gather information from the survey. We would then set a deadline of two weeks to review the survey data and determine what improvements we could make to increase sales. Next, we would set a deadline of one month to implement the changes. Our final deadline would be a period of three months to track the changes in sales, make changes in our process or product as necessary, and then ultimately reach our goal.

As each deadline expires, it is important to review your goal and make sure that your progress is on track. At each review, you may make any changes that are necessary to both your plan and your goal. However, try not to change the time limit, as this can lead to procrastination and eventual defeat.

Involve others. The last step in your positive goal creation is the involvement of others. This step is important to the creation of any positive thinking goal because it utilizes the reinforcement and encouragement that can be obtained from family, friends, and colleagues.

After finishing the first three steps of positive goal setting share your goals and deadlines with those around you. Use them as a sounding board, listen to their advice or thoughts, and let them be connected to your success. By informing others of your goals, you will be able to create a net of strength and support that you can call on if reaching your goal becomes difficult or you get off course.

However, be warned – not just anyone will do. There are negative-thinking people in the world, and connecting them to your network will not lead to a positive outcome. If you have friends or family who are trapped in a cycle of negative thinking, then you need to keep them away from your business. This may seem harsh, but positive thinking doesn't work when there's someone aggressively undermining it with their own negativity.

## **HOW FINDING A MENTOR CAN HELP WITH POSITIVE THINKING GOALS**

No matter how much knowledge you possess about your business or how much work you put into realizing your goals; sometimes you need outside advice. While this advice can come from any number of avenues, it is usually most advantageous to seek the guidance of a mentor.

A mentor can be any person with knowledge of your field of business. However, when searching out a mentor, it is best to seek someone who has the greatest understanding of the situation you are facing and the most experience with a business similar to your own. To find a mentor and get the most out of your time together, follow the simple steps below.

Choose a specific situation to seek advice for. While you may wish to seek as much help as possible, it is easier and more beneficial to narrow your quest down to a specific area or situation. Later, after that situation has been resolved, you can also go back to your mentor for additional help.

To choose a situation to pursue, review your positive thinking goals and determine which one is the most important to you or your business. Once you have a goal in mind you will be able to narrow down your choice of mentors by evaluating their level of expertise in your topic. For example, if you choose to seek a mentor to help you increase your Internet sales, then you will want to choose someone who has achieved great successes in this area. You do not want to choose someone who hasn't been in business very long, or someone who has vast experience and success in retail sales but not in internet sales.

Choosing a specific situation will also help you later when you go to prepare your list of questions to ask your mentor. By choosing a specific problem and a set of specific questions prior to your first visit, you will give yourself extra time to review the questions and weed out the unnecessary information.

Contact your potential mentor. While this step seems obvious, the way in which you contact the person can be a little tricky. Depending on your level of familiarity with the person, your first contact could consist of something as simple as a quick phone call or something as formal as a written request for an interview. In order to adhere to professional etiquette requirements, your first contact with someone you are not very familiar with should always start with a written request or phone call to his or her secretary. Never call the personal phone number of a person you are not on a comfortable level with.

Also, chances are good that the person you choose as your potential mentor is going to have a busy schedule. Because of this, it is usually best if all contact is begun by setting up an appointment to state your case. Never try to state your case or explain your position during the first contact.

Once you have made an appointment, you need to pick the type of meeting you will have. Depending on the circumstances and the time that your mentor has free, this first meeting can be a short phone call or even a meeting over lunch. If possible, allow your mentor to choose the time and place of the first meeting.

Prepare thoroughly for the meeting. Proper preparation will save both you and your mentor a vast amount of time. With proper preparation you will be able to state your request in a simple, knowledgeable manner. Make sure that you are prepared to share your specific goals and challenges with your mentor and are able to explain to him or her exactly what it is you expect to gain from them.

Ask specific questions. Once someone has agreed to be your mentor, you need to prepare a list of specific question for him or her. If your questions are too broad they will be hard for your mentor to answer. Plus, general questions usually require multiple answers, which can lead to wasted time on both sides.

Using our earlier goal as an example, notice the differences between these sets of questions.

*"How can I increase my internet sales?"*

*"What are three steps I can take to start increasing my internet sales?"*

*"How can I determine my customer's needs?"*

*"Have you ever utilized customer surveys? And if so, what is the most important you can tell me about them?"*

As you can see from the examples, the second question in each set is more detailed and specific. Recognizing and utilizing this distinction will enable you to prepare better questions and ultimately receive better, more goal-oriented advice.

Put your mentor's advice into action. It is not enough to simply seek the advice of a mentor. You also have to be willing to listen to their ideas, research their ideas and eventually, put them into action. A great idea is just a great idea until it is turned into a goal. Use what you have learned from your mentor to expand upon your goals and increase your chances of success.

Use your mentor for more than just advice. A mentor can be a great source of inspiration and positive thinking. Listen to his or her stories, get caught up in his or her excitement, use his or her positive thinking to bolster your own. If you find your attitude taking a negative turn, or discover thoughts of defeat sneaking into your mental self-talk, call your mentor for a positive pep talk.

Thank your mentor. No matter how the experience ends, whether you ultimately use their advice or not, always send a card or gift of appreciation to your mentor. While this little step may not seem important, it is the biggest and best way to ensure that your professional relationship continues. The fact of the matter is that your mentor probably agreed to help you solely because your success is important to him or her. Let them know that you appreciate their time and effort and keep them abreast of your success. In doing so you will leave an avenue open for further mentoring and new opportunities.

## CHAPTER 3

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# HOW POSITIVE THINKING AFFECTS YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

# THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE THINKING ON YOUR LIFE

As you have learned from the previous chapters, positive thinking can influence everything you do, say, think, feel and accomplish. Once you have mastered the skills of positive thinking you can use that influence to change the negative aspects of your life and to further develop the positive aspects.

In your personal life, this influence can help you bounce back from failure, stay calm during tough times, build better relationships, and strive for improvement.

Positive thinking skills can help you deal with and recover from failure better because the skills help you focus on the bright side of the situation. Instead of stewing in their bad luck, positive thinkers recognize the failure as a minor setback and immediately begin working to get past it.

To keep a positive attitude during times of failure or defeat, follow these three steps.

Immediately write down three things to be positive about. These three things do not have to be directly related to the setback, however, they must be things that you are thankful for or that make you happy. For example, if your new email sales campaign isn't producing the expected results, your three things could be...

- The campaign did produce some new customers.



