

# 7 having an awesome attitude

## for you to know

Do you think? If the answer to that question is yes, then you already know how to use an awesome anxiety-management tool. Your thoughts create your experience of life. Your attitude, or the way you think about things, is one of the most powerful tools you have to help you prevent and manage feelings of anxiety. And since you are the only one who controls your thoughts, at every moment you have the ability to create a peaceful experience or an anxious experience for yourself.

Tristan and Jon were training for their school's big cross-country meet. They decided to meet at the field house at noon on Saturday to run a ten-mile course through the surrounding neighborhoods. Saturday turned out to be the hottest, most humid day of the summer. The boys laid out their course and then started off. About one-third of the way through, both boys were really feeling the heat, but they didn't want to stop because they needed the training. They kept running, getting hotter and thirstier with every step. By the time they were two-thirds of the way through, all that either of them could think about was a cool drink of water. When they finally hit the last stretch, they were hotter than ever and their clothes were drenched with sweat. Upon reaching the school, they both ran straight for the drinking fountain, only to find that it wasn't working. There was no drinking water at all except for a half-full water bottle sitting next to the fountain. Tristan had left it there before they started their run. Both boys looked at the same water bottle, and both had different reactions.

Tristan said, "Oh man! I am so glad I left this water bottle here! It's just half full, but that's better than nothing! Gee, are we lucky to have this!" Tristan's attitude made him feel peaceful.

activity 7 \* having an awesome attitude

Jon looked at the very same water bottle and said, "Oh no! I can't believe this is all we have! This is terrible! I could drink ten full bottles myself, and all we have is a half of one!" Jon's attitude made him feel anxious.

Each boy was in the same situation, but each experienced it very differently having nothing to do with the situation itself. Their experiences came from within each of them—from their attitudes.

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directions

In each pair of pictures below, two young people are in the same situation, but you can tell by the looks on their faces that they are experiencing it differently. Under the pictures, write what each person might be thinking to cause their individual feelings.



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## more to do

Describe a recent situation in which you experienced anxiety.

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Tell what you were thinking that caused this anxiety.

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What could you have thought to make the experience a peaceful one instead?

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Describe a recent situation in which you felt peaceful.

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Tell what you were thinking that caused you to feel peaceful.

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What could you have thought that would have made the experience an anxious one instead?

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Read over the two situations you just wrote about. If possible, share them with another person. Think and talk about the awesome power of your attitude to affect how you experience life.

As you go through the upcoming days, notice how your attitude about anything that happens affects your anxiety level.