

WHO IS MICHELLE WHAITE?



Michelle is a LifeSuccess Consultant living locally in Denham and has joined the In & Around Publishing Team as the Resident Mind Coach with a regular Coaching Column right here every month.

10 Ways to Start Taking Control!

At first glance, it would seem that positive thinking and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) have nothing to do with one another. But many of us with ADD develop negative thinking patterns because we become frustrated by our challenges and frequent feelings of being overwhelmed. This negative outlook then makes it even harder for us to manage those challenges and move forward.

Practicing positive thinking allows people with ADD to focus on our strengths and accomplishments, which increases happiness and motivation. This, in turn, allows us to spend more time making progress, and less time feeling down and stuck. The following Top Ten Tips provide practical suggestions that you can use to help you shift into more positive thinking patterns:

1. Take Good Care of Yourself

It's much easier to be positive when you are eating well, exercising, and getting enough rest.

2. Remind Yourself of the Things You Are Grateful For

Stresses and challenges don't seem quite as bad when you are constantly reminding yourself of the things that are right in life. Taking just 60 seconds a day to stop and appreciate the good things will make a huge difference.

3. Look for the Proof Instead of Making Assumptions

A fear of not being liked or accepted sometimes leads us to assume that we know what others are thinking, but our fears are usually not reality. If you have a fear that a friend or family member's bad mood is due to something you did, or that your co-workers are secretly gossiping about you when you turn your back, speak up and ask them. Don't waste time worrying

that you did something wrong unless you have proof that there is something to worry about.

4. Refrain from Using Absolutes

Have you ever told a partner "You're ALWAYS late!" or complained to a friend "You NEVER call me!?" Thinking and speaking in absolutes like 'always' and 'never' makes the situation seem worse than it is, and programs your brain into believing that certain people are incapable of delivering.

5. Detach From Negative Thoughts

Your thoughts can't hold any power over you if you don't judge them. If you notice yourself having a negative thought, detach from it, witness it, and don't follow it.

6. Squash the "ANTs"

In his book "Change Your Brain, Change Your Life," Dr. Daniel Amen talks about "ANTs" - Automatic Negative Thoughts. These are the bad thoughts that are usually reactionary, like "Those people are laughing, they must be talking about me," or "The boss wants to see me? It must be bad!" When you notice these thoughts, realise that they are nothing more than ANT's and squash them!

7. Practice Lovin', Touchin' & Squeezin' (Your Friends and Family)

You don't have to be an expert to know the benefits of a good hug. Positive physical contact with friends, loved ones, and even pets, is an instant pick-me-up. One research study on this subject had a waitress touch some of her customers on the arm as she handed them their bill. She received higher tips from these customers than from the ones she didn't touch!

8. Increase Your Social Activity

By increasing social activity, you decrease loneliness. Surround yourself with healthy, happy people, and their positive energy will affect you in a positive way!

9. Volunteer for an Organisation, or Help another Person

Everyone feels good after helping. You can volunteer your time, your money, or your resources. The more positive energy you put out into the world, the more you will receive in return.



10. Use Pattern Interrupts to Combat Rumination

If you find yourself ruminating, a great way to stop it is to interrupt the pattern and force yourself to do something completely different. Rumination is like hyper-focus on something negative. It's never productive, because it's not rational or solution-oriented, it's just excessive worry. Try changing your physical environment - go for a walk or sit outside. You could also call a friend, pick up a book, or turn on some music.

Positive thinking is not just an exercise where you repeat to yourself angrily 'am happy am happy am happy' when you are feeling miserable! It is about changing your state of mind and feeling the change from within - from perhaps feeling a little low to a feeling of hopefulness. Hope can bridge the gap towards having faith. Faith can lead to certainty.

I have found the best way to help a client move from a feeling of no hope to some hope is to ask the client to list their top 50-100 things they absolutely love to do but are perhaps not currently doing. Things that if they did do them regularly, they would perhaps feel much better about themselves and their lives. At first one might struggle to get past 20, however, as we keep the pen flowing the feeling of misery can be lessened by focusing on all the things that one loves to do and getting emotionally involved with the feelings generated from such ideas.

For example, one of my clients wrote down that she loves to sleep but rarely gets to bed before 1am, she also wrote that she loves to see her

friends and family but rarely makes the time to visit. My client also wrote down that she would love to take up ballroom dancing classes but had never found the time to go. We discovered she enjoyed entertaining friends for dinner parties and going out to the theatre. When my client reached around 36 items, my client was scratching her head saying 'I can't think of any more?' so I asked her - what would need to happen to get you to 100 things you love to do or at least want to experience that you might think would bring you more joy into your life? Suddenly a flurry of further ideas were unlocked - she used to go away for weekend city breaks but again had gotten so wrapped up in her work that she had not made time to go away with her partner as they did when they first got together. So by the time we got to 67 items, my client had already shifted into a state of joy thinking about all the wonderful weekends away sight seeing that she had enjoyed only a few years earlier, the dinner parties they used to host before she switched jobs etc.

My client could now see why she was feeling so miserable as her life had become one long 'ground hog working day'/week/month of repetitiveness or inner programs running by themselves - ie getting up, showering, breakfast, fighting traffic, working, lunch, working, gym, home, working some more and then collapsing into bed! We then resolved that she would begin at once to introduce these items (weekly for the smaller goals) to her working life to create a more balanced approach to living.

All work and no play makes Jack (or Jill) a dull boy (or girl!). We resolved to begin with the simpler ideas that she could begin implementing straight away such as getting to bed by 11pm to give herself at least 14 hours extra sleep per week to begin with!

What is your top 100 that you are not currently doing? When will you now schedule time to create more joyous occasions and memories in your life?

Email me yours michelle.whaite@gmail.com to win a prize! Why are you possibly waiting to enjoy life? When will you start living joyfully?