



7 PROVEN METHODS FOR IMPROVING MINDSET

7 PROVEN METHODS TO IMPROVE YOUR MINDSET

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GRATITUDE	1
SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE	3
THE JOY OF LAUGHTER	4
USING VISUALIZATION TO CREATE THE LIFE YOU WANT	6
STOP NEGATIVE SELF-TALK BEFORE IT UTTERS ANOTHER WORD	8
DISCOVER THE POWER OF TAKING CHANCES.....	11
KEEP LEARNING	13

GRATITUDE

FIVE BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE

Showing your gratitude can be a great way to spread positive feelings in the world around you. When you think about it, reaching your goals starts with a single positive thought.

How do you feel when someone sincerely expresses his or her gratitude to you for something you did? Doesn't it make you feel good about yourself? These positive feelings can lift you up, boost your enthusiasm, and motivate you to achieve even more.

Feeling grateful for what you have can produce the same good feelings and sustain your drive toward your goals.

This shows how gratitude can have some seriously positive snowball effects.

Here are some of the benefits of gratitude:

- Reaching your goals. When you feel grateful, it tends to be a lasting and selfless feeling. It's much more than just a momentary burst of positive energy; it has staying power that will provide a great boost for you to reach your goals.
 - When you express your gratitude to others, ensure that you're open and expressive. People don't know what you're thinking; hearing it can make all the difference.
- Strengthened relationships. There are many ways you can express your gratitude to your loved ones, including saying, "Thank you," writing a letter, or giving them a thoughtful gift. When you learn to avoid taking your loved ones for granted, you'll have a long lasting and loving relationship.
 - Showing gratitude is a two-way street. Learn how to effectively express your gratitude and, just as importantly, to receive it as well.

- Improved communication. Gratitude can mean better communication all around. By expressing your gratitude to strangers, they'll be more likely to show an interest in helping you, too.
 - Gratitude is such a powerful entity that it can even help you communicate with your pets! They should be appreciated too.
- More effective constructive criticism. No matter how we express constructive criticism, it often makes the recipient defensive or even angry. No one likes a blow to the ego. In this situation, a grateful attitude can take you a long way. You can express criticism quite effectively when you also emphasize what you appreciate about them.
- Preserving memories. You can preserve memories in a positive way when you keep a gratitude journal. You'll be able to enjoy your memories again and again when you read about these happy times in the future.

SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE EVERY DAY

Showing gratitude to others may seem like a selfless act, but it's something that you also benefit from. When you show your gratitude every day, you change the way you think.

You'll appreciate your good life when the majority of your thoughts remain positive. Negative thoughts can sometimes be overwhelming, and just because you have them doesn't mean you're a bad person. They happen to everyone, but you can strive to keep them to a minimum with the help of a grateful attitude.

One way to show your gratitude every day is to remind yourself of the big picture when a negative thought arises. If a petty argument with your spouse makes you feel angry and heated, take a deep breath and think for a moment. Remember that the argument is not permanent and, instead, feel grateful for the gift of this relationship.

Our days on this earth are numbered so we must cherish the time that we do have and enjoy the benefits of living each day as if it were our last.

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE

If you want to feel better about your life, hang around people that encourage you and bring out the best in you. Spend more time with people that make you feel good about yourself and less time with those that complain about everything.

Like it or not, your friends influence you in plenty of ways. Let's examine how and to what extent you're influenced by the company you keep.

The people you associate with have the capacity to change your life in a number of ways. If you make yourself aware how your friends are affecting your life, you can then choose which habits you want and which of your buddies are contributing to the life you want to lead.

Surround yourself with positive people. Humans are social beings that can feel the energy of others. Have fun with positive and supportive friends and family members. Just being around positive people can lift you up when you're feeling down.

THE JOY OF LAUGHTER

“Laughter is the best medicine” is a phrase that dates back to biblical times as an old Proverb and it’s still widely used today all over the world. That’s because it’s true!

Let’s take a look at what happens inside your body, mind and spirit when you laugh.

LAUGHTER’S EFFECT ON YOUR BODY

Endorphins are released throughout your body, stimulating muscles, nerves, organs and tissues when you laugh. Studies show these endorphins give relief to chronic pain, help to relieve stress and promote functioning of the immune system. Laughter literally helps heal your body.

