

MAKING POSITIVE CHOICES

We make choices all the time. It's important to understand how the choices we make will affect our lives – will they have positive or negative consequences? With positive choices, we can create a better life.

'In the end we are our choices. Build yourself a great story.'

Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon

1 Quickly read Sophie's email to her friend Samira. Why is Sophie writing?

- a To give Samira some good news.
- b To ask Samira for advice.
- c To tell Samira about some things that have happened recently.

Sophie

Hi Samira,

I'm sorry I didn't write before, but I've had a really terrible week! Let me tell you all about it.

On Monday I got up late, so I didn't have any time for breakfast. Also, I missed the bus, so I was late for school! Things only got worse after that!

On Tuesday evening I planned to revise because I had an important exam the next day. But in the end, I went on an online music forum and had a stupid argument about the Eurovision Song Contest! As a result, I didn't do any revision and I did really badly in the exam.

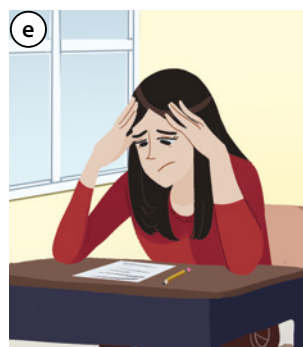
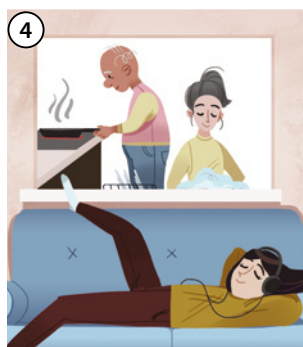
On Wednesday I went out without a coat or an umbrella. In the afternoon it started to rain a lot and I got really wet as I walking back from school! Then yesterday my mum and dad didn't give me any pocket money because I haven't helped at home all week. We had a big argument about it, but, to be honest, I've been really lazy! So, today I couldn't go to the open-air swimming pool with my friends because I didn't have any money. And it's been a beautiful, sunny day! In the end I stayed at home all day and ate a lot of chocolate because I was feeling sad. Now I have a bad stomach ache!

I hope your week was better than mine!

Bye for now,

Sophie xx

2 Read Sophie's email again. Match actions 1–5 with consequences a–e.



3 Sophie has decided to make more positive choices. Read her action plan. Match the words and phrases in bold with definitions a–f.

- a try hard (to)
- b use badly or too much
- c do something so that something happens
- d intend (to)
- e speak angrily when you don't agree with someone
- f think carefully about what you are doing

4 Now think about your own life. What positive choices can you make? Complete the sentences.



Family and friends

I won't argue when _____

School and studying

I'll concentrate _____

Health and fitness

I'll aim to _____

Money

I'll make sure that _____

Free time

I won't waste time on _____

The environment

I'll make an effort to _____

My action plan

1 Make sure that I always set my alarm in the morning.



2 Concentrate when I have to revise for an exam.



Don't **3 waste** time on silly conversations online.



Don't **4 argue** with Mum and Dad.



5 Make an effort to do more in the house.



6 Aim to eat more healthily when I feel sad.



Sophie Grant

7th April



5 Answer the questions with your own ideas.

- 1 Write three choices that you have made in the last week.

- 2 What one positive choice would make your life better?

MANAGING YOUR EMOTIONS

Sometimes we have negative emotions in specific situations: we feel angry, sad, worried, etc. We can't control feeling these emotions. However, we can control what we do with them. If we want to enjoy life more, it's important that our negative emotions don't last a long time and don't become part of who we are.

1 Look at the *Ask Anna!* web page on p71. Match problems 1–4 to advice a–d.

1 ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 ____

2 Match the words and phrases in bold in the problems with definitions 1–5.

- 1 the opposite of 'positive' _____
- 2 I feel very angry as a result _____
- 3 annoyed because things are not happening how you want _____
- 4 very worried and not able to relax _____
- 5 being at a disadvantage because you're not doing what other people are doing _____

3 Read the practical tips for managing emotions. For each idea, write your star rating. Five stars is very useful. One star is not useful at all.

4 Read the situations and answer the questions.

1 A good friend of yours didn't invite you to their birthday party.

How do you feel? _____

What do you do to manage this emotion?

What do you say to your friend?

2 You really want to learn to ride a horse, but your parents say it's too expensive.

How do you feel? _____

What do you do to manage this emotion?

What do you say to your parents?

