

# Encourage positive thoughts.



Positive thinking is linked with better physical and mental health.

Healthier thoughts lead to healthier behaviors and can help you have:<sup>1</sup>

- Less sadness and worry.
- Lower levels of pain and discomfort.
- Better heart health.
- Increased ability to fight infections.
- Greater resiliency to manage stress.

Being positive doesn't mean you ignore it when life feels overwhelming. You don't need to pretend tough things aren't happening in your life. It does mean you feel those feelings, take steps to find solutions and improve your outlook. Here are some ways to encourage positive thoughts, even in challenging times.

## Be aware of your thoughts

Our brains naturally pay attention to the negative to protect us from potential harm. When having negative thoughts, ask yourself:

- Is the thought true?
- What evidence do I have?
- Am I making assumptions or predicting the future?
- Am I talking to myself the way I would a loved one?

It takes time, practice and self-compassion but being more aware of your thoughts leads to more positive thinking.

## Laugh

They say laughter is the best medicine. Laughter releases powerful feel-good chemicals called endorphins into our bodies. Endorphins help you feel happier, less stressed and more positive. Get the benefits of laughter by watching a funny movie, listening to your favorite comedian or playing a video on laughter yoga. (Yes, it's a real thing! Look it up).

## Spend time with positive people

Positivity is infectious. When you surround yourself with people who are positive, you're likely to be more positive. Choose who you allow into your inner circle and find people who, like you, want to see the good in every day.

Positive thinking can make good times even better and tough times feel more manageable.

<sup>1</sup>Positive thinking: Reduce stress by eliminating negative self-talk. Available at: [Mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org). Accessed June 2024.

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