LAUGHTER AND YOUR MIND

Happy thoughts lead to a more positive outlook on life. When you’re hanging out with friends and having good conversation that produces smiles and laughter, your mind’s producing happy thoughts.

On the other hand, if you’re always around people who never smile and always find something to complain about, you’ll lean toward a more negative outlook on life.

STRENGTHENING YOUR INNER BEING

Laughing causes your inner being to be emotionally and physically strengthened. When you laugh or even smile, your inner being is stimulated in an affirmative way, producing a more positive outlook on life. This helps your body produce more self-healing endorphins, which actually helps your body remain healthy and running optimally!

BOOSTING YOUR SPIRITS

Laughter causes a lift in your spirits, helping you feel uplifted. Laughter not only helps you personally, it's also very contagious and infectious, which helps those around you feel less stress and anxious.

Don't you just love it when you hear a baby or toddler laugh? What happens to you? You can't help but laugh too! Laughter begins to develop in humans as early as 3 months of age and a baby's laughter is one of the most contagious of all human sounds.

LAUGHTER AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

When two people share a funny story or a silly situation arises between two people, there's a unique bonding that is created. Something special is formed between the two that only they can relate with. It's an inside joke that is special to those who've shared in the moment.

When two people spend a lot of time together in laughter, a stronger, more ever-lasting relationship develops.

In a marriage, studies show couples that laugh together stay together much longer, if not for life. Think about a truly happy couple you know. Sure, every family has their issues and marriage takes work, but chances are they spend a lot of time laughing together. This doesn't happen by accident either. It can be created and fostered!

When you choose to embrace laughter, you'll be able to get through many more rough spots in life and come out a happier and healthier person.

Life can be tough, so why not choose to make it more joyous? You can if you choose to.

Always try to find joy in every situation and laugh as often as possible each and every day. Also, by spending more time around positive people, who love life and love to laugh, you'll be amazed at how you begin to feel on the inside and out!

USING VISUALIZATION TO CREATE THE LIFE YOU WANT

If you find yourself feeling frustrated that you aren't living the life you desire, this article can help you move forward in the directions of your lifelong dreams.

When you visualize a result in your life, you imagine what life will be like upon accomplishing that result. If a specific goal you've clung to over the years isn't possible for you now, read on.

Let's say you've always wanted to be a doctor but now, here you are—40 and feeling like you can't achieve the one dream you've always wanted. But maybe now you don't want to spend 10 years in college studying before starting your desired career.

In similar instances, how can you create the life you want using visualization?

Before visualizing, adjust what you want in life to achieve a similar result. What if you tweaked that dream a bit so you could visualize accomplishing a revised goal that will bring happiness? Using the above example, you might decide to become a registered nurse instead.

You could visualize working in the same setting you wanted to before: a hospital with physicians while managing health issues with patients.

Be open in your quest. Visualization requires a certain mental flexibility that allows you to encompass all possibilities. What do you really want to be doing in your life? What must be done to achieve those goals?

Allow yourself to openly acknowledge what you crave to do with your life. When you can do this, you can better visualize your dream.

Write down your goals, one by one. Doing so will enrich your thoughts about what it will take to achieve your dream. Record tasks you'll accomplish to ultimately reach your desired end result. In order for visualization to work, it's important to know specifically what it is you're after and the steps you must take to reach or exceed your wants.

Construct a mental picture. In your mind, paint a picture of the scene in which you'll achieve a desired accomplishment.

Using the above example, you might imagine where you would be and what you would be doing when you receive your nursing degree. What will you wear? Who else will be present? How will you feel at that moment?

Have tangible representations of your dream around you. Create an area at home that represents the goal you're striving to accomplish. Using our example, you could display a nurse's cap, stethoscope, and banner from the local college with a nursing program on a table in your den.

Touch or hold the items during visualization. Possessing tangible representations of your dreams makes your goals real and will serve as daily reminders for you to pursue your goal.

Practice your visualization. Spend 5-10 minutes daily closing your eyes and imagining the scenes. Ensure you're sitting in a relaxed position in a comfortable chair. Keep your dream alive by visualizing your success in achieving it.

