



# LIFE IMPROVEMENT TIPS

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### **How to Bring Up Your Children Properly**

Childhood years are the best times to learn. Somehow, a person's comprehension is at its peak during childhood. Parents should take advantage of these learning years to ingrain the values of life in their children.

If you're a parent, teach them positive habits so that they will know and see the beauty that life has to offer. Make them enthusiastic about life. Instill into their hearts and minds all the wonders and magnificence of being alive by living life to its fullest in a positive way.

There's a startling difference between children learning through self-discovery, and children learning through self-discovery with proper guidance. The first things that children learn are usually the things that stay with them and mold formative years until they reach adulthood.

Let us suppose you let your children learn through self-discovery. To a certain extent, self-discovery is good since it develops full independence and self-reliance. However, the learning process might be slow. In a sense, it is like a trial and error experience for children. They have to segregate the good from the bad, the right from the wrong, what they like and what they don't. It is most likely that what they will like are the ones that come easy to them or the ones that they enjoy the most. And the ones that they enjoy the most might not necessarily be the good ones. Without proper guidance, what they like and enjoy the most might actually be hurting them although they are not aware of it. Perhaps later, if they find out that they picked the wrong choices, it may be too late.

With self-discovery through proper guidance, you will be able to leave room for them to develop independence and self-reliance. At the same time, show them what is right and what is wrong. Explain to them why. If possible, cite instances or examples based on true-to-life events to make them more convincing and realistic. The more realistic they are, the more easily the children are convinced. Likewise, try teaching them in a friendly and humorous atmosphere. Children are more attentive and eager to learn when all (both teachers and students) are in an easy mood. You will know and feel their eagerness to learn through the sparkle in their eyes and by the way they answer your questions. You can be sure that what they learn from you is acceptable to them and will stay with them. That is why, as a parent, you must show enthusiasm in life to your children.

There's a third method of making children learn. That is through proper guidance leaving negligible room for self-discovery. But there are drawbacks. You take away from them the benefits of self-reliance and independence. The guidance you devote to them may be good and well intended, but they must not rely on you on almost everything they do. They become decision-dependent on you. There are instances wherein this type of guidance might be worse than giving no guidance at all.

There are parents who underwent hardships during their childhood, strived, and became successful financially. Although they are financially in the position to guide and assist their children to a better life, they prefer that their children undergo the same difficult experience they underwent during their younger years. Their reason: so that their children will value and experience the same things they went through. This may be applicable to stubborn and rebellious youngsters, but not to disciplined ones. Why must their sons and daughters repeat the same difficulties? There's no reason to. This is like punishing the innocent. Instead of repeating the experience, they should learn from it. Life is too short to repeat unsavory experiences.

One of the best ways to broaden your children's knowledge about life is by traveling. The world - its varied people, places, and cultures - has a lot of information to offer. It is perhaps as important as the conventional classroom. If you are financially able, traveling is one of the best educational experiences you can give your children. Look for exhibits or world fairs, and take your children there. Books are the next best things. It's traveling by reading.

Fill your children with thoughts of self-importance, confidence, and positive attitude so that there will be no room for negative thinking. More importantly, fill their world with laughter, love, and understanding. You'll never go wrong.

## Dealing With Sorrow – Depression Management

While the term depression has been commonly used that people tend not to take it seriously anymore, it is a very serious condition that could impair one's life. Depression is very difficult. It can debilitate one's normal functions, making even the most mundane tasks such as getting up from bed or eating breakfast seemingly difficult. It is sad to think that a lot of depressed individuals are not treated because of the high costs of therapy. However, coping with depression is still possible without professional help if one knows depression management. Here are a few things that can help people deal with depression, it is important to note however, that professional therapy is still very invaluable with serious depression. These steps are just suggestions for alleviating the condition.

Staying active is one way to take one's mind off depression. Primarily, activities help distract people from whatever it is that is causing their depression and it also helps channel unspent energies that build up when one is depressed. Keeping active also releases endorphins – natural mood boosters that somehow cheer people up.

It is also important to take a rest. Being depressed can be very exhausting, so it is essential to regain strength and energy if one is to deal with depression. Relaxation techniques can help one be more attuned to the self and be more at peace. When resting, stressors should be kept away from the bedroom so that ample rest can be obtained.

Depressed people should also express their emotions. Depression usually results from suppressed emotions. People who are grieving can be prone to depression if they keep their emotion to themselves. A lot of people avoid crying because they think it might be a sign of weakness. However, it is important to cry because it releases one's emotions. When expressing feelings, it is important to avoid catharsis – venting up one's anger by doing something violent like boxing, smashing things, and the like. Catharsis does not release one's emotion, especially anger. Rather, it makes a person practice violence as an expression of emotion, and thus can be very dangerous.

Hang around with friends and loved ones. Depressed individuals need support very much. Other people can distract one from stressors. People can also remind a depressed individual that there can be more to life, and it is worth living even if it is simply because of the company of wonderful people.

Lastly, it is important to believe in oneself. A lot of people get depressed because they put themselves down. It is important to satisfy oneself and gain a sense of self-worth. It is good to do something that would make one happy. Prioritizing one's self can help one to believe that one's own life is important and

can be enjoyed. Being kind to oneself is one of the most important steps to get away from a depressive state.

Depression management is possible and entails taking charge of one's self. When dealing with depression however, it is important not to rush. Sadness does not disappear overnight; it takes time to get back on one's feet. Little by little, one can get out of depression and have a normal life once more.

## **How to Deal with People to Get What You Want**

People communicate with each other in various ways for a lot of reasons. And one of these reasons is when you need something from someone. For people in business, this can either be in the form of products or services. You may want to sell a product while the other party must find your product useful for his intention. You may want to offer your services while the other party must be satisfied with the services you render according to his needs. In short, the way to get somebody or anybody to do what you want is to make them want to do it.

To get something you want through intimidation or violence is to invite trouble. Yes, it's possible but not advisable to use forceful methods because the results are undesirable and at times disastrous. Imagine if you force an employee to take a leave of absence for having apparently violated a company rule. The relationship between management and the employee, or perhaps between management and union (if the employee is a member of it), is likely to be severed.

To get what you want, give people what they want. Just what do people want? Physical health, family ties, financial security, spiritual growth, peace of mind, a successful career, and fame are the basic needs of people. There is one important yet intangible thing everybody wants and that is appreciation. Being appreciated and complimented makes a person feel important. When you feel important, you feel needed and wanted, and this gives you a whole lot of reason for existence.

Just how do you give somebody the feeling of importance? Say it, act it; just give it freely, honestly, and wholeheartedly. As literal as it is, saying how appreciative you are for a favor received, makes the other person feel important. You may not be able to describe exactly in words the feeling of importance when you're in the shoes of the recipient. But definitely, what you can not describe is real and priceless.

Pre-empt importance. Give some sort of sign to the other person that what you want from him, will make him feel important. Let's take charity for example. A recipient wants or needs contributions from the giver. It can either be material or

service contribution, or both. Even before the act itself, the giver somehow expects appreciation from the recipient and this will give him a boost of importance. Appreciation may not necessarily be in words. A smile and/or a pat would suffice and they can come from both giver and recipient. The giver shows his feeling of being appreciated. The recipient shows his feeling of appreciation for the gift. Somehow magic or chemistry takes place. It's a feeling both parties would enjoy happening many times over.

Are you aware that the feeling of importance, brought about by compliments and appreciation, is good for your health, mentally and physically? Whether you are the giver or recipient, it is good for both. There are medical findings that substantiate health effects brought about by positive emotions like compliments and appreciation. Frequent doses of the feeling of importance activate the brain cells and various harmonies in the body that promote good health. To put it plainly, the feeling of importance is the antioxidant of life.

