刘秀梅 刘友道 王振英 朱 峰◎编著

高级英语阅读与听说教程_

Advanced English
Reading, Listening and Speaking





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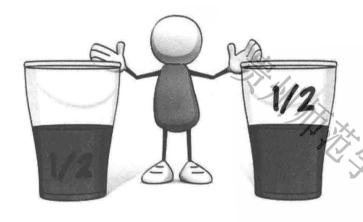
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Unit 1 We Are What We Think

Do you tend to see the glass as half-empty rather than half-full? Research shows that optimistic people have better coping skills during tough times, stronger resistance to illness... But it should be noted that the wrong dose of optimism can be deadly, and for those who are the pessimistically inclined, pessimism may be a very useful strategy. In this unit, we will explore the power of optimistic thinking and pessimistic thinking.



Pre-reading Activity 1: Comment on the following sentences in groups. What inspiration do the sentences shine on you? The tips below are for your reference.

Ask yourself the following questions when commenting on the quotes:

- ✓ Do I find the quote interesting, enlightening or meaningless?
- ✓ How does the quote inspire me or how does it conform to or run against my life philosophy and my knowledge of the world?
- Can I extend the meaning of the quote with more facts or opinions?

高级英语阅读与听说教程

- 1. People who wonder whether the glass is half-empty or half-full are missing the point. The glass is refillable.
- 2. We should keep a light, hopeful heart, but expect the worst.
- 3. I never look at the glass as half-empty or half-full. I look to see who is pouring the water and dealing with them.
- 4. It doesn't matter if the glass is half-empty or half-full. Be thankful that you have a glass and be grateful there's something in it.
- 5. Some people see the glass half-full. Others see it half-empty. I see a glass that is twice as big as it needs to be.
- 6. A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties.
- 7. Whether your cup is half-full or half-empty, remind yourself there are others without one.
- 8. Pessimists are usually right and optimists are usually wrong, but all the great changes have been accomplished by optimists.
- 9. Glass half-empty, glass half-full. Well, either way you won't be going thirsty, count your blessings not your flaws.
- 10. I'm a pessimist because of intelligence, but an optimist because of will.

Pre-reading Activity 2: Listen to the audio, complete the 10 "Would you rather..." questions by filling in the missing information. Write down your choices. Practice taking notes by writing down the initial letters or the key content words such as verbs, nouns and adjectives.

Questions	Your Choice	Choice Implication
1. Be the smartest person or?		
2. Always have to tell the truth or always lie?		
3 or never take an airplane in your life?		
4. Find true love or?		
5 or always have to say everything on your mind?		_
6. Have a photographic memory or?		
7. Never have sex again or never eat your favourite food?		
8 or be the only person in the world to live an unhappy life?		
9. Be the first person to or be the inventor of a drug that cures a deadly disease?		
10. Be poor but able to help people or get incredibly rich by hurting other people?		
Conclusion: 1. If you choose A for 1~3 times:		
2. If you choose A for 4~6 times: 3. If you choose A for 7~10 times:		

The Positive Power of Negative Thinking^①

Adam Grant

- 1 If you want to achieve a major goal, conventional wisdom says to think positive. Picture yourself delivering the perfect presentation, and absorb the energy of the audience. Envision the ideal job interview, and imagine yourself on cloud nine when you get the offer. Although these strategies sound compelling, it turns out that they often backfire. Many of us are more successful when we focus on the reasons why we're likely to fail.
- 2 In a series of clever studies, the psychologists Julie Norem and Nancy Cantor compared strategic optimists and defensive pessimists. If you're a strategic optimist, you envision the best possible outcome and then eagerly plan to make it happen. If you're a defensive pessimist, even if you've been successful in the past, you know this time could be different. You start picturing all the things that could go wrong. What if I spill coffee on the interviewer? What if I accidentally deliver the presentation in a foreign language? What if I forget my own name?
- 3 Most people assume that strategic optimists outperform defensive pessimists, because they benefit from confidence and high expectations. Norem and Cantor found that defensive pessimists were more anxious and set lower expectations for themselves in analytical, verbal, and creative tasks. Yet they didn't perform any worse.
- 4 "At first, I asked how these people were able to do so well despite their pessimism," Norem writes in *The Positive Power of Negative Thinking*. "Before long, I began to realize that they were doing so well because of their pessimism... negative thinking transformed anxiety into action." By imagining the worst-case scenario, defensive

① Adam Grant. The Positive Power of Negative Thinking [J/OL]. Psychology Today, 2013 [2018-10-16]. https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/give-and-take/201310/the-positive-power-negative-thinking.

pessimists motivate themselves to prepare more and try harder.