The more you repeat your visualizations, the more motivated you'll be to take action to go after your goals.

Each day, ask yourself, "What must I do today to create the life I desire?" Your actions coupled with your consistent visualizations will galvanize you to seek whatever it is you want in life. Reflect on how the steps you took today figure in to your goal achievement.

When you combine powerful visualizations with deliberate actions, you can have whatever you desire. Now, close your eyes and visualize....

STOP NEGATIVE SELF-TALK BEFORE IT UTTERS ANOTHER WORD

As humans, we're sometimes very hard on ourselves. Whether we're conscious of it or not, our beliefs can sometimes be very damaging to our self-esteem. Unfortunately, these negative talking points in our head sometimes keep us stuck in a rut.

A great psychologist, Albert Ellis, had many tokens of wisdom to pass around. One of his ideas centralized around these negative thoughts, which he often referred to as irrational beliefs.

Discover how you can stop this vicious circle and turn your self-talk into words that support and encourage you, instead.

PAY ATTENTION TO TRIGGERS

The first step to stopping negative self-talk is figuring out what is triggering these negative beliefs in the first place.

Albert Ellis called these so-called triggers "activating events." These can be everyday occurrences that happen to us or around us. Anything from having your boss or supervisor yell at you and take away your project to experiencing a run-in collision with a deer on a country road can be an activating event.

Are you in conflict with another? Did something not go your way?

Further, triggers can also be incredibly personal to you and unique to your life. These are sometimes referred to as "red flags." Red flags are issues that pertain to you alone, such as your weight, family and close relationships, integrity, and anything else that you deem sacred.

When these issues get raised, they immediately set off an alarm within you.

IDENTIFY IRRATIONAL BELIEFS

These irrational beliefs are the real culprits behind why we get upset or angry at the triggers we've just experienced, according to Albert Ellis. It's not the trigger itself, but the beliefs that cause the negative self-talk.

Ellis claimed that these irrational beliefs are responsible for our emotional states, also known as the consequences of our beliefs. In this way, by identifying and then changing these beliefs, we can experience fewer emotional consequences.

For example, let's look at this process:

- You just learned that you got turned down for a promotion at work.
- Getting turned down for the promotion is the activating event or trigger.
- The underlying thoughts or irrational beliefs you might be having include, "I'm never going to advance my career," "My boss hates me," or even "My boss is never fair to me."

These beliefs or thoughts can lead to emotional consequences of sadness and depression.

DISPUTE IRRATIONAL BELIEFS

The idea behind identifying these negative, irrational beliefs is so you can do something to change them.

You can change them by challenging these beliefs. This is a process of examining the truth and reality and seeing that it is different from your belief.

In the prior example of getting turned down for a promotion, a series of questions can be asked to help you sort through reality from these irrational beliefs. You want to challenge yourself by asking questions that are almost the opposite of your identified beliefs.

Some of these challenge questions may be:

- What is the truth in this situation?
- Do I have evidence to support that my current beliefs are true?
- In the example above: Are there times when my boss has been fair?
- Is it true that I'll never advance in my career, or is this just a minor setback?

These questions can help you identify the truth from what you may erroneously believe or negatively think about a situation.

If you can identify the truth, this can lead you to think differently and avoid suffering the emotional consequences of the trigger in the first place.

Follow this process whenever you notice thoughts that are unkind to you. Change your beliefs and you'll find your self-talk becoming words of encouragement, instead.

DISCOVER THE POWER OF TAKING CHANCES

One of the best ways to make positive changes to your life is to take more risks. Life is more exciting and rewarding when you're willing to put yourself out there and take a few chances. Plus, successful people take more risks than unsuccessful people.

With a little practice, you'll find that taking a chance or two adds immeasurably to your life.

Consider these benefits of taking a chance and reap the power it gives you:

- Taking chances enables you to move beyond your comfort zone. Nothing ever changes if you don't do something new. It's not easy to force yourself to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable, but it's necessary if you want to experience growth in your life. Imagine the new adventures you can have!
- Taking chances gives you power over yourself. Most people are risk-averse. It's not in our genetic makeup to take chances. We're like an antelope hiding in the tall grass, afraid to run out in the open for fear of being eaten by a lion. But there is tremendous power in taking chances.