Can you think of a better way to nourish other people's feelings than to show your concern and appreciation? Well, you can show something better than appreciation, and that is - a truckload of appreciation.

You know what you and I and everybody else should be doing right now? We should go out there and show our feeling of appreciation to everything and everybody. Let's go!

## **How To Determine What You Want In Life**

What do you really want in life?

Most people don't discover what they want in life until it's time to die – and that's a shame.

Most people spend the best years of their lives watching television or doing things they dislike. An author described humanity by saying, "Most people die at twenty and are buried at eighty." Are you one of the living zombies?

What do you really want in life?

Some people struggle in answering such question. When asked what they want or what their goals in life are, many are unsure. They dillydally in their decision,

hardly giving any thought about what they want in life. People without definite goals are letting time pass them by. Are you one of these people?

If you are undecided about what you want out of life, do not worry. There are many ways of discovering your purpose in life.

To discover what you want in life, **try looking deep into your heart**. Oftentimes, people are ruled by logic. People live by what they think they should be or by what others like them to be. The discovery process is the perfect time to listen to your heart. What your heart desires comes from the whispers of your authentic self. Your authentic self is the real you.

Listen to your heart to be able to listen to your authentic self. What your heart says usually feels right. What your heart desires is what you usually love to do and this represents your passion. Anything done with passion is like play where the task is accomplished without hesitation. You pour out your very best and feel no pressure or resistance.

You will totally enjoy doing things that are your passion. Setbacks, difficulties, and obstacles will make it more challenging, but should not deter you from pursuing your goals. Naturally, there may be barriers that may prevent you from reaching your goal, but your heart's desire will find ways to overcome these barriers so that you may ultimately get what you want in life. Remember this: the universe supports people who are pursuing their passion and those who are pursuing their destiny.

However, this does not mean that you don't use your head. People are born with both the mind and heart. Your duty is to live your best life and be in harmony with your mind and heart. The poet Rumi wisely said, "Live completely in the head and you cannot feel the breath and rhythm of life. Live completely in the heart and you may find yourself acting like a love-struck fool with poor judgment and discipline. It's all a fine balance - the head and heart must forge a lifetime partnership if one wants to live a beautiful life."

**Listen to your instinct.** Part of human nature is the mysterious and spontaneous reaction on things. Often times, these are called instincts. Your authentic self communicates with you and guides you via instincts. Instincts are those gentle nudges that urge you to act and follow a certain path. Your role then is to listen attentively.

Often times, we listen to what others say and allow them to run our lives. Parents often do this to their children. "We come from a family of doctors, so my son must also be a doctor." How often do we hear this from parents who have good intentions for their children? Parents unconsciously block the true expression of their child's real self and calling. Friends and critics will discourage you and point out the impossibility of your dream. Before heeding their advice, evaluate the



accomplishments of the critics. Did they achieve their dreams? Do they dream big at all?

Remember, it is your destiny that is in line, not theirs. It doesn't mean, though, that you will not listen to what other people say. Hear them out just the same. But the final decision should be yours.

There is only thing to remember: Every person, to live truly and greatly, must define how he wants to live and what his brightest life will look like. Listen to your instincts and follow your heart's desire. You will never go wrong.

## Enhancing the Human Brain

The human brain is the soul of the human nervous system. It controls involuntary activities such as respiration, digestion, and heartbeat, which are also known as automatic functions of the body. This organ also controls other conscious activities that are considered as higher order activities like reasoning, abstraction, and thought. The human brain is superior to any other brain of any other living species that are known to humankind.

The brain is also the center by which other human characteristics are defined. Creativity, for example, is much associated with the brain. So is personality. The brain lets us make decisions and define colors and smells. This organ controls every other perceived activity of the human body.

However, the human brain, as strong and as invincible as it may look, is not going to stay that way forever. As with any other part of the body, the human brain will wither in the future. One's lifestyles and all other external factors will take toll against the human brain. As one grows old, the human brain will become slower in terms of functioning and rejuvenating itself. However, there are ways on how to enhance the power of the human brain as age catches up. This article tries to give some useful tips on how to do just that.

### 1. Live a healthy lifestyle.

The brain is an integral part of the human anatomy. It is probably the most important organ in the body; but of course, we all know that every other organ in the body works for the others to function properly. The human brain is subject to the lifestyle of the person who owns it. If the person loves alcohol, he may not fully reap the powers of his brain. Alcohol and other dangerous substances destroy brain cells. An alcoholic will argue that, "I've been using only ten percent of my brain, drinking will activate the other 90% of it." This is a total fallacy. This premonition was formulated in the 1800s and there is no truth in it. The brain is a lifetime organ, so we must preserve and protect it.

## 2. Eat the right foods.

Eating the right sets of food will definitely benefit the brain. The brain is the most active part of the body. Even when one sleeps, the brain remains active and vibrant. The brain will appreciate it if one eats the right and balanced sets of food. The sad thing is that the brain is usually taken for granted when it comes to having a balanced meal or a workout because people are so focused into developing their outside looks. It's about time that we give the brain a break.

## 3. Engage in proper exercise.

Proper exercise is good for the brain and not only for the body. The human brain needs a well-balanced life.

## 4. Release stress once in a while

Releasing stress is necessary to be able to clear the brain from all the difficulties and the clouds in one's life. One must take time to get into a relaxing mood and a good night sleep.

The brain is an organ to be cherished. No individual will ever be able to live his life to the fullest if his brain is not functioning well. A brain that is cared for will result in a more active and fulfilling life.

## **Get Rid of Procrastination, Now!**

Do you put off your work for later, only to find your deadlines steadily creeping in? Then you, my friend, are one of the millions of people afflicted by the procrastination virus. Procrastination is the biggest reason for loss of productivity and late output. Though many would not admit it, they would benefit greatly if they start their work on time.

For many people, putting off their work for later is more habit than desire. It can be so hard to get into a groove where starting your tasks in a timely fashion is a priority, especially if the consequences for being late are things that one can probably bear.

If you are one of these people, yet you desire to shake off your propensity for procrastination, then you have come to the right place. Here are a few tips to help you overcome this dilemma and become a more productive and reliable person.

1. Set schedules – It is very important that you have a list of activities to accomplish per day. This will help you realistically budget your time and resources. One of the cardinal sins people commit in regards to performing their tasks is to put off their work because they feel like there is so much time left. A journal, organizer, or calendar of events will help you plan and schedule your task so that you can start them promptly and finish them on time.

2. Save the Vacation for Later – Many people put their work off for later saying, “I’ll just have a little fun then buckle down to work later.” While it may be true that they may have more than enough time to accomplish their tasks, it would be better if they finished their work first and relax afterwards.

Wouldn't relaxation be sweeter if it were after a taxing job? If you choose to lay back and relax before doing your tasks, you will be more prone to burnout and will have nothing exciting left to look forward to after accomplishing a task. It is always better to have slack period AFTER a job than before one, especially considering that people are wont to overusing their slack time. This is suicide if you are heading towards a deadline.

3. Never Underestimate Your Tasks – Sometimes procrastination sets in because people underestimate the resources, difficulty, and time spent for a particular task. They will usually say, “It’s just mowing the lawn, its easy; I could do it in a jiffy.” The problem is, no matter how trivial the task, it still takes time and resources to accomplish. If you underestimate a task, you will most likely set too little time to do it and schedule it too close to its deadline.

