

A POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE

WORKBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

PHOTO
Zack Minor

UNKNOWN

The first step on
any journey is
deciding that you
are not going to
stay where you are.

IN THIS SECTION

Standing still

Connecting

Another way

Putting the decorations up

**Optimism, pessimism and
happiness**

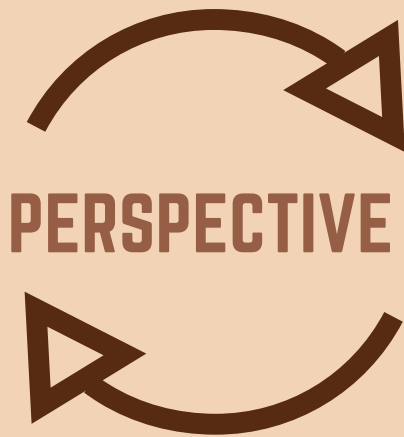
A Positive Perspective

BY MIRIAM JAGER

My motto is: You can't control what you experience in your lifetime, but you can control what you make of it. I feel I need to point out immediately that life is not always fun, nor should it be. It is more about being aware of the choice I have of how to act in certain situations. It helps me focus on what is possible, what elements I am able to influence, and what is important to me. The following practical tips and exercises in this workbook will help create opportunities for you to work on your own happiness. The emphasis will be on implementing a positive perspective.

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THE GLASS IS...

No doubt you are familiar with the expression, the glass is half full for someone with a positive outlook, and the glass is half empty, for someone with a more pessimistic outlook.

People see the same glass but describe it entirely differently. The difference is in the way you view it, your interpretation of a situation.

STANDING STILL

A good start is half the battle. I would like to ask you to recall an experience that was deeply positive for you. Make sure you're relaxed and that you won't be disturbed, and allow yourself to remember your experience as vividly as possible:

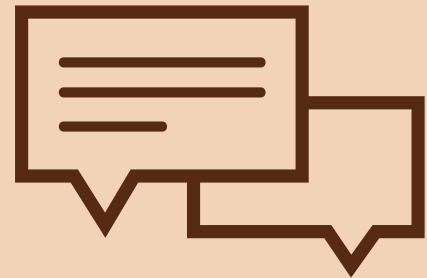
- When did it happen?
- Where were you at the time?
- Who was involved?
- What happened?
- What did you feel, think and do?
- What did you smell, hear or feel?
- What does this experience mean to you?
- How does it feel to take this moment to reflect?

How would you feel if you were to complete this task with someone else? It is likely you will learn something new about each other or maybe it will spark another conversation.



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CONNECTING

CONSTRUCTIVE CONTACT

Set up a meeting and start with a so-called 'check-in' and do so with a positive approach. Consciously take a moment to ground yourself and be entirely present. This gives everyone the chance to have their voice heard. It also gives you an insight into what everyone has going on outside the meeting. Share a moment you are grateful for, for example, a compliment you received or would like to give, talk about a (joint) success, etc. This kind of check-in is an ice breaker with a positive twist.

RULES:

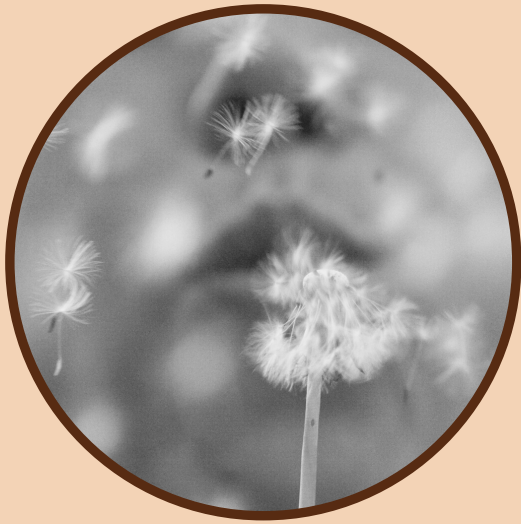
- One person speaks, the rest listen.
- The speaker is in charge of how long they speak. They take as much time as they need but they are aware that everyone wants a chance to speak and that there is a substantial amount of material to get through.
- Everyone present says something.
- Don't go round in a circle; follow the popcorn method (pop when you are hot). When someone has finished, another person automatically takes the floor.
- Everyone stands during the check-in or, for a more dynamic and guaranteed speedy session, you can agree to combine the session with doing some planks, for example.



