



# Power of the positive: Cultivating optimism



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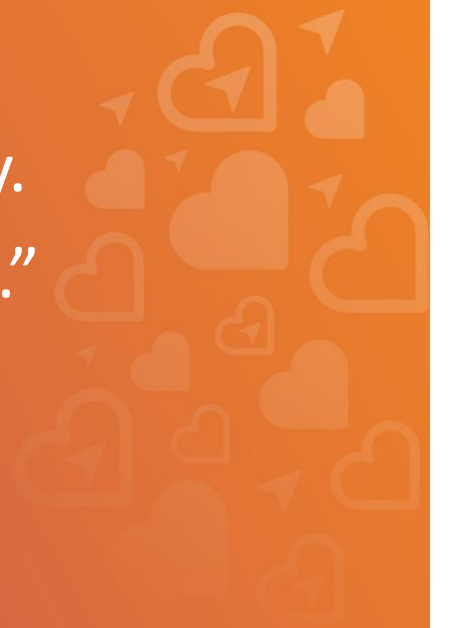
## Objectives

- To understand what optimism is and isn't
- To explore the power of optimism
- To learn ways to cultivate optimism
- To discover how to put optimism to work in your life

# Pessimism vs. optimism?

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity.  
An optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

**- *Winston Churchill***



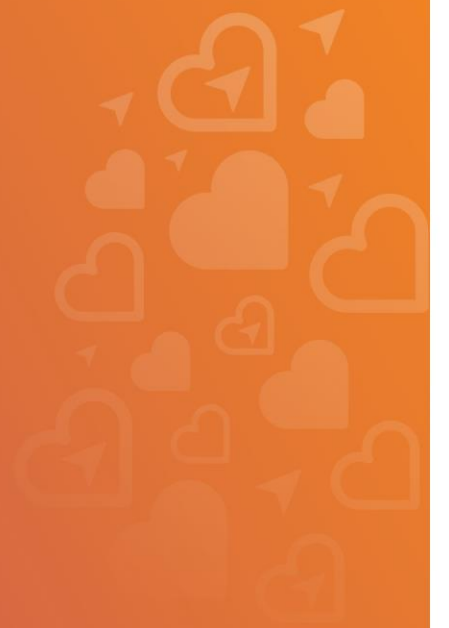
# You may be an optimist if you...

- View setbacks as temporary
- Don't berate yourself for setbacks
- Focus on what you have, not what you don't have
- Recognize your role in creating success





**Bethany Hamilton  
is an optimist**



**Surfing was and still is... her passion**



# Optimists don't give up

## Boy playing ball by himself

- I'm the greatest hitter in the world!
- Strike One.
- I'm the greatest hitter in the world!
- Strike Two.
- Hmmm. I'm the greatest hitter in the world!
- Strike Three.





# Optimists don't give up

## But they know when to change course

- Wow...
- I'm the greatest pitcher in the world!
- Yes!



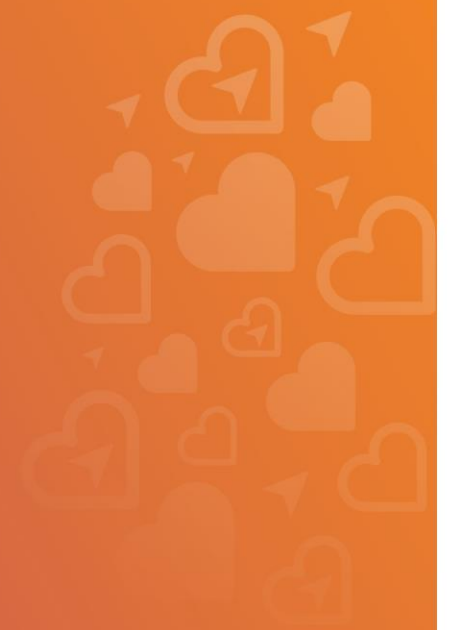
# Optimists are grateful

- They are grateful for the clothes that fit a little too snug, *because it means they have enough to eat*
- They are grateful for a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning, and gutters that need fixing, *because it means they have a home*
- They are grateful for weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day, *because it means they are healthy enough to work*
- They are grateful for the alarm that goes off in the early morning hours, *because it means that they are alive*

# Optimists are grateful

- They are grateful for the wife that asks them to take out the garbage, *because there are many men that wish they could hear their wives' voices again*
- They are grateful for the teenager who is complaining about doing dishes, *because he is at home, not on the streets*
- They are grateful for the mess to clean after a party, *because it means that they have been surrounded by friends*

# Resiliency





# Optimists are resilient

- It is just one situation, and it will go away
- I can change it
- I don't have to let it undermine everything



# Optimists have self assurance

- They are authentic
- They trust themselves and their decisions
- They are open-minded and willing to be flexible





# Optimists and health research

- Lower blood pressure and heart rate
- Less likely to develop coronary heart disease
- Lower stress hormone levels
- Better recovery rates after surgery
- Better cancer survival rates
- Improved immune function
- More likely to live longer

# How to cultivate physical optimism:

- Breathe deeply
- Exercise regularly
- Eat healthily
- Get plenty of sleep



# How to cultivate mental optimism:

- Pay attention to your thinking
- Write to get “unstuck”
- Make gratitude your attitude



# How to cultivate emotional/social optimism:

- Pay attention to your feelings
- Have at least one person with whom you can talk honestly



# How to cultivate spiritual optimism:

- Building a spiritual community
- Reading and listening to inspirational messages
- Singing, praying, meditating and/or contemplating



# Putting optimism to work

- Act ...don't React
- What is not ...What Should Be
- Courage AND Vulnerability
- Nurture AND Nature
- Get out in nature
- Don't participate in negative thinking or conversations
- Do kind things for others and YOURSELF
- Actively engage in positive thinking







# Thank You

## Questions?

