



HOW TO BECOME MORE POSITIVE

*The following is an article written by my father,
Thomas J. Wolff.*

I was giving a speech on positivism and pointed out that in my opinion we can all become more positive. After my presentation a man came to speak to me. He explained that his parents were both negative, as were his grandparents on both sides. His final comment, "I'm a negative person and always will be".

We are all products of the "gene pool" of our ancestors. That however does not mean we can't improve ourselves. For example, Michael Jordan is the greatest basketball player who ever lived. If I decide to equal his accomplishments on the court I could not achieve that goal. On the other hand if I decide to improve my basketball skills, by working at it, I could become a better player.

A positive mental attitude works the same way. No, that fellow whose family was so negative can't become the most positive person on earth. He can however become much more positive than he is.

A question I have been asked is "How can we learn to be more positive?" I was fortunate; I had the rare privilege of meeting the late Dr. Norman Vincent Peale. Peale is the author of the best-selling book "The Power of Positive Thinking".

Peale explained that one of God's great gifts is the ability to change what it is we are thinking about. Let's do a little experiment. As you read these words you are thinking about something. Right now, change your thought to something

pleasant that happened recently. Feels good doesn't it? If you had no difficulty doing this you proved Peale's point. We can change what it is we are thinking about.

Peale pointed out that thoughts are either positive or negative. Obviously we would rather think positively than negatively. Since we have proven that we can change what it is we are thinking about, the objective is to change any negative thoughts to positive ones. However in spite of our best efforts negative thoughts will invade our minds.

Peale said, "We need to be good gatekeepers. Just as we would not permit a criminal to enter our home, we must endeavor not to allow negative thoughts to enter our mind. Through practice we can improve our ability to accomplish this. In spite of our best efforts negative thoughts will at times get through the gate. Therefore we must install an alarm system, to alert us that an intruder has entered."

Through continuous practice I have been able to install the Peale alarm in my brain. When the alarm goes off, I know a negative thought has entered. I immediately work at expelling the intruder and replacing him with a positive thought.

A negative thought is like a snowball rolling down a hill. As it picks up speed and grows in size, it becomes an avalanche, which does great damage. That is why the alarm is so important. It provides the opportunity of stopping the snowball before it has a chance to damage us.

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