

The Top Five Ways to Be Positive (When Everyone and Everything around You Is Bringing You Down)

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

Several years ago, a friend of mine said something to me that I thought was very interesting. His family had been in the real estate business for over 100 years and owned many properties that my friend, I assumed, could also take over if he really wanted to. We were speaking about what sort of job my friend might like to do instead of being an attorney.

“Why don’t you go into the real estate business?” I asked him.

“I would never go into the real estate business,” he said. “The real estate business is the worst possible business you could ever be in. First of all, you have tenants and others constantly trying to take advantage of you and doing damage to your property. Second, you have nature and normal wear and tear destroying your property. Third, you have the government constantly taxing your property. There are just too many people out to hurt you in the real estate business. No way! Not for me.”

What he said, of course, is true. Whether it is nature, tenants, taxes, or the elements, any piece of property is constantly under attack. It is unavoidable. When a building is abandoned, squatters move in. They soon rip out the copper plumbing and take everything of value. If there are bricks, people might even come and take those too. Meanwhile, the government will continue to tax the property owner.

Having a piece of property is a constant fight for survival. You have elements, people, the government and all sorts of forces working in tandem to rip the property down or take it away.

- You have to pay property taxes.
- You have to protect it against the elements and continually repair it.
- To keep it valuable, you have to keep it updated inside and out.
- If people damage it, you have to fix it.
- You have to keep it occupied.

There is a force – almost gravity-like—that conspires to destroy everything of value out there: A property owner simply can never let down their guard and must be “on guard” and fixing, repairing and maintaining the property at all times. That is the job of people in the real estate industry: To keep properties “up” and maintained.

It is like that with people too. There is a constant gravitational-like force challenging you as well. There is an incredible amount of negativity and other forces out there that will destroy you and your dreams if you let them in. These forces are unavoidable, and the number one characteristic of the most successful people is the ability to avoid these negative forces. They succeed despite negativity coming at them from every single direction every minute of every day.

When I was in high school, I attended at least five separate high schools. In each case, I entered these high schools not knowing anyone at all. I noticed that in each high school I entered, the first people to generally try and be my friends were the kids who were trouble – and negative. The kids who were “bad news” were always the ones who wanted to be friends first. If I wanted to be friends with the better kids, I always had to wait a little bit longer and spend some time at the school first. Why do you think that was?

The negative kids represent to me something I have found everywhere I ever gone: The easiest forces (and people) to let into your life are generally the most destructive.

- It is easy to be friends with the bad kids.
- It is easy to get a job that does not require an education.
- It is easy to use drugs instead of trying to be happy another way.
- It is easy to seek out negative, unhappy people instead of positive people.
- It is easy to eat junk food instead of healthy food.

Everywhere we go and throughout our lives we are confronted with a variety of hard and easy choices. When we make easy choices, we have a hard life. When we make hard choices, we generally have an easy life.

You need to avoid the negative forces out there – the negative gravity and information that will seek to keep you down. You need to watch your mind: You need to put more positive things in your mind than negative things.

No one who ever achieves any form of greatness is realistic. Instead, they are able to ignore these negative forces and messages coming at them – guard their bodies and minds – and create conditions in their minds and bodies that promote success, happiness and possibility. This is what you need to do as well.

Most people out there have given up on their dreams. Many people have also given up on being happy or becoming the person they really wanted to be at one point. This is something that is now too far away for most people. They become like a piece of property that is only a shell of what it could be if the property was fixed up, updated and made its best. The elements have attacked and gone after these people, and over time, they become less capable than they could be. They give up on their dreams for many reasons.

What makes someone successful is no different than what makes someone good at managing property:

- You do not let anything bad inside that is likely to hurt it
- You keep everything up-to-date

- You make sure you avoid (bad) people (tenants)
- You make the best of what you are
- You put nice things inside of it

Most people, however, do not maintain themselves as well as they can. Instead, the elements around them have taken hold and reduced them to something less than they are capable of being. They have long ago given up on their dreams and what is possible for them.

Why do people give up on their dreams? Many people are negative because they are afraid. They have been disappointed so many times that they are now afraid of getting excited about anything. If someone is negative, then the chances are they are fearful. The problem, however, is that we typically get what we look for: If we look for negativity, then that is what we end up finding.

