



LEARNED OPTIMISM



Did you know:

- The way we think, especially about health, changes our health?
- Optimists have better health habits than pessimists do?
- Optimists tend to do better at school, at work, and on the playing field?
- Optimism is a learned skill, one that can be permanently acquired?

Learned helplessness is the giving-up reaction, the quitting response that follows from the belief that whatever you do doesn't matter.

Explanatory style is the manner in which you habitually explain to yourself why events happen.

Learned optimism is the power of “non-negative thinking,” using the skills of changing the destructive things you say to yourself when you experience the losses and setbacks of life. Using learned optimism you can change your explanatory style to resist helplessness by:

- understanding that the causes of bad events may be temporary;
- realizing that your problems in one area aren't universal;
- affirming that bad events aren't totally your fault.

Practicing the thinking skills of learned optimism can give you the energy to keep on succeeding at life goals. You can strengthen your self-esteem because you know you can solve temporary problems in creative ways. You can learn to be more productive and less depressed, more hopeful and less discouraged, to achieve more successes than failures. Learned optimism allows you to change your self-talk and beliefs so you can face adversity in responsible and realistic ways. Your explanatory style is not fixed and unchangeable. You can gain a set of skills which free you from habitual pessimism and allows you to use optimism when you choose.