4. Don't Allow Yourself to Get Comfortable Doing Nothing – It would definitely help if you kept a subconscious alarm whenever you are doing nothing. Get this alarm to remind you of things that may need to be done. This will help you foster the notion that jobs accomplished now means more time for relaxation later. However, even if this is the case, do not forget to put ample time in for rest and to remove all thoughts of troubles before hitting the sack. The trick here, however, is not to overdo you rest. There is a difference between resting and idling. Always set the right amount of time for rest and stick to that schedule.

## **Getting to Know Fears and Phobias**

A person’s fear can hinder his chances for development and for success. Fear in itself can be debilitating and can limit a person’s ability to go through life in a healthy way. Sometimes, a person’s fear can rule a person’s life and he becomes bereft of reason.

A person who allows his fear to rule his life can be prevented from leading a normal life. The sad fact is that the person who has the fear is not the only one affected, but also his family, friends, and the people around him.

Fear can be healthy because it allows a person to be on his toes and to be watchful of what is happening around him. A person can actually make his fears work for him instead of against him. Then again, this requires a lot of self-control and positive thinking.

A person's fear can be caused by an event that happened some time ago, or by a belief that he is not capable of dealing with something or someone. There are fears that have a real basis, but most fears are just the creations of one's imagination.

Phobia is also a fear of something, but such fear can be considered irrational. A phobia can be ridiculous and exaggerated such as a person's fear of cats or of water. Some people who have developed phobias are aware that the fear is not based on rational thinking; but unfortunately, they are not able to get hold of their emotions and rise above their irrational fear.

Some people are quick to equate phobia with insanity; but it is not fair to conclude that just because a person is phobic, it means that there must be something wrong with his sanity. A person's phobia can sometimes be embarrassing, especially when he is not able to control such fear. There are people who actually shiver and hide when confronted with their phobias.

Phobias can be simple like the simple fear of being in an enclosed area, or complex like the fear of riding an airplane. A social fear can be manifested in the fear of public speaking or of being surrounded by a crowd. Most phobias are characterized by panic attacks such as when the person is confronted by his phobia and he is forced to come face-to-face with it.

It is normal to be afraid because fear is rational. However, a fear that becomes irrational and is already without basis, is already called a phobia. It is no longer normal and can disrupt a person's lifestyle.

A person who wants to get rid of his phobia should not turn to doctors who dig deeper just to discover the root cause of the phobia. Such an activity can be a waste of time because finding the underlying cause of the phobia will not get rid of it. What is more important is to be determined and strong-willed so that the person's fears will no longer rule his emotions. If a person can learn how to handle his emotions, then he can get rid of his phobia.

## **Giving Your All**

The act of giving your very best to the needy can likewise cultivate the best emotional satisfaction in your heart. Whatever form of help you extend, be it service or something of value, you will undoubtedly receive something better in return.

Is there anything better than a simple “thank you” that is meant with sincerity? Is there anything better than an appreciation that makes you feel needed and important? Is there anything better than to see smiles on other people’s faces for having made them feel equally important and cared for?

If your physical resources are limited, you can put your talent or creativity to work. Your urge to help those in need should inspire you to find ways in accumulating resources to actualize your intention. You can come up with ideas to generate more money through fund raising programs. You may also give more of your time doing volunteer service.

In the process of giving your all, your cooperation, attention, and entire being need not be strained. You may get physically exhausted; but emotionally, you will be charged with a heart full of compliments, making you feel all-important. You will feel revitalized and invigorated. You will become more enthusiastic. All these occur because you love what you’re doing.

When you set your mind to work for a good cause, you are actually tapping and activating power that promotes health in every corner of your physical, psychological, and emotional being. Your emotions will run high in a positive manner. You will feel sentimentally contented with what you are doing. You will feel as though you’re the highest paid executive in the business; not because you’re being paid with money, but because you’re being paid with your own sense of fulfillment.

Oh yes.....when you give your all, the best will bounce back to you.

## **How to Make Others Like You**

One of the basic needs of man is to feel accepted. Knowing this is the secret to establishing and maintaining great relationships with various types of people.

A number of books, articles and seminars have taken the role of educating people like you on the different ways of associating with people and building lasting relationships with them. There are several things that you can do when associating with other people.

One of these is to **make them feel accepted**. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, one of man's basic needs is to feel a sense of belonging to a group. Man feels the sense of belonging in either small groups like a family and small circle of friends, or big groups like clubs, teams, associations, departments and parties.

People have to feel they belong and are needed. One way to convey acceptance of people's ideas is by simply listening. **Listening communicates the message that their thoughts are valued and their inputs are significant.** It answers the very basic need to belong and provides a sense of importance.

Have you ever been in any of the following situations?

- While sharing an important insight, somebody would finish the sentence for you.
- While narrating what happened over the weekend, somebody would butt in and narrate a similar story.
- In a meeting, the boss would cut you short while you are still explaining your side.
- You ask your child about his day in school and he runs straight to his room.
- You wanted to discuss something with your spouse but he is busy watching football.

How did you feel? Not good, right? It's as if you are taken for granted. It's as if no one is listening to you and that you do not matter. It signifies that your thoughts, concerns, and ideas are not accepted.

At the onset of life, an infant can feel this sense of acceptance from a mother who touches and caresses him in a loving way. As he grows older, his sense of acceptance and importance now comes from other family members, friends, teachers, peers, bosses, officemates, spouse, children, etc. Every person needs to be accepted. It puts meaning to a person's existence.

Imagine a life with total absence of acceptance. Envision the life of babies who were abandoned by their mothers. Imagine the effect this will have on the babies' emotional well-being. It is very possible that these kids will grow up dejected and feeling discriminated. The effects of discrimination can result to resentment and, if uncontrolled, can result to violent tendencies.

The feeling of resentment that is harbored overtime can escalate to anger and hostility. When a person becomes hostile, violence erupts. Resentment is like a forest fire - it can turn wild especially when fanned with more resentments. The mere civil act of accepting a person "can make or break them," as the saying goes.

Acceptance must be done unconditionally. The giver should not expect anything in return. There should be no “no strings attached” or no commitments to fulfill. To expect something in return defeats the purpose of making others like you. In fact, this may only breed resentment, for it would appear that you are manipulating people by forcing them into a situation they may not like in the future.

Unconditional acceptance of other people’s thoughts, ideas, and concerns can yield favorable outcomes. Acceptance elicits cooperation and this leads to working towards a common goal. Acceptance yields positive and fruitful results. At the same time, you have raised the esteem, importance, and morale of the person whom you have accorded respect and acceptance.

Be willing to accept other people’s ideas, thoughts, and inputs. You will harvest not only good results, but also the admiration and appreciation of others, as well.

## **How To Use Affirmation Properly**

“I am, therefore I exist,” is a phrase affirming one’s existence as a being. It may be a simple phrase, but it says everything about the being saying them. It indicates a confidence not commonly found among other beings.

But why do people need affirmation? Why do beings need to be affirmed? Is existence relative to one’s affirmation?

Affirmation is a very powerful technique to empower one’s subconscious. Once the subconscious is disciplined to believe one’s affirmation, the latter is converted into a positive action for the conscious mind. Through affirmation, beings are empowered to do, to work, and to strive for more things. Affirmation allows people to believe in themselves and to put their thoughts into action.

Affirmation is a combination of verbal and visual techniques of a preferred state of mind of a person. Strong affirmations can be very powerful, and can be used by almost anyone to achieve his goals and fulfill his desires. However, the power of an affirmation depends on how strong or weak an affirmation is.

Affirmation is merely an assertion made by a person, about something or about a state of being. A person can affirm those that he chooses to attain, like “I now have a good life.” Being healthy in mind, body, and spirit can also be made possible through affirmation.

