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Creating our own reality

A positive mental attitude can transform a glass from being half empty to being half full and then actually help to fill the glass.



Your attitude towards the things you have to do makes the difference between getting the most out of them and seeing them as chores that are impossible to enjoy.

A SILLY STORY

Imagine there are two women who are both married to successful men. They live in the suburbs from where their husbands commute to the city every day. Their husbands come bursting in from work one day with the news that they've won the Salesperson of the Year Award. The reward is a week in San Francisco in a five-star hotel with a pool and all the luxury you can imagine. Not only that, but wives are invited.

Both men suggest that their wives head to town on a shopping spree to buy some new clothes, especially something stunning for the dinner and dance and gala presentation.

Here's an
idea for
you...

Choose a task that you're not looking forward to. Firstly, remember that whether or not you do the task is your choice. Now imagine having completed the task and how much you enjoyed doing it. Feel the pleasure of having completed it. Next set aside a time to do the task. Remember that you choose your thoughts, so it's down to you whether you feel depressed or energised about the task. If you feel depressed, the task will become more of a chore and the quality of the thinking you put into it will be reduced.

The first wife is excited and thinks, 'Brilliant, a day in town. I'll park in the car park, probably not too near the station because the commuters will have got there first, but it'll be safe and I won't need a taxi. I'll go up by train, which I love especially as I love people-watching. It's fun trying to work out what they all do by how they look and the newspapers they read. I'll also be able to have a nosey at people's gardens and see the different things they all do with the similar space. And when I get to the centre, there'll be millions of people of all different cultures and just the energy of the place will be exciting. Then I'll get a taxi and even though there'll probably be a queue, you never know who you'll get talking to and the cabbies are real characters. I might get some tips from them about where to go. Then

I'll explore the shops, which I really enjoy. The challenge will be not to buy too much because I know there'll be so many things that I'll like. What fun, I can't wait.'

The second wife thinks, 'Oh no, I hate the city. I'll never find anywhere to park at the station because the commuters will have got there first. It'll probably be raining so I'll be wet and cold before I even get there. I probably won't get a seat and I bet no one will offer me their seat. Commuters are so boring, they just stare at their newspapers and ignore you. And when I get there, it'll be a nightmare with hundreds of people pushing and shoving. There's bound to be a long queue for a

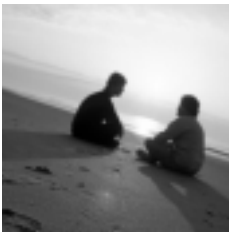
taxi and cabbies always take you the long way round and charge a fortune. Then I'll have to traipse round the shops. Shop after shop because I'll never find something I want, and the service is never as good in the big city stores. It's going to be awful but I suppose I'll have to go because I've got to find something to wear.'

Look at IDEA 32, *Your moment of choice*, to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of responsibility.

Try another idea...

So, both women do go to the city. And what sort of day do they have? It's obvious isn't it – the first has a brilliant day and the second has an awful one. But just think about it – everything outside of themselves is identical, and yet they have a very different experience.

What you can say here is that these women created a day in their life by the way they were thinking. So, let's pause a minute and think about this because if we can create one day then perhaps we can create two days, a week, a month, a year or even a lifetime. This is actually amazingly exciting because it means that we have everything that we need to transform our lives. Change your thinking and you'll change your life.



'Life is the movie you see through your own eyes. It makes little difference what's happening out there. It's how you take it that counts.'

DENIS WAITLEY, trainer and motivator

Defining idea...

How did
it go?

Q I have to attend a monthly meeting at work that's a waste of my time. It drags on, and most of the subjects are of no interest to me. I've plenty of better things I could be doing with my time, but my boss insists that I attend. What can I do about it?

A Firstly, it's your choice whether or not to attend the meeting, but if you wish to stay in your current job you may choose to go along. Most importantly, having decided to attend, you could choose to approach it thinking that you'll make the most of the time spent by communicating with and getting to know all of your colleagues better and contributing as much as you can. You may be surprised at how much the experience improves.

Q Whenever we visit my mother-in-law I have an awful time. The journey is long, she never seems to be very welcoming and I have to eat food that I'd never normally choose. I don't want to be impolite, so I have to put up with it don't I?

A No doubt it's important to your partner to see her mother. So, you may choose to adopt the approach that this is a way of showing your love and support to your partner. And if you decide to make the most of every visit and show that you're happy to be there, you may create a totally different experience. You could even offer to cook for her one day!