



## CONSCIOUS OPTIMISM

By Ven. Adelowo Adesina

It is said, and it is generally agreed, that mankind is in the most disruptive era in the history of creation. These are evident in wars, famine, natural disasters – wildfires, floods, earthquakes, political uncertainties, economic ambiguities, etc., that we witness all around and all about us.

Do you tend to see the positives or the negatives in these trying situations? When it comes to how we view the world and the happening all around us, people fall into two categories – the pessimist and the optimist.

The pessimists assume the worst and focus on the negatives; the crisis and the chaos all around us. Some even conclude that the world has come or will soon come to an end. On the other hand, is the optimist who believes that life is not all about doom and gloom, there are always more positive sides to life and living than the negatives.



### About OPTIMAL

Optimal is a monthly wellness newsletter written, developed and circulated by **Sages & Scribes Consultants** aimed at informing, educating and improving on the general wellbeing of readers by focusing on the essentials for improved mental health, and how to live a vibrant yet practical life in the present reality.

In this edition, we look at **Conscious Optimism**. Wave after wave, our society seem to be sailing toward Icebergs of chaos, disruptions, famine, and disasters in dimensions with innumerable uncertainties. Should we give in to the bedeviling tides and watch everything fall apart? No! We are conscious of the troubling times yet optimistic that we will pull through. We will win!

Improve your wellness, optimize your wellbeing and enhance your lifestyle with **OPTIMAL**.



**“Optimism is a happiness magnet. If you stay positive, good things and good people will be drawn to you.”**

Mary Lou Retton



**“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”**

Winston Churchill



## Defining Optimism...

The word optimism embraces two closely correlated concepts:

1. The first is the inclination to “hope for the best”
2. The second is the inclination to believe that “we live in the best of times in the best possible world.”

Optimism therefore is the tendency to see and judge things from their best sides without ignoring or hiding their negative sides.

Optimism is acknowledged by experts as one of the most important personality traits needed by human beings in the quest to be successful and lead a life of purpose, meaning and significance.

Another name for conscious optimism is incurable optimist. That is, one who relentlessly pushes forward, never letting trials and obstacles keep him from believing and going for his

desired goals and ambitions that lies ahead.

Optimists see the good and positive sides in people, things, and events. They expect things to turn out well. They believe that they have the skills and enablement and ability to make good things happen and turn bad or negative things into good and positive things. They believe they can make things right. They choose to believe there is always tomorrow. There will always be opportunities. They choose to see the glass cup as being “half full” and never half empty.



## Character Qualities of Optimists



The following are the character qualities of optimists:

- ♥ They are realistic and pragmatic individuals who take a balance view of the events of life but choose to be positive about them.
- ♥ They feel good things will happen to them in the future.
- ♥ They expect and work for things to turn out for the best.
- ♥ They trust they will succeed despite life’s challenges and tough situations.
- ♥ They see the future as being bright and beautiful
- ♥ They believe that good things can come out of negative events.

- ♥ They see challenges, obstacles, even failures as opportunities to learn.
- ♥ They cultivate the attitude of gratitude for who they are and what they have.
- ♥ They always look for ways to make use of opportunities.
- ♥ They accept responsibility for their mistake and failures but don’t dwell on them.
- ♥ They strive to thrive, even flourish and prosper.



## Schools of thoughts...

There are two schools of thoughts as to how optimism as a character trait is given or acquired. This discuss is known as the “Nature Vs Nurture Debate”

“The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today.”

The first school of thought – The Nature advocates are of the opinion that optimism is a natural endowment. Optimism is generic. It is given and engrained in our DNA.

The second school of thought – The Nurture proponent argues that Optimism is learnt.

I am of the considered opinion that optimism is both given and learnt. Thus, optimism is both a personal trait and a product of our environment. Afterall, it is generally accepted that we are all the products of our family background, education, experiences, enlightenment, and exposure.

According to Karol Word, “from an early age, babies and children pick up the emotional vibes in their homes. If the atmosphere is relaxed and loving, children blossom even if they innately have the tendency towards anxiety. But if the home environment is tense and filled with dysfunctionality, optimism is the first thing to go. It is hard to be emotionally open and hopeful, when it is not being modelled for you by your caretaker.”