A strong affirmation should be stated in the present tense to be more effective. An affirmation of “I am now a happy being” is more effective than an affirmation

saying, “I am going to become a happy being.” Affirmation should always be in positive terms because it is supposed to work for you and not against you. Instead of saying, “I am not sad,” why not make an affirmation saying, “I am happy.”

An affirmation should be made up of simple but concise words, and it should be short to be more effective. A very long affirmation can work the other way around, instead of creating a positive mindset for a person. A short affirmation can be easily spoken and repeated by a person. It can serve as a mantra that can be repeated over and over again.

To be effective, an affirmation must be repeated. Repetition works and influences the subconscious, which in turn motivates the person into acting out his affirmation. A person who creates the affirmation should be deeply involved with the words he will be using, so he will be able to actualize his affirmation. Writing words that one believes in can be very powerful, and this can be put to good use when creating an affirmation.

However, creating an affirmation alone and repeating them a million times would not make the affirmation a state of mind. The important thing is to live one’s affirmation and to be open-minded enough to do the things that would help the affirmation become a reality. Feeling the affirmation and applying it in one’s life will help in making the affirmation a reality.

While affirmation is generally used to make an individual better, it can also be used to boost or confirm another person’s value. By affirming another person’s existence, you are helping him improve his self-worth.

Affirmation is a very simple thing that can make a very big difference in a person’s life. It can be a great motivator and can make things happen.

## **Job-Loving Tips for Employers and Employees**

“I hate this job!” You hear this often from people who are not satisfied with the job they hold. But they can’t take this thing called “job” away from them because it brings food to the table, buys them clothes and shoes to keep them in fashion, buys medicine to keep them healthy, and pays for almost everything they need on a day-to-day basis. Technically, it’s ironic that something like a “job” would be hated by so many people when it can bring them many benefits.



Psychologically, if you hate your job, it only means it's something you do against your will. Anything that resists a flow makes the flows difficult. Similarly, anything that assists a flow makes the flow move faster.

Equating this with the way you may think about your job, if you put "love" instead of "hate" to your job, work becomes easier for you. This will make you more productive. The company will profit more. As a result, they will pay you more. Then, everybody becomes happy.

If you are the employer, you can also do many positive changes that will benefit your employees. In the end, you will be the biggest beneficiary of this change.

You can start by putting up slogans around the walls of the workplace. These slogans may promote unity and harmony between management and staff where everyone will benefit out of it. These slogans may suggest positive attitudes that will form part of their work habits. There is power in words. These words, once written on slogans, will guide your staff to change in positive ways. It would be wise to turn these words into action. In time, the "I hate this job" chant becomes "I love this job". This improvement in work attitude will be reflected in turnover of employees. As an employer, you will find less people leaving the company and more employees being satisfied.

Visitors visiting your company will be impressed with the slogans you place on the walls of your work place. So make them as meaningful as possible.

If you're the employee, you must make a change in the way you think about your job. It cannot be denied that hating or loving a job has a lot to do with the way you treat it.

There are many instances wherein an employee does not see the good side of his job until he has left or lost it. You need not wake up one morning to this kind of scenario. To avoid this, let the good side of keeping your job pervade your thoughts.

Here's another formula to make you love your job. Treat your job as though you are doing voluntary work. Think of your job as though you are helping the needy without expecting anything in return. You will be astonished with the result it will bring to your heart, health, and pocket. Treating your job as a volunteer work makes you work wholeheartedly, without any resistance.

It's either you keep your job or you don't. Hating it is not an option.

## Learn to Set Goals

There are those who are bounded by laws and rules, yet success is too distant for them. On the other hand, there are those who appears to be easy going people but are successful. Think you have what it takes to be like them? Or would you rather do something different to achieve the elusive success? Take heart and set your goals.

What do goals represent by the way? These are actually representations of your visions about you and your future. Goals should be achievable and realistic. These kinds of goals allow you to put them into practice or at least do some activities that allow you to monitor your progress. However, more is involved in just merely setting realistic goals. Remember that in order to achieve your goals, you must act according to your goals. Otherwise, all else would be vanity if you do not exert effort in reaching them. The following will help you set achievable goals:

1. Enhance your skills in achieving targeted goals by setting objectives, as well as standard and optional activities that will help you meet your goals.
2. Strategize and take risks in meeting your goals. Strategic thinking is very important because this will allow you to be productive and focus on the activities according to your goals.
3. Act in accordance to your goals. Proper mind setting is very important in achieving your goals. Take the extra mile. Try taking risks but never compromise your safety. Taking risks means that you are ready to learn new things and challenges that will help you in the long run.

On one hand, you may wonder why there is a need for you to set goals if you think you have not failed at all in your endeavors. Remember that setting goals does not mean that you always fail. Setting goals means that you are acknowledging your limitations and you are ready to work your way up towards success, professionally or personally. It is for this reason why objective goals matter.

Moving forward, you also have to consider that there are goals that are just too hard to achieve on your own. At times, these goals even create conflicts that you might think of surrendering in the long run. Take heart. Everybody have similar concerns at times. If this situation occurs and you think that surrendering is the last option, why not look for a partner, a friend maybe who is willing to help you out with your goals? Collaborate with your prospective partner and learn to prioritize. If it requires spending time in plotting all the possibilities, both the pros and cons, try it.

Remember that goal setting is focused on your benefits. So try working things out and focus, focus, and focus. Minimize or avoid distractions if possible so you can work your goals better. Work that proper mindset for a clearer vision of you achieving those valuable goals. If you are vying for promotion in your workplace, it is important that you see yourself already in the position you want. If you are aiming for a personal or educational goal, make things happen by planning and doing things related to your goals. You will then realize that goals, no matter how difficult they may appear, are still valuable to consider. Once your goals are achieved, sweet success knocks on your door commending you for a job well done.

## **Learn to Solve Your Problems**

How much percentage in a class of 30 students would agree to you that Mathematics is a great subject? You might answer “around 10 to 35%” and that is all. True, most kids today are not thrilled to solve Mathematical equations not because they do not know the processes involved, but because of the lack of interest in it.

In a similar way, our daily activities do not mean 100% joy and 0% problems. At times, we have more problems than joy. Fortunately, some individual are skilled in handling problems right. Want to know their secrets?

Well, carefree people, as some might call them, have one thing in common: optimism. These kinds of people do not mean they never had problems before. Try remembering a colleague, a relative, a friend, or someone from your community who has the brightest smile at the start until the end of the day. How many times did you see that person frown? Carefree people are fun to be with because their attitude is contagious. Have you tried asking them how they carry their problems lightly? Below are their secrets:

1. Learn to control your feelings by separating negative feelings from positive thoughts. This is the first step in solving problems. Only after you have cleared your mind with unnecessary thoughts can you start solving your problems accordingly.
2. Treat each problem as challenge and opportunity for self-improvement.
3. Free that scapegoat attitude. Are you pointing your finger or blaming others for mishaps? Take responsibilities for your mistakes. No one is perfect, so never put the blames on others.

4. Use a pen and paper, and rate the depth of the problem and possible answers to your problem. Probability law principle will allow you to evaluate how far you have thought of resolving your problems.
5. Keep a journal and treat it as a “secret friend” who is always willing to listen to your grievances. Write your feelings freely.
6. Develop a noteworthy hobby, for this will help you lessen or minimize stress in your life.
7. Take time off from work and create variations of your daily schedule. Relax and check out the best movies in town. Travel and meet new wonderful people. You will find these activities worthwhile in the long run.

