

The Art of Positive Thinking

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The general meaning of positive thinking is having “good” thoughts, which are full of hope and without any thought of failure, apprehension, and fear. If you dare confront your boss about being realistic on the sales target or if you remind your spouse about saving for future, you are defiantly met with ejaculations such as “Oh come on! Don’t be a pessimist, think positively”. A glare accompanied by a sigh may follow, meaning “You hopeless fellow”.

To be aware of the uncertainties of life; to remain grounded, and to be able to foresee risks are indicators of

positive thinking. Actions which bring happiness and lasting peace to our fellow beings and us, originate from positive thinking.

Thought is a force; it has immense power. Positive thinking is not about just having good thoughts, but to feel and believe in rightfully getting what we want. It is commonly understood that we all manifest our thoughts, but in reality, we manifest the feelings behind those thoughts.

But how should we manifest our positive feelings? The answer is—through right action. Paramahansa Yogananda, the author of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, says that it is not enough just to think of success or

think of ideas; they must be demonstrated. To think that you are virtuous does not make you virtuous. So thinking about success, does not make you successful. All actions begin with thought, which is the action on the plane of consciousness. To be manifested, thoughts must be charged with dynamic will by concentration and perseverance to rouse the indomitable power of the mind.

So while thinking and feeling is the beginning of any action, our thoughts have to be charged by dynamic will, concentration and perseverance so as to rouse the indomitable power of the mind. Merely having great thoughts is of no con-



sequence if we do not set into motion the corresponding laws of action.

But then, why does it become so difficult to accomplish positive action? Yoganandaji says that it is inevitable in this world of relativity—light and darkness, good and evil—that whenever you try to expand, you will

encounter opposition. This holds true for all endeavour: The minute you try to accomplish anything, there is resistance. As soon as a plant tries to emerge from its seed there is resistance from the earth, and then the bugs go after it, and it has to struggle against

the weeds that compete for its food and water. And the same is true for human beings. Resistance and inertia are always there. Positive thoughts are clouded with doubts, moods, and negative emotions. But what can make us victorious is the fact that we are endowed with the natural positivity of our creator.

No matter how great the inner resistance, no matter how much you have been enwrapped in negative thinking and negative behaviour, those wrong habits cannot enslave you forever. Darkness may reign in a cave for thousands of years, but bring in the light, and the darkness vanishes as though it had never been. Similarly, no matter what your defects, they are yours no longer when you bring in the light of goodness.

No one else can save us. We are our own saviours as soon as we realize this. To change ourselves we have to begin with our thoughts. Then we can be what we want to be and accomplish what we want to accom-

plish.

Paramahansa Yoganandaji says, “Fill your mind with the resolution to accomplish, and work toward your goals with positive actions. Do not be a helpless failure. Control your destiny by changing your thought. Do whatever you make up your mind to do. To concentrate the mind in this way does not cost you a thing. Inwardly determine to change yourself, and you can change your destiny according to your will.”

Bad habits are the worst enemies you can have. You are punished by those habits. They make you do things you do not want to do, and leave you to suffer the consequences. You

must drop bad habits and leave them behind you as you move forward. Every day should be a transition from old habits to better habits. In this coming year you can make a solemn resolution to keep only those habits that are for your highest good.

By plugging away at the negativity within and focussing on positive thoughts as well as by translating them gradually into action, you will become a shining example of positivity and will be well on the way to winning the battle of life!

(Swami Suddhananda Giri is a member of the Yogoda Satsanga Society of India and the views expressed in the article are his own)