



It's not personal, permanent or pervasive

Bởi:

Joe Tye

“If we habitually believe, as does the pessimist, that misfortune is our fault, is enduring, and will undermine everything we do, more of it will befall us than if we believe otherwise... Pessimistic prophecies are self-fulfilling.”

Martin Seligman, PhD: *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*

In *Learned Optimism*, Martin Seligman admonishes that we should avoid interpreting adversity in a way that makes it seem personal/ pervasive/permanent (“I lost the job because I’m incompetent/ I screw up everything because I’m incompetent/ I will always be incompetent.”) You can teach yourself to expect positive outcomes, and your optimistic expectations will help you create the reality. Optimists do better professionally, are happier, and live longer than pessimists. It’s as simple as ABC, says Seligman: Adversity leads to Beliefs which lead to Consequences. What you choose to believe about adversity will powerfully influence whether it has positive or negative consequences.

In his follow-up book *What You Can Change and What You Can't*, Seligman emphasizes that it’s not sufficient to improve your self-esteem; you must first and foremost stop seeing yourself as a helpless and passive victim and take personal responsibility for your own future.