READING

A Read the article and check: What is "Defensive Pessimism"?

A It's when you are defensive because you don't really want to do things.

B It's a state of mind when you don't know what to do with your life.

C It's a strategy we use to control anxiety, fear and worry.

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:

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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

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B Read the article again and decide if these statements are True or False

1 Many people think that it's better to be an optimist than a pessimist.

2 Defensive Pessimism will never have any positive results.

3 About 30 percent of Americans use Defensive Pessimism in their lives.

4 The Americans that use Defensive Pessimism are not very successful.

5 Defensive Pessimism makes you imagine all possible bad results.

6 After imagining bad results, you think about how to avoid those results.

7 Sometimes thing go wrong and it is always good to be prepared for it.

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