- I am thankful that I own my own business; working for someone else was tougher than this.
- Every traffic light on the way to my sales meeting this morning was green. What luck!

By finding positive things in your life to concentrate on, you can refocus your negative mood and recapture the right attitude. This focus can boost your confidence, increase your creativity and inspire you to find a solution.

**Take action.** Too often after a setback, people sit back and wallow in their negative feelings. If this is allowed to go on too long, the situation can begin to sabotage other areas of your life. The best course of action is immediate reaction. Take in the facts of the situation; determine areas that can be changed, and then start making those changes. Just by taking the first step toward progress you will be able to change the way you view the setback.

**Use your visualization and affirmation skills.** Use the positive thinking skills that you now possess to make a positive change. Use visualizations skills to review the failure. Visualize yourself succeeding instead of failing. This will not only prepare you for next time, but also work to change the memory in your mind so that the memory of failure does not hold you back in the future.

Use your affirmation skills to strengthen your positive feelings. Create an affirmation for the situation that follows the positive thinking guidelines and repeat it frequently until your subconscious feels positive about the setback.

Positive thinking skills can help you stay calm during tough times because positive thinkers truly believe that a new opportunity is just over the horizon. This belief not only sustains them during the tough times, but also helps them recognize and go after new opportunities when they are presented with them. Positive thinking also reduces outbursts of anger because the positive feelings that are produced by believing in the bright side help keep your anger in check.

Positive thinking skills can also help you build better personal relationships because they help you focus on the positive aspects of those relationships. Think back to an argument you have had with a loved one. Think about the thoughts that were running through your mind after the argument was over. Did you constantly replay the parts that made you angry? Did you begin to rehash past arguments in your mind? Did you focus your energy on concentrating on all of their bad habits? If you did, you can probably recall how much longer it took to get over the fight.

Now imagine that same argument, only this time, concentrate on the positive aspects of your loved one. Consciously make an effort to attach a positive thought to every negative thought that the fight brought on. Feel the difference? By concentrating on the positive you force your mind to remember all the reasons that you care about that person. Those feelings lead to even more positive feelings. Soon, your heart and your mind will be more concerned with making things right than with harboring negative issues.

Finally, positive thinking can lead to constant improvement in your life. The feelings that you get from accomplishing goals will feed your need

to continue progressing. The better that you feel about yourself and your place in life, the more you will want to experience those great feelings. In order to keep the feelings coming, you will constantly strive to improve and accomplish more goals.

## **THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE THINKING ON YOUR CUSTOMERS**

By using your positive thinking skills to concentrate on your customers, you can develop a more customer-focused attitude, help build your customer's trust in you and your product or service, and improve your customer conflict resolution skills.

In order to develop a customer-focused attitude, you need to use your positive thinking skills to realize that your attitude is a choice. You can either choose to focus solely on the benefits that you will reap from your business, or you can choose to focus on the benefits that your customer will gain from your business. If you shift your focus from yourself to your customer, you will be more likely to concentrate on their needs and wants. This new customer-focused attitude will enable you to meet their needs better, thus improving your product or service and increasing your sales.

Plus, with your new positive thinking attitude you can anticipate your customer's needs before they voice them. If you are concentrating on your customer, you will be attempting to see things from their point of view. With this change in perspective you will be better able to understand their needs and problems.

You can also use positive thinking skills to help build trust between you and your customer. And, let's face it; it is harder to build trust with your customers through an internet business than it is with a business that affords personal contact. The bottom line is that customers buy based on trust. Since a customer cannot see or feel your product, they have to trust that it will be what they want and that it will deliver what it promises. So, how do you build this trust?

There are three ways to build this trust using your positive thinking skills. If you use the following techniques, you will soon be on your way to a better relationship with your customers.

Use positive language. Positive language brings out positive feelings. If you present your product in an affirmative way, customers will perceive it as positive. Once they begin to associate positive feelings with your product or service, they will be more open to trusting what you have to sell.

One note of warning though, try not to use too many cliché words in your product or service descriptions. Even though words like cost-effective and easy to use are positive in nature, they have been used so many times to sell so many things that people tend to view these words as fluff or covers for second-rate ideas. If your product really is more cost-effective than the competition's, then by all means use the words. However, if possible, you may want to first try using similar words that do not carry the same connotations.

Give your customer positive proof. Use positive testimonials or money-back guarantees in your sales letter. These types of positive proof portray a solid belief in your product or service. Thus, by convincing the

prospective customer that you and your current customers believe in your product or service, you will be able to influence their belief in your product too.

You can also use positive proof in your product or service descriptions. When describing exactly how your product can help a customer or what problems your service can solve for a customer, use words that focus on the facts. What has your product been proven to do? Who has it been proven to help? In what situations does it produce tangible results? Once you narrow these answers down, use them to create positive proof descriptions.

Point out the benefits and opportunities your product or service will provide. This technique will work for your customer in the same way that it works for you. The difference is that instead of writing out a list of positives in order to increase your confidence and inspire yourself to strive for improvement, this list will be doing that for your customer. Take your time and concentrate on the same techniques that you used for your list only this time focus your thoughts on your customer's needs, wants and dreams. A well written list can leave a customer feeling excited, and more times than not, this excitement will lead to a purchase of your product or service.

Finally, your positive thinking skills can enable you to seek quick resolutions when faced with customer conflict. Quicker resolutions will lead to happier customers, and happy customers lead to increased sales. In order to reap this positive thinking benefit, use the following guidelines.

Act immediately. Just as you used this action step to keep your positive thinking skills flowing, you should use it with your customers.

Immediate action will help keep your customer from focusing on the negative aspects of the situation. The less time they have to wallow in the negative aspects, the less time they will have to develop negative feelings about you and your product or service.

Use positive language. Always use positive language when dealing with an angry or dissatisfied customer. Your positive language will rub off on your customer, enabling them to be more accepting of a solution. Instead of saying things like "We can't refund your money", say something like "We will be glad to replace your product" instead.

Always end the transaction on a positive note. No matter how the situation ends, always try to find one last positive thing to say about it. By leaving your customer with a positive feeling, you will leave the door open to future business or at least cut down on the amount of negative feelings that they share about your business.

For instance, even if the customer refuses to continue doing business with you, end your correspondence by saying, "I really appreciate the time that you have taken to make me aware of this situation. Your thoughts are important to me". This type of positive statement will make them feel better about the situation and themselves. By making them feel valued you will enable them to move past the situation and open their mind to new possibilities.

# THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE THINKING ON YOUR INTERNET BUSINESS

Positive thinking can help you reap many benefits in your Internet business. Through positive thinking you can achieve better focus, more readily recognize new opportunities, better define your business goals, build up your belief in yourself and your product/service, and more actively seek new ideas.

Positive thinking can help you keep your focus by teaching you to concentrate on what you can accomplish. Once you believe that you can accomplish a goal, your attention becomes more focused and your determination increases.

You can also use your positive thinking skills to help you recognize new opportunities. With a positive belief in the future, you will become more open to different possibilities. This belief in what is possible will allow you see certain situation as opportunities for growth and inspiration.

Positive thinking can also come in handy when you set out to define your business goals. As you learned in the earlier chapters, goals that are set using positive thinking guidelines are easier to achieve and progress towards. You can also use these skills to better define those goals. The more specific a goal is the simpler the steps are to reach achievement. When you view a goal as being simple to complete, you encourage your progress toward that goal.

Anyone who has ever attempted to set up and run an internet business knows that the undertaking comes with pitfalls. These pitfalls can be better weathered if you are armed with positive thinking skills. Through positive thinking skills you can expand upon your belief in yourself and your business, which will lead to a better attitude and the belief that your business can grow and flourish. During slow times or times of difficulty, use your affirmation, visualization and goal setting skills to redefine your business and make the changes that will lead you to success.

Finally, you can use your positive thinking skills to help you seek new ideas for your internet business. Whether you need a way to improve a product or a new way to expedite the shipping of a product, you can use your skills to brainstorm for new ideas. By believing in the impossible and putting your positive attitude to work, you will be able to find inspiration in things that others dismiss. Negative thinkers have a tendency to see a new idea and think, "There is no way that will ever work". By immediately dismissing the idea, they miss out on the opportunities it can afford. Positive thinkers, however, see an idea and think, "Well, that may not be the exact answer I am looking for, but let's work through the possibilities and see what we come up with".

This ability to be open to an idea and eventually expand upon it or reinvent it to suit your exact needs will enable you to benefit from ideas that may not have been positive to start with.



# THE POWER TO PROBLEM SOLVE

Positive thinking skills can lead to above average problem-solving skills. And with high quality problem-solving skills in your arsenal, you can open the way to continued business success and growth. So, just how does positive thinking affect problem solving? Use the following steps to turn your ordinary problem-solving skills into positive problem-solving skills.

**Define the problem.** Once you can accurately define the exact origin of a problem, you are halfway to solving it. By setting out the problem in a clearly defined way, you will be better able to see exactly what needs to be done to rectify the situation. Keep these definitions simple and to the point. Do not allow emotional or unrealistic issues to cloud the statement.

For example, if your new sales letter is not producing the desired results, do not define the problem by just stating that same fact. Instead, re-word the problem to state a well-defined point of origin. An example of this would be to say "my sales letter lacks enough description and motivation to make my customers buy." With this description, you now know that your letter needs to use more descriptive words and also needs a tag line to motivate your customers to buy.

**List your feelings about the situation.** Are there any feelings or beliefs that could hold you back from solving this problem? If so, use your positive thinking skills to change those views. Once you release

any negative thoughts about the situation, you will clear the way for unhindered resolution.

For example, if you were the one that wrote this sales letter you may let your feelings of insecurity convince you that the letter would fail no matter what you did. Instead, use positive self-talk techniques, visualization and affirmations to overcome your insecurities and rewrite the letter in a more desirable way.

**State a positive outcome for this problem.** Using your positive goal setting skills, change this event from a problem to be solved into a goal to be accomplished. Once you have the goal written out, use your skills to follow the steps to accomplishment.

For example, you could state the outcome for the above example as "The rewrite of this new sales letter contains the perfect product description to entice my customers and the tag line includes words to motivate them to buy right now".

**Determine the positive steps necessary to accomplishing this goal.** Once you have a clear goal set, you can turn your focus to accomplishing that goal. List each step using positive, action-oriented language in a way that breaks down each step into a separate, achievable goal.

For example, using the situation above, you could break down the steps as follows.

- I will rewrite paragraph two of my sales letter to include more positive, upbeat descriptions.

- I will add the incentive of a free newsletter to entice my customers to buy.
- I will add a line that offers a discounted price to anyone who orders in the next twenty-four hours.

**Use your visualizations skills to imagine a perfect outcome to the problem.** Run the perfect solution through your mind. Pay attention to how you respond and act. Strive to actually see yourself solving the problem in a desirable way. Use this visualization to guide you through the actual act of problem solving.

**Put your preparation into action.** Now that you have step up a simple process to solve the problem, act immediately to follow through. It is best to act immediately while your positive attitude is primed for success. Plus, immediate action will help keep you motivated to see the process through to its successful end.

**Review your process.** After a problem is solved, you need to go back over the details of the problem and the process to learn from them. How could you have avoided the problem in the first place? What could you have done differently to speed the resolution along? How closely did the actual outcome resemble your imagined outcome?

It is important that you take this step after the problem has been solved so that you do not bog yourself down with negative feelings in the beginning and so that you can use your feelings of success to think back on the incident in a positive manner.

This step, while easily forgotten, is very important because it allows you exercise your positive thinking skills. This exercise will reinforce your skills and help you strengthen and perfect them before the next problem arises.

## CHAPTER 4

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# THE PROBLEM WITH NEGATIVE THINKING

# WHAT IS NEGATIVE THINKING?

Negative thinking includes any thoughts or forms of self-talk that include criticism, doubt, low expectations and put-downs. These thoughts usually stem from our insecurities and are repeated, automatically, by our subconscious many times through the day. If left unchallenged, these negative thoughts can lead to lower confidence levels, below average performance, and diminished mental skills.

Negative thinking can have an adverse effect on both your personal and professional lives because it leads to self-doubt. This self-doubt can lead to problems with decision-making, lack of motivation and a tendency to fail.

Think about what you have learned about positive thinking so far. It's a pretty powerful tool, right? Now, apply that same principle to negative thinking. If positive thinking can motivate you to succeed, it's possible that negative thinking can motivate you to fail. If we are capable of achieving anything that we believe, then it stands to reason that if we believe we will fail, we can achieve that too.

The main problem with negative thinking is that it is so subtle and so automatic that many times we do not even know that we are being affected by it. For example, if you are about to launch a new product, your conscious mind may be very excited and optimistic about it. However, if your subconscious mind is allowing negative thoughts to slip through day after day, they will eventually influence you. This slow and steady influence will eventually lead to a lack of motivation or even to defeat.

