

Young Men of Purpose

A Complete Mentoring Guide for Developing
Successful Young Men

*“Written to inspire young men to effectively manage their lives,
overcome obstacles, and passionately pursue their goals.”*

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CHAPTER 15

ATTITUDE

“Your attitude will determine how high you soar and whether or not you reach your destination in life.”

Your attitude will determine your altitude

My first experience flying on a plane was on a flight from Indianapolis, Indiana, to Denver, Colorado, for a family reunion. After checking my luggage, I waited patiently to board the plane. When it was time, I walked down the tunnel, boarded the plane and took a seat right next to the window. After about 15 minutes of waiting, the pilot informed us that we were ready for takeoff.

Once the plane was on the runway, it began to accelerate up to 160 miles per hour causing the nose of the plane to lift. Soon after, the rest of the plane left the ground and began to ascend into the sky. About thirty minutes later, the pilot informed the passengers that we had reached our desired altitude of 40,000 feet. At this altitude, the plane soared smoothly as we flew high enough to look down on the clouds.

I tried to sleep during the flight, but was occasionally awakened by the shaking of the plane. The pilot explained that the shaking was turbulence, sudden movements of air caused by up and down currents meeting together.

After a two-hour flight, we reached our desired destination. Just as airplanes allow passengers to soar to reach their physical destinations, your attitude will allow you to soar to realize your dreams and fulfill your purpose. Your attitude will truly determine your altitude, or how high you go in life.

Chapter Focus:

This chapter will explain how maintaining a positive attitude will propel you to soar to your destination in life.

Attitude

Your **attitude** is your approach towards life. It refers to how you think and process every situation you encounter.

- **Pessimism** means to anticipate the worst in any situation, expecting the worst outcome. We are all human, and sometimes life's challenges lead to negative thinking. Negative thoughts always lead to negative actions.
- **Optimism** means to look on the more favorable side of events, expecting the more favorable outcome. Although your attitude will be tested over time, you cannot forget that positive thinking leads to positive actions.

You are what you think.

Your mind is a “battlefield” that is in constant conflict between positive and negative thoughts. They are at war with each other in your mind and affect your attitude. In order to win the battle of the mind, you must maintain positive thoughts on a consistent basis.

If you want to ascend and reach higher heights, you have to keep a positive attitude. A positive attitude will bring changes into your life and make you joyful despite the circumstances. You will expect the best to happen, and not worry about things you cannot control.

Having a positive attitude will put you in a state of mind that will strengthen you throughout life. What you watch on TV, view on the internet and listen to will greatly influence how you think. Your peers and personal life experiences will also impact your attitude.

You are what you speak.

As you grow and develop as a man, you will experience challenging situations that may cause you to doubt yourself. Speaking positively is the first step to overcoming any challenge you face in life.

When your attitude becomes negative, you will constantly say what you cannot accomplish. If you keep telling yourself that you cannot do something, you will never be able to do it. If you want to ascend, you should not speak negatively.

- Always say “I can...” instead of “I cannot....”
- Always tell yourself “I will...” instead of “I will never....”
- Always say “I am...” instead of “I am not....”

Complaining never results in positive changes.

Do not complain about things that you cannot control. Instead focus on what actions you can take to solve the issues in your life that you can control. When you complain, you blind yourself from seeing the positive side of things and you have failed to learn from the situation.

Begin to Ascend

To **ascend** means to rise to a higher point, climb or to go upward. How you start your day will set the tone for the remainder of the day. If you start each day with a positive attitude you will take off, begin to ascend and move towards accomplishing your goals. If you have a negative attitude, you will never get off the ground.

High Altitude and Looking Down on the Clouds

I never knew planes could reach altitudes higher than the clouds so I placed a limitation on how high the plane could soar. Many young men never soar to achieve greatness because they allow their limitations to prevent them from reaching a high altitude. If you keep a positive attitude, you will soar above your limitations and achieve at unimaginable levels.

Turbulence

Just like the plane, you too will experience turbulence throughout your life. On the plane, **turbulence** referred to a sudden, violent, movement of air caused by up and down currents. In life, turbulence refers to confusion, disorder and commotion that can cause you to experience ups and downs.

Turbulent times in your life will challenge your attitude and “shake” you along the way. If you stay focused on your destination, you will realize that turbulence is only temporary. Stay positive in your thinking, and you will make it through the ups and downs in life. Never forget that the good times always outweigh the bad times you experience in life.

Arriving at Your Destination

Your **destination** is the place to which a person travels or the purpose for which you are destined. As you journey through life, you will travel through a variety of experiences that will impact your attitude. Stay positive and remain confident that you will reach your destination and fulfill your purpose in life.

Associate and spend time with peers who also want to soar and reach their destinations in life. Negativity will bring you down, so remove yourself from naysayers who discourage you from reaching your goals. Be sure to surround yourself with people who dream, believe, and achieve.

Plan of Action:

1. Start your day off thinking about or reading something positive.
2. Hope for the best in every situation, good or bad, and try not to complain.
3. Seek inspiration from music, quotes, and other people’s testimonies.
4. Surround yourself with positive peers, and encourage, motivate, and help other people to be successful.

Statement of Affirmation:

I understand that I must maintain a positive attitude. If I want to take off and soar in life, I need to speak and think positively during my ups and downs. I will strive to be optimistic and not pessimistic. **This is my life, and I am a young man with a purpose.**

Please visit YoungMenOfPurpose.com for more information and additional excerpts.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Roy Dobbs is an award-winning educator, who has served as a teacher, coach, Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, and Principal in both traditional and alternative school settings. In addition to these educational experiences, Roy Dobbs has served as the Principal of an all-male middle school. As the founder of the Young Men of Purpose Mentoring Program, he inspires today's young men to become tomorrow's leaders through teaching the importance of character, scholastic achievement, and service. He resides in Indianapolis, Indiana, with his wife, Kristen, and three children.

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Building Character, Citizenship, and Academics