



JOHN R. COLVIN
ATTORNEY AT LAW

BOLD APPROACH. CLIENT FOCUSED.™

P.O. Box 309
Winchester, TN 37398

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- INSIDE THIS ISSUE**
- pg 1 *The Power of Positivity*
 - pg 2 *The Life-Changing Magic of Spring Cleaning*
 - pg 2 *Live a Happier Life*
 - pg 3 *Our Aging Infrastructure*
 - pg 3 *Roasted Carrots and Onions With Honey Balsamic Dressing*
 - pg 4 *Lights, Camera, Egg-tion!*

THE POWER OF POSITIVITY

How Do Our Thoughts Affect Us?



One of the main takeaways from "The Power of Positive Thinking" is illustrated by the simple question "Is the glass half full or half empty?" If one thinks the glass is half empty, those thoughts are going to breed negativity. If we can get ourselves out of negative thinking and into positive thinking, we have a greater chance of succeeding than if we start with a negative outlook.

A large part of positivity is one's motivation. If we think the glass is half empty and we decide that we will never accomplish a formidable task, achieve our career goals, or spend more quality time with our families, we've already put up an obstacle to reach those goals. Because we've already decided what the outcome is going to be, we won't be looking for ways to reach our desires.

When I graduated from high school, I received a copy of Norman Vincent Peale's "The Power of Positive Thinking." At the time, I didn't know what to think of the gift, but over the years, I have found myself referring back to the small book many times. While the book has sold tens of millions of copies worldwide since its release in 1952, I have found its message timeless and a very good book to dip into with its excellent reminders for staying positive in spite of a negative world.

Even the ancients grappled with the question "What are the secrets to a happy life?" Well, it turns out that happiness is deeply rooted in having a positive mindset, and there are many secrets to staying positive — one being mindfulness. Many times, we get trapped into thinking about yesterday or tomorrow and never focus on the present moment. Always thinking about the future can diminish your enjoyment of the present.

I have recently read several books on mindfulness and being in the present moment. The two most common roadblocks to mindfulness today are personal electronic devices and our on-demand society. We are being pulled by 50 or more distractions a day and keeping one's focus and attentiveness can be tough — but freeing yourself from those distractions is both empowering and enlightening. Research has shown that being mindful allows a person to be more insightful where their mind is calmer and they are more productive.

Another lesson from the "The Power of Positive Thinking" is the importance of stepping up and facing your goals. Think about the Nike phrase, "Just do it." Actor Peter Gallagher has a good quote about facing your goals: "To stay on the map, you've got to keep showing up." Throughout life, I've found this to be true. Showing up isn't all of life, but it counts for a lot. At work, at home, and in every single personal goal we set for ourselves, showing up is a majority of the battle.

When you view the glass as half full, any problem becomes a challenge instead of a roadblock. Viewing the glass as half full also gives you an extra push of motivation. If we believe that we can be more active every day, for example, the question changes from "Can I be more active?" to "How can I be more active?" I could wake up a half hour earlier each morning to get a small workout in; I could do jumping jacks or situps during commercials on TV; I could take a short walk during my lunch break, etc. Our minds begin looking for ways to get us to our goals instead of leaving us stuck at the roadblock of negativity.

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As with anything in life — from learning to read, to driving a car — thinking positively, with practice, can become second nature. With every small step you take to stay in the moment, look at the glass half full; view problems as challenges; and look for opportunities.

To staying positive,

- John Colvin

LIGHTS, CAMERA, EGG-TION!

Fun Facts and Famous Movie Eggs

Eggs are gold-medal winners — and we're not just talking about their yolk. For centuries, they've been a staple of breakfast dishes and baked goods all around the world, but how much do you really know about eggs? Did you know that apart from being used in meals and Easter festivals, they have also had a very prolific movie career?

"WILLY WONKA AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY" — 1971

Eggs come in all shapes and sizes! Just ask Veruca Salt, the bad egg who demands a golden goose. Along with the other rotten eggs, she falls down the garbage shoot on her way to the furnace. Did you know that eggs left at room temperature age more in one day than they would if they spent in a week in the refrigerator?

"ROCKY" — 1976

Eggs contain the highest quality protein you can buy in stores, but you don't need to tell Mr. Balboa that. In one of the most iconic scenes from "Rocky," Sylvester Stallone starts his morning off right by drinking five raw eggs. Would you be willing to try his all-natural, organic, sugar-free protein shake?

"GHOSTBUSTERS" — 1984

When Sigourney Weaver's character comes home with an armload of groceries, she becomes horrified as a box of eggs begins acting strangely. It opens up, and the eggs inside start frying and popping all on their own. Talk about eggs-transterrestrial!

Keep an eye out for eggs' next big blockbuster appearance. You never know when they'll crack out another hit!



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The Life-Changing Magic of Spring Cleaning

Houses get stuffy after a long winter. Once the sun makes its return, spring cleaning is the best way to freshen up your living space. While comprehensive cleaning can seem like a major chore, it can also liven up your home and give you a sense of pride and accomplishment. As Marie Kondo, the best-selling author of "The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up" puts it, "The objective of cleaning is not just to clean, but to feel happiness living within the environment."

