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Editorial Rough Draft

Chin Up, Buttercup

You woke up late, couldn't find your favorite purple sweater, missed the bus, and now you stare out the window at the drizzling rain as your mom lectures you on the importance of being on time as she drives you to school twenty minutes after the late bell rang. Then you remember- dang it! You forgot to study for that science test that's worth 45% of your grade. On top of all that, your buddy keeps pestering you about the money you owed him a month ago. And just when you think you've had enough for one day, you trip in the hallway on your way out of your 6th period class and drop your new, school-loaned Microsoft Surface tablet down the stairs. On days like this, being optimistic seems like a [joke](#). But as cheesy as it sounds, a positive attitude is the best way to see a glimpse of sunshine in the end.

That's right. Various studies have proven that a positive mindset helps us recover from disappointments and flat-out letdowns. Basically, [Winston Churchill](#) was spot-on when he said, "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." That means that no matter how terrible your day has been, being enthusiastic is the best way to turn your frown upside down. During a study on HIV-positive patients, those who were optimistic were less likely to blame themselves and more likely to seek further information in order to plan their recoveries. Since these patients generally kept a hopeful attitude, they engaged in problem solving when faced with a difficult situation, a reaction that shows an increased psychological well-being. While pessimists cope with hardship by abandoning their goals, optimists are able to accept reality and make the best out of their circumstances. Seeing

the glass as half full instead of half empty actually makes a difference because optimists are able to perceive the light in a sticky situation.

But wait, there's more. Aside from our usual, and sometimes not-too-bright, routines, optimism can also come in handy for a prolonged and healthier life. Research has proven that being optimistic improves our health and prevents diseases. In a [study](#) by scientists from Harvard and Boston University, a group of 1,306 volunteers evaluated for an optimistic or pessimistic attitude. Those who were pessimistic were more than twice as likely to develop heart disease even after taking other health factors into account. None of the volunteers had been diagnosed with coronary artery disease when the study began. However, after 10 years, the results showed that optimistic qualities were linked with preventing heart disease. Another study, examining 447 patients over a 30-year period, also showed that optimists were more likely to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the long run. Despite the time that passed, an optimistic attitude continued to benefit the patients' physical and mental state. Although more studies are needed to find out why optimism contributes to these results, the facts still point toward positivity for a healthier lifestyle.

If all this optimism seems like we're putting too much faith in an unlikely success instead of focusing on reality, then first off: you're being pessimistic. Second: negative expectations shape future outcomes in negative ways. That means that thinking "realistically" is only realistic because we are limited to achieving the goals we set our minds to. People who believe that low expectations are the [secret to happiness](#) because we will be more satisfied with what we have might also argue that studies on optimism are faulty since people who are healthy are more likely to have a positive outlook on life. However, researchers have adjusted these results for existing

medical conditions. Therefore, the results remain the same: optimism still correlates with better health.

You don't have to act like a preppy cheerleader and plaster a fake smile on your face until your lips stretch from ear to ear to be optimistic. In actuality, optimism is having hope and confidence for the future and a successful outcome. It literally means traveling through time in your mind and being able to imagine your success in the future. We usually take this mental time travel for granted. However, planning ahead helps us endure hard work because we have our eyes set on the prize. Neuroscientist and author of [The Optimism Bias](#), Tali Sharot, states that "An optimistic mind-set changes what you do every day-- and that, in turn, changes the future." By setting goals for the future, optimism literally changes our futures because we are more likely to achieve our goals with a positive mindset.

In a life where we continually face endless challenges, learning to be optimistic seems about as possible as finding a needle in a haystack. But that's the pessimistic way to look at it. If we focus on the opportunities and the successes in our future, we can improve our daily lives and ability to cope with life's struggles-- not to mention prolong our lives and prevent various illnesses. As the saying goes, "Shoot for the moon and even if you miss, you will be among the stars." So, even if the bird singing outside your window turns out to be a vulture, the good thing is that there won't be any road kill in view. It's important to keep up a positive attitude because, as humans, we work better when we're geared for hope. Without a doubt, the optimistic way of life is definitely worth a shot. Think of the life-changing possibilities!

Mentor Text #1: [The Problem with Favoring Natural Talent Over Hard Work](#)

I enjoyed this editorial because it uses a well-balanced combination of facts from a study and figurative language to be both engaging and factual. It describes a study that shows how an entrepreneur's success is due to natural talent and not just hard work. It classified fictional entrepreneurs as either "naturals" with raw talent or "strivers" that worked to achieve their goals. Although investors typically value hard work and determination, when asked if they would sacrifice other positive attributes to work with an entrepreneur, most investors picked the "naturals" over the "strivers." This was effective as evidence because it provided an instance when people would prefer someone who is naturally good at something over someone who is willing to put forth the effort to be good at something. I used this as an example of how to incorporate the results of a study as convincing evidence in an editorial.

Mentor Text #2: [Why We Look Like Our Names According to Psychology](#)

This editorial was interesting because the topic was intriguing and supported with evidence. The author simplified a psychological finding in order to apply it to practical terms. She used logos to explain the reasoning behind why we relate names with a specific style. This editorial also compiled the results from different studies to show the audience that psychology has proved our looks tend to fit our names. By explaining the results of various studies, the author provides convincing evidence that supports her point. I imitated this style to incorporate the results of different studies that show the benefits of optimism and how they can be applied to our lives.