

13 Tips to Stay Positive During Anxious Times

As workers everywhere struggle to feel connected due to new remote work requirements, limiting social media and news updates may not feel like an option. Additionally, it can be hard to know how to stay positive at work and in life while the world seems full of bad news. The good news is you can start learning the power of positivity at any time.

Here are 13 ways to focus on staying positive:

1. Start Your Day Off Right



What gets you in a good mood right off the bat? As soon as you open your eyes, consider tackling a task or activity that makes you feel upbeat. It sets the tone for the day and when you're happy and smiling, it's contagious — in a good way.

A few ways to start your day:

- Meditate
- Workout
- Journal
- Listen to a podcast
- Make a healthy breakfast
- Turn on your favorite playlist

However you decide to kickstart your day, always remember: You have control over how you feel even if you can't control what's going on around you.

2. Do Good for Someone Else



It's nearly impossible to stay in the doldrums when you focus your attention on someone else. Be it your kids, your neighbor, your spouse, a friend, or even a complete stranger — there's more to the world than just you. Melt your worries away by doing a good deed for someone else.

Good deed ideas to try:

- Donate to a food bank
- Send out an encouraging email
- Write a handwritten thank you card
- Donate your PTO time to coworkers in need

Good people can change the world one good deed at a time. When you're trying to stay positive during tough and uncertain times, being good to the people around you can make life feel more enjoyable.

3. Work on Your Own Health



We can't do our best work if we're feeling unhealthy — either physically or mentally. Make it a personal challenge to focus on your overall well-being. During times of stress, it's easy to let your workouts fall by the wayside and your negative thoughts balloon up. Instead, see how you can incorporate healthy habits and watch how it helps you to stay positive.

Tips for staying on top of your health:

- Clear your mind with a walk
- Take a wellness challenge
- Check-in with a friend daily
- Schedule your workouts
- Drink plenty of water
- Reduce time on social media
- Start a virtual fitness challenge with coworkers

When you feel your best, you can do your best. It has a positive domino effect on all areas of your life, including your work performance. When you maintain your health, consider giving yourself a healthy reward for sticking to it.

4. Read a Self-Improvement Book



There's nothing like a good self-help book. When you've got extra time on your hands or feel uncertain about your life — or work — direction, self-improvement is a good distraction. Plus, a good read will give you solid strategies to implement into your life.

A few picks to consider:

- [Get Out of Your Head: Stopping the Spiral of Toxic Thoughts](#)
- [A Year of Positive Thinking: Daily Inspiration, Wisdom, and Courage](#)
- [Mini Habits: Smaller Habits, Bigger Results](#)

Consider starting a healthy reading book club at work. Obviously, you can't read on the job, but you can discuss the book during a walking break or even over lunch. On a remote team? Schedule a short weekly Zoom chat to discuss your favorite takeaways.

5. Implement The 5 Second Rule



Speaking of good books, motivational speaker Mel Robbins wrote *The Five Second Rule*. In it, she discusses counting backward from five when you have an impulse to achieve a specific goal. In this case, stopping negative thinking is a perfect way to use the rule. Count backward from five, physically move your body (take a walk, shut off the news, etc.) and reactivate your mind in a positive space.

When to use The 5 Second Rule:

- When negative thoughts start spiraling
- A conversation is going in the wrong direction
- You need the motivation to get started

When you're trying to learn how to stay positive at work, this is an ideal rule to implement yourself. Whether it's needing to change the direction of a negative conversation or getting started on a project, a five-second countdown can give you the boost you need.

6. Look for the Good in Others



During difficult times or periods of uncertainty, it's easy to see all that's going wrong — including how people act. Instead of being overwhelmed by the negative Nancys or wrongdoers, look for who is doing good. Zoom your focus in on those and watch your perspective shift.

Ways to practice recognizing the good in others:

- Give a daily-shout out
- Praise a coworker for a job well done
- Slow down. Give the benefit of the doubt
- Look for positive intentions behind actions

Once you start looking for the good in others, it makes it easier to be less cynical. Start looking for one good trait or action in each person you meet or interact with daily.