The above tips will help you optimize those positive feelings of yours. Say you are already consumed by some problems. Here are the 1-2-3 steps in doing your problem solving:

1. Determine the root cause of the problem. If you think it is difficult, ask hundreds of why's and what's and you will soon find out the cause.
2. Think, strategize, and act for resolution.
3. Develop a strong desire to solve the problem.
4. Review the situation for you to avoid repeating the same mistakes committed beforehand.

Consider that everybody experiences lowliness many times, but problems are problems. They are there not to annoy you; but problems are created when you cannot accept your limitations. Once you accept your limitations, problem solving is just a 1-2-3 step, hassle-free, and a life-sharpening experience indeed. Hence, never consume or lock yourself in your room when problem strikes. Think that problems are states of your being limited to something you need the most. But if you cannot have that important thing, accept it. Let go and you will free yourself with worries. Remember, less worries mean less problems. If you think that you really want some time out because of problems, consider that there is another room available for you called “improvement.”

## **Reduce Stress and Be Happy**

Anything taken too much is bad for the health. A little stress is actually good, as it could serve to help you function at your best. However, stress that seems a little

too much could take a physical, as well as mental, toll to your body. Stress should be managed in order for depression or anxiety to be prevented.

So how should you do it then? The following are tips and advice to help manage stress.

### ***Write it out, schedule it out.***

It is best to write down everything that seems to be overwhelming. You will find a things-to-do-list much easier to manage than having errands all crumpled up in your head. Writing down the tasks, and putting a specific schedule and time to do them, helps anyone manage activities one chunk at a time. Crossing out an activity that has already been accomplished is very rewarding and could actually help you feel more relaxed when doing the other tasks at hand.

### **One at a time works.**

Focus and put all your attention specifically on one task at one time. It does not help to feel panicky about the other undone or to-do tasks. Thinking about them only adds unnecessary stress and could even hamper in doing the task you are attempting to accomplish at present.

### ***Relax and take it slow.***

At least, try not to expend too much energy on activities that are currently not priorities. This is in order for your energy to be not easily expended on the tasks that are not that important, at least for now.

### **Delegate, delegate, delegate.**

You need not do everything all at once, and you need not do everything on your own. Ask for help, get help, or pay for help. When there is a feeling of being overwhelmed that is cropping up, hire someone to mow the lawn or get a sitter for your children. The feeling of being pressed to finish something on time will somehow be eliminated if tasks are delegated. It takes a load off unnecessary worry and anxiety. Moreover, it is easier checking up on how things are, than worrying yourself sick doing everything on your own, all at once.

### **Give yourself a reward.**

You deserve it. Acknowledging your accomplishments, no matter how big or small, is an effort that is necessary before getting on to the next tasks and activities. It reduces stress and could even make you happier in doing the next task.

### ***Give yourself a break.***

You need it to be more productive. A ten to fifteen minute break during your work is necessary. Go visit a café nearby, take a quick brisk walk, or do anything to put your mind off work, at least for a while. This is necessary to refresh and recharge. Believe it or not, you can also stay in your work and sit with your eyes closed as you visualize a peaceful landscape or a relaxing scene. This frees the stress from your muscles and your mind.

Relax and be cool. Doing so makes you healthier, happier, and a lot more productive.

### **Learning The Rewards Of Reading**

What have you been reading lately?  
When was the last time you read a book?  
Are you a wide reader?

In a gathering, you can tell who the wide readers are. Wide readers think and speak well. They win the admiration, respect, and good opinion of others.

Reading expands the mind. In fact, many people consider it as one of the satisfying pleasures of humans, for it involves physical as well as mental activities.

**Reading is primarily a mental activity.** After all, you read with your mind and use your imagination to paint the setting of the detective thriller you are reading. You use your mind to imagine the pain that the main character experiences as the story unfolds. You bring into play the different arguments and ideas brought up by the author in that self-help book you are holding.

To read effectively, **reading helps you develop a wide vocabulary** through extensive reading. A skillful reader has a wide *recognition* vocabulary. He may not know exactly what every word means, but he will have a good general idea of the meaning of the sentence.

**Reading makes you alert and curious about new words.** Other readers develop the dictionary habit. Every time they come across a strange word, they try to figure out what it can possibly mean by the context. If they cannot do this, they refer to the dictionary.

Likewise, **reading develops intellectual curiosity** by exposing you to a variety of materials. You learn to read by reading books of increasing difficulty and variety. As in other forms of activity, you learn by actually doing.

**Reading trains you to have an active and open mind.** Merely grasping the writer's idea is not enough. You must make a positive response to what you read. Be an active, not a passive, reader. Develop the habit of drawing your own conclusions, the habit of active thinking, of agreeing or disagreeing with the author. Keep your mind open; understand and weigh the ideas that you read. A practical part of active reading is the drawing of conclusions.

Allow me to share four basic rules for effective reading and better comprehension:

- 1) Try to read more and more. Remember the saying that practice makes perfect. Practicing in the correct way makes perfect.
- 2) Develop the habit of reading for main ideas. Look for the subject and predicate. Do not waste time on details or little words.
- 3) Learn to read with focus and concentration. Think of what you are reading. Do not let your attention wander somewhere else. Good readers read with understanding.
- 4) Learn to budget your time. Experiment with your reading time. Try purposely to read faster. Give yourself a time limit on specific material that you read.

Reading is a stimulating mental activity. It expands your reality and capability. You have so much to gain in discovering the joys of reading. Go ahead; grab a book right now!

## **Discover The Secret To Fast Learning**

Can you still recall the cartoon series featuring Wily Coyote and the Roadrunner?

“Fast” brings back the image of the Roadrunner zooming past the obstacles laid out by Wily Coyote.

Speed may allow you to arrive at your intended destination; but along the way, were you able to take note of the things that you may have missed while speeding along the fast lane? As in driving, zooming in fast does not give

enough opportunity to see and enjoy the view. The same can be said about learning.

Much of what you learn can be acquired through reading. The simple activity of getting in a comfortable position and start reading a book of your choice opens a new world for you. Reading enables you to tap into the minds of great people.

The more you read, the more you know. In the hope of reading more books, some attempt fast track reading. It is believed that the faster you read, the more you cover.

Fast track reading may involve reading by phrases and concepts compared with the word-for-word method. Fast track reading enables you to cover more pages with the same rate. However, one limitation of this method of learning is that you tend to remember only a small portion of the main idea. There is danger that you might miss the important details in the book.

There is a solution for this. Few people are aware of this seldom-talked about technique in fast learning. This is based on the principle that the mind thinks in pictures.

Learning is accelerated when you “see” the whole idea of the write-up or book. Seeing **“live pictures” of ideas and thoughts of the writer makes reading experiential and unforgettable.** When you see nothing while reading, you learn nothing. Fast reading becomes useless.

This technique is called visualization. Visualization is vital to quick learning. Visualization in reading is like constructing a jigsaw puzzle where pieces are put together to form the whole picture. The whole thing not only “appears,” but actually “comes alive” before you. All of these happen in the realm of the mind.

Just going through the motions of fast reading can give you a hazy picture of the subject matter. But like a mist, this picture often quickly evaporates into thin air. Fast reading without visual pictures often informs but very seldom impresses.

Impressions last while information changes with time. Past information is easily forgotten in favor of new ones. Impressions change you, and these are stored permanently in the mind.

For learning to become effective, it requires brief pauses to be able to visualize and reflect. Effective learning is not about how fast you can finish reading a book. It is more on how you effectively comprehend the ideas brought forth by the writer.



