

Cultivate a Positive Attitude

English heart surgeon Martyn Lloyd-Jones asserted, “Most unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself rather than talking to yourself.”

Does that sound like a strange statement to you? Here is what the good doctor meant:

What kind of voices do you hear when you listen to yourself? When you face new experiences, does a voice in your head say you’re going to fail? If you’re hearing negative messages, you need to learn to give yourself some positive mental pep talks.

On that subject, John C. Maxwell, internationally recognized expert on leadership development, wrote in his book *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*: “The best way to retrain your attitude is to prevent your mind from going down any negative forks in the road.”



To improve your attitude, Maxwell suggested doing the following:

- **Feed yourself the right “food.”** If you’ve been starved of anything positive, then you need to start feeding yourself a regular diet of motivational material. Read books that encourage a positive attitude. Listen to motivational tapes. The more negative you are, the longer it will take to turn your attitude around. But if you consume a steady diet of the right “food,” you can become a positive thinker.
- **Achieve a goal every day.** Some people get into a rut of negativity because they feel they’re not making progress. If that describes you, then begin setting achievable daily goals for yourself. A pattern of positive achievement will help you develop a pattern of positive thinking.
- **Write it on your wall.** We all need reminders to help us keep thinking right. Alex Haley (author of the 1976 book *Roots*) used to keep a picture in his office of a turtle on a fence post to remind him that everybody needs the help of others. As incentive, people put up awards they’ve won, inspirational posters or letters they’ve received. Find something that will work for you and put it on your wall.

Allow yourself to dwell on the positive and not the negative today.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things (Philippians 4:8 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter