Positive Thinking

Depression has often been called the “common cold of mental health.” While feeling "down," "blue," or "bummed" from time to time is normal, one of the features of depression is pessimistic thinking or having negative thoughts. The good news is that pessimism can be unlearned. Like a destructive habit, it can be changed. One of the most powerful actions you can take in combating pessimism is to try and change how you think.

In most circumstances positive thinking can lead us to a more hopeful and confident stance about our circumstances. Positive thinking is a mental attitude that allows the mind to create thoughts, words and images that are conducive to growth. It is a mental attitude that expects good and favorable results. Here are several action strategies to help you break away from negative thoughts:

- **Positive Affirmation**: Affirmations are a simple optimistic self-talk device that can be used by anyone and they are remarkably effective. It requires you to come up with a set of positive sentences to repeat to yourself or someone else.

- **Journal your negative thoughts**: Journaling helps you to assess the amount and the degree of negative thoughts you have. Note any kind of pessimistic thinking and any focusing on the problems rather than the solution. The act of writing your thoughts down is an exercise that can help you become more aware of your triggers.

- **Develop a partnership strategy**: Ask a family member or a trusted friend to help you point out and identify your negative thinking.

- **Challenge negative thoughts**: When you start to feel pessimistic, ask yourself if this thought is productive? If it is a negative thought that steals the joy of the moment, then you must put an end to that thought. Convert your negative thought into a positive one!

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**DON’T FORGET!**

**Depression Screening Day is**

*October 19, 2006*

*9:30 am - 6:30 pm Eastern Standard Time*

Call 1.800.935.9551 to participate.

This screening is free, confidential, anonymous and is available for all employees and their family members. Qualified, masters-level counselors will ask you a few brief questions and then will provide you with the results of the screening. Each screening takes about 5 minutes to complete.

To learn more or to speak with an FSAP professional, call **1.800.935.9551**

The FSAP is a voluntary, confidential assistance program available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, at no cost to employees.