

Balanced Living

November 2022



Change Your Attitude to Accomplish More

When things go wrong, it doesn't have to ruin your day. In fact, with the right outlook, you can prevent many problems from ever happening.

When mistakes occur or something goes wrong, "remember that you're the person who controls your reactions," says Ed Foreman, a motivational speaker and president of Executive Development Systems in Dallas. "Don't let the weather, your spouse or your boss take that control away from you."

Choose to maintain a positive attitude. "Bring a proactive approach to situations, don't just react to things after they've happened," he says. "Decide how you would like them to turn out."

Set high expectations up front. "Instead of wondering what might go wrong, start looking for things to go right. Our thoughts are self-fulfilling, so chances are you will get the result you expect," says Mr. Foreman.

A positive outlook contributes to a less stressful, more healthful lifestyle, he says. Anger, fear and other stressful emotions are associated with many health problems, from depression to high blood pressure, heart disease and the common cold. But feeling good about yourself and others helps prevent mental anguish and physical problems.

Being upbeat also contributes to more pleasant personal relationships. "Take an honest look at your attitude, then ask yourself, 'Would I like to work with this person? Would I like being married to me?' If you answer no, it's time to change your attitude and behavior," says Mr. Foreman.

Start with a smile

Start building a positive attitude as soon as you open your eyes each morning. "Instead of dragging yourself out of bed and off to work in a big rush, start each day with a positive, healthful routine," Mr. Foreman says.

To do that, he suggests you:

- Get up early so you don't have to rush.
- Tune into positive messages. If the morning news depresses you, listen to a motivational cassette or read an upbeat, fun book.
- Eat a healthy breakfast.
- Exercise. Refresh your body and spirit with a brisk walk or other aerobic activity.
- Leave home early. Allow enough time for your commute -- and then some.

Put yourself in charge

"On the job, an individual with a positive attitude is more likely to achieve good results. The next time there is an important assignment or a promotion, that person is likely to get it," Mr. Foreman says.

Here are his strategies for achieving a positive attitude at work:

- Plan your day and your future. Work to achieve real goals, not just finish tasks.
- Greet people with a smile. Studies have found that smiling makes you feel better.
- Avoid excuses; they just make the other person angrier. But "I'm sorry" and "I'll take care of it" work wonders.
- Give sincere appreciation. Your co-workers deserve to know when they've done something well -- and they will return the compliment.
- Listen more and talk less. Listening to another person is one of the best compliments you can give.
- Alternate work and rest periods. Take time out to refresh yourself with a walk, stretches or other moderate exercise.
- Don't complain. Grumbling focuses attention on what's wrong, not what's right, and creates a negative atmosphere.
- Learn from your mistakes. Instead of getting upset, ask, "How can I correct the situation?"
- Make room for humor. Make it cheerful, not offensive.
- Review your accomplishments at the end of the day. Even small contributions make a difference.
- Go home early enough to spend time with family or friends. Relax and get a good night's sleep.

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Having Difficult Conversations

Sometimes in life it's necessary to have difficult conversations—whether at home, school, work, with friends, or with your partner in a relationship. Though it's a natural part of life, it can be tricky to collect your thoughts, say what you really mean to say, and have a productive conversation. Here are some tips to help you have effective conversations with others, even when the topic is complicated, heavy, or just all-around difficult.

- If you know the conversation is coming, spend some time preparing yourself for it. You don't have to write down every word you plan on saying but brainstorm what your main points are. Ask yourself, what do I want to accomplish from this conversation?
- Try not to label the conversation as “difficult” in your mind, or you might cause yourself unnecessary stress and anxiety. Instead, focus on how you'll feel after the conversation is over. You'll likely feel relieved and glad that you found the courage to have it.
- Don't assume you know how the other person feels or what they are going to say. They have their own perspective and emotions entirely different from yours.
- When possible, try to have the conversation in person. Although so much of our communication is done electronically or on the phone these days, many nonverbal cues get lost, such as body language, tone, and facial expressions. This can lead to misinterpretations and misunderstandings.
- In the moment, try to stay calm and focused and don't forget to breathe. If you are nervous, taking deep breaths beforehand can help to calm your nerves.
- Stay open to how the conversation naturally evolves based on the other person's thoughts and how they respond to yours.
- Try to be an active listener during the conversation and really consider what the other person is saying. This will facilitate a more productive conversation and encourage the other person to actively listen to you as well.
- Be direct in a tactful way. Don't expect others to read your mind. They won't know how you feel unless you tell them.
- If necessary, take a break from the conversation and regroup at a later date. This will give both parties time to calm down, reflect, and consider the best approach.

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Being a Strong Leader: Tips on Making Decisions, Coaching

As a leader, you wear many hats. In addition to overseeing others, you are also likely to be in charge of making important decisions, coaching employees through situations, and communicating with team members about important matters. To better develop effective leadership skills that will help you be successful in each of these areas, follow the guidelines below.