- 5 Strategic optimists and defensive pessimists succeed under different circumstances. If you're a defensive pessimist, or you're attempting to motivate one, the strategies that prove effective are often the reverse of what you expect.
- 6 Although evidence shows that happiness often makes us more successful by fostering energy and creativity, it can backfire for defensive pessimists. When strategic optimists and defensive pessimists threw darts, they did equally well overall, but were most effective under opposite conditions. Before throwing darts, some people listened to relaxing tapes ("hear the gentle rolling of waves on a sunsparkled ocean"). Others imagined themselves throwing darts and missing their targets. When they actually threw their darts, the strategic optimists were about 30% more accurate when they relaxed rather than imagining negative outcomes. But the opposite was true for the defensive pessimists: they were about 30% more accurate when they thought about negative outcomes, instead of relaxing or picturing perfect performance. Norem's research suggests that "positive mood impairs the performance of defensive pessimists." When they're in a good mood, they become complacent; they no longer have the anxiety that typically mobilizes their effort. If you want to sabotage defensive pessimists, just make them happy.
- 7 We think it's a good idea to encourage people, but not so fast. In one experiment, people completed a drawing task requiring focus and accuracy. Right before the task, for half of the participants, the researcher looked at their grades in college and said, "Hmm, given how well you've done in the past, I would think that you'd be very confident about your performance. You will probably do very well on the upcoming tasks." These words of encouragement slightly boosted the performance of strategic optimists, who did 14% better. In contrast, the defensive pessimists did significantly worse when they were encouraged, scoring 29% lower. The encouragement boosted their confidence, quelling their anxiety



- and interfering with their efforts to set low expectations. As Oliver Burkeman writes in *The Antidote*, "Reassurance is a double-edged sword."
- 8 When people are anxious, we sometimes tell them to distract themselves. Once again, this doesn't pay off for defensive pessimists. In another experiment, people completed a questionnaire about their styles, and then took a mental math test that involved adding and subtracting numbers in their heads (like 15+47-73). The strategic optimists didn't benefit from reflecting on possible outcomes, but the defensive pessimists did. When the defensive pessimists distracted themselves with another task right before the math test, their scores were about 25% lower than when they listed the most extreme outcomes that could happen in the test, and how they might feel. Taking time to worry helped them generate the anxiety necessary to motivate themselves.
- 9 Studies show that positive fantasies discourage achievement— when people imagine losing weight or pursing a relationship with a crush, they're less likely to follow through. Also, people perform worse when they say "I will" than when they ask themselves, "Will I?" "Affirmation feels good," writes Dan Pink in *To Sell Is Human*. "But it doesn't prompt you to summon the resources and strategies to actually accomplish the task."
- 10 In the U.S., we favor optimists over pessimists. When economists surveyed more than 1,000 U.S. CEOs, they found that more than 80% scored as "very optimistic".
- 11 Optimists tend to thrive in jobs that require resilience and perseverance. For example, in insurance sales jobs with high rejection rates, optimists sold 37% more than pessimists over a 2-year period and were half as likely to quit in their first year. In *Learned Optimism*, psychologist Martin Seligman reveals that when things go wrong, pessimists view negative events as personal (I'm a terrible public speaker), permanent (I'm never going to get better), and pervasive (I'm going to lose the respect of my colleagues and my spouse). Optimists, by

