

Is it natural to be negative?



Having a negative mindset is something those of us committed to our well-being struggle to change. We have come to understand that “being negative” is not healthy, and yet we find ourselves in situations in which negative thoughts and feelings arise quite frequently. Some of us even take our negative feelings to be the source of disease and illness in our lives, and feel even more pressure to be positive. We try to muscle that negativity into something positive, to perpetually identify the silver lining, to the point that we sometimes feel like we are at war with ourselves.

It's not natural to feel positive all the time. Negative thoughts and feelings are just as much a part of our experience as positive ones. And in fact, our conscious minds are *primed to be slightly negative*. Evolutionarily, being primed toward the negative meant that we could quickly identify dangers that threatened our survival. Thinking through all the bad things that can happen in a circumstance allows us to be prepared and potentially avoid them. The problem is, while this is a mechanism that was selected for because it enhanced survival, this mechanism was never meant to be activated as often as it is in modern times. Our perspective regarding threats has changed drastically, from infrequent, intermittent threats to near constant threats (as has our situational context for dealing with those threats, as I will discuss in a later post). Our perspective determines how negatively we assess a situation. Our predisposition determines our perspective. And ultimately, while a negative predisposition does lead to a heightened level of awareness that is more likely to identify a threat to our survival, it does have the potential to lead us down the path of disease,

and to leave us unfulfilled.

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The next time you feel or think something “negative”, become

aware of your reaction. Are you embracing it, as a part of your life experience? Are you listening for any intuitive messages that are hidden underneath? Or do you get carried away toward being miserable, only to attempt to swim upstream back towards being happy? Both actions are exhausting. Let your awareness, which is neither negative or positive, be your safe haven. It will illuminate your darkest moments, and intensify your greatest joys.