As someone who makes decisions, you should:

- Think things through. Don't decide too hastily, and make sure to consider alternatives. Employees can be a great resource. Ask them for input regarding decisions when appropriate.
- Take risks, but know the consequences before you jump.
- Admit when you make a mistake, and use it as a learning tool. Share with others the lessons that you have been taught.

As a coach who guides employees, you should:

- Envision the goals that you and your team can accomplish. Seek and share the goals with your team, motivating them to get there.
- Show each member of the team that you are interested in his or her success. Notice unique skills and talents, and work with each member to develop them.
- Help resolve differences between team members. You can act as a mediator between two employees who don't see eye-to-eye. When doing this, make sure you are fair and supportive to each employee.
- Be enthusiastic and honest to each employee. This will inspire them to be the same way.

As a communicator, you should:

- Give the employee your full attention when he or she is speaking to you. Don't be quick to criticize or judge, hear the person out, and think before you speak.
- Check if employees understand goals.
- Give feedback to employees. This can be constructive criticism, but make sure you present it in an encouraging and supportive way. Be specific when an employee needs to make a change.
- Be calm when stressful situations arise. Be the voice of reason when things are tough.
- When communicating praise or criticism, use "I" statements to demonstrate how you feel. For example, "I was impressed by your latest presentation to our clients," or, "I was hurt by what you said to co-workers about the team leaders."

Written by Life Advantages - Author Dr. Delvina Miremadi ©2022



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COPD Awareness

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a term used to describe chronic lung diseases, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis. In the United States, COPD affects more than 15 million adults. More than half of those diagnosed are women. COPD is a significant cause of disability, and it is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Symptoms of COPD can be different for each person, but common symptoms are:

- **Increased shortness of breath**
- **Frequent coughing (with and without mucus)**
- **Wheezing**
- **Tightness in the chest**
- **Unusual tiredness**

COPD is (currently) an incurable disease, but with the proper diagnosis and treatment, there are many things you can do to breathe better and enjoy life and live for many years. Being active will help you feel better, move better, and sleep better. You may also need oxygen therapy, pulmonary rehabilitation, or medicines to treat complications.

The good news is that COPD can be prevented by not smoking. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of COPD. Most people who have COPD smoke or used to be a smoker. However, a genetic condition called [alpha-1 antitrypsin \(AAT\) deficiency](#) can also cause the disease.

Experts now say that any physical activity, even a few minutes at a time, counts toward better health. Regular exercise will improve your stamina and strength and help you with daily and recreational activities. You will also strengthen your bones and muscles, increase your self-confidence, and breathe easier with less effort. It is essential to stay physically active to keep feeling these benefits. Although there is no cure, there are treatments and lifestyle changes that can help you feel better, stay more active, and slow the progress of the disease.

Source:

[What is COPD? - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease - COPD Foundation](#)
[COPD - What Is COPD? | NHLBI, NIH](#)
[EIM_Rx-for-Health_COPD.pdf \(exerciseismedicine.org\)](#)



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Activities to Keep Your Mind Sharp

Memory loss and other cognitive changes can be frustrating. Everyone has the occasional "senior moment." However, did you know that aging alone does not cause cognitive decline? You can improve your memory, focus, and general brain function no matter how old you are. The first step we are all taught is to make healthy lifestyle changes. In addition to these lifestyle choices, there are strategies you can practice to help maintain cognitive fitness.

Here are several you might try:

1. Keep learning something new

Education is critical for better mental functioning in old age. Studies have shown that advanced education keeps memory strong by naturally creating the habit of remaining mentally active. Challenging your brain with cognitive exercises, such as sudoku and crossword puzzles, activates the processes that help maintain individual brain cells and stimulate communication.

2. Use all your senses while creating a memory

Your primary senses go hand-in-hand with brain function. The more senses you use while learning something, the more of your brain is used to retain new memory. Challenge all your senses as you venture into the unfamiliar.

3. Believe in yourself

There are many falsehoods and misconceptions when it comes to failing memory. When exposed to negative stereotypes about aging and memory, middle-aged and older learners struggle with memory tasks. People who have convinced themselves that they are no longer in control of their memory are less likely to work at maintaining or improving their memory skills. Therefore, they are more likely to experience cognitive decline. Coupling the personal belief that you can improve your memory with practice gives you a better chance of keeping your mind sharp.

4. Prioritize your brain activity

Take advantage of smartphone reminders, calendars, maps, shopping lists, file folders, and address books to keep routine information accessible. Designate a place at home for your glasses, purse, keys, and other items you use often. By creating a routine and daily habits to maintain the memory of small things, like where you left your car keys, you are conserving mental energy to keep your mind fresh and open to new thoughts and ideas.