A great way to begin the project of spring cleaning is to get rid of unwanted objects in the home. "To truly cherish the things that are important to you," Kondo writes, "you must first discard those that have outlived their purpose." This philosophy applies to all sorts of objects throughout your home, from clothes to books to appliances. Consider donating those objects that you no longer need to Goodwill or a similar charity. You'll free up space while simultaneously providing another family with something they need.

Once you have cleared your home of excess goods, it's time to get down to cleaning. Though lots of people organize their cleaning by room, another smart tactic is to divide tasks into categories. Schedule one day for windows, another day for carpets, and so on. This strategy makes it easier to assign tasks to each family member based on preference. Plus, it keeps you from having four people in the kitchen, cleaning on top of each other.

There are lots of tools in your house that can do double duty during spring cleaning. Your dishwasher works great for cleaning all sorts of glass fixtures and plastic objects like your toothbrush holder. You can use your vacuum not just for carpets, but also for couches and drapes. Spring cleaning is also a great



time to clean those often-overlooked areas like your oven and microwave. Don't forget to clean your cleaning objects like brooms and vacuums.

A thorough cleaning in the spring makes your home easier to maintain for the rest of the year. It also provides an opportunity to make changes to decorations and put a new spin on your environment. Plus, nothing beats the feeling of putting your feet up in a freshly cleaned home on a beautiful spring day.

THE COSTS OF OUR AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

Do you know how our country's infrastructure is holding up? It's not something we particularly like to think about, but it does need to be addressed all the same.

If you think back to World War II, that's when America really burst onto the world stage. We enjoyed incredible prosperity in the years following 1950. Looking back, a big part of that was the billions of dollars we invested into our infrastructure, including roads, airports, and schools.

Today, we're facing the opposite scenario. The middle class is cratering, and at the same time, our infrastructure is collapsing. We need to restore our roads, bridges, airports, and waterways. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, our roadway infrastructure gets a D grade. The evidence is in the potholes, the incredible congestion in dense cities, and the lack of support roads during bad weather incidents.

Bridges are a little better, with a C+ grade, but they still need repair — and the consequences of disrepair are much more serious. Statistically, 1 in 10 bridges in the United States is structurally deficient, which could lead to a collapse!

Pipes have a D grade as well. Some pipes in this country are over a century old. This poses two problems: First, many are in very bad shape, and second, they were originally built with materials we now know are hazardous. Lead poisoning has been increasing in communities across the country. How can we let that happen to our kids and families?

Schools are probably our biggest challenge when it comes to improving our country's infrastructure. Most schools were built for the baby boomer



generation, not millennials. The reason they get a D grade? Most schools constructed before 1980 are likely to have asbestos, which leads to lung cancer and mesothelioma. And if a school's water lines aren't well maintained, contaminated water is also an issue.

So, what can we do about the aging infrastructure? I think the most important thing to do first is recognize that we're already paying a big price while we ignore the problem: People are getting injured, sick, and even killed.

We're still the same country that made those incredible leaps in the 1950s and for decades afterward. As we gaze at the road that lies ahead, let's rally together to solve our infrastructure problem. This is one can issue we can all get behind.

Live a Happier Life Norman Vincent Peale's "Positive Power Points"

Anybody can do just about anything with himself that he really wants to and makes up his mind to do. We are all capable of greater things than we realize.

— Norman Vincent Peale

Norman Vincent Peale was a minister and author of the famous book "The Power of Positive Thinking," that remained on the bestseller list for 186 consecutive weeks after its release in the early 1950's. Here are some tips from Peale on living a happier life.

Focus on Today

Focusing on tomorrow when it arrives saves you stress and improves your focus and performance. Thinking about tomorrow compulsively will leave you unable to concentrate on what's in front of you today.

Face Your Obstacles

It's easy to think about what might happen when you face obstacles. But when you do stand up and face them, they are rarely as bad as you thought. After you've done enough thinking, research, and planning, stop thinking. Don't fall into the trap of overthinking and monster-building — let go and do what you need to do.

You Get What You Expect

Self-fulfilling prophecies can be very powerful. If you think that you will fail, you'll find proof that you will. If you think you will succeed, the focus system in your

mind — your reticular activating system — will help you find those opportunities for success.

Find the Upsides of Problems

Problems can provide insights that allow you to grow, so don't be discouraged when you run into problems. Finding the upsides of problems can make it easier to not take your problems too seriously. Instead, ask yourself, "What can I learn from this situation?"

Analyze Your Thoughts

What you spend most of your time thinking about, you tend to become. You may not know what you think about the most, so keep careful notes for a few days and find out how you spend your time and thoughts.

As you incorporate more positivity into your thoughts, you might fall back into old thought patterns, but over time, you'll find that positive thoughts become more automatic.

Learn From Your Successes

Our mistakes often teach us something valuable if we take a closer look at them. However, analyzing your successes can be useful too. When you see success, don't get lost in basking in your glory. Take a close look at what happened and see what you did right.



Roasted Carrots and Onions with Honey Balsamic Dressing

Recipe inspired by PaleoPlan.com

Spring has sprung, and with it, that renewed craving for freshly prepared vegetables. Your taste buds will love this sweet and tangy recipe for roasted carrots and onions, and your body will love it, too!

Ingredients

- 2 pounds baby carrots
- 1 medium onion, peeled and sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons raw honey

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and honey. Add carrots and onions. Toss to coat.
4. Place in oven and bake for 30–40 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

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