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Share the Wellness Tip

Spring Clean Your Attitude

Ready for a little spring cleaning? Before you get ready to dust the cobwebs consider clearing out your negative thoughts as well.

The study of happiness, called “positive psychology,” has recently become an important area for psychologists to explore. Positive psychology focuses on working on personality strengths and an optimistic approach to life rather than the negative. Pessimistic thinking can limit your enjoyment of life. Replace self-defeating thoughts with more positive ones that you can make happen. For example, let’s say you find yourself thinking, “This is a hopeless disaster.” Think instead, “This is a problem, but I can brainstorm a solution.”

Learn to fret less. Stressful situations happen to everyone. Be ready with a list of quick, easy strategies you can use for immediate stress relief. For example, you could count slowly to 10, take six deep breaths or walk up and down a flight of stairs.

Boost your confidence. Do you have goal that you’re working on? Close your eyes, and picture yourself achieving it. Involve all your senses as well as your emotions. For example, if you’re training for a 5K, you might imagine the sound of the crowd, the feel of your muscles working, the sight of the finish line and the surge of pride as you cross it.

See the positive in a negative. If you’re going through a rough patch, ask yourself what you have gained from the experience. Perhaps dealing with hardship or tragedy has made you stronger, brought you closer to loved ones or deepened your appreciation for life. Finding your silver lining helps you bounce back.

Feel more connected. Family and friends are a super source of emotional support. Nurture your relationships to improve your well-being. Look through your phone contacts, and call someone you haven’t talked with lately. Expand your social circle by taking a class, joining a club or volunteering for a cause.

Become more Zen. Mindfulness involves concentrating on the present moment without critiquing it. It means not living your life on “autopilot.” Instead, you experience life as it unfolds moment to moment, good and bad, and without judgment. Studies show that practicing mindfulness helps manage stress, reduce anxiety and depression, and improve the ability to cope with illness. To see mindfulness in action, sink your teeth into your favorite spring fruit. Then really notice the fruit’s appearance, taste, texture, and smell. Enjoy every delicious moment.

Sources: Psychology Today; National Institutes of Health

