

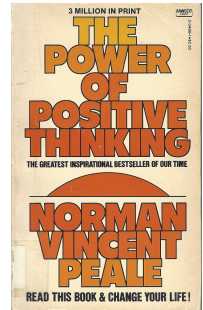
# The Power of Positive Thinking

Norman Vincent Peale (1952)

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*Notes by Bob Evely  
Wilmore, Kentucky; 2018.*

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Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! (13)

There are various cases of inferiority feelings, and not a few stem from childhood. (15)

## Prayer

The acquiring of dynamic faith is accomplished by prayer, lots of prayer, by reading and mentally absorbing the Bible and by practicing its faith techniques. ... Surface skimming, formalistic and perfunctory prayer is not sufficiently powerful. (17)

Pray deep, big prayers that have plenty of suction and you will come up with powerful and vital faith. (18)

## Affirmations

*"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* (Philippians 4:13) (14)

*"According to your faith be it unto you."* (Matthew 9:29) (18)

*"If ye have faith ... nothing shall be impossible unto you."* (Matthew 17:20) (19)

*"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."* (Mark 11:24) (54)

*"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."* (Mark 9:23) (93)

*"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* (Romans 8:31) (19)

*"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Romans 12:2)

The prescription I write is a verse from the Bible; Romans 12:2. I do not write out the verse for my patients. I make them look it up. (28)

*"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."* (Isaiah 40:31) (40)

*"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."* (John 10:10) (43)

*"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."* (Psalm 118:24)

*"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let now your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* (John 14:27)

*"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile."* (Mark 6:31)

*"The peace of God which passeth all understanding."* (Philippians 4:7)

*"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help."* (Psalm 121)

*"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28)

*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."* (Isaiah 26:3)

*"The Power of Positive Thinking" (Norman Vincent Peale)*

*"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14) (131)*

*"I am with you always." (132)*

*"Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10) (155)*

*"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart." (Psalm 27:14) (155)*

*"The Lord is the strength of my life ... in this will I be confident." (Psalm 27:1,3) (168)*

Words have profound suggestive power, and there is healing in the very saying of them. (30)

It is helpful to use lines from poetry or passages from the Scriptures. A man of my acquaintance who achieved a remarkable peace of mind has the habit of writing on cards unusual quotations expressing peacefulness. He carries one of the cards in his wallet at all times, referring to it frequently until each quotation is committed to memory. One of the quotations he used is from a sixteenth-century mystic, "Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. Everything passes away except God. God alone is sufficient." (30)

### **Re-educating the mind**

If your mind is obsessed by thoughts of insecurity and inadequacy it is, of course, due to the fact that such ideas have dominated your thinking over a long period of time. Another and more positive pattern of ideas must be given the mind, and that is accomplished by repetitive suggestion of confidence ideas. [It is to] re-educate the mind. (18)

I used to drive around all day between calls thinking fear and defeat thoughts, and incidentally that is one reason my sales were down. ... I have learned to think differently. ... Instead of thinking fear thoughts of defeat and ineffectiveness, I think thoughts of faith and courage. (19)

The secret is to fill your mind with thoughts of faith, confidence, and security. This will force out or expel all thoughts of doubt, all lack of confidence. (24)

Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. (24)

### **Fear**

Everywhere you encounter people who are inwardly afraid. Deep within themselves they mistrust their ability to meet responsibilities or to grasp opportunities. (20)

The blows of life, the accumulation of difficulties, the multiplication of problems tend to sap energy and leave you spent and discouraged. (20)

### **Taking inventory**

So if you feel that you are defeated and have lost confidence in your ability to win, sit down, take a piece of paper and make a list, not of the factors that are against you, but of those that are for you. (23)

### **God is guiding you**

One of the most powerful concepts, one which is a sure cure for lack of confidence, is the thought that God is actually with you and helping you. No other idea is so powerful in developing self-confidence as this simple belief when practiced. To practice it simply affirm, "God is with me; God is helping me; God is guiding me." (23)

### **Choosing a mind full of peace**

Last night I got into bed and read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. I didn't go to bed with an ear full of trouble. I went to sleep with a mind full of peace. An ear full of trouble or a mind full of peace. Which do you choose?