TRY TO CHECK-OUT USING ONE WORD ONLY.

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SOME TIMES ARE GOOD, SOME BAD

Sooner or later, we all encounter problems in our lives or 'challenges' as our positive colleagues might call them. We often tend to focus on the problem and analyse it. We ask ourselves what went wrong, why it went wrong in the first place, what the knock-on effect is and whether there are any more issues that will come up. Instead of this problem-oriented method, I would like to invite you to consciously apply a more solution-oriented approach.

ANOTHER WAY

You can apply this method to situations when you are looking for solutions either alone or together with others. Instead of investigating the problem, the focus is now on the desired outcome.

Sample Questions:

- What do you hope to achieve?
- What's going well? What has contributed to this?
- How can you expand on what works?
- Who has helped you so far and what else can they do? Are there any other people who can help you?
- What motivates you to work on this? What motivates others to work on this?
- Which elements drive progress?
- What have you already achieved and how did you make sure you valued this?

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**LIFE IS ONE BIG
CELEBRATION, BUT YOU
HAVE TO PUT THE
DECORATIONS UP
YOURSELF.**

DERIVING JOY FROM NECESSITY

Everyone has tasks in their life that they would rather not do. But the reality is, that there is often no way around these things. I urge you to try to make the most out the situation.

Which tasks energise you? What opportunities can you see to combine these with your unpleasant task (at least in part)? A few examples of this would be listening to music you love while you work, doing your job somewhere that has a nice view or is in a beautiful location, eating or drinking something delicious, or singing your heart out.

Can you reward yourself with something fun after you have completed the task? Or challenge yourself by adding an element of competition. How fast can you get the job done? Can you do it while standing on one leg? There's bound to be a creative solution you can come up with.

Is there a task that none of you are looking forward to? Brainstorm all the possible ways to get this unpleasant job done.

BRAINSTORMING RULES

- Every idea is valid
- The more the better (quantity over quality)
- Pinball - don't hesitate to jump from one idea to another
- Pinch away - other people's ideas often give rise to more suggestions

**IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT DOING THINGS YOU ENJOY, BUT ALSO
ENJOYING WHAT YOU DO.**

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**REMEMBER THAT THE
HAPPIEST PEOPLE AREN'T
THOSE GETTING MORE, BUT
THOSE GIVING MORE**

H. Jackson Brown Jr.

OPTIMISM, PESSIMISM AND HAPPINESS

The personality traits optimism and pessimism are reasonably stable. Research has shown that optimistic people are happier. The reverse is also true, so happy people are more optimistic. The good news is that here too, you can influence how you behave. To put this another way, the way you behave and what you focus on, can lead to a different outcome. Seligman (2002) demonstrated that naturally pessimistic people can feel more content if they work on being happy. He demonstrated this through the following writing task, which they completed every day for a week.

FOR ONE WEEK, WRITE DOWN:

- all the times in the past when you were at your best
- your strengths, every day
- three good things that have happened in your life

IK BEN JE DANKBAAR VOOR...

Another thing that worked well was to consciously express gratitude to someone close to you. This positive focus allows you to point out exactly what that person means to you. There are benefits for both parties. You feel happier because you are doing something nice for someone else and you are strengthening your relationship with them. The other person feels loved and appreciated by you. Choose a form of expression that suits you. You could write a letter, a card or a poem, record a video message, paint or draw something.

TO SUM UP

Thank you for your interest in this workbook on how to implement a positive perspective. If you would like to take things further and give form and substance to your (work) happiness, please contact me to discuss the options available to you (with no hidden obligations). Send me an email at info@geluksjager.nl or call 06-40086158.

With happy regards,
Miriam Jager

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