

## **Coach Yourself Hopeful!**

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As a personal and business coach I encourage my clients to foster their inner resources and build on their personal strengths to reach their goals. One of my personal favorite Positive Psychological strengths is **HOPE**. **Are you a high hope person?** If you are high in hope you probably look down the road of life to potential accomplishments. You know there will be hard times – even times you’ll want to give up. However, you are also confident that ultimately your abilities (and your ability to solve problems) will lead you to new and interesting outcomes. Your goals make life exciting and interesting!

If you are a **low-hope person**, you still have dreams and goals, but often those goals cause anxiety and self-doubt. You look down the road of life and see potholes, detours, and Dead Ends. Often just the consideration of those obstacles is enough to make you quit before you start. Better to stay wherever you are, even if you’re not very happy, than to start something you fear will never work.

Hopeful thinking is something you can acquire at any age. Some people learn it as children, but for the rest...read on! No matter what your family background, your money “issues”, your education (or lack thereof) – you can raise your level of hope and have a more exciting future. Keep in mind I didn’t say it was easy – there are old habits of thinking and living that are safe and comfortable. Some of these old standbys will have to go.

Hope is active. Hope involves: 1.) Setting goals, 2.) The ability to find paths to your goals (WAYpower) and 3.) That driving energy force that propels you toward your goal (WILLpower). Interestingly, waypower and willpower are the important elements in building and maintaining hope in your life. Hope does not depend upon achieving your goal 100% of the time – the experience of **SOME** success along with the experience of practicing waypower and willpower is all you need to feel the build up your hope. Hope can be measured and hope can be taught. The first step is to ask yourself the miracle question: “If a miracle occurred and I could have my life exactly the way I want it, what would it be like?” The next step is to look at all the arenas in your life and ask yourself the “miracle question”. Major life arenas are: Personal relationships, career and work, spirituality, education, finances, mental and physical health, recreation. It is interesting that satisfaction with life does not necessarily mean the achievement of grand and glorious goals. It does mean that you have met the goals you set for yourself. Let’s say that your life would be most different if a miracle occurred in the arena of physical health, fitness and recreation. These may be areas that could benefit from a little boost of hope in your life. You might decide to set a goal to begin an exercise program. Next it’s up to your waypower and willpower to carry you through.

Hope is a way of approaching life that says “YES” and “I CAN”. A personal coach can help you clarify your goals, focus on steps to achieving the goals (waypower) and keep your willpower from wavering during the inevitable tough times.