

Feed the Positive Dog

Action Plan by Jon Gordon

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The research shows that we can develop more positivity in our life and share it with those we live and work with. The more we feed the positive dog the bigger it gets and the stronger it becomes. The key is to take action. In this spirit I have created an 11 Day action plan with a daily strategy to feed yourself with positivity. The purpose of this plan is to help you experience more positivity in your life and provide you with simple strategies to take charge of your positive thoughts and emotions. My hope is that when you are done with the plan you will choose the strategies and exercises you like best and make them a habit. For example, I take a thank you walk every day and it has become my favorite positivity booster. I also ask my children each night before bed their success of the day. When you finish the plan you'll be able to create your own plan and incorporate one or more of the following strategies into your life and work. So let's start feeding the positive dog.

Day 1—Take a Thank You Walk

It's simple. It's powerful and it's a great way to start feeding the positive dog. How does it work? You simply take a walk... outside, in a mall, at your office, on a treadmill, etc and while walking you think about all the things, big and small, that you are grateful for. The research shows you can't be stressed and thankful at the same time so when you combine gratitude with physical exercise, you give yourself a double boost of positive energy. You flood your brain and body with positive emotions and natural antidepressants that uplift you rather than the stress hormones that drain and slowly kill you.

Note: If you love the thank you walk feel free to do it every day.

Day 2—A Day of Gratitude

A number of studies show that grateful people tend to be more optimistic which increases immune function, improves heart health and happiness according to Robert Emmons, a Gratitude expert and Professor of Psychology at the University of California-Davis. In a nutshell, being thankful is good medicine and good for a positive life.

Today as you live, work, interact, shop, drive, etc. turn off the negative news and identify all the things you are grateful for throughout the day. To help you do this you

may want to implement the *Get to* instead of *Have to* strategy. You may also want to create a gratitude journal, utilizing paper or your mobile device, and write down the things you are grateful for.

Day 3—More Smiles and Laughter

They say that children laugh about 400x a day while adults laugh only about 25x. Perhaps we need to be more like children and smile and laugh more. Research shows that smiling produces more serotonin in your brain and laughter reduces stress, increases your immune system and causes your body to release “feel good” endorphins. Today I want to encourage you to find more humor in your life that will make you laugh and smile today for at least ten minutes. Here are some ideas to smile and laugh more today:

- Find and watch funny videos on www.youtube.com.
- Rent your favorite funny movies and watch them
- Get a joke book and read funny jokes.
- Watch a funny television show on television.

Day 4—Celebrate your Success of the Day

According to sports psychologist Jim Fannin, the last 30 minutes of every waking day is recorded and replayed that night by our subconscious minds 15-17 times. This replay occurs 5 times more often than any other thought at any other time. Thus it's important to go to bed thinking positive thoughts. If you go to bed thinking and feeling like a champion you'll wake up thinking and feeling like a champion who is optimistic and ready to win.

Today before you go to bed celebrate your success of the day. Identify the one great thing about your day; the one great conversation, accomplishment, or win that you are most proud of. Or identify the one person you helped most today or The one thing that made you smile. Focus on your success, and you'll look forward to creating more success tomorrow.

Day 5—Spend time with Positive People

Research shows that the old adage that money doesn't buy happiness is true. However, being rich in friends certainly does make a difference. According to a survey from the National Opinion Research Center, the more friends you have the happier you are.

Other studies show that close relationships promote health, enhance longevity and enhance positivity. So today make time to connect with the positive people and take the time to strengthen your relationships with them. Get together with an old friend. Call a loved one. Or take action to make a new friend. Positive people make us feel more positive so spend time with them today.

Day 6—Share the Gift of Kindness

Sonja Lyubomirsky, author of the *How of Happiness* has been researching different techniques and strategies that increase our happiness. Not surprising one of the successful happiness boosters is performing acts of kindness—such as volunteering for a charity, opening the door for someone, feeding the homeless or taking your elderly neighbor grocery shopping. Lyubomirsky has found that by engaging in 5 acts of kindness in a single day (the impact is more powerful if performed in one day rather than spreading 5 acts over 5 days) participants in her studies experience a measurable boost in happiness.

Make today a day of kindness and engage in 5 acts of kindness. Some acts you will likely have to schedule and plan while other acts can be more spontaneous. The key is to perform 5 acts in one day. For ideas visit www.giftofkindness.com

Day 7—Smell the Roses

According to Barbara Frederickson, author of *Positivity*, research shows that spending time in nature boosts your positivity—especially when the weather is good. However, anyone who has been to the beach or taken a walk through a forest or spent time fishing on a lake knows how good it feels to be immersed in nature.

Today, take the time to smell the roses and spend time in nature. Take your lunch break in a nearby park. Ride your bike to the beach. Take your kids hiking in the mountains. Go fishing at a nearby lake. Exercise with a friend in a park. If you love Golf consider a visit to the Golf course as beneficial as a trip to the park so long as you take the time to enjoy the air, the trees and the green grass. Connect with nature and connect often. It will feed your positive dog.

Day 8—Take Out Your Telescope

I often talk about a telescope when encouraging people to create a big picture vision for their future and dream about the life they want to create. The telescope represents our

dream for the future and according to Barbara Frederickson research shows this is a simple way to boost positivity.

Today dream about the life you want to create. Write down your big picture vision. What does it look like? What are you doing? What do you hope to accomplish? What difference do you want to make? What is your mission and purpose? Spend some time visualizing the future you want to create. Then write down your vision, dreams and goals.

Day 9—Make a Gratitude Visit

Martin Seligman, Ph.D., the father of positive psychology, suggests that we write a letter expressing our gratitude to someone. Then we visit this person and read them the letter. His research shows that people who do this are measurably happier and less depressed a month later.

Today schedule and make a gratitude visit to an old boss or mentor, a friend who helped you through a tough time, a family member or someone who made a difference in your life.

Day 10--Lose Yourself in the Moment

When we are engaged in an activity in the present moment and doing something that interests us we feel more positive.

Today choose an activity today that will engage, interest and energize you. Play an instrument, listen to your favorite dance music and dance, paint, play a sport, surf, plant some flowers, play checkers or chess, read a good book, or choose another positive activity that will allow you to enjoy the present moment and feed your positive dog.

Day 11—Be a Coach

Coaches bring out the best in others. The best coaches mentor, encourage, praise, inspire and lead with optimism and positivity.

Today feed others and yourself with positivity by being a coach. Instead of complaining about what others are doing wrong, start focusing on what they are doing right. Praise them, encourage them, love them, recognize them and inspire them to be their best and you'll help others feel great and you'll feel great too.

Everyday—Pray

Scientific research shows that daily prayer reduces stress; boosts positive energy; and promotes health, vitality, and longevity. When you are feeling stressed to the max, stop, be still, plug-in to the ultimate power, and recharge.

.....and Here are A Few Ways to Starve the Negative Dog

- Turn off the News
- Don't participate in gossip
- Turn complaints into solutions
- Identify the negative stories you tell yourself and replace them with positive stories.
- Replace fear with faith.
- See negative people as teachers who help you become more positive.
- Choose positive words instead of negative words.

Find Additional Resources (Videos, Downloadable Posters, and More) at:

www.FeedThePositiveDog.com

Purchase *The Positive Dog: A Story About the Power of Positivity* where books are sold or online at www.FeedThePositiveDog.com

