

# **Self help matters.**

Helping you to find your solutions

## **Negative Thinking**

# Negative Thinking

Motor racing drivers on an oval circuit were found to be “hitting the wall” because they had developed a negative anxiety about doing just that. Subconsciously they were steering into the wall. After confronting this negative-thinking, they learned to avoid it.

Our perspectives of the “glass half full” (positive) or the “glass half empty” (negative) peppers how we choose to perceive or interpret the world around us.

When you drive a car in winter, you might worry about ice. That’s not negative. That’s your brain cautioning you to moderate your speed and drive according to the adverse conditions. But if you worry about ice on the road all the year round, you’d probably see this as pointless. Again, that’s negative-thinking.

Sometimes you validate your negativity by saying, “If I prepare for the worst possible outcome, then I’m ready for it!” But is the worst always going to happen? Probably not. And you have wasted a lot of head-space and energy in the process.

## Top Tips

**Be with positive people.** There's nothing like being with negative people that breeds your own negativity. Connecting with positive people helps you learn to think and behave similarly.

**Identify the worry.** If you can isolate the deep-seated angst, frustration, fear or concern, then you can choose how to combat that emotion before it triggers negative-thinking.

**Reality check.** Negative-thinking is often void of reality. If you consider the reality of the situation, with the reality of the outcome, you'll often be faced with a different overview.

**Body language.** How you hold yourself can affect how you feel. Slouch or stoop and that'll feed into how you feel. If you sit or stand upright, confident, assured and bold, then you'll feel self-assured and positive.

**Calm down.** When faced with spiralling negative thoughts, stop! Give yourself a minute to take stock, breath calmly, relax and give yourself the space to respond.

**Embrace the good.** Often we get so sucked into thinking about bad, destructive things that we lose sight of the really good things we have going for us or that are around us. Write a list of what's good in your life, however small, as this can help you see and believe that things are actually quite good in your life.

**Thoughts create feelings.** Replacing negative and self-critical thoughts with more positive self-accepting thoughts starts by accepting that negative thoughts are no longer helpful to you and are creating negative feelings and outcomes.

**Act positively.** Do something actively positive. Phone a relative who's lonely, help a family friend with gardening, coach a fellow-student on a subject you know something about. Feeling good about what you're doing helps you get into a habit of feeling good about yourself and this creates positivity.

## Resources

### MOODZONE

Boost your mood, cope with stress, anxiety or depression or simply improve your overall emotional wellbeing.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx)

### LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



**Opening Hours:** Online

<https://littf.com/>

### MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



**Opening Hours:** Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

### UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



[www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support)

### THE MIX

Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

#### **If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following**

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - [www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling)