[**How to Overcome Negative Thoughts**](http://www.lifeoptimizer.org/2008/01/23/tips-to-defeat-negative-thoughts/)

Negative thoughts are the enemies of victorious life. Since our life is very much determined by our mind, our thoughts can make or break our life. Negative thoughts will distract your focus from the important and drain your energy. At the end, you will no longer have the ingredients necessary for success. Knowing how to overcome negative thoughts may make the difference between victory and defeat.

I believe there is an important principle at work regarding negative thoughts, and that is:

**Attention is self-reinforcing.**

If you give attention to negative thoughts, they will get stronger and stronger. What seems like a small matter in the beginning may become monstrous at the end. **What you should do is breaking the vicious cycle by shifting your focus to something positive**. You can then reinforce this positive attention until you completely defeat the negative thoughts (read more at [attention management](http://www.lifeoptimizer.org/2007/11/14/attention-management-7-tips-to-use-your-attention-wisely/)).

Here I’d like to share 20 tips to overcome negative thoughts mostly based on this principle. Not all tips are suitable for all situations, so choose the ones that work for you. Here they are:

1. Realize that you only hurt yourself with negative thoughts. Don’t let them trick you.
2. Decide that you will live your day with happiness and not let negative thoughts steal it.
3. Look at yourself in the mirror and say, “I’m a positive person. I won’t let negative thoughts control me. I’m a winner in life.”
4. Read positive quotes. You can go to [Quotations Page](http://www.quotationspage.com/) or [ThinkExist](http://en.thinkexist.com/topics/) and browse the topics. Or, if you want random quotes, you can go to [Random Quotations](http://www.quotationspage.com/random.php3).
5. Never say negative words in your conversation.
6. Change the tone of your thoughts from negative to positive. For example, instead of thinking “This problem is too difficult” think “This problem is cool and challenging”.
7. If you think negatively about someone, remember positive things about that person. Shift your attention to the positive side.
8. Smile. It’s more difficult to think negatively when you are smiling.
9. Walk and act confidently. Good body language helps you have good thoughts.
10. Pray or meditate. Spiritual peace and calmness is among the most effective ways to overcome negative thoughts.
11. Gather with positive people. Be careful not to choose the wrong people or the situation will only get worse.
12. Take a nap so that you will wake up with a fresh mind.
13. Read an inspiring book. Spiritual books often do well.
14. Go out and appreciate the beauty of the world around you.
15. Sing a cheerful song.
16. Make yourself comfortable with failure. Failure is the stepping stone to success, so don’t be afraid to fail.
17. Have realistic expectation. Accept the fact that people could make mistakes since nobody is perfect.
18. If you think negatively about a situation, decide that you won’t give up even if the worst happens. Prove yourself to be a tough opponent. You are a winner.
19. Accept yourself and be comfortable in who you are. You can’t be perfect but neither can anyone else.
20. Help someone. Shift the focus away from yourself and do good to others.