

Healthy Choices: Healthy Attitude

Our attitude affects everything we do. A negative outlook can make tasks more difficult and escalate tensions in our relationships. How can we gain a healthier attitude? As with most things, it is the result of choices we make. Developing a positive attitude requires examining our choices in the areas where we have some control and making strategic decisions which will lead to the attitude we desire. The amount of sleep we get, the foods we put into our bodies, the influences to which we expose ourselves, etc. are all factors which sway our energy levels, our outlook and our ability to respond to stress.

An important part of developing a positive attitude is developing the discipline to keep yourself on track. For instance, different people require different amounts of sleep, but typically 8 hours is a good target. Determine a schedule which allows you to get the amount of sleep you need and determine to make it a priority. If you have gotten used to 5-6 hours of sleep, you will be amazed at the change in energy, emotions and overall attitude you will feel after just a couple of good nights' sleep. The increased energy that comes from adequate rest will enhance your creativity, your ability to solve problems, your focus, and your confidence, as well as your ability to make better decisions.

Healthy eating is certainly a boost to attitude. Try reducing the use of caffeine and sugar, which give brief energy surges, but drain you later on. Replace these with healthy snacks that will help maintain a more consistent energy level throughout the day. If you don't have time to prepare healthy meals, take a daily multi-vitamin to make sure your body is getting the nutrients it needs. Giving your body plenty of nutrients will make you feel better and increase your ability to handle stress. In conjunction with an adequate amount of sleep, you will soon find that problems that used to seem huge are much more manageable.

Do some sort of physical activity. This, too, requires discipline to make it work. However, even making a small change to increase your level of activity will make you feel better physically, mentally and emotionally. Just turning off the T.V. and taking a 5 – 10 minute walk will make a difference. Failure to stick to a new behavior is often the result of setting goals which are not consistent with our level of commitment. Challenge yourself to take small steps with which you can be consistent.

Our attitude is strongly tied to our physical condition. Changing habits and applying the discipline to maintain new ones is difficult, but the results you will see in a more pleasant disposition will astound you, and probably those around you as well!

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