Boosting Your Optimism and Resilience
Adapted from Positive Psychology’s Explanatory Styles: How to Boost Optimism and Develop a Balanced Mindset

Martin Seligman described **explanatory style** as “the manner in which you habitually explain to yourself why events happen”. In other words, it’s the little stories we tell ourselves to make sense of our life. Your explanatory style is how you interpret and explain bad events to yourself. Pessimists and optimists have different explanatory styles which are distinguished by the “3Ps”.

**Personalization:** Events are internally or externally caused.
Say you lose a tennis match. A pessimistic player will interpret the cause as personal (‘I failed’). An optimist who allows for non-personal factors (‘grass just isn’t my surface’).

**Permanence:** Events are perceived as permanent or temporary.
Pessimists interpret setbacks as permanent (‘I’ll never succeed at this level’). An optimist sees the setback as only temporary (‘I didn’t prepare well this time/I had a cold’).

**Pervasiveness:** Events are perceived as global or specific.
Pessimists see setbacks as all pervasive (‘nothing works out for me’). An optimist sees the setback as narrowly contained or confined to one area of life (‘I still have a life outside of playing tennis’).

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<th>Good Situation</th>
<th>Bad Situation</th>
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<td>Permanent Pervasive</td>
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<td>Personal (internal)</td>
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Use the 3Ps to determine your explanatory style by figuring out how you explain ‘good’ or ‘bad’ events. When faced with loss or disappointment, ask yourself these three questions:
• “Am I really to blame, or was it just bad luck, the situation, or other people?”
• “How long will it last; i.e., will it always be like this or will it pass?”
• “What does this really affect in my life and what will remain unaffected?”

Now, think about how you explained the negative event to yourself:
**Personal**- Did you blame yourself at the time – if so, in hindsight did that prove accurate?
**Permanent**- Did you assume it would last forever – if so, were those predictions accurate or did it pass?
**Pervasive**- Did you assume it would ruin everything in your life – if so, in hindsight was that accurate or did much of your life continued unaffected?

**If you have been thinking like a pessimist, practice thinking like an optimist to increase your resilience!**

If you want to learn more about positive psychology, visit [https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/explanatory-styles-optimism/](https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/explanatory-styles-optimism/) or schedule an appointment with our behavioral psychologist, Dr. Davidson.
**Calendar of Events**

**Bariatric Forum: Patient Open Mic Night**
Wednesday, May 17 from 6-7pm
Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital
Tynan 2 Conference Room, 4th Floor

**Walk from Obesity**
Saturday, June 3, Registration 8am/Walk 9am
Faulkner Hospital: 1153 Centre Street, Boston, MA
www.WalkfromObesity.com to register

**Bariatric Forum: Physiological Changes After Surgery**
Tuesday, June 20 from 6-7pm
Brigham and Women’s Hospital
Carrie Hall Conference Room, 2nd Floor

**Bariatric Forum: Plastic Surgery**
Wednesday, July 19 from 6-7pm
Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital
Tynan 2 Conference Room, 4th Floor

**Bariatric Forum: Supermarket Savvy**
Tuesday, August 15 from 6-7pm
Stop & Shop (near Brigham and Women’s Hospital)
1620 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02120

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**Recipe of the Month**

**Cilantro Lime Roasted Salmon**

Foods high in omega-3 fatty acids help balance symptoms of depression and cognitive and emotional disorders. Two to three servings per week of fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, herring, or sardines can provide the brain with the healthy fats needed for cognitive and emotional health. Try this recipe to hit one of those servings!

Makes 8 servings
Serving size: 4 oz fillet

**Ingredients:**
- 2 pounds salmon fillet
- 1 lime, zested and juiced
- 1 lime, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons flat leaf parsley or cilantro, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 jalapeño, seeded and coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoons salt (or to taste)
- ½ teaspoon pepper

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Rinse salmon filet. Pat dry.
3. Place skin side down on foil lined baking sheet.
4. Combine lime, garlic, olive oil, cilantro, and jalapeno in blender or food processor. Pulse until well blended.
5. Spread evenly over salmon filet.
6. Place sliced lime on top of salmon.
7. Bake salmon for 4-6 minutes per inch (usually 12 minutes or so) or until an internal temperature of 145 degrees.

**Nutrition Facts** (per 4 oz serving): 135 calories, 5g total fat (1g saturated fat), 3g carbohydrates, 21g protein, 290mg sodium

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**Featured Product of the Month:**

*52 Lists for Happiness*

**Weekly Journaling Inspiration for Positivity, Balance, and Joy**

By Moorea Seal

This weekly journal will encourage you to reflect, acknowledge, and invest in yourself. The journal includes peaceful photography, inspiring quotes, and thought-provoking prompts to encourage happiness.

$11.52 on Amazon.com

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**WE’RE ON FACEBOOK!**

Let us know if you would like to join our group.