So how do you beat negative thinking at its own game? The first step is to get to the source of the problem.

Negative thinking has two main origins, internal beliefs and external sources. The internal beliefs stem from any negative feelings that you may be harboring. The external sources can come from any person or event that caused you to become unsure of yourself or your abilities.

Most negative internal beliefs stem from insecurity. These insecurities can be based on actual events, honest mistakes or, more often, misconceptions. If these events are left unchallenged they can lead to feelings of low self-esteem, low self-confidence and anxiety.

Once you allow a negative internal feeling to reside in your subconscious, it steadily grows until it has the power to immobilize you. Then, the next time that you experience a negative event, your insecurities use that event as fuel to reinforce the negative thoughts and feed your negative self-talk.

So, how does internal negativity start? There are many causes, but they all share a general theme. Internal negativity stems from the way we react to any given situation. To further explain this we will look at a few examples.

**Fear of making a mistake:** The way we react to making a mistake can either strengthen our belief in our problem-solving skills or increase our negative views about ourselves. The difference comes from how we react to those mistakes. If you make a mistake, do you admit to it or do you run from it? Do you view it as a learning experience or a reason to

feel worthless? Do you see it as a part of everyday life or an inevitable happening based on your lack of skills?

How we handle mistakes is based on our past experiences. Did the people with the most influence in your life support you through your mistakes and see them as a necessary part of the learning process? Or, did they berate you and see the mistakes as an example of your lack of ability?

If your prior experience with mistakes resulted in shame, then you will naturally harbor a fear of making mistakes. While you may use this fear as a way to protect yourself, it is really a form of negative self-talk that can keep you from advancement and achievement. Think about that for a minute. If you are afraid to make a mistake, you will never try anything new, thus keeping yourself from discovering new opportunities and acting on great ideas.

**Fear of rejection:** Almost everyone, to some degree, harbors a need to feel accepted. This is a natural feeling because when we feel accepted, we feel valued. However, this need for acceptance can become a source of negative internal belief when we feel this need so greatly that we fear doing anything that may jeopardize our acceptance. This feeling is made worse if we reacted badly to a rejection in the past.

For example, a fear of rejection can force you to make bad decisions, especially in business. If you are afraid to lose the acceptance of a partner, client or customer, you may be too willing to go along with a bad idea. Instead of risking their rejection and stirring up negative feelings from the past, you will be more apt to stay quiet even though you see the error of their approach or plan.



**Fear of not being good enough:** This source of negative thinking usually stems from our own misconceptions of how "good" others expect us to be. This misconception usually starts with a well-meaning parent or teacher who pushed you too hard when you were young. While they were most likely only trying to motivate you to always do your best, you may have been doing your best and came away from the experience feeling "not good enough". If we believe that others expect us to be perfect at all times, then even the most subtle failure could result in feelings of worthlessness, depression and anxiety.

The main problem with this insecurity is that our belief keeps us from realizing that others are actually not holding us to such high standards. This level of perfection is almost always self-imposed.

By harboring this misconception, you force yourself to perform in a constant state of over-achievement. While the desire to over-achieve can be great at times, it can also take away from your success. Why? Because perfection takes time. If you find yourself spending too much time on each and every decision or project, you could be robbing yourself of the chance to undertake or discover bigger and better opportunities.

Also, perfectionists are inadvertently setting themselves up for a fall. No one can be perfect all the time. If you constantly hold yourself to this level of performance, you will eventually be disappointed. And, unfortunately, this disappointment can lead to an increase in negative thinking.

**Fear of not being able to change:** A few lucky people do realize the reasons behind their negative thinking. However, they fail to recognize that these reasons can be changed.

- "I have never been any good at this kind of thing."
- "That's just the way I am."
- "I can't help how I think or feel."

Do any of these statements sound familiar? These self-limiting statements stem from a fear of being unable to change. The statements afford us an excuse for our behavior. After all, if it can't be helped, then it can't be our fault.

The problem with these statements is that they limit us from achieving our true potential. If we believe the statements when we think them, then our reactions to them are almost always self-fulfilling. With these negative thoughts running through our mind, we are unable to accomplish certain goals even if we really want to.

Now that we have identified the internal sources of negative thinking, it is time to examine the external sources. These sources can be easier to recognize but a little harder to control.

External sources of negative thinking always come from outside ourselves but their true harm comes from the way we react to these sources. Think about this for a minute. We cannot control the things that happen to us, or the people that we come in contact with, but we can control how we react to each of these events.

For example, if you are contemplating introducing a new product to your internet business but everyone you share the idea with has negative things to say, your reaction may be to start to second guessing your original idea.

Or, if you are about to undertake a new exercise program, but your spouse comments that you will never stick with it, your subconscious may believe him or her and your reaction may be to lose your motivation.

While those examples show how a person's comments can induce negative thinking, events can also have the same effect. Say, for example, that you did introduce a new product but it didn't sell well. The event could play on your insecurities and your reaction would be to think negative thoughts about yourself and your business abilities.

Or, if you started an exercise program but didn't see the results that you wanted, your reaction might be to fall into a trap of thinking it was your fault. Your insecurities could cause you to think things like, "I knew I couldn't do it" or "Nothing I ever do turns out right".

Things that are even farther beyond your control can also be a source of negative thinking. For instance, if you were laid off from your job due to downsizing, negative thoughts can begin to form from that event. Although the actual lay-off had nothing to do with you or your abilities personally, the event can still lead you to believe negative things about yourself. One scenario would be to decide that you were cursed with bad luck. If you were to continue believing this, then you may shy away from new opportunities or automatically talk yourself into failing at your next job.

As you can see, each of these sources or insecurities can eventually lead to negative thinking. The key is to learn to recognize these insecurities and stop them before they can stop you.

## HOW TO STOP NEGATIVE THINKING

There are two ways to tackle the problem of negative thinking and which approach you choose will depend on the source of that thinking. The first approach deals with negative thinking that comes from your own thoughts and actions. The second approach deals with the comments and actions of others.

To stop negative thinking that comes from within you will need to work to change your insecurities and your reactions to negative self-talk. The following list will guide you through this process.

**Become aware of your thoughts and reactions.** In order to stop negative thinking, you must first be aware that it exists. To do this you must make a conscious effort to pay attention to your thoughts. There are two ways to accomplish this. You can either keep a notebook handy and jot down the thoughts running through your head every time a difficult situation arises, or you can set aside some time and purposely think about a difficult situation while you write your negative thoughts down. Either technique will work as long as you do not try to suppress the negative thoughts and as long as you remember to write each and every thought down.