Visual pictures provide lasting impressions. Go after ideas and how it will enrich people's existence. Go for lasting impressions and insights that will mold you into better individuals.

## **Strategies To Maximize Time**

There is no denying in the truth of the saying, "Time is gold."

You never seem to get enough of time. Even if you are given thirty hours in a day, you still won't be able to get enough of it. Somehow, some things will come up and you will end up wanting more time. Time is a precious commodity. Once it's gone, it cannot be recovered.

The fact is: when you are busy, time flies swiftly. But when you are not, time seems to be at a stand still. This is true when you are killing time because there is nothing else to do under the circumstances.

How do you maximize the use of your time? It would be worth your time to consider the following strategies:

1. Check your schedule at the start of the day. Review it in its entirety. You may notice that portions of your day may be hectic, while some may not be too frenzied. Distribute your activities evenly throughout the day.

Keep note pads handy so you can keep track of your schedule. It also helps to remind you of your tasks and commitments. Note pads and schedule notebooks help you avoid overlapping of activities. In case of overlaps, determine which one is priority.

After spreading your schedule for the day and you still feel overwhelmed by the number of tasks to be accomplished, you may have to forego some of them. Re-schedule other tasks for another day.

What you are actually doing is very much like cleaning a closet. When your closet is in order, you avoid being accidentally hit on the head by falling objects upon opening its door. Also, if it is in order, you will likely find spare spaces available.

2. Request for a re-schedule in advance. This is especially true when another person will be affected. Show courtesy by doing this in advance. This leaves time for the person to adjust to the new schedule. Who knows? You may be

doing the other parties a favor. They may be in the same predicament as you are, and they will not be aware unless you make it known to them.

3. Be creative. Time is an element when simple creativity can be put to practice. For example, you need to do the laundry but at the same time, you also have to rush and buy some groceries. Perhaps, what you can do is to set your washing machine to do the laundry while you step out to the grocers. Manage your time in the grocery and back home, just in time when the laundry is done.

You can even do the cooking at the same time by using a slow cooker. It cooks food by itself. You can even pick up the kids from school after shopping. Four tasks are combined to one. All it takes is scheduling and a little creativity.

4. When you have to do a certain task for the first time, it is natural for mistakes to happen. However, a first time task doesn't have to be a blunder. If there is no clear direction on how things should be done, take time to plan it out before you take action. This saves time, energy, and money.
5. Visualize the possible outcome of your objective. Seek out alternatives. Choose the better of two or more alternatives. If there is only one option, do it just the same. Some tasks may appear difficult when you think about it, but not necessarily when put into action. The same thing is true the other way around.

Time is something you could never have enough of. You become wise when you choose to maximize it.

## Accelerate Your Learning Powers Using Subliminal Learning

Subliminal learning is the use of techniques that allow people to learn even without any conscious effort at all. It does this by exposing one to stimulus they are not or barely aware of – images that flash on the screen for barely perceptible moments, words played over and over again at a volume just above the hearing threshold, or other such stimulus. The discovery of such methods has aroused the excitement of many people because of its potential to boost the learning process and make acquiring new skills a lot more painless and effective.

The possibilities are definitely boundless. Just imagine. If this were true, you would be able to learn new things without having to buckle down and do the dirty work. For example, it has been argued that learning a language is theoretically

possible using subliminal techniques – no need for books, teachers, and other learning implements, except for your subliminal learning equipment. You also won't have to lose time to learn tedious language lessons. You could have your subliminal equipment on while you do other stuffs – and in some programs – even while you sleep.

Some common applications of subliminal learning include new languages, vocabulary skills, music, and even behavior modification programs.

It may seem ridiculous at first, but once you get a good grasp of the theories of learning – plus the potential and limitations of subliminal learning - you will find out that it really isn't implausible after all. For example, there are actually things you do every day that you learn even if you don't expend any conscious effort to do so.

Ever wondered how a song got stuck in your head even if you hated the song and tried your best not to pay attention to it? Somehow, the meaty chorus of the song finds its way into your subconscious and never leaves, doesn't it?

What about words? Haven't you wondered how a certain word came into your vocabulary even though you never remembered trying to memorize the word or use it purposefully? You probably heard the word somewhere – maybe at work, or from your friends, or even from the TV or the radio, and suddenly, poof, it's made permanent residence in your head - without your notice.

Now, looking at these examples, people have begun to wonder about the possibilities if we could push the envelop and take advantage of this particular quirk in one's learning process to somehow "accelerate" the rate of learning among students. Thus was born the wonders of subliminal learning.

Scientists have been digging hard and thorough on the subject of subliminal learning. Although it is theoretically possible to have such techniques do much for accelerated learning, there will always be skeptics who look for empirical proof from scientific studies before even considering subliminal learning. Little by little, these scientists have come to learn more about how we process and store knowledge, and are receiving heartening results from their studies on subliminal learning.

On a small scale, they are convinced that some skills can be learned through subliminal learning – especially those that are not "high-process" data such as patterns, words, numbers, and other easy visual data. Other skills such as languages and mathematics are "high-process" skills that require full attention and thought when performed. However, learning these skills is still beneficial when learned in conjunction with subliminal learning.

## Take It Easy and Enjoy Life

Can you remember your childhood days? During those times, nothing yet seemed complicated – all we had to think about were crayons, cookies, or Santa Claus. We didn't care about the things we didn't know because we were just too oblivious of the things that might bother us.

But as we grow older, we get anxious with the things that surround us – life and death, loving and parting, success and failure, to name a few. We find that almost everyday, we are obliged to be concerned about people or events.

Nevertheless, always keep this in mind: Don't take things as if they are responsible for the way you feel. Events or situations do not trouble you. How you look at them does.

If you miss those carefree days, you just have to look back at how you used to view things then, and you will know what to do now. Here's a guide to make sure you won't lose your way:

Cherish the simple things: Trust in the power of a smile or laughter, a kiss or a hug. Believe in kindness, honesty, dreams, and imagination. Living positively is the first step to becoming happy.

Loosen up. Laugh at your mistakes. You might remember the time when you were delivering your speech and your mind went completely blank right in the middle of delivering it. It's embarrassing. But most likely, your audience will forget about it in a day or two. We all mess up occasionally. The good thing is that people tend to forget such situations.

Surround yourself with what you love. Get a pet. Retain film moments as keepsakes. Keep away from those that drag you down. If that high-paying job makes you sulk at the thought of having to go to work, find a job you like first before quitting. If some people force you to comply even if you think of doing otherwise, stay away from their company.

Don't put off. Go on that trip. Take your Master's. You'll never know the extent of your life. Do something, while you can.

Don't push yourself too hard trying to please everyone. You just can't. And it never seems to be worth it anyway. When you want to make somebody's day, start with your loved ones.

Keep fit. Be that attractive person you always picture yourself to be. Cherish your health. It's the best way of showing you are putting your best face forward.

Do not assume. Don't fret about forgetting your speech before you actually do it. Don't worry about not getting the job you want because you might mess up at the interview. It's good to expect the worst; but don't end up expecting only the worst.

Alter your way of thinking. When you're being ridiculed, criticized about your family background, or condemned for past mistakes, put on deaf ears. Don't believe everything you hear. You know yourself better than everybody else does. Never wallow in self-pity.

Remember: Don't get upset over things just because it's how most people would react when faced with the same situation. When you find yourself being negative – angry, down, jealous, etc. – you also unknowingly drain your energy and enthusiasm. You just have to try keeping these negative feelings in the low, because giving in to these emotions would sometimes make you unreasonable, and you might end up making bad decisions.

Happiness is always in your grasp. You can attain it, as long as you know how.

