

## ACTIVITY: Reduce the negativity in your life

Reducing negativity is the fastest way to increase your positivity ratio. Some negativity keeps us grounded, but we don't want it locking us into incessant cogitating over problems. As Mark Twain once put it, "Drag your thoughts away from your troubles...by the ears, by the heels, or any way you can manage it."

Negative emotions tend to overwhelm the rational brain with raw emotional power. The tendency is to ride the emotional wave without questioning whether the belief driving the negativity is valid. Stress sets off false beliefs constantly that appear to be a threat but aren't.

We have to learn how to dispute negativity and stress and not reflexively buy in on autopilot. When negative thoughts pop up, dispute them like a good lawyer would. Are they based on anything valid, or it just awfulizing? Round up the facts and put them to the test.

When you fail to dispute negative thinking, the false beliefs become entrenched and can lead to days or weeks of ruminating over a setback or comment. Rumination is dangerous. You go over and over the same story, locking in a false belief as well as negativity, which then dredges up other negative thoughts.

You can exit the rumination track by avoiding replay mode and letting go of the thought loop.

### Try This!

**DISTRACT YOURSELF.** Find healthy distractions—the gym, meditation, music—that force you to focus on something else.

**MINDFULNESS.** Learn to accept a thought as just a thought. You observe without judgment and refuse to grab the thought just because it's in your head. Only experience is real.

**REFRAME PROBLEMS.** Reappraisal is the secret of people who can keep setbacks from turning into prolonged blues. The choice is yours: half-full or half-empty.

**REFUSE THE MANIPULATION OF DIFFICULT PEOPLE.** Resist responding with negativity to their negativity by turning the beat around with hope, humor, personal interest.

How Optimism Boosts Productivity and Work-Life Balance. Joe Robinson.

<http://www.worktolive.info/blog/bid/336460/How-Optimism-Boosts-Productivity-and-Work-Life-Balance>