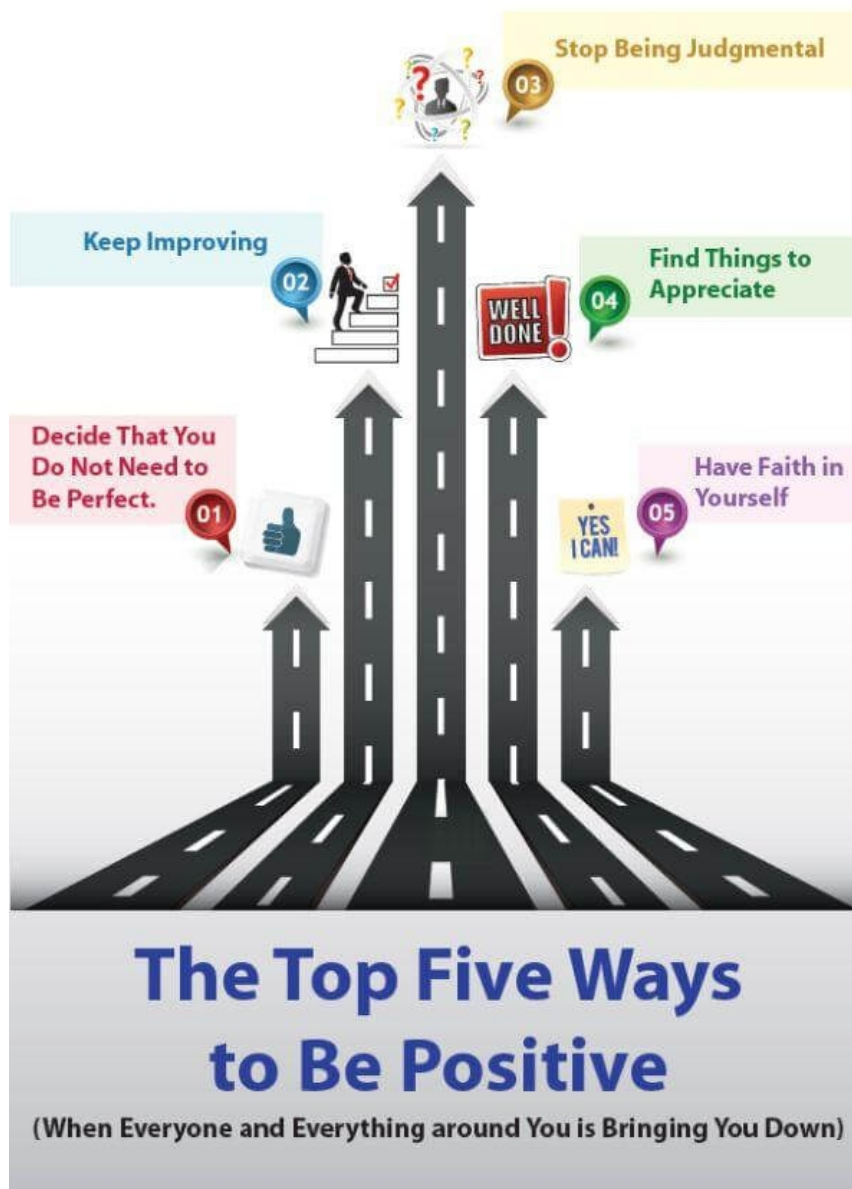
There are all sorts of forces around us that create doubt and hold us back:

- Things people have said about us in the past
- Things we have said about ourselves in the past
- Poor results we have gotten in the past
- Our current situation and fear of change
- People around us that give us negative messages
- People who used to be around us that gave us negative messages
- Our overall environments and how positive and negative these are
- Good results others around us have gotten
- Goals we have not accomplished in the past
- Information in our environment that frightens us
- Our lack of knowledge
- Our comfort level
- The news coming out of our environment

You need to stand guard at the doorway of your mind because what you think about daily shapes your destiny. If you watch the news, read the paper, or join the average conversation of most groups (co-workers, friends and others) you are likely to discover that a significant portion of this information is likely to be negative and uninspiring. Why this is the case, I do not know. What I do know is that this sort of information can act like a gravitational force on your life and keep you down.

