

Explanatory Style Practice Worksheet

Visualize a recent negative and positive event you experienced.

Negative Event	Positive Event
(ex. My friend snapped at me)	(ex. I got a job)

How would a pessimist vs. an optimist explain the cause of the event? Think as a pessimist and then as an optimist. Write down thoughts for each area (Permanence, Pervasiveness, and Personalization).

Pessimist

	Negative Event	Positive Event
Permanence Good events have temporary causes, bad events are forever	Permanent	Temporary
	(ex. My friend is a jerk)	(ex. I had good luck today)
Pervasiveness Good things happen in specific cases, bad things bleed into all areas	Universal	Specific
	(ex. People are mean)	(ex. I did well on the interview)
Personalization Good things happen because of other people or circumstances, bad things are my fault	Internal/Personal	External
	(ex. I am an annoying person)	(ex. The company needed more help)

Optimist

	Negative Event	Positive Event
Permanence Good things have permanent causes, bad things are only temporary	Temporary	Permanent
	(ex. My friend had a bad day)	(ex. I am a lucky person)
Pervasiveness Good things are universal, bad things are compartmentalized	Specific	Universal
	(ex. She was mean)	(ex. I have good interpersonal skills)
Personalization I am instrumental in good things, there are many causes for bad events besides me	External	Internal/Personal
	(ex. She took her stress out on me)	(ex. I am well qualified)

Remember your actual reactions to the events above. Is there a pattern in your thinking? Over the next 2 weeks keep a record of events that occur and how you explain them. Practice shifting to an optimistic perspective.