

Positive vs. Negative Thinking

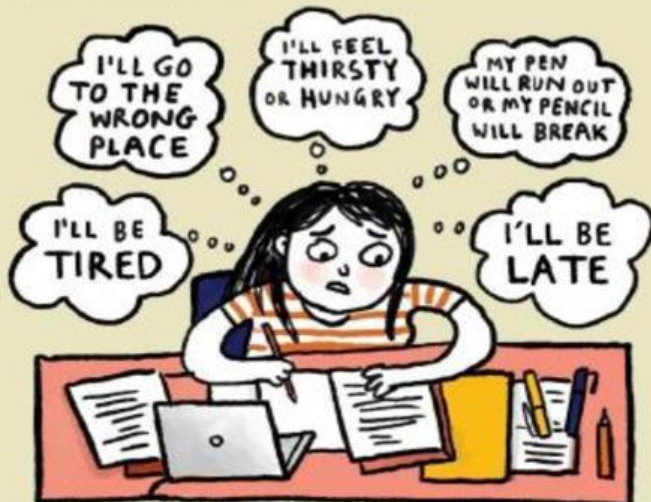
- a Listen to the introduction to a radio programme. Why is positive thinking good for you? ((S))
- b Try to guess the missing words in these callers' tips. Listen to the rest of the programme and check.
- Caller 1 Live in the pr _____, not in the p _____.
- Caller 2 Think p _____ thoughts, not n _____ ones.
- Caller 3 Don't spend a lot of time following the n _____ online or on TV.
- Caller 4 Every week, make a list of all the g _____ th _____ that happened to you.
- Caller 5 Try to use positive l _____ when you speak to other people.
- c Which tips do you think are the most useful? Do you have any tips of your own?
- d Look at the cartoon in the article of a girl who has an exam the next day. Do you think she is an optimist or a pessimist?
- e Read the article. What is 'defensive pessimism'?



Why negative thinking can be positive

Everybody thinks that it's better to be an optimist than a pessimist (even pessimists think it, of course). People always say 'Cheer up. Don't worry, be happy. Smile.' But in fact there's a kind of pessimism – called 'defensive pessimism' – that can lead to very positive results, according to Julie K. Norem, a professor of psychology at Wellesley College, Massachusetts. 'Defensive pessimism is a strategy used in specific situations to manage anxiety, fear, and worry,' says Norem. Studies show that 30 to 35 per cent of Americans use it to help them in their lives, and they're often very successful people.

Defensive pessimists think about future situations and prepare for them by imagining all the things that can go wrong. For example, if a defensive pessimist has an important exam, they think this:



- 15 Then they look at each possible problem and plan how to avoid it. So for the exam situation, they go to bed early and have a good night's sleep; they find out in advance exactly where the exam is; they eat a good breakfast, and take lots of pens and pencils, and a bottle of water; and they leave home early. That puts them in control, and it means that the exam will be better than for an optimist, who just thinks 'Oh, everything will be fine!' Because sometimes everything goes wrong, and it's good to be prepared.

Adapted from a US website

- f Complete these sentences from the article with the same word.
- 1 I'll go to the _____ place.
- 2 Sometimes everything goes _____.
- g What do these sentences mean?
- 1 There's something **wrong** with the printer.
- 2 I'm sorry, you've got the **wrong** number.
- 3 Our journey was fine, nothing **went wrong**.
- h Read the article again. Then look at the things a defensive pessimist thinks about catching a flight. What can he do to avoid these problems?



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

i Do you think defensive pessimism is a good idea? Can you think of any situations where you behave in this way?

j Look at the picture. Write the predictions with the words in brackets and *will / won't*.



- **Line of heart:** a long, strong and unbroken line means your relationships will be happy.
- **Line of health:** a long, strong and unbroken line means you'll be healthy.
- **Line of success:** a long, strong and unbroken line means you'll have a lot of money.
- **Line of fate:** a long, strong and unbroken line means your job will be important to you and you'll have a job for a long time.
- **Line of life:** a long, strong and unbroken line means you'll live for a long time.
- **Line of head:** a long, strong and unbroken line means you'll be clever and like learning.

- 1 Your line of heart shows that (you / have / long and happy marriage)
you'll have a long and happy marriage.
- 2 Your line of health is unbroken. (You / have a healthy life)
You _____.
- 3 This line of success isn't very strong. (You / not be very rich)
You _____.
- 4 Your line of fate shows that (you / not always have / same job)
_____.
- 5 Your line of life is quite strong. (You / have a long life)
You _____.
- 6 You have a strong line of head. (You enjoy / learning new things)
You _____.

k Look at the lines on your own hand and write predictions about your future. Use the information in j and *will / won't*.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

l Complete the conversations with a verb from the list and *will / won't*. Use contractions where possible.

catch forget have not find not sell not win pass

- 1 A We're going camping next weekend.
B I'm sure you'll have a great time.
- 2 A Are you in the tennis final tomorrow?
B Yes, but I'm playing Andy, so I'm sure I _____.
- 3 A I told Nick that it's Jane's birthday on Friday.
B Thanks, but you know Nick!
He _____.
- 4 A It's Louisa's exam tomorrow.
B I'm sure she _____. She's worked very hard.
- 5 A I'm getting the 8.50 train.
B It's 8.40 now. _____ you _____ it?
- 6 A We can park near the cinema.
B At this time? We _____ a parking space.
- 7 A I'm going to put my tablet on eBay.
B It's too old. You _____ it.