3 You lent your friend your bike. It's been stolen and your friend says they can't buy you a new one.

How do you feel? _____

What do you do to manage this emotion?

What do you say to your friend?

5 Answer the questions with your own ideas.

1 Do you think we should try to manage our emotions? Why/Why not? _____

2 If you answered yes, have you learnt any good ideas in this section to help you to do this? Which ones? _____

Practical tips for managing negative emotions

1 Talk to a friend or someone you trust about how you are feeling.

My rating: _____

2 You can also talk to yourself about the emotion. Ask yourself: why am I feeling like this? Is it helping me?

My rating: _____

3 Keep a diary of when you have negative emotions. Describe what caused the emotion and how you will deal with a similar situation in the future.

My rating: _____

4 Do some physical activity or sport. It will help change the way you feel.

My rating: _____

5 Listen to music that makes you feel good or relaxed.

My rating: _____

6 Breathe deeply and count to ten slowly. It'll help you to feel more relaxed.

My rating: _____

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1 When I look at my friends' posts on Instagram, they're always having a great time. My life seems so boring in comparison! I feel that I'm **missing out** and that their lives are much more interesting! Do you know what I mean?

Amy

2 I've got so much to do at the moment. I'm in the school play, I play for the school football team, I'm the editor of the school magazine and I've got exams soon. I feel really **stressed out**. Help!

Jack

3 My older sister always thinks about herself and she never thinks about me! She takes ages in the bathroom in the morning, so I'm always in a hurry. And she never lets me use any of her things. **It really makes me mad!**

Ali

4 I failed my maths exam for the third time this week! It isn't fair because I studied for hours and hours! I feel really **frustrated** and **negative** now! I know that's not good, but what can I do?

Katie

a Have you tried talking to her about this? If this doesn't work, then why don't both of you talk to your mum and dad about this problem?

b Perhaps you need to try some different study techniques. Ask your teacher for suggestions. I'm sure you'll pass in the end!

c I completely understand what you're saying. But you need to ask yourself, 'Why am I comparing myself to them?' You need to have your own life!

d You're certainly very busy! I've got two suggestions. First, make a plan for each day. And second, perhaps another person could do your job on the newspaper for the next few weeks.



FOOD AND FEELINGS

We sometimes eat unhealthy food when we experience negative feelings – for example, when we're stressed out, sad, frustrated or when we're very tired. To stop this happening too much, there are various things that we can do.

1 Look at the pictures and answer the questions.

1 How often do you eat the food in the pictures?

2 In what kind of situations do you eat them?

2 Read Tom's diary on p73. Then match situations 1–6 with results a–f.

1 Tom felt tired while he was studying. ____

2 Tom had too much caffeine. ____

3 Tom didn't sleep well. ____

4 Tom felt sad. ____

5 Tom was bored. ____

6 Tom ate some crisps and popcorn. ____

a He didn't feel cheerful in the morning.

b He drank a lot of cola.

c He didn't feel pleased.

d He ate a lot of chocolate.

e He slept badly.

f He ate.

3 Match definitions 1–7 to the words and phrases in red in Tom's diary.

1 sad _____

2 very tired _____

3 feeling very awake and able to think clearly _____

4 food that is unhealthy, but is easy to eat _____

5 not feeling cheerful and a bit angry _____

6 start to sleep _____

7 not go to bed _____



4 Read the tips on healthy eating. How would you rate each of them?



Food for thought!

1 If you feel tired a lot, think about the types of food you eat. Sugary food can give you a short burst of energy, but you may feel tired soon after.



2 Start a food diary. Write down what you eat and why. This will help you to see if there are any connections between your mood and what you're eating.



3 Carry a healthy snack with you, so that if you feel hungry you don't immediately buy chocolate or sugary snacks.



4 Swap unhealthy snacks with healthy ones, e.g. fruit rather than crisps, yoghurt rather than ice cream, etc.



5 Try to eat your food more slowly and think about what you're eating, so you notice when you feel full.





5 Complete the food and emotions questionnaire.

Food and emotions questionnaire

Tick (✓) the sentences that are true for you.

- ☐ 1 I sometimes eat even when I'm not hungry.
- ☐ 2 Being alone makes me feel hungrier.
- ☐ 3 When I am feeling down, a little snack will improve my mood.
- ☐ 4 If I'm disappointed, I want to eat something.
- ☐ 5 When I'm stressed (e.g. exams), I eat more junk food.
- ☐ 6 When I'm not eating, I often think about food.
- ☐ 7 I eat more when I'm bored.
- ☐ 8 I often need to drink cola or energy drinks to stay alert.



