



Toxic Positivity

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In the age of social media, we are accustomed to seeing posts around having a positive attitude no matter the situation. We see things like, “good vibes only,” “you’ll be fine,” and “just smile.” These are all examples of a term called Toxic Positivity. The phrase toxic positivity is the culture of portraying yourself as being happy no matter what. You’re switched off to anything that might be viewed as negative and feel pressure to act like everything is ok no matter the situation.

A positive attitude is very beneficial, however at times, feeling emotions that don’t make you feel good can also be beneficial. Emotions help our body to understand what is going on. When you don’t allow yourself to feel all your emotions, you run the risk of having an unhealthy outburst when they build up inside of you.

There are many ways to show all your emotions and still keep a positive attitude. If you find yourself “forcing positivity” try some of these substitutions instead:

Toxic Positivity	Validation and Hope
You’ll get over this; just focus on the bright side.	This is hard. You’ve done hard things before and I believe in you!
Think happy thoughts. If you think negative, you’ll be negative.	It’s probably pretty hard to stay positive right now. I’m putting out good vibes for you.
See the good in everything. Don’t let it get you down!	It’s probably hard to see any good in this situation. We’ll make sense of it later. For now, let’s just talk about how you’re feeling.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic has begun, we have all experienced various emotions. Depression or sadness could be some of the emotions experienced. It is important to know the difference between sadness and depression. Depression involves many symptoms, for example, feeling exhausted all the time and losing interest in things that you normally enjoy. Sadness is an emotion that is attached to a certain event and usually fades over time. [This article](#) discusses the difference between sadness and depression. Henry Ford Health System [has many resources](#) to help with the wide array of emotions we are experiencing during these tough times.