CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE

Your attitude is often one of the first things people notice about you. It is the foundation and the support of everything we do. Attitude is a key element in creating your destiny and achieving mastery in your personal and professional life. Your attitude today determines your success tomorrow. The American Heritage Dictionary defines attitude as “a state of mind or feeling with regard to some matter.” To turn attitude into action, you must accept responsibility for what goes on inside your mind by monitoring your internal dialog. One of the greatest challenges to a positive attitude is change, whether it’s a change of jobs, a change in a relationship, or a change in your economic status. We’ll look at the benefits of adopting a whatever-it-takes attitude when confronted by change.

Many times we get stuck because we don’t know where we want to go in the first place. Positively charged people are working on goals (purpose) while doing what they love (passion). Attitude is a choice: Choose to take charge of your life. The problem is that we often forget we have choice. Attitude can be a powerful tool for positive action or it can be a poison that cripples your ability to fulfill your potential. Your attitude determines whether you are living life or life is living you. Attitude determines whether you are on the way or in the way. Self confident people may suffer setbacks, make mistakes, or get dragged down by hard times, but they still believe they will be successful and come out on top. Those who don’t believe in themselves never seem to find their way. Often they just seem to drift with the tides.

Choice is the starting point to everything we do in life. By changing our attitudes we change our lives. If you want a positive attitude, you’re going to need to be committed enough to work at it. Once you’ve determined what has been holding you back, it’s time to look ahead and analyze where you want to go. Understanding the importance of living your life with purpose and passion – having a personal vision – is critical to achieving success. We have a choice. We can concentrate on problems or we can focus on solutions.

What happens to us influences what goes on within us unless we develop a process for taking control of our attitudes to maintain a positive approach to life when negative events occur. If you look around, you can find many examples of people whose attitudes do not fit their apparent circumstances. Researchers have shown that the single act of smiling causes the brain to release a stream of chemicals that make you feel good. For example, think about when you blush. We blush when we’re embarrassed. Isn’t that physical reaction the result of a thought? We didn’t do anything to exert ourselves to make blood rush to our faces, causing them to redden. It’s the thought that triggers this reaction. If we have this kind of physical reaction to a thought, is it so hard believe that a positive thought could affect our bodies in a beneficial way?

Many people are controlled by a negative attitude. People in this category lack faith in their ability to overcome difficulties and don’t understand their own power. When hit by hard times, they crumble. They stay there until they’ve been down so long it looks like up to them. Many never get back up. People who are controlled by attitude tend to believe not only that they can’t control their lives but that life has it in for them. They are pessimists by nature. When something bad happens to them – and bad things happen to everyone – their tendency is to believe that the difficulties will last a long time, eventually wiping them out. They also tend to perceive challenging times as special punishments dished out only to them because of past sins. They see even the good times and life’s blessings as merely a setup for bad times to come. For them, all defeats are permanent, all mistakes are fatal, all missed opportunities are gone forever. When faced with a challenge, they often talk about being overwhelmed by the enormity of it. They exaggerate the size of the problem and put down their ability to respond.
The root causes of a bad attitude include low self-esteem, stress, fear, resentment & anger, and the inability to handle change. Only the limits of our mind-set can determine the boundaries of our future. When we become fixated on problems, we become paralyzed. When we look ahead for solutions, we are taking responsibility and some measure of control over our lives. The danger with “What-If Baggage” is that you never put it down, even when you’ve considered what your response might be.

It’s up to you to assign a value or meaning on the point of view you decide to take. Turn attitude into action – find your purpose and passion. Lack of vision will get you lost. Comfort zones can be treacherous. You believe that “I just can’t leave the familiar, no matter how frustrated I get.” It’s easy to become angry about standing still but being afraid to move. If you don’t make the move, sooner or later, life makes a move on you. Lack of vision will get you lost. Comfort zones can be treacherous.

If you change your focus, you change your attitude. Happiness is yours to create. We all want to be happy and fulfilled. Often though we demand too much of life. We set strict criteria for what will make us happy. When those criteria are not met, we develop attitudes that only make matters worse. The most basic, most revealing question you can ask yourself is “what does it take to make me happy?”