The essence of the secret lies in a change of mental attitude. The life of inner peace, being harmonious and without stress, is the easiest type of existence. [It is an] acceptance of God's gift of peace. (27)

Let mental pictures of the most peaceful scenes you have ever witnessed pass across your mind, as, for example, some beautiful valley filled with the hush of evening time. (30)

Fill your mind with all peaceful experiences possible, then make planned and deliberate excursions to them in memory. (36)

### **Conversation**

There are other practical ways by which you can develop serenity and quiet attitudes. One way is through your conversation. Depending upon the words we use and the tone in which we use them, we can talk ourselves into being nervous, high-strung, and upset. We can talk ourselves into either negative or positive results. By our speech we can also achieve quiet reactions. Talk peaceful to be peaceful. In a group when the conversation takes a trend that is upsetting, try injecting peaceful ideas into the talk.

Negative conversation adversely affects circumstances. (33)

Fill your personal and group conversations with positive, happy, optimistic, satisfying expressions. (33)

### **Starting your day**

Start each day by affirming peaceful, contented, and happy attitudes and your days will tend to be pleasant and successful. Such attitudes are active and definite factors in creating satisfactory conditions. Watch your manner of speech then if you wish to develop a peaceful state of mind. (33)

### **Silence**

Another effective technique in developing a peaceful mind is the daily practice of silence. Everyone should insist upon not less than a quarter of an hour of absolute quiet every 24 hours. (34)

### **The link between mind and body**

If your mind tells you that you are tired, the body mechanism, the nerves, and the muscles accept the fact. If your mind is intensely interested, you can keep on at an activity indefinitely. What is needed is thought discipline. By supplying attitudes of faith to the mind it can increase energy. (40)

Our physical condition is determined very largely by our emotional condition, and our emotional life is profoundly regulated by our thought life. (43)

### **Tapping divine energy**

Contact with God establishes within us a flow of the same type of energy that re-creates the world and that renews springtime every year. When in spiritual contact with God through our thought process, the Divine energy flows through the personality.

It is my conviction that the principles of Christianity scientifically utilized can develop an uninterrupted and continuous flow of energy into the human mind and body. (41)

The solution to weariness is to get into the time synchronization of Almighty God. One way to do this is by going out some warm day and lying down on the earth. Get your ear close down to the ground and listen. You will hear all manner of sounds. You will hear the sound of the wind in the trees and the murmur of insects, and you will discover presently that there is in all these sounds a well-regulated tempo. (44)

Pray: "Dear God, You are the source of all energy. You are the source of the energy in the sun, in the atom, in all flesh, in the bloodstream, in the mind. I hereby draw energy from You as from an illimitable sources." Keep in tune with the Infinite. (45)

### **Balance and harmony**

The body is designed to produce all needed energy over an amazingly long period of time. If the individual takes reasonable care of his body from the standpoint of proper diet, exercise, sleep, no physical abuse, the body will produce and maintain astonishing energy and sustain itself in good health. If he gives similar attention to a well-balanced emotional life, energy will be conserved.

The natural state of the individual when body, mind, and spirit work harmoniously is that of a continuous replacement of necessary energy. (42)

### **Thomas Edison**

According to Mrs. Edison, his secret ability to rest in a manner so natural and complete was attributed to his being "nature's man." He was completely in harmony with nature and with God. There were no obsessions, no disorganizations, no conflicts, no mental quirks, no emotional instability. He worked until he needed to sleep, then he slept soundly and arose and returned to his work. He drew his energy from emotional self-mastery, the ability to relax completely. (43)

### **Be on fire for something**

When a very busy statesman was asked why he was not tired he replied, "I am enthusiastic about my convictions." He was on fire for something. You only lose energy when life becomes dull in your mind. Get interested in something. Get absolutely enthralled in something. Throw yourself into it with abandon. Be somebody. Do something. (45)

### **Guilt and fear**

The effect of guilt and fear feelings on energy is widely recognized by all authorities having to do with the problems of human nature. (47)

### **Prayer**

Prayer restores the harmonious functioning of body and soul. Pray for God's relaxation inwardly. (51)

It is important to realize that you are dealing with the most tremendous power in the world when you pray (53)

The secret of prayer is to find the process that will most effectively open your mind humbly to God. (53)

### **A formula**

Prayerize ... Picturize ... Actualize. (55)