Since negative information cannot necessarily be avoided, the best solution is often to counteract this with more positive than negative information. You need to pump your mind with positive thoughts daily—or else you will end up being unhappy.

Here are five ways you can be positive when everyone and everything around you is negative:



1. Decide That You Do Not Need to Be Perfect.

Most people become very negative because they feel they need to be perfect. They do not participate because they are afraid of losing or of not being the best. They are afraid of what people will say if they screw up or otherwise fail.

Everyone is going to screw up, and you will too. The worst thing you can do is to let the fact that you might screw up stop you from acting or doing anything at all. Far too many people allow the prospect of failure to shut them down or prevent them from acting. They also allow the fact that they are not perfect to make them feel bad about themselves. No one is perfect, and you are not either.

See the following article for more information:

- [Area 51 in Nebraska, Suicides, and the Danger of Comparing Yourself to Others](#)

2. Keep Improving

Many people hit a plateau of sorts in their lives and stop there. Or, they fall down to a certain level and stop there. The rare person keeps improving and keeps setting goals for themselves. One of the most important things you can do in your career and life is to constantly set goals for the person you want to become and never stop improving.

Improvement is powerful because when you are always improving and do not stop improving you are sending a message to your mind that tomorrow can be better than it is today. Tomorrow should always be better than today, and when you are constantly setting goals for yourself and improving, you are sending yourself that message.

There are a lot of things I feel proud of in my life; however, symbolically I have always set small fitness goals for myself to keep me motivated and constantly improving, primarily because it conditions my mind and body to think of the possibilities. A few years ago, it was difficult for me to run even a few miles. Now, I regularly run 10 to 12 miles. Even at that, I keep improving my times even though I am getting older. You need to keep improving constantly.

See the following articles for more information:

- [Never Stop Improving: The Secret to Career Life and Success](#)
- [Alpha Pygmy Goats, Unreasonably Optimistic Russian Attorneys and Setting High Expectations for Yourself](#)
- [Plan for Success and Not Failure](#)
- [Practice Makes Perfect](#)

3. Stop Being Judgmental

Most people are quite judgmental of others. They look at people who are different than them and find all sorts of fault. They find all sorts of fault with others, whether it is how they dress, talk, live, or conduct themselves. In fact, many social groups seem to exist and thrive based on judging others.

The problem with judging others is that as soon as you start judging others, you also start judging yourself. Any person who takes joy in judging others or watching others in pain will also eventually experience a great deal of pain. You need to free yourself from the disease of judging others and making them wrong.

See the following articles for more information:

- [The Danger of Judging Others](#)
- [Never Worry About What Others Think](#)

4. Find Things to Appreciate

Everyone needs to find things in their lives that they can appreciate, and every life has things in it that can be appreciated. You can even appreciate things that seem to be negative to you. You need to focus on the things that you have and not things you do not have.

The reason you need to appreciate things is because you will attract into your life what you focus on. If you focus on the negative, then you will attract the negative. If you focus on the good, you will attract more of the good. You need to find the good and what you can appreciate.

The world and the people in it are full of negative thoughts that will eat you up and take hold of you if you let them. The smartest thing you can do to be happy and not negative is to find aspects of your life that you love and focus on these. Be grateful for who you are and what you are.

See the following articles for more information:

- [Appreciate Those Around You](#)
- [The Power of Gratitude in Your Job Search](#)

5. Have Faith in Yourself

The most important power you have in the world is faith. Faith makes everything possible. Being positive is about having faith in yourself and that things will get better than they are today. You have been through a lot and whatever negativity you see in your life today will pass as well.

See the following article for more information:

- [The Most Important Thing You Can Have is Faith](#)

Your life is controlled by your thoughts and through faith you can achieve whatever you set your mind to. You need to believe in yourself first and do everything within your power to believe in yourself even when that does not always seem like the smartest thing to do. Everyone who has achieved anything worthwhile generally only was able to do this by having faith in themselves.

Conclusions

There is a tremendous amount of negativity, harm and hurt in the world. These forces are all around us and conspiring to bring us down and reduce us to less than we are capable of being. In order to reach our potential and be the people we are capable of becoming, we need to do everything we can to be positive in the face of overwhelming negativity. This will save us, make us strong and give us the lives we are entitled to and deserve.