Once you have a pretty complete account of your negative thinking self-talk, you can move onto the next step, which involves examining that self-talk.

**Challenge your negative thinking.** In order to stop negative thinking, you must challenge its rationality. For this step you will need to go over your list of negative thoughts and examine each one individually. For each thought, ask the following question.

1. Is this thought based on the reality of the situation?
2. What facts can you find to back this thought up?
3. What emotions does this thought evoke?
4. Is this thought tied to a past failure or event?
5. Can this thought be changed?

Now that you know which questions to ask, let's put this step into practice. Imagine that one of your negative thoughts is that you will never be able to write a compelling sales letter.

Is this thought based on reality? Do you have any skills or background on this topic? If you do, then this thought is irrational and most likely based on your feelings of insecurity. If you don't, then you can always find the resources necessary to attain these skills. Once the appropriate skills are attained, this negative thought will be eliminated.

What facts back up the thought that you cannot write a compelling sales letter? Have you written one that failed before? If so, review that letter and determine what you can do to make it better. If not, are there other facts that are contributing to this thought? Perhaps you have a lack of

experience with the topic or inadequate knowledge of the task itself. Both of these facts can be changed with a little effort and research.

What emotions are tied to the act of writing the sales letter? Do you have a fear of failing? Whatever the emotion is, you need to remind yourself that emotions are not facts. Rather, they are just associated feelings that can be changed or eliminated through positive thinking techniques.

Is the thought tied to a past failure or event? If the answer is yes, remind yourself that this situation is a completely different event that contains different possibilities, and that you can use your positive thinking skills to change the outcome of this event.

Can this thought be changed? As you can see from the previous answers, almost every negative thought can be changed in some way or another. The key to this question is to recognize the extent to which the change can take place. If your negative thought did have any factual basis then the reality-based parts of the thought cannot be changed, but your feelings and reactions to the thought can be.

**Correct your negative thoughts.** Now that you have good understanding of your negative thinking and its origins, you can begin turning those thoughts into positive thinking. So, how do you correct negative thinking? You change the language of the thought by using positive words and you turn the negative statement into a positive affirmation. For practice, let's turn the negative thought "I will never be able to write a compelling sales letter" into a positive affirmation.

First, we need to address any facts that were contained in this statement. Let's assume that you did write a previous sales letter that failed and that you do lack the experience to write a better one. The first part of your affirmation will need to be written to reflect these facts in a positive manner. For example, you could say, "I can read a book about successful sales letters and follow the examples to create my own winning letter".

Second, we need to address any emotions that were attached to the negative thought. For example, you could say, "I have prepared thoroughly for this task and I know that I can succeed this time around".

Last, we need to change the language of the thought. Here, you could say, "I will write a compelling sales letter."

Now, let's compare the two statements.

*Negative thought: "I will never be able to write a compelling sales letter."*

*Positive affirmation: "I can read a book about successful sales letters and follow the examples to create my own winning letter. I have prepared thoroughly for this task and I know that I can succeed this time around. I will write a compelling sales letter."*

See the difference? Now that you have a positive affirmation in place to challenge and correct the original negative thought, repeat it frequently until you have overcome your negativity and completed the task in a desirable way.

To stop negative thinking that comes from other people's actions and comments, you need to learn to change your reactions. To do this, you need to learn the skills necessary to enable you to embrace other people's negative thoughts and turn them into a positive benefit. Use the following guidelines to turn other people's negativity into a wealth of positive ideas and opportunities.

**Ask for advice.** When someone makes a negative comment to you about a certain situation, ask him or her what he or she would do to rectify or improve the situation. Instead of simply agreeing to their views, find out what makes them feel the way they do. Not only will this enable you to review the comment for facts, but also it will allow you to learn from their thoughts and, hopefully, find new ideas to make the situation even better.

Once you know the facts behind a comment, you can either eliminate the negative influence of an irrational comment from your mind, or you can apply positive thinking to a valid comment to cancel out the negative influence.

**Be open to suggestions.** Attempt to view the negative comments of others simply as expressions of caring. Perhaps the person's comment was made out of a fear of seeing you fail. Discuss the comment with them and let them know that you want their suggestions. If their suggestions are invalid, simply dismiss them. But, on the other hand, if their suggestions are valid, use the ideas to strength and expand your original idea.



**Never take a negative comment personally.** Rather than just assume that the comment was meant as a criticism of you or your idea, take the time to review the comment for another meaning. Was the comment of expression how that person feels about him or herself? Was the comment a result of the other person's insecurity? Was the comment born of a belief that the other person holds against your field of business?

People make negative comments all the time for a variety of reasons. Even if there is no way for you to truly know the reason behind their comment, keep in mind that the statement very rarely reflects the abilities of the person it was stated to.

If that knowledge is not enough and you are still in doubt, go ahead and ask the person for clarification. Just remember to take anything they say as their opinion and not a fact. Also remember to challenge their thoughts with the questions you learned previously in order to eliminate the negative from your thoughts.

**Attempt to turn negative comments into a resource for new ideas.**

Anytime you are faced with a negative comment, search the words for a new idea or resource. Is the person making the comment an expert in your field? Then perhaps, they are on to something and can point you in a new, better direction. Is the comment coming from a loved one who has helped you research this idea? Then, maybe their idea is coming from a different approach to the same idea. Explore this option and see what you can learn.

If after following the previous guidelines, you still have negative thoughts that you simply cannot change, it may be time to learn how to use that negative thinking in a positive way.

## **HOW TO TURN NEGATIVE THINKING PATTERNS INTO A BUSINESS ASSET**

At some point during your learning process, you are bound to come across a negative thinking situation that doesn't respond to your present positive thinking skills. These situations, however, do not have to signal the end of your positive thinking career. Instead, these situations can be learned from, explored, and eventually used as a positive business asset.

Negative thinking that cannot be eliminated should be viewed as a resource for further growth. So, what good could possibly come from negative thinking? Negative thinking can help us face the reality of a situation, help us prepare for upcoming events, help put us into action, and help us face the cause of our negative thinking.

**Face the reality of the situation.** In business, it is especially important to have the skills to face the reality of a situation without allowing it to destroy our confidence or stop our progress. Negative thinking can help with this task by allowing us to see the reality of a situation. While optimism is key to success, it is equally important not to ignore potentially damaging facts or avoid negative situations.

