

# HOPE AND OPTIMISM

CREATED BY THE SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING



We might have noticed that when situations get tough, we tend to think in **extremes**. For example - *"Due to Covid-19, I will never get a job". "Covid-19 has ruined everything."* By using words such as 'never' and 'everything', we have automatically presumed the worst of a situation. In of the past newsletters, we introduced you to **"Thinking Traps"**. These thinking traps that we fall into, drain us of our **hope** and definitely, our **optimism** as well. We often feel paralyzed and helpless. Not to mention our motivation goes down the drain. Last week we looked at how we can build motivation, but we need to sail through such major life experiences such as a pandemic with a spark of hope and a dash of optimism, so that we are able to work with the thought that *this too shall pass*. This newsletter aims to address just this and we **hope** it helps you.

Hope instills in us the **trust** that something will work out. And optimism is along the same lines - it is a way of thinking that boosts our confidence that something we want will eventually work out. It creates room for possibility. Now, why are these important? In these grave times where everything seems to be so bleak, hope and optimism help us latch onto the light that is at the end of the tunnel. They remind us that what we are going through is **not permanent**. It helps us realign our focus to something that is more tangible, positive, realistic and most importantly, **in our control**. In short, it *enables us to stay motivated*. Think about it - if you are hopeful that you will get a job, instead of focusing on COVID-19 and how it has ruined everything, you will be able to alter your outlook and energy to what you can do to get a job. This slight readjustment in our focus lens empowers us instead of paralyzing us.

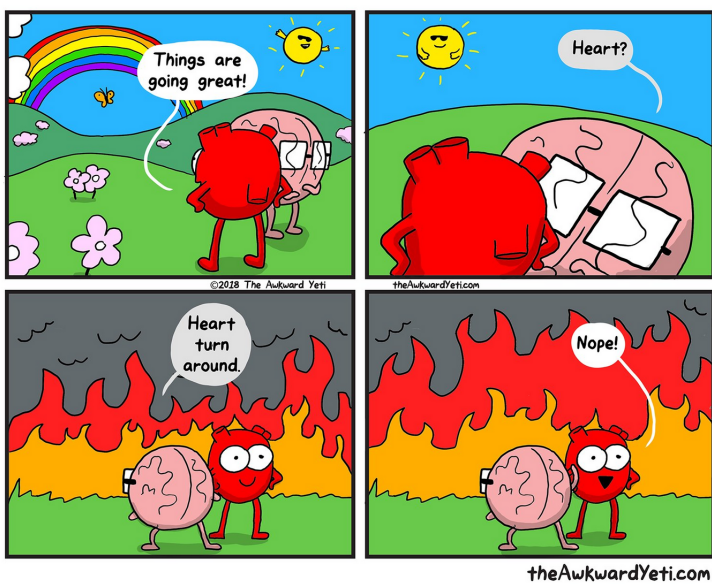
## RELIABLE NEWS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

The COVID India Data Tracker  
<https://covidout.in/>

The US CDC Website:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

For news and updates, rely on reputed news sources and channels and avoid getting your information from social media, heresay or Whatsapp

Importantly, keep an eye on all official communication from your campus admins and directors.



That being said, ***too much of anything is unhealthy***. You want to tread the line carefully so as to not fall over the fence into being ***oblivious***. Hope and optimism is *one part of the formula* to get you past this difficult time. It is not the whole formula. Therefore, learning how to ***balance our hope and optimism*** along with the ***realities of life*** is what is essential. You can use some of the mentioned strategies as starting points.

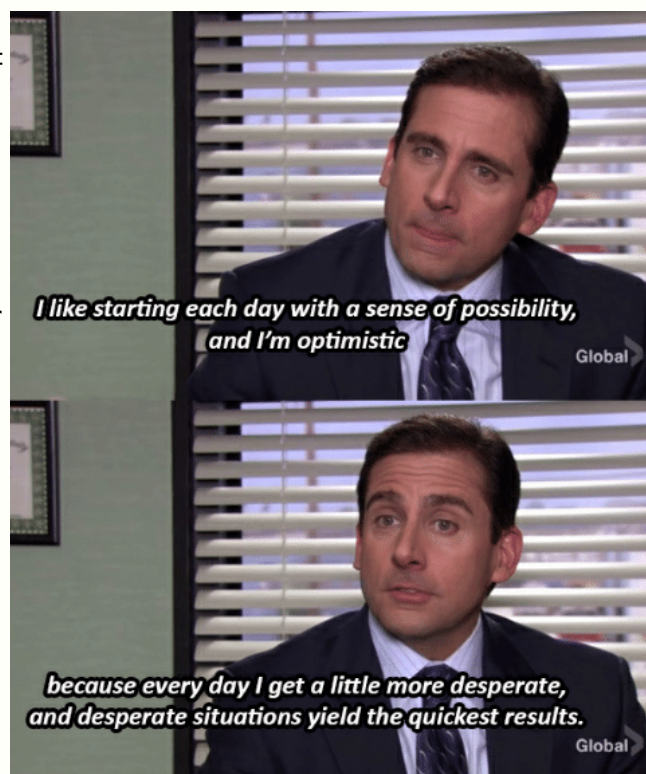
1) ***Discipline*** is one of those tried and tested methods that we are taught right from childhood as a means of getting what we want. However, as we might have experienced first hand with this pandemic, there is a very large number of things that are not in our ***control***. What we have in our control is ourselves, our choices, how we manage our emotional experiences, our thoughts and our reactions. We also have control over our perspectives. So if we can ***use discipline*** to help ourselves to work towards increasing our self-confidence, efficacy and arrive at our full self-actualization potential, we are less likely to feel helpless and more likely to feel ***hopeful***.

2) If you find yourself thinking in extremes or using thinking traps, try to ***restructure these thoughts*** by finding evidence of the contrary. For example - If you encounter a thought such as, "*I always fail at waking up early.*", try to find evidence of when you actually did manage to wake up early. This often helps in arriving at a more ***realistic conclusion*** whilst providing us with the ***hope*** that if it happened in the past, it can happen again. As obvious as it may sound, look for the ***silver lining***. No matter how tiny, there will always be one. Capitalizing on it will boost you forward, tapping on your inner resilience. This with practice can then lead to cultivation of ***optimistic*** outlooks.

3) When we are struggling with getting things done, ***recruiting a buddy*** who you can pair up with to achieve common goals can help. Think of this buddy as your ***thrive buddy***. Finding a tribe or a community of people who share your interests is extremely motivating and comes with abundant possibilities of hope. Knowing people are in the same boat as you can provide that ray of hope that you may not be able to find sometimes. ***Solidarity*** is a powerful tool.

What these strategies will help you do, is cultivate hope and optimism while still keeping you grounded and in check with reality. Further, you will tap into that inner motivation and move past the hurdles that are blocking your path. It will catalyze you to conquer your fears and help you take off into the future full speed ahead. We found an adorable video that encapsulates this and thought it might help capture what we are trying to share and also add a smile of hope to your face.

You can watch it on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAIRXlckfMA>



**In case of any mental health emergencies, reach out to your SCEW campus counsellor via phone or at [mindhelp@siu.edu.in](mailto:mindhelp@siu.edu.in)**

**SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)**

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