## **Tips on Getting Organized**

Fred just got hired as a consultant for a financial services company. This new position is different from the previous job since this will require a lot of traveling. There will be a lot of changes, and getting organized is the best thing to do before doing anything.

The first that needs to be done is to organize the office. Some things are needed more frequently on the desk while others need only to be used once in a while. The person can organize this by frequency.

The table can have the computer with the telephone nearby to receive calls. If the printer doesn't fit on the desk, perhaps putting this somewhere nearby will suffice, since the cords of this machine are not that long. Some pen and paper, which can be used to write a small memo, can be stored in the top drawer.

A box of calling cards should also be ordered since the job will entail meeting a lot of potential clients. Giving calling cards away will make it easier for potential clients to get in touch with the company.

The person should also have an inbox-outbox counter on the table. This will make it easier for the person to know which of the documents are done and which of them still require some action.

Being in meetings and traveling around a lot, the person will probably be better off by carrying an organizer around. There are the primitive ones that use pen and paper while there are those that are electronic.

Some of these high tech models also serve as mobile phones, which are light, easy to carry, and fit in the breast pocket.

The office where the company operates has probably been in that building for a long time. The person can sift through some of the old documents that are not needed anymore and have these thrown out. This will make the office clutter-free and will make it easier to find things when these are needed.

There is a lot of responsibility in being a top executive. Important documents should not be left lying around. These should be locked up in a safe (if there is one in the room) or in a drawer when not in use.

Some executives can organize activities for the week in advance using an organizer. Those that can't will probably need the help of an assistant.

The person can plan everything to be done on a single day. This means writing everything down, and then crossing out things once they are done. Other pending tasks that are not yet close to the deadline can be put off so that these can be finished the following day.

An efficient employee is someone who is always ready. He is aware where everything is and makes sure the office is organized.

## **Tips To Keep Memory In Tiptop Condition**

Keeping the memory in good condition is a vital part of the brain's function. Every now and then, our actions greatly depend on a lot of information we retrieve from our memory bank. Such information can either be short term (such as specific tasks that we have to do) or long term (such as the ability to drive a car or repeat an instruction we read from a book). While long-term memory may come spontaneously without too much effort when the need arises, short-term memory requires recalling information from the accumulation of things stored in our memory. This is why you need to keep your memory in great shape to achieve efficiency in your daily endeavors:

- Keep your attention focused on the needed information to be stored in your memory bank. Even with distractions around you, stay focused on the subject. The more concentrated you are on the information, the better the chances of retaining it in your memory.
- Utilize the most ideal sense or senses when gathering the information. This what we call acuity in sensing our environment. Be aware of the color or details of a picture, or the particular sound or smell of the thing involved. All our bodily senses are attuned to collect information depending on the circumstance at hand. While our sense of vision may be the most used in gathering information, our senses of hearing, smell, taste, and touch are equally important and helpful in remembering things, situations, and information about something or someone.
- When you're not sure that the information you are about to remember would really be retained by your brain, it would be better to write the information. This could be proven effective especially in gathering very long and tedious information like lecture notes or a personal interview. Just be sure you don't forget that you have a note at hand; and of course, don't misplace the note.
- Maintain a balance diet. A well-proportioned diet will result to a conditioned memory. Oily and sweet foods may cloud the memory. If you cannot completely eliminate a bad diet, gradually cut down your intake of these memory-inhibiting foods. Doing it gradually cushions the effect of withdrawal symptoms and you'll get adjusted to the new lifestyle you are creating. This is not only beneficial to the memory, but we can say you're on your way to a healthy life. Drinking lots of water brings lots of advantages to your overall health, and memory is not an exception.
- Don't deprive yourself with enough rest and sleep. Having enough sleep does not condone laziness; oversleeping does. So don't feel guilty resting or sleeping as long as it is not overdone. You need it badly to keep you revitalized from the tiresome demand of work.
- Take time to relax. Breathe deeply if you must. Keep your thoughts organized before acting on them. Keep away from stress and anxiety. It may be impossible to completely eliminate stress since it is part of our challenging generation, but try to keep it down as much as possible. Stress may bring your memory into its inefficient level. Avoid the habit of saying to yourself that you might forget things, because you're more likely to if you do. This just builds your anxiety level up to its panic mode.

- Stay positive, creative, and energetic. Your memory needs to be within a circle of various things. Things that come in various shapes, sizes, and colors can motivate your creativity. This is a positive way of discovering your surroundings in all its variations and diversities. Avoid being enclosed within the four walls of your room just like you're a prisoner. The only time to be enclosed is when you have to rest or sleep. Don't be a couch potato. There's a very exciting world out there waiting to improve your memory.

The very best way to improve your memory is between infancy and adolescent. As we grow old, memory starts to fail. But a strong memory that we can develop during the prime years of our lives will definitely enhance us to be good thinkers. This can be done by continuously exercising our memory through reading and other cognitive activities like the habit of solving crossword puzzles. The more you do these, the better memory retention is developed.

As far as health is concerned, high blood pressure can lead to stroke and heart ailments. It also results to poor memory retention. Memory function declines when blood pressure is high. Researchers have observed that people with normal blood pressure, especially at midlife, have a higher cognitive function. Concentration, decision-making, and remembering functions falter as a result of high blood pressure. What is healthy for the body is likewise healthy for the memory.

## **Menu for an Upbeat Life**

Just like set menus from restaurants wherein different kinds of foods are served - from appetizers, to main dishes, to desserts - life also has its menu for an upbeat life. Different people have their own individual menu that makes them cheerful and optimistic. Find out what they are; they may help to keep your life meaningful, enjoyable, inspiring, and interesting. Consider the following:

Help the needy, the poor, the handicapped, the ailing, the broken-hearted, the homeless, the lost, and the environment. The list can go on. When you help the needy - in services, monetary value, or other forms (lending a shoulder to cry on or an understanding ear to listen to other people's problems) - the returns are ten folds over. However, don't expect anything in return. Just the contentment you experience in your heart is an incomparably satisfying feeling. Giving something wholeheartedly without expecting anything in return is divine. Imagine yourself as



the person on the receiving end. You can't wait to return the favor once you get the opportunity to do so.

Another way to enjoy life is to listen to music. Play your good old favorite songs and sing along. Sing your best. Sing carelessly or out of tune - whatever it takes to make your heart contented and whatever makes you laugh. Just hum the tune if you don't remember the words. Sing until you laugh heartily. The idea is to cheer up. Do this in private with your close friends or relatives though. You don't want to annoy your neighbors.

The sound of nature is also music. The sound of river flowing, the gust of wind on a tree branch, waves on the seashore, and birds chirping are as natural as nature can be, and the way music should be. The sound of nature can make you optimistic because it is a beautiful and serene sound.

Let's face reality. Life has its share of troubles, disasters, and misfortunes. Bad news exists and it disturbs the mind. Totally ignoring it may not always be the answer to approach life in a realistic manner. However, you can always find ways to avoid being affected by it to maintain the dominance of life's beauty.

A party without humor and laughter is a dull one. The same is true in real life. Fill your life with lots of humor and laughter to keep it upbeat. The more spontaneous a humorous situation is, the more natural it is, and the better it can liven up your spirits.

Look at the lessons that can be derived from misfortunes. Mistakes allow you to learn and see opportunities hidden behind adversities. Always find meaning from every event in your life. See through the shell game and value every lesson that you learn.

## **How To Use Creativity To Improve Your Life**

"Are there still original ideas in the world?"

"They beat me to that bright idea; what else can I do?"

"I've failed many times before that I can't think of anything else to solve this problem anymore."