- contrast, recognize that when a presentation misses the mark, it's possible that the audience wasn't ready for their message, they can practice and improve, and they can still excel at other tasks and have an enjoyable evening at home.
- 12 At the same time, we need pessimists to anticipate the worst and prepare us all for it. On average, research indicates that people who never worry have lower job performance than those who worry from time to time. Studies also show that when entrepreneurs are highly optimistic, their new ventures bring in less revenue and grow more slowly, and when CFOs are highly optimistic, they take on more risky debt and swing for the fences more often, putting their companies in jeopardy. (This may be why there are fewer optimistic CFOs than CEOs.)
- 13 Ultimately, both styles are deadly at their extremes. Pessimism becomes fatalistic, and optimism becomes toxic. The key is to find the sweet spot, the more moderate ranges that combine the benefits of both approaches. In the words of Richard Pine, "The best chief executives— and that includes presidents— know that too much optimism is a dangerous thing, that wise and productive leadership means striking a balance between optimists' blue sky view of the world and pessimists' more clear-eyed assessment of any given situation. Take one part salesman, one part inventor, one part lawyer, one part safety engineer, stir gently and you've got a great chief executive."
- 14 If you're the kind of person who's always telling other people to look on the bright side, you might want to reconsider. Whether people succeed is not a matter of thinking positively or negatively, but rather whether they choose the strategies that match their thinking styles. As psychologists Heidi Grant Halvorson and Tory Higgins write in *Focus*, "It's the fit that counts".
- 15 And if you're a defensive pessimist, when preparing for a performance that really matters, you might want to list your weaknesses instead of your strengths, and drink a glass of anxiety rather than a shot of confidence.

New Words

compelling adi. (of an argument etc.) that makes you feel certain that something is true or that you must do something about it; very interesting or exciting, so that you have to pay attention backfire (a plan or action) has the opposite effect to the one you intended scenario a situation that could possibly happen; n. a written description of the characters, place, and things that will happen in a film, play etc. to damage something or make it not as good as it should be impair V. pleased with a situation, especially something you have complacent adi. achieved, so that you stop trying to improve or change things sabotage to secretly damage or destroy equipment, vehicles etc. that belong to an enemy or opponent, so that they cannot be used; to deliberately spoil someone's plans because you do not want them to succeed to end a situation in which people are behaving violently or quell protesting, especially by using force; to reduce or stop unpleasant feelings such as fear, doubt, or worry fantasy an exciting and unusual experience or situation you imagine n. happening to you, but which will probably never happen; an idea or belief that is based only on imagination, not on real facts crush n. a crowd of people pressed so close together that it is difficult for them to move: a strong feeling of romantic love for someone, especially one that a young person has for someone older who they do not know well: someone who you have a feeling of romantic love for, but who you do not know well

affirmation a statement asserting the existence or the truth of something to order someone to come to a place; summon V. to officially order someone to come to a court of law; to try very hard to have enough of something such as courage, energy, or strength, because you need it thrive to become very successful or very strong and healthy the ability to become strong, happy, or successful again after resilience n. a difficult situation or event; the ability of a substance such as rubber to return to its original shape after it has been pressed or bent a source of danger; a possibility of incurring loss or jeopardy n. misfortune believing that there is nothing you can do to prevent events fatalistic adj. from happening containing poison, or caused by poisonous substances toxic adj. moderate not very large or very small, very hot or very cold, very fast adj. or very slow etc.; having opinions or beliefs, especially about politics, that are not extreme and that most people consider reasonable;

staying within reasonable or sensible limits

Reading Skills

expressions in Paragraph 1~2. Write down the information you use for your reference. defensive pessimist: Contextual clues: cloud nine: Contextual clues: backfire: Contextual clues: **Reading Skill 2:** Skim Paragraph 3~5 to tell what Norem and Cantor's findings about strategic optimistic and defensive pessimists are. Finding 1: Finding 2: Reading Skill 3: Read to summarize Paragraph 6~9 by giving each paragraph a subtitle. Please make good use of the topic sentences. Paragraph 6: Paragraph 7: Paragraph 8: Paragraph 9: **Reading Skill 4:** Scan Paragraph 10~14. Read the following statements and check true (T) or false (F). 1. According to Martin Seligman, pessimists tend to blame themselves when things () go wrong. 2. Thinking positively will do more good to CFOs.) 3. Richard Pine holds the view that CEOs should have sweet personalities.)

Reading Skill 1: Use context clues to figure out the meaning of the following

Reading Skill 5: Discuss with a partner. What information can the two	"If-"
clauses at the beginning of Paragraph 14 and Paragraph 15 tell us about the	main
idea of this part?	