7. Strengthen Your Social Circle



If you've ever been in isolation for any length of time, you understand how lonely it can be. Whether you're forced into it (sickness) or doing it by choice (introvert tendencies), it's amazing how quickly you realize how important social interactions are to humans.

Need to socialize? Here are a few ways to stay connected:

- Keep a funny group text going
- Call a friend once a week
- FaceTime relatives outside the country
- Email out a weekly update with positive quotes

We all need to feel a human connection. Daily, preferably. When you're isolated (like what's currently happening with the mandatory Coronavirus quarantine in many areas), you need to make socialization a priority.

8. Be Mindful



Thanks to the rushed culture we live in, it's easy to feel the need to multitask and balance everything in life. Most of our activities have us focusing on what's behind us or in the future, but rarely what's actually in the moment.

Easy steps to practice mindful behavior:

- Take pause
- Ask yourself what you're actually doing
- Reflect on how you can focus your efforts
- Let go of perfection
- Skip multitasking as much as you can
- Think about your breathing

When you pause and reflect on your behavior, it offers an opportunity to change activities that don't serve you. It also allows you to think about how others view you and your impact on their own behaviors (i.e. If you're stressed and always rushing, it may rub off on coworkers). Tap into the [power of mindfulness](#) starting today.

9. Start a Positive Quotes Wall/Board/Note



Need a little inspiration and reminder on how to be positive at work and in life? Start your own collection of positive quotes. You can collect these on a Pinterest board, in a phone note, or even create a physical wall of quotes you love.

A few to get you started:

- “Limit your ‘always’ and your ‘nevers.’” - Amy Poehler
- “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” - Winston Churchill
- “Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.” - Albert Einstein
- “No matter what you’re going through, there’s a light at the end of the tunnel.” - Demi Lovato

Ask your friends, colleagues, and family to send you their favorite quotes, too. It’s a perfect idea to kick-off a weekly positive group text thread!

10. Practice Gratitude



When it feels like everything is going awry, that’s the time to look at the flip side. What’s actually going right? The benefits of gratitude are endless, but when you have a daily gratitude practice, that’s when you really reap the benefits.

Why practice gratitude? Here are a few reasons:

- Improves overall lifestyle satisfaction
- Increases positivity at work and home
- Can help you better manage stress
- Leads to better sleep

The benefits of gratitude aren’t just mental; they’re also physical. Try journaling and starting with writing down one thing you’re grateful for during a month-long period. Check out how to [make gratitude](#) a part of your workplace culture, too.



11. Add Value to Someone Else's Life

Right now, we can all use some uplifting. You have unique gifts and ways of giving back to the world that you may not be using fully. Think about ways you can take action right now to bring some value and joy to another person's life. Some ideas to try:

In the community

- Tip extra
- Be kind
- Say thank you

In the workplace

- Offer your expertise
- Give a free training
- Assist on a special project

In the home

- Make a favorite family meal
- Sit down and talk uninterrupted
- Do a household chore your spouse normally does

Whatever you do, try to give away immense value and positivity. Support people with your time, talents, funds, or other means to make life feel a little sweeter.

12. Stay Off Social Media



Stay off the scroll hole. When chaos abounds, social media explodes with all the bad news and rumors you can find. Sure, there is some positivity, but it's often the dark news that gets the most coverage. It's also a breeding ground for misinformation. Instead, go straight to the best sources.

Manage social media urges by:

- Canceling phone alerts
- Asking colleagues not to share
- Installing apps to minimize scroll time

Twitter even has a fantastic option where you can mute specific keywords. Enter Coronavirus and all traces of the word will disappear based on your timing preference — 24 hours to forever.

13. Stay on Top of Your Sleep



When you minimize the social media noise, practice gratitude, and generally start watching what goes into your mind and body, it makes it easier to sleep. If you're finding sleep is interrupted due to schedule disruptions, worrisome thoughts, etc., do your best to adjust what you can to get your seven to eight hours of quality sleep.

For a better night's sleep:

- Do a calming activity before bed
- Sleep in a cool, quiet environment
- Minimize electronics use an hour before bed
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily

Make sleep a priority. It will help you maintain a good mood, vibrant health, and a more optimistic attitude when you're not exhausted.