For example, if your sales were really declining (which watching your numbers can prove) it would not be smart to ignore that reality. Instead, you would want to use your negative thinking patterns to contemplate this decline and find the reason for it. By facing the negative facts of a situation, you can address them in the beginning instead of ignoring them until it's too late.

**Prepare for any negative outcomes to upcoming events or situations.** While some people may view this preparation as unnecessary worry, it can actually be an asset if used correctly. By allowing your mind to run through all of the possible negative outcomes to a situation, you will become aware of the weak areas in the situation. Once you can recognize these areas, you can plan for them. Once you are thoroughly prepared, you can replace the negative thinking with positive thinking by concentrating on your newly perfected plan of action.

For example, if you are planning to introduce a new product to your internet business and you only concentrate on the positive aspects of that plan, you could be setting yourself up for failure. The smarter approach to this situation would be to also contemplate the possible problems with the situation. Do you have the correct marketing in place? Have you thoroughly researched the advantages of this product? Does this product fall in line with your customer's needs? Do you have a back-up plan in place in case this product does not sell well? Without proper planning, which includes the examination of any negative aspects, you could find yourself totally unprepared for the actual outcome.

**Use negative thinking to avoid immobilization and to spring yourself into action.** Sometimes, fear of the unknown can cause you to experience anxiety. These feelings of anxiety can cause immobilization due to your fear of making a mistake. You can use these negative feelings, however, to contemplate the outcome you are afraid of, review it for any factual basis, and then use our fears to plan for the realistic aspects of the situation. Thorough planning will empower you to take action, and once you feel prepared the anxious feelings will diminish.

For example, imagine that you fear the failure of your new product. Instead of letting that fear stop you from introducing the product, you can create a detailed plan to deal with possible failure. Once you have a plan in place, you can use your mental energy to concentrate more clearly on a positive outcome and take action more effectively.

In order to get the most benefit out of this step you need to understand how to use it. You need to be able to accept your negative thoughts but know how to use them in a productive, action-oriented way. The following negative thinking based statements will help you understand this concept more completely.

- If my product fails on its own, I can couple it with a similar product to increase sales.
- If this product is a failure I can learn from the mistake and use my new knowledge to make better choices in the future.

- The failure of this product will not mean the end of my business. I have other products and I can improve those to recoup my losses.
- The failure of this product will not negatively influence my reputation. Others will understand that risks must be taken in order to succeed in business.
- If this product fails I will not use that as an excuse to quit. Instead, I will pick up the pieces and use that failure as motivation to do better next time.

As you can see from the first four examples, a negative thought can be used to increase planning and decrease the overall effects of a negative outcome. The last two examples show how a negative thought can be turned into an affirmation that protects your self-confidence in the face of setbacks.

### **Face negative thinking and allow yourself to learn from it.**

Sometimes, negative thinking can lead to new ideas and opportunities. For example, your fear of introducing a new product could lead you to thinking about that product in a whole new way. Maybe, during your research you became so excited about the benefits of the product that you overlooked a possible drawback. If you can recognize that drawback with negative thinking then you can use positive thinking to improve it or eliminate it all together.

Other way that facing your negative thoughts can help is by allowing you to accept your shortcomings. For example, maybe the product really isn't a good idea after all. If you had gone forward with the

launch by choosing to only concentrate on the positive outcomes, you could have made a big mistake.

Some negative thinking can be based in reality. Do you really have the skills in place to offer this product? Through this type of thinking you may come to realize that a totally different product may be better suited to your expertise and over all business goals. In this case, your negative thinking could save you a lot of time and unnecessary grief.

In order to use negative thinking as a business asset you need to be able to see negative thoughts for what they really are: opportunities to learn from and challenge yourself with. By using the above steps each time a factual negative thought enters your consciousness, you can use those facts to empower yourself and strengthen your business.

## CHAPTER 5

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LET POSITIVE  
THINKING TAKE  
YOU AND YOUR  
BUSINESS TO THE  
NEXT LEVEL

# BELIEVE IN YOURSELF AND YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE

One of the most important keys to success in business is your belief in yourself and your product or service. If you do not firmly believe in your own abilities, knowledge, and experience, then you cannot expect others to believe. If you do not believe in your product or service, then you will never be able to convince your customers to believe.

Fortunately, you can use your positive thinking skills to increase your belief and attain business growth in the process. To begin this process, take out a sheet of paper and write two headings at the top. The first heading should read "Me" and the second heading should read "My Product/Service". Now take a minute to write down every positive aspect and benefit that comes to mind about each. Do not filter your thoughts at this point. Write down everything even if it doesn't seem to be directly related to the topic. Once you have a rough draft of the list, you need to review it and weed out the statements that are unnecessary for this exercise.

A sample list may look like this:

<b>Me</b>	<b>My Product</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 years of experience with marketing</li></ul>	timesaving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good problem solving skills</li></ul>	low cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Previous success with this business</li></ul>	many features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Great customer service skills</li></ul>	makes life easier
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive attitude</li></ul>	solves a problem



After you have narrowed down the list to only include meaningful, concrete statements and benefits, you need to turn each statement into a positive affirmation. For example, you can turn "4 years of experience in marketing" into the following affirmation.

*"I can use my 4 years of marketing experience to succeed at every aspect of my business".*

Once you have turned every statement into an appropriate affirmation, repeat those affirmations often to strengthen your beliefs. Once these statements become part of your core beliefs, they will sneak their way into everything you do and say. The confidence that this will create will rub off on your customers and other contacts, enabling them to sense and share your belief.

## **EXPECT TO SUCCEED IN ORDER TO REALIZE YOUR DREAMS**

By expecting the best you free yourself from thoughts of failure. This freedom will allow you to put all of your energy into achieving everything you can dream. If you expect to fail, then you inevitably will. However, if you expect to succeed, then the sky is the limit.

Success is a combination of skill and belief. Use the following guidelines to release your doubts and succeed at every endeavor you undertake.

**Let go of doubt.** Let go of doubt and truly expect the best outcome possible. The mind has a sneaky way of achieving what it views as fact. If you firmly believe in the best outcome, your mind will automatically lead you to achieving that outcome. To help this process, use your affirmation and visualization skills to develop your outcome and strength your belief in its possibilities.

**Convince yourself of the possible outcomes.** Nothing works better to convince us that we can achieve whatever we want than our past accomplishments. Use your past successes to strengthen your belief in yourself and increase your confidence.