Go about every day discussing with God in a natural, normal manner the questions that have to be decided and dealt with. The Presence will come to dominate the conscious and ultimately the unconscious thinking. “Prayerize” your daily life. Pray as you walk or drive or perform other everyday activities. Say to God as a close associate, “What will I do about this, Lord? Give me a fresh insight on this, Lord.” (55)

To assure something worth while happening, first pray about it and test it according to God’s will; then print a picture of it on your mind as happening, holding the picture firmly in consciousness. (55)

Do this and you will be astonished at the strange ways in which the picturization comes to pass. In this manner the picture “actualizes.” (56)

### **Prayer is vibration**

I believe that prayer is a sending out of vibrations from one person to another and to God. You transport from yourself to the other person a sense of love, helpfulness, support – a sympathetic, powerful understanding – and in this process you awaken vibrations in the universe through which God brings to pass the good objectives prayed for. (59)

### **Prayer as a stimulus**

One of the important functions of prayer is as a stimulus to creative ideas. Within the mind are all of the resources needed for successful living. Ideas are present in the consciousness which, when released and given scope together with proper implementation, can lead to the successful operation of any project or undertaking. (60)

Do not always ask when you pray, but instead affirm that God’s blessing are being given, and spend most of your prayers giving thanks. (65)

### **Choose to be happy**

When I get up in the morning I have two choices – either to be happy or to be unhappy. (66)

Many of us manufacture our own unhappiness. Of course not all unhappiness is self-created, for social conditions are responsible for not a few of our woes. Yet it is a fact that to a large extent by our thoughts and attitudes we distill out of the ingredients of life either happiness or unhappiness for ourselves. (68)

Happiness is achievable and the process for obtaining it is not complicated. Anyone who desires it, who wills it, and who learns and applies the right formula may become a happy person. (68)

“I make it a habit to be happy.” This is a profound statement. Our happiness or unhappiness depends to an important degree upon the habit of mind we cultivate. (69)

The happiness habit is developed by simply practicing happy thinking. Make a mental list of happy thoughts and pass them thru your mind several times each day. Every morning before arising, lie relaxed in bed and deliberately drop happy thoughts into your conscious mind. (70)

When you arise, say out loud three times: *“This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”* (Psalm 118:24)

When dressing or getting breakfast, say aloud remarks such as: “I believe this is going to be a wonderful day. I believe I can successfully handle all problems that will arise today. I feel good physically, mentally, emotionally. It is wonderful to be alive.” (70)

As a redcap carried a man's suitcase he tried to share a little Christian fellowship with him. He carefully watched a customer to see if there was any way in which he could give him more courage and hope. (71)

If happiness is determined by our thoughts it is necessary to drive off the thoughts which make for depression and discouragement. (76)

### **Stop fuming and fretting**

Many people make life unnecessarily difficult for themselves by dissipating power and energy thru fuming and fretting. (80)

A first step is to reduce your pace or at least the tempo of your pace. It is possible for a person to live a quiet existence physically and yet maintain a high tempo emotionally. The character of our thoughts determines pace. When the mind goes rushing on pell-mell from one feverish attitude to another it becomes feverish. One might suffer profoundly from debilitating overstimulation and super-excitement, which produces toxic poisons in the body and creates emotional illness, fatigue, and a sense of frustration so that we fume and fret about everything from our personal troubles to the state of the nation and the world. (80)

The only wise rate at which to live is God's rate. God gets things done and they are done right, and He does them without hurry. He neither fumes nor frets. He is peaceful and therefore efficient. The same pace is offered to us: *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."* (John 14:27) (81)

The deep quietness of woods and valleys so well known to our forefathers is an unaccustomed state to us. (81)

Practice being peaceful. Practice: *"The peace of God which passeth all understanding."* (Philippians 4:7) (83)

A prescription: Take off two hours every working day and go for a long walk. Then take off a half-day a week and spend that day in a cemetery, meditating on the solemn fact that when you get there permanently the world will go on just the same and, as important as you are, others will be able to do the work you are now doing. (84)

Very slowly read Psalm 121: *"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help."* (87)

A beginning step in achieving calmness is to discipline your physical reactions. You will be surprised at how quickly this can reduce the heat of your emotions, causing fuming and fretting to subside. (90)

### **Expect the best and get it**

If you expect the worst you will get the worst. If you expect the best you will get the best. *"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."* (Mark 9:23) (93)

