

AND BE IN HEALTH - V

"How Positive Emotions Affect Health"

I. MANAGING OUR ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

- A. Attitude can make difference between coping and collapsing
- B. Attitude determines overall reaction we have to challenges of life
- C. Positive attitude most effective vaccine against stress-related disorders and organic disease
 - 1. Positive mental attitudes support positive emotions
 - 2. Optimist is one who has a dominantly positive attitude toward life
- D. Peter the Pessimist and Oscar the optimist
 - 1. True optimist makes the best out of the worst
 - 2. True pessimist makes the worst out of the best
- E. I have learned to be content in any state
 - 1. The secret of life is to enjoy benefits of your present state without bemoaning things you don't have
 - 2. Secret of life is to enjoy whichever age we are in without longing for things we don't have

II. A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR

- A. Humor the most physical of the positive emotions and the best-known antidote for worry
 - 1. Impossible to genuinely laugh and worry at same time
 - 2. Humor stirs the insides and gets the endocrine system going
- B. When we laugh chemical changes take place which can stimulate circulation, restore muscle tone, facilitate digestion, relieves headaches, contributes to a better-functioning cardiovascular system, sets off body's own pain-lessening enzymes
- C. Like physical exercise, laughter reduces depression, stress, and hypertension
- D. Can minimize possibility of strokes and heart attacks, ulcers, chronic headaches, and a host of other ailments
- E. Scientific study of laughter called gelotology
- F. People we admire have good sense of humor
- G. Effective leaders have learned to use humor
- H. In business, can establish camaraderie between co-workers, reduces absenteeism, increases motivation, improves morale, encourages productivity, builds relationships, and helps employees cope with stressful situations
- I. Fear of humor--afraid of looking or acting too undignified
- J. Laughter adds color and richness to ordinary days
- K. *"Blessed is he who has learned to laugh at himself, for he shall never cease to be entertained."*
- L. Laughing at ordinary events of life (Read antidotes)

III. HAPPINESS AND JOY

- A. Our ability to accept happiness determines greatly how well we are physically and emotionally
- B. Happiness does not depend on circumstances
 - 1. *"Now I'm stuck with 3 new friends"*
 - 2. Could win state lottery and still not be happy
 - 3. Can't kill a happy man
- C. Happy people rarely get sick, and recover quickly if they do
- D. Happiness is a feeling, but joy is an attitude
 - 1. Joy more to do with who we are, not what we have
 - 2. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, and is a choice
- E. Irresponsible person full of joy can often be healthier than the stressful, worried person who is a Puritan in diet and habit
- F. Mother Teresa, *"Oh, my, another wretched day in the ghetto?"*
- G. Have life full of more tasks than you can fulfill will rob you of joy and happiness
 - 1. We need to simplify our lives
 - 2. Find exciting and meaningful things and do them with gusto
- H. Grimness not Christian virtue--if no joy, missed heart of Good News, and body and soul will suffer

IV. HOPE

- A. Can't be whole person without being excited about your future
 - 1. If not excited, defeated and in despair
 - 2. State of hopelessness can create climate in which serious problems can develop
- B. Simple definition: Believe good things are about to happen
- C. Dreams and visions make us excited about the future
 - 1. If too old to dream, then you're too old
 - 2. Dreams and hopes are powerful motivating forces
 - 3. Gives you something to live for
- D. Don Quixote - Suffered senile psychosis; called innkeeper the lord of a great castle--called him bonkers; called pathetic orphan girl the great lady, Dulcines and begs for her handkerchief as a token to take into battle--she was furious; end of play, all gather around deathbed and begs him not to change--his excitement about their future has transformed them into what this insane visionary saw in them.
- E. When you expect great things for yourself or others, set force in motion that work toward producing those great things
- F. Absence of hope leads to depression, anxiety, despair, stress, and leads to mental and physical problems

Bad days...

You know it's going to be a bad day when...

1. You call your answering service and they tell you it's none of your business
2. You put your pants on backwards--and they fit better
3. Your horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a group of Hell's Angels on the freeway
4. You sink your teeth into a beautiful steak and they stay there

Aging...

You know you are getting older when:

1. Your back goes out more than you do
2. Your knees buckle, but your belt won't
3. You get winded playing chess
4. You sit in a rocking chair and can't make it go
5. You turn out the light for economic rather than romantic reasons
6. Dialing long distance wears you out
7. the little ole gray-haired lady you help across the street is your wife
8. You reach down to tie your shoes and wonder if there is anything else you can do while you're down there

Actual statements on insurance forms...

1. Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I didn't have
2. The guy was all over the road: I had to swerve a number of times before I finally hit him
3. I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law, and headed over the embankment
4. I had been driving my car for forty years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident
5. The pedestrian had no idea which direction to go, so I ran over him
6. The telephone pole was approaching fast. I was attempting to swerve out of its path when it struck my front end.