

With 2012 just around the corner some of us have already begun thinking of our New Year's resolution. For a large number of people that resolution will be the illusive lose weight and eat healthy, but what about our attitude health? How difficult is it to look at the situations in our work and home life with a positive attitude? If we viewed more aspects of our life positively how much difference would it make in our happiness and satisfaction with life? Here's to 2012 and a new attitude!

Alter Your Life by Your Attitude

by Mary Miscisin

How important is your attitude? Can it affect what you might do in a situation? How you might react or what you might say? Can it affect your mood or your thinking?

You may already realize the importance of your attitude and it's influence on so many aspects of your life. So what can you do to make sure your attitude supports the experience you want to have?

NOTICE YOUR FOCUS

It's interesting how two people in the same situation can have a totally different experience. Sylvia and Jack were invited to a friend's wedding. At the mere thought of going to a wedding Sylvia's mood began to plummet. "Weddings are so boring and tiresome. I have to figure out what to wear, the food is usually terrible, we have to dance to the same tacky wedding music they have at all weddings and make idle chit-chat with strangers. Do we have to go?"

In contrast, Jack was thrilled and excited with anticipation about the wedding. "I love weddings! It's a chance to dress in my best duds, free food, free booze, dancing all night, interesting people. What a blast! I can't wait!"

With the difference in their attitudes, do you suppose they would experience the same event quite differently? Sylvia goes to weddings looking for terrible food, listening for the "tacky" music and rolling her eyes at the forced conversation with strangers. And this is what she finds. All the while Jack enjoys free food, has fun dancing, and makes new friends.

DETERMINE YOUR GOAL

If you recognize that your attitude may have started to spiral towards a frame of mind you'd rather not be in, pause and clarify what you want instead. Ask yourself



these three questions:

"Is my attention focused in a direction that I want to go?"

"What is the direction I want to go?"

"How can I refocus and take action now?"

Imagine what might happen if Sylvia were to decide that she wanted something different. Instead of focusing on how boring and tiresome her past experiences with wedding have been, she can create a new experience for herself. If she determines that she wants to instead have a pleasant time at the wedding, she can shift her focus and ask herself, "What can I appreciate right now?" Chances are, if she were sincere, she would be able to find something. Further imagine what this would do to her mood and ultimately her experience at the wedding!



TAKE ACTION

I used this recently at work. My supervisor gave me a choice between two new assignments. I did not want either of them, I wanted to continue working with my present projects. This, I was informed, was not an option. Choosing the "lesser of the two evils," I reluctantly selected one of the two. The first day working on the new assignment I was grumpy, moody and resentful. I didn't enjoy feeling this way, yet I reinforced my attitude by repeatedly complaining to myself and others. "This isn't fair, I had no choice, I am being forced to work on this assignment, I have no enthusiasm for this..."

A close friend of mine stopped me in the middle of my protest and pointed out, "You did have a choice, and you made it, so why are you making yourself miserable? What can you find that is good about the choice you made?"

I paused and thought for a moment. He was right! I was focusing on everything that I did not like about the project instead of finding things I could like. I decided to reframe my thinking and ask myself, "What can I appreciate, right now?"

It was amazing how many things I could come up with. I really appreciated having a job, one with great benefits, my health, my co-workers, I was using my skills...the list grew and grew, and so did my attitude...in a positive direction. I was surprised how quickly my mood shifted. In the days that followed I derived more and more enjoyment from the new assignment.

Knowing what a powerful effect shifting your focus can have on your attitude, think about the areas you can use this in your life. Starting now, purposely look for the things you can appreciate in every situation. You may already practice this to a certain degree, if so, turn it up a notch. Notice that when your attention shifts, your attitude lifts! So, What can you appreciate right now?

Mary Miscisin is the author of [SHOWING OUR TRUE COLORS](#) - A Fun, Easy Guide for Understanding and Appreciating Yourself and Others.

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