I trained myself to think positively about everything. This does not mean that by believing you are necessarily going to get everything you want or think you want. Perhaps that would not be good for you. But that which has seemingly been impossible moves into the area of the possible. (94)

Expecting the best means that you put your whole heart into what you want to accomplish. (97)

Lots of people get nowhere simply because they do not know where they want to go. They have no clear-cut, precisely defined purpose. You cannot expect the best if you think aimlessly. (102)

Expect the best at all times. Never think of the worst. Take the best into your mind and only that. Nurture it. Concentrate on it. Emphasize it. Visualize it. Prayerize it. Surround it with faith. Make it your obsession. Expect the best, and spiritually creative mind power aided by God power will produce the best. (103)

### **Don't believe in defeat**

Faith supplies staying power. It contains dynamic to keep one going when the going is hard. (112)

An effective method for making your subconscious positive in character is to eliminate certain expressions of thought and speech which we might call the "little negatives" The best way to eliminate them is to deliberately say a positive word about everything. (114)

What you think about your obstacles largely determines what you do about them. Form the mental attitude that you cannot remove an obstacle and you will not remove it. (115)

A fundamental doctrine of Emerson is that the human personality can be touched with Divine power and thus greatness can be released from it. William James pointed out that the greatest fact in any undertaking is one's belief about it. (117)

A salesman once offered the following three-sentence prayer:

I believe I am always divinely guided.

I believe I will always take the right turn of the road.

I believe God will always make a way where there is no way. (120)

### **How to break the habit of worry**

Worry is simply an unhealthy and destructive mental habit. You were not born with the worry habit. You acquired it. And because you can change any habit and any acquired attitude, you can cast worry from your mind. (122)

A famous psychologist asserts that "fear is the most disintegrating enemy of human personality." And a prominent physician declares that "worry is the most subtle and destructive of all human diseases." (122)

A scientific expert on length of life made a study of some 450 people who lived to be 100 years of age. He found that these people lived long and contented lives because: (1) They kept busy. (2) They used moderation in all things. (3) They ate lightly and simply. (4) They got a great deal of fun out of life. (5) They were early to bed and early up. (6) They were free from worry and fear, especially fear of death. (7) They had serene minds and faith in God. (123)

Dr. George W. Crile, famous American surgeon, said, "We fear not only in our minds but in our hearts, brains, and viscera, that whatever the cause of fear and worry, the effect can always be noted in the cells, tissues, and organs of the body." (123)

Practice emptying the mind daily. This should be done preferably before retiring at night to avoid retention by the consciousness of worries while you sleep. Utilize a process of creative imagination. Conceive of yourself as actually emptying your mind of all anxiety and fear. Picture all worry thoughts as flowing out as you would let water flow from a basin by removing the stopper. (124)

Upon emptying the mind, practice refilling it. Fill it with thoughts of faith, hope, courage, expectancy. Say affirmations aloud. (125)

Fear is the most powerful thought with one exception; and that one exception is faith. Faith can always overcome fear. (125)

Surround your mind with healthy thoughts; thoughts of faith and not fear; and you will produce faith results instead of fear results. (126)

Reduce the number of worry words in your conversation. (127)

Never participate in a worry conversation. Shoot an injection of faith into all your conversations. (132)

Cultivate friendships with hopeful people. Surround yourself with friends who think positive, faith-producing thoughts and who contribute to a creative atmosphere. (132)

### **Power to solve personal problems**

Practice believing that God is as real as your wife, or your business partner, or your closest friend. Practice talking matters over with Him; believe that He hears and gives thought to your problems. Assume that He impresses upon your mind thru consciousness the proper ideas and insights necessary to solve your problems. (136)

### **Fear and guilt**

Fear and guilt, hate and resentment, are often closely connected with problems of health and physical well-being. (148)

Seek to have an absence of worry, resentment, and tension. (154)

### **Surrender to God's recuperative power**

One of the greatest techniques of human well-being is that of surrendering yourself to the recuperative power of God. This is done by consciously attaching yourself to the creative process thru mentally conceiving of re-creative forces as operating within you. Open your consciousness to the tides of vitality and re-creative energy inherent in the universe which have been barred from your life thru tension, high pressure, and other departures from the laws of well-being. (153)

He made both body and mind and He established the processes of health and well-being governing both. *"In Him we live and move and have our being."* (Acts 17:28) (155)