6 Complete the sentences with foods which are true for you.

When I feel down, I often eat _____.

When I feel disappointed, I often eat _____.

When I feel stressed, I often eat _____.

When I feel bored, I often eat _____.

7 What can you do to change each situation in exercise 6?

Tom's diary

Sunday 2nd June

I **stayed up** late last night because I had to revise for my maths exam. When I started to feel tired, I drank a one-and-a-half-litre bottle of cola. That certainly made me feel more **alert**! In the end, I was studying till 2 a.m.! The problem was, when I went to bed, I couldn't **get to sleep** because I had drunk all that caffeine!



Monday 3rd June

I was **exhausted** when I woke up this morning - I'd only slept for two hours! I was **in a bad mood** all morning! And I don't think I did well in the maths exam. That's not surprising - I was half-asleep and I couldn't concentrate!



Thursday 6th June

I got the exam result - fail! I was feeling a bit **down** when I got home, so I had a big bar of chocolate. And then another one! Did it make me feel better? Yes - for a while. But only for a while! After that, I felt sick!



Sunday 9th June

It was raining all day today. That shouldn't happen in June! Anyway, I didn't go out and it was a pretty boring day! I watched a few episodes of a new series and ate some crisps and popcorn while I was doing that. To be exact, I ate three packets of sugary popcorn and four packets of crisps. I must stop eating all this **junk food**!



ACCEPTING YOURSELF

Accepting yourself means understanding who you are, respecting yourself and not wanting to be someone completely different.

- 1 Look at this poster. What do you think 'celebrate myself' means?

**'I celebrate myself
and sing myself.'**

Walt Whitman (1819 –1892), American poet



- 2 Read the article. Are the statements T (true) or F (false)?

- 1 Accepting yourself means liking everything about yourself. _____
- 2 You should write down your strong and weak points. _____
- 3 When you have negative thoughts, tell yourself that they aren't true. _____
- 4 You might need to change some friends. _____
- 5 You should behave towards yourself in the same way as you behave towards your friends. _____



Accepting yourself means accepting the parts of yourself that you like *and* those parts that you don't like. Some of us have problems accepting ourselves because we are very **self-critical**: we're always seeing things about ourselves that we don't like. If this happens to you, start by writing down all your **strengths**. For example, 'I'm a good friend to my friends and always try to help them.' Sometimes it's easy to forget your good points if you don't remind yourself! But you won't have **a positive self-image** if you don't give yourself **praise**.

But what do you do when you have negative thoughts? Let's look at an example. Imagine that you're at a party and you start dancing. Suddenly you think to yourself, 'Why am I dancing so badly? I'm like an elephant!' When you have these thoughts, stop and ask yourself, 'Am I being nice to myself? Would I speak like this to a friend?'

If you want to accept yourself, it's also important to spend time with people who give you *positive* energy. Don't hang out with people who are always telling you that you aren't good enough and need to change.

Here's one final thing to think about: do you accept and respect your friends? Of course you do! Are they perfect? Of course not! In the same way, accept and respect yourself. Be **gentle** with yourself and don't judge yourself all the time. You'll enjoy life much more!

- 3 Match the definitions with the words and phrases in bold in the article.

- 1 strong points _____
- 2 noticing and saying bad things about yourself _____
- 3 kind and not strict _____
- 4 saying good things about someone _____
- 5 a good opinion of yourself _____

- 4 When was the last time you had negative thoughts about yourself? Do you think you sometimes try to be 'too perfect'?

LEARNING TO ACCEPT MYSELF

1 In general, is my self-image more positive or negative? Explain why.

2 What are my strengths?

3 What negative thoughts about myself do I have?

Negative thought _____

In what situations do I think this?

Am I going to accept this aspect of my personality or try to change it?

Negative thought _____

In what situations do I think this?

Am I going to accept this aspect of my personality or try to change it?

4 Do all my friends give me positive energy?

5 When was the last time I gave myself praise? Do I do it often enough?

6 In general, how can I be more gentle with myself?



5 Complete the worksheet about you.

6 Answer the questions with your own ideas.

1 Do you think about your strengths or do you have negative thoughts more often?

2 Is there one negative thought about yourself that you have frequently?

3 If yes, what will you do the next time you have it?

4 How can you learn to accept yourself more?
