

# The snowstorm -- undefeatable optimism

I know several people who are very optimistic -- and it's not unusual to hear people say such things about them as "he's living in a totally different world."

Well, they're right -- my optimistic acquaintances are living in a different world -- the positive one.

Sure, sometimes, the things of this world bring you pain, suffering, and trouble. Sometimes, it's difficult to be optimistic -- and yet, somehow people manage to do so.

The way I see it, you can basically **choose** what world to live in. You can choose to go through life, seeing the bad life may offer, complaining about the ways you have been shortchanged, expecting to see trouble around every corner -- or you can choose to look at the positive aspects of life, and see the possibilities that life offers.

Like many of you, I drive quite a bit. The other night, I was in the middle of a snowstorm that seemed to be getting worse by the minute. I was having a harder and harder time of seeing where the roadway was.

Suspecting there was more to this problem than just the amount of snow, I took an exit for a nearby rest area. Looking at the front of my car, I found a solid two to three inches of snow and ice -- and saw that one of the headlights was totally "snowed over." The other, remaining, headlight had only a small space to give out its light.

A couple of minutes' work later, I was free of the ice and snow. You can tell you've been through a real snowstorm when you can read your front license plate backwards in the snow that falls from the front of the car.

As I got back onto the freeway, the world seemed to be a much brighter place.

And such are our lives.

So many times, we get to the point where our view of life is gradually altered by circumstances. Gradually, challenges and troubles distort our view of the world around us. We wind up seeing the world as a much darker place.

Has the world changed? Nope -- there have always been challenges in the world around us -- and opportunities as well. For the foreseeable future, there will likely be famine, drought, sickness, sadness, troubled economies, pain, and suffering. There will also be flowers, chirping birds, babies being born, Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas, family gatherings, great opportunity for growth, learning, joy, and miracles.

So many of us live our lives like my trip through the snowstorm -- not getting enough light to see properly the road ahead.

When the light appears, the road looks much better.

This, then, is the key to living life optimistically:

1. To look for the positive, each and every day
2. To concentrate on the areas of greatest worth and joy
3. To see the challenge, not the problem
4. To search for a solution, not dwell on the trouble
5. To see others for the joy that they offer
6. To live each day completely and fully
7. To be caught up in the excitement of living
8. To explore the greatness within you
9. To stretch the bounds of your abilities
10. To remember to clean off the headlights  
(remove the baggage of negative experiences when things start to be dark)

We can choose how to live our lives; we should choose to live them positively, no matter what comes our way, no matter how difficult it may become.

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