

Optimism

Optimism is the ability to look at the brighter side of life and to maintain a positive attitude, even in the face of adversity. Optimism assumes a measure of hope in one's approach to life.

1. **Remember that life is short.** When you feel pessimism affecting your mood or you start to feel down about the future, remind yourself that every minute in the day counts. Any amount of time spent thinking negatively guarantees nothing but less time to enjoy whatever life might have to offer. Pessimism is a waste of time, and time is a limited resource that you can't afford to take for granted.



2. **Let go.** Let go of the assumption that the world is against you, or that you were born with a gray cloud over your head. It is an assumption that has no basis in reason. Sometimes we pick up pessimism from a parent who made negative assumptions about the world somewhere along the line or a friendship group that always looks at the negative. Either way, the sooner you can attribute your pessimism to a unique set of circumstances rather than the state of the world itself, the easier it'll be to change your perspective.
3. **Understand the past does not equal the future.** Just because you've experienced pain or disappointment in the past does not guarantee that what starts badly will end badly. By making these predictions you are creating self-fulfilling prophecies.
4. **See yourself as a cause, not an effect.** You don't have to be a product or a victim of your circumstances. Stop thinking about what is happening to you; and start thinking about what you can make happen. If you're not happy with the way your life is now, set goals and start to make strategies to move towards them. Use your past negative experiences to build character and make better decisions for your future.
5. **Speak kindly to yourself.** Write down short statements that remind you of what you're trying to change about the way you see the world. Put them in places where you'll see them

every day, such as on your bathroom mirror, on your computer monitor or on your phone. Some affirmations to consider: "Anything is possible." "My circumstances do not create me, I create my circumstances." "The only thing I can control is my attitude towards life." "I always have a choice." "I choose to be positive."

6. **Be a balanced optimist.** Nobody is suggesting that you become flighty and unrealistic, pretending that nothing bad can or ever will happen. Doing so can lead to poor decisions and invites people to take advantage of you. Instead, be a rational optimist who takes the good with the bad, in hopes of the good ultimately outweighing the bad, and with the understanding that being pessimistic about everything accomplishes nothing. Prepare for the worst, but hope for the best.
7. **Visit a success coach.** If you would like more information on this topic visit a success coach. To book an appointment, visit the student success office (2nd floor of south campus hall) or call 519-888-4567 ext. 84410.

Adapted from - wikihow.com/Be-Optimistic.
Adapted from - Stein, S. J. & Book, H.E. (2006). *The EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Success*.
Mississauga: John Wiley & Sons Canada. Ltd.