Studies have shown that optimism, the mindset that enables people to view the world, other people and events in the most favourable, positive light can be learnt by anybody.

Franklin D. Roosevelt



## VITAL STEPS TO OPTIMISM...



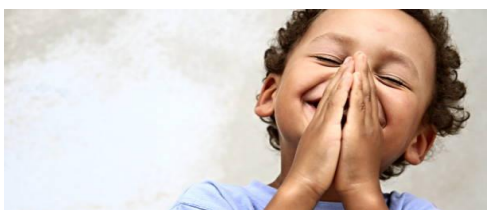
Listed below are some of the steps that can be taken to learn optimism:

### 1. Cultivate the Optimistic Mindset

Write down all your wishes, desires, and ambitions for good. Seek and pursue positive outcomes for all aspects of life; relationships, career and life chances, etc.

### 2. Positive Thinking

Change your thought patterns to thinking positive, happy thoughts. Challenge yourself instead of looking at the dark side of life to see the sunny side of life. This is what psychologist call “positive refraining”. Instead of seeing the world and the events of life in negative terms, use or wear positive lenses to see life’s choices and chances in bright, and beautiful lights.



### 3. Cultivate and Maintain Positive Friends.

Be mindful of the company you keep. Positive and negative emotions are contagious. If you spend a few hours in the company of friends with negative outlooks, chronic complainers, and gossipers, soon enough, you will be sailing in their boat. On the other hand, spend some time with happy, positive, and progressive forward-looking people, they will lift your spirit, motivate you to see possibilities, fire your drive and determination to overcome challenges and begin to make impossibilities possible.

### 4. Cultivate the Attitude of Gratitude

It is said that “your attitude is your greatest possession.” “Your attitude determines your altitude.” A “can do attitude”, makes all things possible. So rather than just striving, cultivate a “can do” attitude to thrive and to flourish.

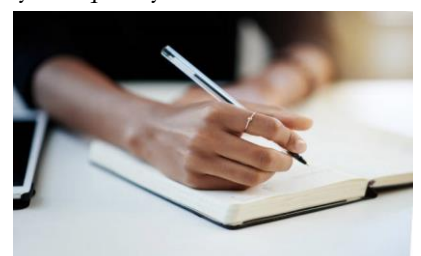
### 5. Write a Journal

Gratitude is the appreciation of what is valuable and meaningful to oneself.

Gratitude is a general state of thankfulness.

Gratitude is a mental state that fosters an optimistic outlook.

Writing down what you are grateful for is linked to greater feelings of optimism. Also, writing down your own acts of kindness can give your optimism a boost of good and positive feeling and improve your general well-being and your quality of life.





**“If you can be in the present state, without judgement and thoughts about the past and the future, you will find that there is no room for pessimism.”**

*~Weiss*



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## 6. PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Being optimistic doesn't mean you fail to acknowledge the negative side of life. Optimism is being in the moment to face realities, thinking rationally and taking pragmatic actions to attain the desired positive outcomes.

### 7. Turn Off the News



Someone once said, “five minutes of morning news is enough to send anyone's mood in a downward spiral.” The reality of our time is that the moment you turn on the news on television, flip open the newspaper or click on the social media, you are likely to be bombarded with a torrent of negative news items.

Globally, there is the Russian-Ukraine war, Californian wildfire, Hurricane Ian, Famine in Afghanistan, DRC, Zimbabwe, Congo, Protest in Iran, threats of nuclear bombing in Korea, etc. Locally, it is kidnapping, corruption, oil theft, building collapse, political uncertainties, exchange rates, etc.

This, however, is not all objective reporting nor the balanced view of events. It is thus advisable for people to limit the intake of negative news items to cultivate a positive optimistic attitude, mindset, and world view.

### Concluding Remarks...

Conscious optimism has its gains and benefits. It has been established that people with optimistic sunny worldview tend to be more resilience, proactive and pragmatic human beings and thus tend to be high achievers and more successful than pessimists.

Optimists tend to lead a more healthy, purposeful, and productive, less stress-free existence and tend to live long and happier lives.

- ♥ Optimists are known to enjoy better and more meaningful career and social relationships with colleagues, neighbours, family, and friends.
- ♥ Optimists tend to be more creative and innovative. They are constructive thinkers and problem solvers who contribute to the socio-economic development of their immediate community and the society at large.



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