Turn attitude into action. Four things we must learn to do include (1) focus on handling stress, (2) identify your negative/pessimistic thoughts, (3) tell a supportive person how you feel, and (4) act to settle a problem. If you assign a numerical value to each letter in the word attitude, it totals 100 ... A(1) + T(20) + T(20) + I(9) + T(20) + U(21) + D(4) + E(5) = 100.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESS:

1. Be Proactive – prepare yourself for those times when challenging circumstances threaten to provoke negative attitudes that can hinder your plans and throw you off course while pursuing your goals and dreams. You will discover that even with a positive attitude, purpose, and passion, life is never without challenges, disappointments, setbacks, and problems.

2. Nobody makes it alone in this world. We all need supportive relationships to get through challenging times. To build a team you first have to develop an attitude that will make others want to support you. Build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships through networking, shared vision, and shared values. You will also learn the best defense against toxic people who try to disrupt your success.

3. Sometimes people tell you that you can’t do something because they don’t see themselves achieving it. But the magic of the word “triumph” is the first syllable. You’ve got to TRY. The critical difference between those who believe that they will succeed and those who have no belief in themselves is their understanding of attitude. There are those who know they can control their attitudes and those who allow their attitudes to control them. The people who do best in life are those who realize they have the power to choose their attitudes, just as they have the power to choose their clothing, their cars, or their dinner companions.

The same attitude spoils many relationships. Many fail because one or both people involved demanded to much of the other. Not everyone is perfectly neat, beautiful, charming, loving, funny or attentive all the time. Life isn’t a romance novel. We often demand too much of love and friendship and the same is true of happiness. It’s easy to be happy if you can find happiness in small doses. If you set impossible criteria for happiness, then it will be all but impossible for you to be happy.
4. Most people allow their brains to be programmed indiscriminately – like the computer adage “Garbage in, Garbage out.” The brain hears negative things and accepts them as truth. The key to ridding yourself of this attitude of helplessness is to clear your mind of negative inner conversations and replace them with more hopeful messages. You can reframe your perspective by changing and controlling your inner dialog.

We like to think that our attitudes are affected by what people do and say to us, but in reality, it is what we say to ourselves that has the greatest influence on how we present ourselves to the world. The loudest and most influential voice you hear is your own inner voice, your “self-critic.” The root of your happiness is your joy. Don’t let anyone steal your joy. Identify through self-awareness the attitudes that hold you back or propel you forward.

5. The ability to recognize our feelings as they come over us is called self-awareness, and it is critical to our development in a highly mobile, fast-changing, and complex society. Self-awareness allows you to be aware of your emotions and attitudes. If you can remember the experiences that trigger a bad or self-destructive attitude, you can then work to disarm those triggers and even replace the bad emotions with more constructive and empowering emotions to create a better attitude.

Self-awareness is very important. When you tell yourself “I am going to do my best on this exam,” you are practicing self-awareness because you are monitoring your emotions and judging their potential impact. When you practice self-awareness, you give yourself far greater control of your actions. This control gives you options. You can decide not to react to negative emotions. You can channel the energy of the negative emotion into a positive action.

6. Avoid learned helplessness. You may not be able to stop an unwanted change from occurring in your life, but you can program yourself to take positive actions that make the most of it. You have to take responsibility for your attitude and for your success. Get out of the blame game – toss away the emotional baggage and attitudes that are holding you back. Letting go of blame, hurt, and anger and replacing those negative emotions with an attitude of forgiveness and gratitude is a powerfully healing experience. It also returns responsibility for your life back to you. It’s no longer anyone else’s fault that you have not accomplished your dreams or achieved your goals. Once the blaming stops, you accept responsibility. Not wanting to accept responsibility is why so many people hide behind negatives attitudes.

7. Goals are tools for focusing your life, taking responsibility, and getting you to take action. Achieving goals is just part of what is really important – the quality of life you experience, the person you become and the difference you make in the lives of others as you pursue and achieve your goals. It’s up to you to set goals and direct your passion at a purpose. Start making changes today that will get you to where you want to be tomorrow. Dare to dream and then set deadlines for realizing those dreams.

8. And, finally, keeping the faith. When you put your attitudes into action, you start to overcome the hazards you are facing. Once you accept that there are going to be hazards and challenges in life, you are better prepared and able to adjust your attitude, do what you need to do to take action, and then start rejoicing because you know your victory is on the other side. When you go through problems or hazards, have faith.

The level of your talent isn’t really as important as the intensity of your passion. Once you have defined your goals, make a list of smaller goals that can be achieved in the short term. Date the smaller goals. Set small reachable goals. And ask for help when needed.