



POSITIVE ATTITUDE

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Hello to my friends at CharacterPlus.

I want to begin by congratulating all the 2020 state and national schools of character from Missouri. You've earned this prestigious recognition from Character.org.

When I was asked to talk about Positive Attitude and the first thing that came to mind was the movie *The Help*, especially Octavia Spencer's character. Do you remember in the movie when she is taking care of the 2-year old Mae Mobley. Her character kept repeating the same words to little Mae.

You is kind. You is smart. You is important.

That's helping a child develop a positive attitude. It's called self-talk. We all do it.

But we also put a lot of negative self-talk in our heads.

That's because of evolution. Our ancestors had to be vigilant about danger and threats. This negative self-talk helped us survive a long time ago.

But not today....Negative self-talk doesn't help us survive.

Too often all it does is stress us out. Makes us anxious. Nervous.

Negative Self-talk can even lead us into depression.

So this is why Positive self talk is so important:

- It refutes and counters our negative self talk
- It helps us to live-into our core values
- Positive self talk is like a mental nutrient. It builds up our inner strength

So if you want to nurture a positive attitude, either in yourself or someone else, you have to find your own positive affirmations – particularly along three stepping stones. Let's call them the 3 stepping stones to a positive attitude.

1. **Acceptance.** The Serenity Prayer – “God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.” Let go of what you can't control.
2. **Optimism** –Storms of life. Arthur, you got this.



3. **Gratitude.** – An attitude of gratitude creates blessings

So my friends, when you're working with your students or parenting your own children, try this:

1. Share with them expressions or phrases you use to keep a positive attitude.
2. Encourage them, especially if they are bit older, to discover for themselves an expression or phrase that lights them up. Expressions that they own for themselves, born out of their own experience.

By the way, words are not the only way to maintain a positive attitude.

- For some people it's photo or picture that pumps them up.
- For others it's positive music.
- Or helping others.
- Or something physical. Walking. Dancing.

About 10 years ago, I found something that worked for me. I would be in faculty meetings and I could literally feel how my face would get all serious. Totally the opposite of generating positive energy.

And then one day I heard about the Buddha Smile. I tried it and it worked. So whenever I am in a meeting I have trained myself to....SMILE.

THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE OF A SOFT SMILE. I can literally feel the chemical changes in my body.

Here's your homework:

Be more intentional about knowing the words that speak to your heart. The words that help you have a positive attitude. Share these expressions with those you teach and those you love.

Be Octavia Spencer's character. Pass on your **WISDOM KEEPSAKE** in a way that they will never forget:

You is kind. You is smart. You is important.

Thank you

Buddha smile!