### **Connection between mind and body**

I have known a patient's blood pressure to jump sixty points almost instantaneously in response to an outburst of anger, creating strain upon the heart. (160)

Whenever a business problem starts to vex you or your begin to get angry, let yourself go limp all over. (160)

Since irritation, anger, hate, and resentment have such a powerful effect in producing ill-health, what is the antidote? Obviously it is to fill the mind with attitudes of good will, forgiveness, faith, love, and the spirit of imperturbability. (164)

William James said, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind." Fill your mind with fresh, new creative thoughts of faith, love, and goodness. By this process you can actually remake your life. (167)



Ralph Waldo Emerson declared, "A man is what he thinks about all day long." (169)

If you think in negative terms you will get negative results. If you think in positive terms you will achieve positive results. (170)

### **Relax**

Sleep is a natural restorative process. One would think that any person after a day's work would be able to sleep peacefully, but apparently Americans have even lost the art of sleeping. (180)

In a clinic study 77% of patients were found to be ill of psychosomatic difficulties – physical illness caused largely by unhealthy mental states. (181)

Remember what Carlisle called "the calm supremacy of the spirit over its circumstances." (183)

Do everything more slowly, less hectically, and without pressure. (183)

Try to keep yourself in tune with God. (184)

If you sit and relax and think about God and get yourself in tune with Him and open yourself to the flow of His power, then sitting is not laziness. In fact, it is about the best way to renew power. (185)

Collapse physically. Drain the mind of all irritation, resentment, disappointment, frustration, and annoyance. Think spiritually. (186)

Ten rules for taking the hard way out of your job. (189)

1. Don't get the idea that you are Atlas carrying the world on your shoulders.
2. Determine to like your work.
3. Plan your work and work your plan. Lack of system produces that "I'm swamped" feeling.
4. Don't try to do everything at once.
5. Get a correct mental attitude.
6. Become efficient in your work. Knowledge is power.
7. Practice being relaxed.
8. Discipline yourself not to put off until tomorrow what you can do today.
9. Pray about your work.
10. Take on the "unseen partner." God is as much at home in offices, factories, stores, kitchens, as in churches.

### **How to get people to like you**

1. Learn to remember names.
2. Be a comfortable person so there is no strain in being with you.
3. Acquire the quality of relaxed easy-goingness so that things do not ruffle you.
4. Don't be egotistical. Guard against giving the impression that you know it all.
5. Cultivate the quality of being interesting so that people will want to be with you and get something of stimulating value from their association with you.
6. Practice liking people until you learn to do so genuinely.
7. Never miss an opportunity to say a word of congratulation upon anyone's achievement, or express sympathy in sorrow or disappointment.

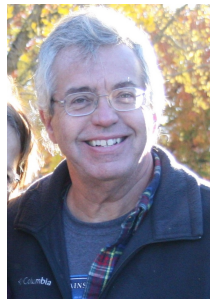
### **Editor Comments**

Throughout this book, Mr. Peale has often taken Scripture out of context. Properly studied and interpreted, Scripture does not teach a "name it and claim it" philosophy for life in this present era. For a serious study of the Bible it is important to remember the important instruction given in 2 Timothy 2:15 to "rightly divide" the Scriptures so as not to apply truths to our present situation that were directed specifically to a different group of people in a different era.

But having said this, there is much good that can be gleaned from the book. Because there is a strong relationship between faith, mind, and body; using the techniques of affirmation to train the conscious and the subconscious mind to have a positive outlook in all things can most certainly affect one's bodily health, energy level, personality, and attitude; and can therefore cause one to be more successful in all endeavors. The physical body is a miraculous thing, and clearly the mind (attitudes, outlooks) has a bearing upon physical health. I am convinced that when one is faced with a physical condition, healing can come when a positive mental outlook influences the body. So even if our study of the Bible leads us to believe God is not in the business of supernaturally healing in our present era, He has gifted us with a miraculous body and mind that work in close partnership, and healing can come when body and mind are working in harmony.

Keeping this in mind, I believe that the positive thinking principles contained within Mr. Peale's classic book contain great value.

*Notes by Bob Evely*



### **Evely Enterprises LLC**

Bob Evely, President

(p) 859.967.9955

bob@EvelyLLC.com

www.EvelyLLC.com

www.linkedin.com/in/bobevely