



# Wellness In Action



## May: Healthy Thinking

### BAMC HEALTH PROMOTION

#### Healthy Thinking? What is that?

We all know about having a healthy body, but is it really important to have “healthy thoughts” too? Are you a glass half empty or a glass half full person? Is it really possible to “think yourself well”?

According to a review of over 100 studies, published in 2009\*, having a positive attitude relates strongly to health and how one recovers from illnesses. Additionally, positive people are more likely to engage in healthy lifestyle activities such as eating healthier and exercise.

Negative thoughts don't just happen. They are learned patterns related to our own experiences and beliefs. As children we often learn to cope with difficulties through ineffective means. Certain thoughts and beliefs may work to meet a need when we are children, but using those same behaviors and attitudes as adults can cause problems. These learned “thinking errors” are common and often such an ingrained part of an individual that he/she doesn't know if/when they're using them. All is not lost, however, because the first step to changing any behavior is to recognize it. There are many of these “errors” in thinking, but here are five of the most common. Take an HONEST look at yourself and how you deal with life. Do any of these look familiar?

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Blaming       | Always either blaming yourself or others for problems that arise without ever really fixing anything.                             |
| Assuming      | Assuming the worst OR assuming the best (i.e. No consequences for actions)  |
| Minimizing    | Minimizing either what is good or what is bad about yourself, others or situations  |
| Mislabeled    | Labeling people (including yourself) or situations with “negative titles” or names  |
| Self-Centered | Taking into account only what is good for YOU and not thinking of the effects your actions, words, or desires may have on others. |

#### What you focus on MAGNIFIES!

If you focus on the negative, the negatives will become larger and will crowd out the positives in your life. You can easily become the “Complainer”. The more you complain, the more negative you become. Talk about what stresses or upsets you, but be careful who you talk to.

If it's someone who can help you find a solution, help direct your energy to more positive thoughts or give you support to help you move on, it can be a very beneficial thing. If it's someone who complains WITH you and the two (or more) of you just get upset together, it can be more destructive than helpful.

Try This:

- For one day focus on what is good and right. Then write them all down and keep a “Positives paper”. You can add to it each time your new focus shows you another good thing in your life.
- Each day after, pay attention to what you're thinking. If it's negative, start working on changing your focus back to the positives. Keep the “Positives paper” handy to refer back to.
- On particularly stressful or difficult days, take a few minutes to go outside (if you can) and find something good. Do one or all of these, if you can, and practice focusing on GOOD.
  1. First, LOOK for something beautiful. A flower, a bird, the sky, a child playing or even a car that you really like. Look at it closely, and study every detail.
  2. The next day do the same, but now purposefully FEEL. Feel the warmth of the sun, the coolness of the air, the rain, the softness of a leaf or your dog's coat. Pay attention to THAT feeling, instead of negative emotions. Breathe deeply, relax into what you FEEL.
  3. Next, take time to LISTEN. Listen to things that we often miss. HEAR the birds, a distant train, the wind, the rain or the silence. Close your eyes, focus on what you hear. Listen for every detail.
  4. Finally, purposefully enjoy a SCENT. This might be the smell of a flower, or even just the “smell” of fresh air, or the air just after a rain. Again, close your eyes, breathe deeply and take in all of the scent. Focus on how good it smells to YOU.

These are just some of the little things in life we often overlook as we go about our hurried days. Start making YOUR glass half FULL!

\* Rasmussen, Scheier. *Greenhouse, Optimism and Physical Health: A Meta-analytic Review*; *Ann. Behav. Med.* (2009) 37:239–256



"It's Your Time" is the theme for 2012's National Women's Health Week from May 13-19, recognizing the importance of improving the health and well-being of women across the country. Women, empower yourselves now to make your health a top priority, by focusing on healthy lifestyles and simple actions to improve your physical and mental health and prevent disease.

Get active and eat healthy. Pay attention to mental health, including getting enough sleep and managing stress. Avoid unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking. See your health care provider regularly for checkups and preventive screenings. For a list of current preventive screening recommendations, visit [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov). For more information go to the Health & Wellness tab on the BAMC Internet <http://www.bamc.amedd.army.mil/>.

## 31 MAY is WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

### Tobacco Cessation Program

Health Promotions offers two classes every month on Wednesdays or Thursdays and meets once a week for 4 weeks/sessions. (No classes offered in the month of December). Classes begin on the first Wednesday or Thursday of each month and are open to all eligible beneficiaries on a self referral basis. There is also a requirement to see the provider, 1 on 1, in order to get prescriptions for tobacco cessation medications. The Provider will see patients from 1545 to 1700 (Approximately 15 minutes per slot) on the same day of Class #1, on a first come, first served basis. However, due to time restraints, or if you are unable to stay, then you may have to be scheduled for a different day to see the provider, possibly on Friday from 1530 to 1700, in 15 minute increments.

Class size is limited, so enroll early. The class is offered in a group setting with a facilitator and physician oversight. The class offers behavior modification techniques, group support, nicotine replacement therapy (Nicotine patches and Nicotine gum), and tobacco cessation medication Zyban or Chantix.

To register or for more information call, Health Promotions at 210-295-2538 or 295-0049.

Dates: 1st Wednesday or Thursday

Times: 3:00 – 4:00 P.M.

Location: McWethy Troop Medical Clinic, 3051 Garden Avenue, Bldg 1279, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

### Group Lifestyle Balance (GLB)

GLB is a proven lifestyle intervention program. It aims to promote long-term weight loss through healthy eating and physical activity. You may be eligible to participate in this program if you are an adult (over the age of 18), a beneficiary of the military health care system, overweight (BMI greater than 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) and not Diabetic. If you would like to participate, you can enroll in a 12-week intervention program to learn healthy eating techniques and how to develop and sustain a physical activity routine.

Weeks 1-6 cover basic information such as learning about calories and fat grams; reading food labels; tracking food intake and activity; and learning how to incorporate a minimum of 30 minutes of activity into your day. Participants are advised to obtain their physician's approval prior to beginning physical activity.

Weeks 7-12 focus on behaviors, recognizing negative food cues, and initiating positive activity cues. Participants also learn to recognize ways to stay motivated.

A DVD version of the program is also available and may meet the needs of Active Duty service members who might otherwise be unable to participate due to conflicting schedules. The DVD version follows the same guidelines. However, the participant has only four face-to-face sessions with three phone calls between sessions to discuss lessons and progress.

To register or for more information, call Health Promotions at 210-295-2538 or 295-0049.

**Other Links of interest:** <http://walkforlunch.com> & <http://everybodywalk.org/partners/593-walk-for-lunch.html>