When you can make yourself do things you don't want to do, you realize that you're conquering yourself.

This power extends to other areas of your life. You'll find that you'll do a better job of taking care of the mundane, but necessary, tasks in life. Taking action in the face of discomfort has a powerful impact on your life.

Taking chances gives you greater power over your life. You can take control of your life by taking steps to build the life that you desire. This gives you greater control. You can determine how you want to move forward, how you can overcome obstacles, and then do it.

Think of the people that never take chances. They're much more susceptible to the randomness of life. External conditions have a greater effect. By taking a chance, you can avoid all this.

Taking chances reduces feelings of regret. More people regret the things they didn't do than the things they did. Not taking chances in life leads to regret in your later years. You don't want to be one of those people that looks back on his life and wonders, "What if?"

Your life is more exciting when you take chances. One of the most frequent complaints of adults is boredom. Do you live the same day over and over? The time flies by because there's nothing to differentiate one day from the next. There are no victories or defeats, just the dullness that comes from monotony.

Add some spice to your life and have a reason to get up in the morning. Take a chance or two.

You'll develop greater self-confidence and self-esteem. When you have control over yourself and your life, you feel pretty good about yourself. These qualities influence all the other parts of your life, too.

You have more opportunities. Taking chances exposes you to even greater opportunities. When you're willing to act boldly, life seems to meet you halfway. It can be a great boost to the amount of success you experience in life.

Taking chances can be scary, but ask yourself what you have to lose. Whether it's approaching someone attractive or sending your resume to your dream company, what do you have to lose? Most risks have little potential for real loss. The threat is inside your head.

For your best results, start slowly. Decide to take one small risk each day for a month and measure the effect it has on your life. Then you can move up to taking bigger chances as your tolerance for discomfort improves.

Discover the power of taking a chance. Start today! You'll be glad you did!

Realize that a miniscule amount of improvement each day is enough. A tiny amount of improvement each day, or even each week or month, is more than enough to achieve anything you desire.

Whether you're interested in earning more money, learning the piano, or perfecting your welding skills, slow and steady progress is enough.

Imagine 20 years of minimal progress each day. Imagine even a single year of daily progress.

Become an expert. It's not enough to read one book or to take one class. Reading one book on gardening isn't enough to turn you into a master gardener. Learning about your area of interest requires a deeper knowledge. Take the time to become a true expert. Never stop learning.

Take courses, read books, or join a community of people with similar goals and interests.

Practice daily. Regular practice is the key. Mindless practice is insufficient. You must know what you're trying to accomplish with your practice each day. Striving to improve is critical.

Remember, the intention is to be better today than you were yesterday.

Measure your progress. You can't know if you're getting better if you don't measure your progress. Find a way to measure yourself and do so regularly. Nothing stimulates enthusiasm like success. You'll also notice when you're losing ground, which suggests that you might want a new approach.

Be patient. Progress often comes quickly at first and then slows. Eventually, progress is barely perceptible. This is true for any field. The importance of patience can't be overemphasized. Be patient and progress will come.

Get a mentor. A mentor is an expert with an interest in your success. Getting regular feedback from someone that knows what they're talking about can be much more effective than going at it alone. Get expert help if you can.

Celebrate progress, not perfection. Avoid waiting until you're perfect to celebrate. That time will never come. Even if you're just a tiny bit better than you were, throw yourself a little party. Any progress is worthy of excitement and pride. Those little spurts of progress add up over time.

Set goals. It's easier to stay motivated and on course if you have a specific goal you're working toward. Instead of just focusing on "getting better," focus on being able to play Clair de Lune by the end of the year. A goal provides direction and a time constraint. Both can be useful.

If you put in the time and remain patient, you can become amazingly good at anything. The key is increasing your knowledge and lots of practice.

Avoid falling into the trap of wanting perfection. Perfection can't be obtained. Instead, put your faith in progress. A small amount of progress each day created the Grand Canyon.

For a great tool to improve your mindset and maintain a positive outlook, use [The MAP: A 10 Minute-a-Day Journal](#). Visit the [The MAP Journal Blog](#) for more tips on goal-setting, confidence-building, and other self-improvement tools.