

How's Your Attitude?

Attitude will determine if you accomplish what you desire or if you don't even try. It will give you the strength to move forward or cause you to give up at the slightest obstacle. It can be your best friend or your worst enemy. This article helps you learn how to guide and control it.

The social media meme displays the number "13" who is saying to all the other numbers, "I'm the worst number ever!"

Six-six-six replied, "I've got you beat."

Twenty-twenty chimes in, "Contest over."

One cannot live in times like these without paying the toll.

We internalize our environment, affecting how we feel and even infecting our beliefs; the result is that we view our lives differently than if circumstances were otherwise.

As evidence, utilizing an example from the late Zig Zigler, picture your typical morning. Imagine your attitude. Rate it on a one-to-ten scale; most of us land somewhere between six and eight most times. Now, imagine that same "typical" morning, with one aberration: you awake to voice mail from a loved one, "It's been too long. I'm thinking about you. I can't wait until we get together. I love you and hope your day is filled with joy."

It is without a doubt that in scenario two, we'd face the day energized, enthusiastic, and determined. Problems that would have normally knocked



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us off-trail become insufficient bumps in the asphalt.

Nothing changed — except our attitude.

Because it improved, we took on more; facing more upbeat the day ahead, and closing our eyes at night more fulfilled.

Attitude — the complex interaction between feelings and beliefs that affect how we view the world, and therefore how we react to it — matters.

Yet, a question remains: "Is our attitude determined by us or by outside circumstances?"

The honest answer is it's some of both, but with

enough understanding of what determines this mindset, we can wrestle back the reins and become masters of attitude, therefore leading happier, more fulfilling lives — even amid the madness churning around us like a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico.

Attitude has nothing to do with logic; it's more primal.

It's "right-brain" driven. Therefore, telling yourself (or anyone else) to "get over it" is like trying to teach a pig to sing; it wastes your time and annoys the pig.

To up-level attitude, we must dig deep into what we believe as well as how we process emotions.

Beliefs — closely held values accepted as facts — are deeper than the more transient emotions. Sure, we can do a deep dive into our values but that's like trying to turn an ocean liner; it's a slow process, it requires planning and awareness, and it's more difficult in rough seas. Instead, if we accept that emotions, referred to as "thoughts that stick" by Louise Hay, are within our control, we can alter our life's direction, even in times as turbulent as these.

To change your attitude, give direct attention to your internal dialog.

I currently don't like venturing into public; seeing everyone adorned in masks and avoiding each other runs contrary to my beliefs about society. Although I — being socially responsible — do wear a face covering and practice social distancing, my out-of-the-gate thought is, "I hate this. Something is horribly wrong with my country." That thought ping-pongs in my brain for a while (in effect, "sticking") until I become saddened. Because I am glum, my attitude, being an out-picturing of my beliefs and feelings, reflects that gloominess. My posture sags, thoughts slow, choices that might be taken in another state of mind remain unexplored.

Opportunities are missed. The road less taken remains unexplored.

The solution is to change what I'm hearing between my ears, the most powerful voice in my life.

Yes, these are indeed trying times. Yes, we indeed have to remain distant. Yet, it's also true that seeing all these like-minded citizens doing what they have to do to help each other reminds me of another of my beliefs, that — at our core — we are good of heart and giving of soul. We engage in these actions because we care. It is our collective attempt to create a better world from the dark place in which we find ourselves.

What I see us in that light, I feel empowered. I am part of the solution. I am contributing to a greater whole.

THAT I like. THAT gives me hope. THAT is the world in which I want to live — and I do. Attitude shift complete.

I've said it before. I'll say it again.

What we say to ourselves determines with straight-line accuracy what we will do to ourselves. Although nothing except my thoughts changed the world is now a better place.