

11-2003

Get an Attitude

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Recommended Citation

Craig, Winston J., "Get an Attitude" (2003). *Lake Union Herald*. 773.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/773>

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Healthy Choices

Get an Attitude

BY WINSTON CRAIG

The condition of the mind greatly influences our physical health. Research has shown that the brain and the immune system communicate with each other. This could explain why a grateful spirit and a positive mental attitude helps the body fight off disease and recover more quickly from illness.

In a study conducted in Minnesota, the positive emotions of joy and contentment were strongly correlated with longevity in nuns. Health is strongly enhanced by cultivating a spirit of gratitude and praise (Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 251).

People with anxieties and chronic stress in their lives often experience recurring headaches, back-aches, allergy outbreaks, or other ailments which resolve when the anxiety or stress is eliminated. In mid-January 1991, there was a 58 percent increase in mortality from heart attack in Israel resulting from the intense apprehension and mental

Ways to maintain a positive mental attitude:

1. Cultivate a spirit of gratitude, an attitude of thankfulness.
2. Resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings.
3. Make a list of the blessings you have experienced recently. Thank God for each item on the list.
4. Believe that all things work together for good. Plan for some good things to happen.
5. Memorize many promises from Scripture.

distress caused by the Iraqi scud missile attack at that time. With the passing of the crisis, the mortality rates dropped to pre-attack levels.

Mental illness is often associated with poor physical health. Heart disease and cancer are twice as likely to develop in persons with chronic anxiety and depression. In the Alameda County study, researchers found that unhappy persons had a 57 percent greater risk of dying prematurely. Solomon tells us that a cheerful attitude is like good medicine (Proverbs 17:22).

Grief, anxiety, discontent, guilt, and distrust are all negative forces that erode our physical health. On the other hand, trust, hope, love, contentment, and courage are all positive forces that promote physical health and enhance life (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 241). We would do well to “get an attitude”—a positive, healthy attitude.

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