5. Say it. Repeat it

Memorizing something you've just heard, read, or thought about can be tricky. Repeat it out loud or write it down to reinforce the connection. One of the most common difficulties is remembering names. If you are meeting people for the first time, try using their names more often while speaking to them. For instance, "So, John, where did you meet Camille?"

6. Space things out

It's best not to repeat something many times in a short period, such as cramming for an exam. Spacing out study periods helps improve memory and is particularly valuable when trying to master complicated information and pay attention to details.

Try out some of the following activities to support your brain health, keep your mind sharp, and have a little fun along the way!

- Complete a jigsaw puzzle
- Learn a new language
- Dance
- Learn a new instrument
- Read a book
- Meditate
- Listen to music
- Draw, paint, or color
- Play brain games
- Learn a new skill
- Teach a skill to someone else

Sources:

[Open Your Mind to New Experiences and Possibilities - Home \(familywellbeingcoach.com\)](https://familywellbeingcoach.com)

[Keeping an Open Mind: How to Embrace New Ideas | by Steve Spring | Live Your Life On Purpose | Medium](#)

[10 Ways to Open Your Mind to New Possibilities - Everyday Inspiration \(beliefnet.com\)](https://beliefnet.com)



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National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness

November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month, a time to heighten awareness about Alzheimer's disease and support the more than 6.2 million Americans living with it. It is a brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills and, eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks.

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Memory problems are typically one of the first signs of Alzheimer's, though initial symptoms may vary from person to person. A decline in other aspects of thinking, such as finding the right words, vision/spatial issues, and impaired reasoning or judgment, may also signal the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

Some older adults have more memory or thinking problems than adults their age. This condition is called mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and can be an early sign of Alzheimer's, but not everyone with MCI will develop the disease.

Researchers are studying many approaches to prevent or delay Alzheimer's. Some focus on drugs, some on lifestyle or other changes.

There is evidence for three types of interventions:

- Increased physical activity
- Blood pressure control for people with high blood pressure
- Cognitive training

No specific evidence recommends a diet to prevent cognitive decline or Alzheimer's. However, certain diets and healthy eating patterns have been associated with mental benefits. Such as the Mediterranean diet and the MIND—a combination of the Mediterranean and Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension ([DASH](#)) diets. The MIND diet focuses on plant-based foods linked to dementia prevention.

Currently, there is no cure for Alzheimer's, though there has been significant progress in recent years in developing and testing new treatments. Several medicines have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat people with Alzheimer's.

Source:

[Alzheimer's Foundation of America | November Awareness \(alzfdn.org\)](#)

[What Is Alzheimer's Disease? | National Institute on Aging \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Preventing Alzheimer's Disease: What Do We Know? | National Institute on Aging \(nih.gov\)](#)

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Slow Cooker Curried Butternut Squash Soup

4 Servings

Vegan, Gluten-Free, Dairy Free, Nut Free, Egg Free, Low Carb

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 medium butternut squash (2 - 2 ½ pounds), peeled, seeded, and cubed (about 5 cups)
- 3 cups "no-chicken" broth or vegetable broth
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 teaspoons curry powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 14 ounce can of coconut milk
- 1-2 tablespoons lime juice, plus wedges for serving
- Chopped fresh cilantro for garnish

Directions

1. Stir squash, broth, onion, curry powder, garlic powder, and salt together in a 5-quart slow cooker.
2. Cover and cook until the vegetables are very tender, either 7 hours on Low or 3 ½ hours on High.
3. Turn off the heat and stir in coconut milk and lime juice to taste. Puree with an immersion blender until smooth. Garnish with cilantro.

Nutrition

Serving Size: 1 cup

Per Serving:

Calories: 153	Protein: 2.2g
Carbohydrates: 14.5g	Dietary Fiber: 3.1g
Fat: 10.8g	Saturated Fat: 9.4g
Calcium: 59.9mg	Magnesium: 56.8mg
Potassium: 453.5mg	Sodium: 424.2mg

Source: [Slow-Cooker Curried Butternut Squash Soup Recipe | EatingWell](#)

Practicing Detachment from Alcohol Issues

Ask for counseling help and support if you are concerned about a loved one's alcohol use this holiday season. Start with your EAP or other qualified expert and discuss the art of "detachment." Detachment is about stopping the preoccupation with the drinker's behavior—tracking what they are doing and where they are going, threatening, pleading, manipulating, and all the while growing resentful or even physically ill. Detachment is the "off switch" to enabling. It is a teachable skill, and with guidance you can discover how to use support groups to learn how to manage the alcoholic relationship in a new way. Learning to detach with awareness typically accelerates the alcoholic's awareness and willingness to accept treatment that enabling has helped to prevent.