Imagine a baseball player who is experiencing a home run streak. By visualizing his past success and convincing himself of his future success, he is able to increase his chances of repeating a positive outcome. This same exercise can be utilized in business. If you use your past achievements as a way to increase your belief and visualize yourself obtaining the next achievement, you will automatically increase your chances of reaching your goals.

**Allow yourself to dream, and then decide to dream big.** Dreams are an important component to success. If you never allow yourself to dream then you will never give yourself a reason to push for achievement. Without dreams, we have no goals.

Once you believe in the importance of dreams, you need to allow yourself to dream big. After all, what good is a dream if it only gives you a mediocre future to look forward to? In order to harness the long-term motivation needed to continuing progressing toward achieving

your dreams, you need a prize at the end of the journey worthy of work it entails.

After you have agreed to include the skill of dreaming in your positive thinking arsenal, set aside time on a regular basis to dream about your future. Where do you see yourself, both personally and professionally? At what level is your business operating? How would you describe your future success? What attributes would you assign to the future you?

Once you can answer these questions you can begin to set goals for achieving the future you envision. Without a dream, you will be missing the road map to your future. Obviously, it is not enough just to dream of expanding your business. You need to dream about the ways in which you see yourself doing it and then turn those steps into concrete goals and plans of action.

**Turn you dreams into concrete goals.** Once you have a positive vision of your future successes in place, it is time to create a plan for reaching those successes. For example, if your dream involves expanding your internet business, you need to lay out the steps necessary to achieving that expansion.

The easiest way to do this is to work from the future backwards. Start your list with the positive outcome of your goal.

- I will expand my business and own three fully operable, highly successful Internet stores.

Then, write out the steps that need to happen just before this outcome is realized.

- I will open a third Internet store.
- I will research new products and decide which type of store holds the most possibilities for my business right now.
- I will achieve the level of profit necessary for funding a third store.

Now list the steps that would need to take place before you could move onto those goals.

- I will improve my products, perfect my marketing and create more opportunities in order to increase my profits from my second store.
- I will open a second Internet store.
- I will research new products and decide which type of store holds the most
- I will achieve the level of profit necessary for funding a second store.

Finally, lists the steps that you need to take right now in order to begin working toward realizing your dream.

- I will look for ways to improve my current internet store.
- I will research ways to cut costs while increases my profits.
- I will use my positive thinking skills to boost my success rate.

While it may seem unnatural to set your goals in reverse, this approach is important in two ways. One, this reversal of order will allow your subconscious to believe in the goal before it has been completed. If your brain is thinking in terms of "I achieved this goal, now, how did I get there?" instead of in terms of, "I want to achieve this goal, but how do I get there?" it will be more focused on the outcome than the journey. Don't ever ask yourself "How can I do this?" always ask, "How did I do this?" The difference in the language seems simple, but the meaning behind the language is vastly different.

Two, the order is important because it forces you to focus on the achievement first. By beginning your focus there, you will be less likely to get caught up in the maybes and what ifs that can lead to quitting. If you start with success, your main questions turn from thoughts of "where do I go now?" and "Will this ever work?" to thoughts of "What steps must I have taken already?" and "That obviously worked, so this will too!"

If you are still not convinced, try making your list in the opposite order. Chances are good that you will get hung up somewhere between the immediate goals and the future outcome.

Once you have a dream and a plan, you need to take the entire exercise further and eliminate thoughts of defeat from your conscious thinking.

## **BANISH THOUGHTS OF DEFEAT**

No matter how often or well you use your positive thinking skills, your outcomes can still be negatively influence if you believe in the possibility of failure. In order to use your newly learned skills to take your life and your business to the next level, you need to formulate a plan to banish thoughts of defeat. As with every other step in this book, your goal to eliminate thoughts of defeat can be accomplished. To make this happen you simply need to believe in your own powers, commit to learning the techniques and takes steps to follow through on the exercises.

To begin the process of ridding yourself of thoughts of defeat, use the following guidelines.

**Stand up to defeat.** This may seem like a simple step but it has enormous implications. By committing to stand up to defeat you take away the power of it's meaning. If you acknowledge the words and the thoughts as they enter your mind, but refuse to let them beat you, you change the effect they have on you. With this mindset the words go from being concrete predictors of failure to random words that have no lasting effects on your attitude.

The next time that thoughts of defeat enter your mind, simply state out loud, "I will not be broken by thoughts of defeat." Once you have

repeated this enough times, your subconscious will accept the statement as fact and the words of doubt will lose their affect on you.

**Eliminate the word defeat from your vocabulary.** By engaging in a plan to eliminate the word from your speech, you can eventually eliminate it from your mind. The first step to deleting this word from your thoughts is to replace it every time you use it in your speech or think it in your mind. While it is impossible to replace the word with a positive word that holds the same meaning, you can replace the meaning that the word holds for you. To better understand this exercise, review the following examples.

Thought of defeat: My plan will fail.

Replacement thought: My idea may not turn out exactly as I have planned, but I am sure it will turn out at least as well, if not better.

Thought of defeat: No one will ever buy my product.

Replacement thought: While some people may prefer a different product than mine, I am sure that millions of other people will find my product useful.

Thought of defeat: I have never been any good at selling people on my ideas.

Replacement thought: While I have had some trouble in the past convincing people of the merits of my ideas, I have improved my skills at this and I believe that this will be the time that I succeed.

As you can see from the first example, you can acknowledge that a plan may fail without calling it failure. Instead, we acknowledged that the plan may not turn out the way we want it to but we changed the implications of that outcome by attaching a positive note to the result. By doing this we take away the impact of failure. No longer must you fear defeat because you believe the outcome could end up being better if your plan was to fail.

In the second example, we again acknowledge that the product could fail with some people. However, instead of viewing this fact as a sign of defeat, we turn the words around to show acceptance for those who may not like the product and hope for those who will. Again, we have taken out the meaning of finality in the word defeat.

For the third example, we have acknowledged our prior shortcomings, but chose not to let them affect our attitude with negativity. Instead, we gave a nod to the past, accepted it, and then moved on. With our forward thinking statements we have reaffirmed our belief in a possible positive outcome and backed it up with new facts.

Another way to eliminate the word defeat from your vocabulary is to literally throw it away and vow to never speak or think it again. The best way to do this is to write the word defeat down on a piece of paper. Write it down in big letters using handwriting that gives the word meaning.

Take a moment to study the word and all of the meanings it holds for you. Now, visualize yourself replacing those meanings with positive ones. Repeat to yourself that you will only allow the new meanings to penetrate your thoughts. Finally, crumple the paper in your hands and



toss it in the nearest trashcan. You can do this exercise mentally using visualization, but you will find that it works faster and with more effectiveness if done physically.

