The Power of PERSPECTIVE
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The way we look at something affects the way we feel and the way that we act. Perspective is something that we have control over and does affect our daily lives. What we look for, we will find.

For example, if I have a positive perspective towards life – “Life is good” vs. “Life is full of troubles,” then I will be searching for experiences that support my perspective that “Life is good.” I will notice when events happen that support my perspective and reinforce my perspective (I enjoyed a good conversation with a friend; I shared a huge laugh with my children.) So, if you want a more positive experience, then choose a more positive perspective. Here’s how:

How Can I Change my Perspective?

1) Be aware of what your current perspective is. Is it already positive or does it need some tweaking? We often times pick up a perspective early in life and do not check in as to whether it works for us as an adult. There are many options for perspective from which to choose.

2) Identify what are some other more positive perspective options that exist. You may need more information/education to identify and take on new perspectives. Ask yourself:
   - Do I have an overall positive perspective?
   - What is my perspective toward myself?
   - My significant other?
   - My job?

3) Play with these different perspectives to see what fits for you and what is available to you in each perspective. Try on a few to see what works for you. If you see yourself in a negative way – lazy, unintelligent, etc. – what is available to you is typically depression and anxiety among other possibilities. If you see yourself in a positive way – learning, growing, good person, etc. – what is available is typically more happiness, seeing the good in self and others, enjoying life more.

4) Consciously CHOOSE to take on that perspective. Yes, we have the ability to choose our perspective. If you chose a negative one, you can choose a more positive perspective.
5) Check-in to make sure you are sticking with your new perspective. In the change process, we do not usually go straight to change, but go back and forth. When we are stressed, we go back to the old perspective, but can still know that is normal, plan for it, and get back on track with the positive perspective. Remember to tie the new perspective into the positive emotions that go along with it in order to increase that pathway in the brain.

Depending on what perspective you are trying to change, you can write down 3 items related to that topic. For example, I want to have a more positive perspective of myself. I will write down 3 positive items about myself at the end of each day. This helps us reinforce the perspective as we are paying attention to it throughout the day. The new perspective will start to take hold and you will start experiencing changes in your life.

The Faculty and Employee Assistance Program (FEAP) can work with you if you are trying to make some positive changes in your life. Call (434) 243-2643 to set up a free, confidential consultation with an Employee Assistance Consultant. Visit our website at www.uvafeap.com for more information.