Prioritize Productivity above Politics

Tension and conflict can adversely affect workplace productivity, which is why political discussions are typically avoided. They do arise, however, and when they do, the challenge is remaining civil to prevent a hostile work environment where someone can feel intimidated, harassed, ostracized, or even punished for their political views. Tips: 1) Avoid inflammatory language, personal insults, and sweeping generalizations. 2) Agree to disagree. 3) Don't "rage" over politics. 4) Ask others nearby if they mind you talking politics. If they do, take the discussion to a more private area.

Should You Screen Your Teen for Depression and Anxiety?

Moodiness is normal in teenagers. Even healthy teens will have emotional ups and downs. But depression and anxiety disorders are not simply mood swings. Left untreated, they can influence long-term health and social problems. With suicide being the second leading cause of death for young people 10-19,* the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that all teens get screened for anxiety and depression. It's not difficult, and a doctor can do it. So ask if it's not part of a routine office visit. The goal is earlier treatment and better outcomes, if or when spotted. (*Natl Vital Stat Rep. 2021;70(9):1-114) Learn more: Rollcall.com [Search "panel recommends adolescent screening"]

Inflation Stopper Apps for Your Phone

Technology apps can help you beat inflation and then some! For example, you can scan the barcode of a product while in the store to discover where it can be purchased more cheaply. Other apps allow you to identify products for sale, that when purchased, can later be scanned for a rebate to a PayPal account. Many others like these exist. To find them, search "money saving apps" on your smartphone. Find the category labeled "Shopping." Highly rated money-back apps include ones like ShopSavvy and Ibotta, but check consumer feedback to make an informed choice.



Stop Stress, Right Now:

Anticipating the Holidays with a Self-Care Plan

Try creating a “holiday self-care plan” this year if you are facing isolation, an overwhelming list of “to-dos,” coping with grief, or facing past hurts. Don’t let the season just nudge you along with uncertainties, big to-do lists, and anxiety. Self-care means deciding how you will maintain health and wellness. Decide what holiday events you will (or will not) attend, be assertive about asking for help and support, stick to a budget, and decide you won’t feel guilty for not hosting the big party this year. Add emotional wellness decisions, too. For example, try letting go of lingering resentment from that argument you had last year with your brother-in-law. Discover relief that comes from no longer replaying the exchange in your mind. For real impact, schedule treats or pampering experiences for yourself during the season. Their real value is serving as fun experiences you can look forward to when stressed. If grieving the loss of a loved one, decide how you will remember your loved one during the holidays. Give yourself the opportunity and permission to feel loss. Ask for support you need, and don’t resist feelings of expressing sorrow because you fear “ruining” the holidays for others. With a holiday self-care plan, you can anticipate less stress during the season. In time, you may be sharing your planning secrets with others who need them as you discover more positivity in the seasons to come.

Wake Up More Refreshed

Are you groggy when you first wake up or, even worse, feel like you haven’t slept at all? This is the experience of nearly 70% of people in a recent United Kingdom study. There is little reason to believe the same does not apply throughout the Western hemisphere. *Here’s the fix:* Make earlier sleep time a priority. Try going to bed earlier for a week, and wake up early enough to have a routine that includes something pleasurable—taking your time, taking a walk, fixing a leisurely breakfast, or whatever else fits for you. The key: Make it enjoyable. In theory, your brain will adapt to this structure, and you will awaken more refreshed. As a result, you should begin to experience more satisfying days. Source: www.henryford.com/services/sleep-disorders

Are You a Bully, But Don’t Know It?

It’s a myth that bullying in the workplace is always obvious. Bullying may be invisible to bystanders or impossible to label as such with only one stand-alone incident in the absence of its context. This is what makes mistreatment of others insidious. And it’s what makes a complete “bullying behaviors checklist” difficult to construct. Do you practice bullying behaviors? Rather than a checklist, examine two questions: Do you desire or seek to control or influence your coworker’s behavior motivated by your own desires, needs, or self-serving motives? If not, are these motives hidden behind what you often label as “helping” (i.e., helping someone grow or know their place; helping someone not get too ambitious, “helping them not getting burned,” or “learning the politics of this place”? Still need a list of bullying behaviors? Find one below.

See: <https://positivepsychology.com/workplace-bullying/#examples>

Consume News with Awareness

The COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine have offered plenty of fear and uncertainty. Has the anxiety interfered with your ability to sleep or be productive? Have you been too focused on the latest frightening news? It’s hard to avoid the news, but you can lessen its impact. Tips: 1) Be aware that news is sold and used to sell products, services, and clicks; 2) News is designed to agitate the reader to click or flip pages; 3) It is natural to focus on bad or frightening news because it directly affects the human “fight-or-flight” trigger response. With this awareness and lessened intensity, experiment by consuming news in moderation and use more time for other things you want to accomplish in your life.

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach. Your EAP is here to help with family, work, health, & legal issues.

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