

# Hope

HOPE IS BELIEF IN ACTION

*“Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.” - Augustine of Hippo*

What action step did you commit to last week? What were the results?

## Insight

**Directions:** Take turns reading the paragraphs below. As you read, underline the ideas that capture your attention.

Few words are more positive and promising than *hope*. John Maxwell believes hope can be the greatest asset for a person or organization, and it is often the difference between success and failure.

But what is hope really?

Hope is more than simply having belief or being optimistic. Jonathan Sacks says, “Optimism is the belief that things will be better. Hope is the faith that, together, we can make things better. Optimism is a passive virtue; hope, an active one.”

Most people would agree that optimism is greater than pessimism, but hope is greater than optimism. Notice the contrast between people with low hope and people with high hope:

### Low-Hope People

- Avoid Problems
- Focus on Symptoms
- Feed their Fear
- Get Tired
- Give Up

### High-Hope People

- Engage in Problem Solving
- Focus on Solutions
- Feed their Faith
- Get Inspired
- Work Harder

Psychologist Shane Lopez says, “When we hope, we have high expectations for the future *and* a clear-eyed view of the obstacles that we need to overcome in order to get there. We are primed for action.” The negative things in life may attract our attention and open our eyes to the need for change, but only hope takes us forward to do something positive about them.

**Hope starts with belief.** Casey Gwinn and Chan Hellman observe, “Hope is the belief that your future can be brighter and better than your past and that you actually have a role to play in making it better.” When you believe you can make a difference, you can take action. When you take action, you can make a difference. Hope is the catalyst for change and a better future.

**Hope identifies goals.** When you have hope, you identify specific actions you can take to create positive change. Goals give your hope direction *and* a scoreboard. For every goal you achieve, your hope grows stronger, and the positive change you believe can happen comes closer to actually happening.

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**Hope exhibits willpower.** Dale Carnegie said, “Most of the things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.” The truth is, while others who lack hope do nothing, people with hope have the willpower to keep believing and keep working to make their world a better place.

**Hope finds pathways to change.** Hopeful people find ways to improve their world. Hope fuels their positive mindset and their creativity. Hopeful people shine in negative situations because they can balance realistic thinking, the desire for a better future, the energy and will to take action, and the responsibility to help create positive change. Their motto can be summed up by the words of Nido Qubein: “Your present circumstances don’t determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.”

Hope is the ultimate fuel for positive change.

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## Benefits

When you develop hope, you experience the following benefits:

1. You are inspired to believe in yourself and others.
2. You become optimistic about your future.
3. You become confident that you can create positive change in your world.
4. You are motivated to take positive action.
5. You find the energy to keep going when you’re feeling tired or discouraged.
6. Your belief attracts other people and inspires them to join you.

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## Steps To Follow

1. **Cultivate hope for yourself.** Belief is a powerful thing. You have much greater control over your ability to accomplish difficult things than you might think. You can improve your life and your situation. But you must believe in yourself to do so.
2. **Develop hope for changing your world.** All people can do something positive for themselves and others. What can you do? How can you make a difference? If you’re not sure, ask the opinion of people who know and value you.
3. **Take action with other hopeful people.** Hope is contagious. Share your hope with others who want to make a difference. Once you gather a group, take action. Make a difference, small or great. Positive change happens one step at a time, and each step takes you closer to the hopeful future you imagine.

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## Reflect and Respond

Choose something you underlined that is important to you. Take one minute to tell everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

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## Evaluation and Action

Complete the self-evaluation section below.

Rate how well you demonstrate this quality in your life on a scale of 1-10.

- 1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

Why did you give yourself this rating?

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What benefits would you receive by improving your rating?

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Who do you know that exemplifies this quality? What do you admire most about that person?

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What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating?

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Take a minute to share your responses to the self-evaluation section, including the step you will take to improve in this area. Everyone is asked to participate.