These statements reflect the thought of an individual who has given up on creativity. Sadly, a lot of people share this way of thinking. They never viewed creativity as a very useful tool to improve or improvise in life in all its diversity.

A situation that requires a solution can be approached in a variety of ways. There isn't a single way fix to a problem. Being creative opens new horizons and can deliver many benefits. Creativity can sometimes be mistakenly interpreted as an obstinate attitude. Some people think that insisting on doing things in a different way is a sign of stubbornness.

**Never hold back a good idea.** Everyone is free to interpret his own unique way. Any interpretation by itself is creativity at work. A person who enjoys creative thinking can easily come up with innovative solutions for situations that require a quick fix.

For instance, your car got stalled on a deserted highway due to a leaky rubber hose on the cooling system. Tough luck! Of all places, it had to happen in the remotest places.

If you have some chewing gum in your pocket, it just might be a handy fix. Start chewing the gum and patch it on the leak. To keep the gum in place, tie it with a piece of rag. This quick fix might do the trick so you can drive several miles without an overheated engine, until you get to a service station to have the leaky hose replaced.

There used to be a television series entitled "MacGyver." The main character is an extremely creative and crafty guy. Whenever he finds himself in a tight fix, he tries to find a way out of it with his quick fixes utilizing available materials around him.

In a way, **creativity is a never-ending learning process.** From learning, you gain untold benefits, which you can use in real life situations.

Being creative might require you to **think out-of-the-box**, venturing your mind into the uncommon. You can never be sure of your ideas until you try them. As long as there is no perceived danger involved, it is always worth a try.

Inventions are products of creative minds. The field of science, in whatever branch you may touch on, is invention itself. Without creative minds, science would have been a forlorn field of knowledge.

It must be noted that most adaptations to improve or improvise are aimed at improving current conditions. Upon analyzing honest applications of creativity, the ultimate intention is to achieve good for all and the will to build lasting peace. After all, this intention is what counts most.

Erich Fromm spelled it out clearly, "The conditions for creativity are: to be puzzled, to concentrate, to accept conflict and tension, to be born everyday, and to feel a sense of self."

## **What is Depression: Some New Light on the Old Blues?**

Right now, 20 million Americans are in the midst of an episode of depression.

Some have the incapacitating symptoms of what doctors call a major depression. These symptoms usually require professional attention because they are very severe and demoralizing. Feeling hopeless and worthless, a person with major depression may sleep and eat irregularly.

In the throes of severe depression, it is hard to concentrate, make decisions, or find the energy to do much of anything. Thoughts of suicide are common.

Depression primarily refers to a state of mind that is purely negative, with an inclination to insufficiency and a hopeless lack of interest to do things.

If someone has a minor depression, however, the problem is more manageable. Experts say that people who have some minor depression will feel lousy about themselves and lousy about their lives, but they are managing to function at a high level.

In fact, some of the newfound ways of battling the blues are related to what you do as well as what you feel. Here are some ways that you can prepare your body to help prevent minor depression:

### **1. Put some spring in your step.**

Regular exercise may be the most powerful natural antidepressant available. It is advisable that you take a brisk walk. Exercise helps generate the release of brain chemicals called endorphins. When endorphin levels are low, depression occurs. Exercise also oxygenates the brain, keeping it healthy.

How much should you exercise? Thirty minutes, five or six days a week, at moderate intensity, is a nice level to aim for to help prevent the brain imbalances that can make you vulnerable to depression.

### **2. Nourish your brain.**

Virtually any nutrient deficiency can result in impaired mental function, including depression. To help prevent depression, health experts recommend that people should take high-potency multivitamins or mineral supplement. This will supply the brain with enough nutrients in order to keep it properly functioning and, thus, avoid some mental disorders such as depression.

### **3. Get enough sleep.**

Getting less than eight hours of sleep, night after night, may lower levels of the brain chemical known as “serotonin,” which can make you more prone to depression. To sleep well, health practitioners recommend going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, including weekends.

Relax before bedtime, perhaps with a hot bath. And for the soundest sleep, keep your bedroom quiet and dark.

### **4. Consider some alternate explanations.**

Your emotions, positive or negative, are created not by situations themselves, but by the way you interpret those situations. A very common situation can turn into a reason for hand wringing unless you take mental steps to prevent it.

Suppose a friend is going to pick you up so that the two of you can go somewhere and do something fun together. Now, suppose that time passes, and your friend does not arrive to get you. Your feelings change, quite literally, from moment to moment. If at first you think of your friend as being insensitive and irresponsible, you will find yourself feeling angry at him. If you think that perhaps something bad has happened to him, you will naturally become concerned. If you think that this person does not care much about you and that is why he is late, you feel rejected, lonely, even depressed.

Although the situation does not change, and that your friend is still delayed, you can have a whole range of feelings depending on how you interpret that event.

For this reason, experts contend that situations are usually ambiguous, open to any interpretation. Hence, your interpretation helps create your feelings about the situation. Positive interpretations lead to good feelings and enjoyment; negative interpretations lead to bad feelings and depression. To stay on the positive side, try to look for the positive interpretations.

Indeed, depressions can be very destructive if neglected. Hence, the best way to stop the development of depression is to always put a bright light on the blues and create a positive outlook in life.

## Why Should You Set Goals?

Wonder why some people could not even achieve an inch of what they dream of becoming? Blame it on pure dreaming and lack of setting goals for achieving their dreams.

Setting goals is a very significant part of success and positive accomplishments. It is like scaling a 20 feet building and marking early on what feet you would like to reach at this specific period.

People who set goals literally create a map of their target achievements in life, marking where they should begin, where to pause, where to delve a bit, and where and when to stop. Once this map is created, it allows the map drawer to check where he is in the scheme of things and whether or not he is making some achievements that will take him closer to his goals.

By setting goals, people will know how they are doing and what they should be doing to achieve their targets or dreams in life. They will know if they can relax or if they have to double their efforts when they are falling short of what is expected of them.

Goal setting means a person is proactive in dealing with challenges that may affect his plans. Being proactive means one is able to outline possible difficulties that may occur as well as the solutions to these difficulties. By doing this, a person is not easily scared or defeated when challenges occur because he has already prepared for them. He knows they can happen and he has prepared a solution or strategy when that time comes.

Setting goals will enable people to track their progress in whatever endeavor they have set out to do. It will help people become more confident in themselves and more motivated to achieve their plans.

However, goal setting is not enough, as this should be accompanied by a positive outlook and self-discipline. A person may have a blueprint of where he wants to go, but if he does not have the necessary discipline to carry out the plan, then nothing will come out of it.

To be successful in goal setting, the goals that one has set for himself should be realistic and based on his capabilities, as well as selected and important external factors. Being too ambitious in setting up goals can make the goals unrealistic and difficult to achieve. However, do not also set goals that are too low because this might discourage one's vision instead of achieving it.

It is also necessary that the person setting the blueprint for his direction should also include a time frame within which the goal will be achieved. This way, he is

able to determine if he has to fast track his strategies or to slow down a bit. Goal setting will also help a person check if he is performing within his plans or if he is doing things towards the achievement of his plans.

Once you have achieved something, even a little of what you hoped to achieve, then you should always give yourself a pat in the back to keep you motivated. But do not be too complacent with any little achievement, as this may cause you to backslide.

Setting goals can be used in any aspect of one's life - from one's personal or family life, to his career and finances. Goal setting can be as simple as setting a target weight when you wish to lose pounds or something big, like earning your first million.

When setting goals, it is always important to set standards that would suit your present situation, your capabilities, and other factors that may influence the achievement of your goal.



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