Believe in your power to succeed. This step falls into the category of affirmations. As you have learned in the previous chapters, affirmations have a strong impact on the way that you think and the goals that you are able to achieve. Because of this correlation, you need a strong, persuasive affirmation in your arsenal of defeat-fighting tools. Luckily, the most effective affirmation is also the simplest one. "I do not believe in defeat". Sounds too simple, doesn't it? But think about that statement for a moment. Repeat it out loud. Do you hear the conviction and finality of the words? These powerful words effectively eliminate thoughts of defeat. Why? Because you cannot possibly be affected by something you do not believe in.

Avoid negative people who make statements about defeat.

Of course, before eliminating any contact with friends, coworkers, customers, colleagues, loved ones or acquaintances, you first must try to change the affect their negative statements have on you and your attitude. As you can recall, we learned about techniques for this situation in chapter four.

However, sometimes these techniques do not work. For example, if the statement of defeat was made without any facts to back it up or suggestions for change then the statement cannot be turned into something positive. This rule also applies to statements made by people who are intentionally trying to hurt you. Since these comments are born of malice, there is simply no way to learn from them or use

them as a resource. In either case, you need a plan to deal with these comments and the people who make them before they crop up.

The best plan is simple avoidance. By avoiding the people who make these comments, you can avoid the possible effects of these comments. Essentially, what you can't hear can't hurt you! However, keep in mind that this plan is not usually a long-term solution. Once you have realized your goal, strengthened your resistance to negative thoughts, or overcome the meaning of the word defeat, you can usually mingle with these negative people and suffer no ill effects. Depending on your relationship with the comment makers, your period of voluntary avoidance may be longer or shorter.

That plan sounds great, right? But, what do you do if the comment maker is your spouse, partner or some other person that you literally cannot avoid? In a case such as that, it is best to use your earlier affirmation to stop them in their tracks. Every time that one of these people utters words of defeat to you or about you, stop what you are doing, look them in the eye and repeat the words, "I do not believe in defeat" in your strongest, most convincing tone. It is best to expect that this simple statement will not stop them the first time that they hear it. However, if you continue repeating it in response to their comments, they will eventually get the hint.

CHAPTER 6

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CONCLUSION

As you have learned from all of the information contained in this book, positive thinking can be a powerful tool. Not only can it give you the power to reach your goals and realize your dreams, but it can also be used to improve your life, expand your business and keep you safe from the throes of negativity. Hopefully, if you have gotten this far in your reading, you have come to truly believe in and accept the power of positive thinking.

And, now that you are done, it is time to stop and congratulate yourself. You can use this achievement as your first step toward a life of positive thinking! You bought the book because you wanted to improve yourself in some way. You finished the book because you realized that learning about positive thinking was the first step toward attaining your goal. The only thing left to do is promise yourself that you will not let the process end here.

Once you have decided to embrace the skills that positive thinking can give you, you may want to expand your knowledge even further. The following books and web sites will provide more information concerning your search for positive thinking skills.

## **Books**

- The Power of Positive Thinking in Business, Scott W. Ventrella
- The Power of Positive Thinking, Norman Vincent Peale
- The Positive Power of Negative Thinking, Julie K. Norem
- Beyond Positive Thinking, John Lee Baughman

## **Web sites**

[www.sohoday.com](http://www.sohoday.com) this site offers information pertaining to the positive aspects of running an internet business.

[www.entrepreneur.com](http://www.entrepreneur.com) this site offers an extensive collection of articles on a variety of topics concerning internet business.

[www.businessweek.com](http://www.businessweek.com) this site offers advice and articles for small business owners.

[www.businessknowhow.com](http://www.businessknowhow.com) this site offers articles and information pertaining to the positive aspects of business ownership.

## **Appendix**

In this section of the book you will find fast fact lists for all of the exercises discussed in the book. These lists break down the steps in simple bullets that allow you to easily locate the steps for quick reference after you have learned each technique.

### **Fast Facts #1: Exercises that reinforce positive thinking**

- Review your self-talk
- Practice positive self-talk
- Make a list of the positives in your life
- Make a positive to-do list

- Take care of yourself both physically and mentally

### **Fast Facts #2: Visualizations**

- Clear your mind of all other distractions and thoughts
- Picture yourself completing the task or solving the problem in a positive way
- Keep the outcome of your visualization positive and perfect
- Review the outcome in your mind, looking for ways to improve it
- Repeat the visualization frequently
- Review the actual event and use visualization to change any negative circumstances into positive ones

### **Fast Facts #3: Affirmations**

- State your affirmation in a positive way using the present tense and first person narrative
- Use words like "can" and "know" instead of words like "will" and "think"
- Repeat your affirmations at least three times each day

### **Fast Facts #4: Problem solving**

- Define the problem

- List your feelings about the situation
- State a positive outcome for the problem
- Determine the positive steps necessary to accomplishing this goal
- Use visualization skills to imagine a perfect outcome to the problem
- Put preparation into action
- Review your problem solving process

**Fast Facts #5: How to stop negative thinking from an internal source**

- Become aware of your thoughts and reactions
- Challenge your negative thinking
- Is this thought based on the reality of the situation?
- What facts can you find to back this thought up?
- What emotions does this thought evoke?
- Is this thought tied to a past failure or event?
- Can this thought be changed?

- Correct your negative thoughts by turning them into positive affirmations

### **Fast Facts #6: How to stop negative thinking from an external source**

- Ask for advice
- Be open to suggestions
- Never take a negative comment personally
- Attempt to turn negative comments into a resource for new ideas

### **Fast Facts #7: Steps to turn negative thinking into a business asset**

- Face the reality of the situation
- Prepare for any negative outcomes to upcoming events or situations
- Use negative thinking to avoid immobilization and to spring yourself into action
- Face negative thinking and allow yourself to learn from it

### **Fast Facts #8: Increase your belief in yourself and your product or service**

- Make a list of positive aspects and benefits



- Turn the statements into affirmations in order to strengthen your beliefs

### **Fast Facts #9: Expect success**

- Let go of doubt
- Convince yourself of the possible outcomes
- Allow yourself to dream, and then decide to dream big
- Turn your dreams into concrete goals

### **Fast Facts #10: Banish thoughts of defeat**

- Stand up to defeat
- Eliminate the word defeat from your vocabulary
- Believe in your power to succeed
- Avoid negative people who make statements about defeat