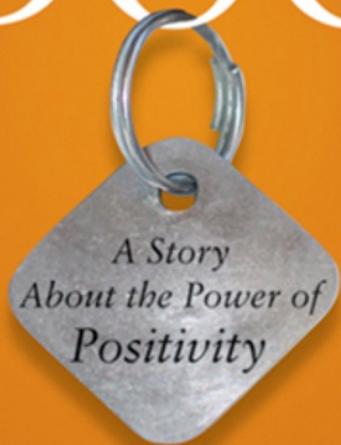


THE POSITIVE DOG



JON GORDON

Wall Street Journal bestselling author of *The Energy Bus*

THE
POSITIVE
DOG

THE POSITIVE DOG

*A Story
About the Power of
Positivity*

JON GORDON



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*For Dharma,
my positive dog*



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Introduction

I'm not a naturally positive person. People think I am because of the books I write, but the truth is I have to work really hard at being positive. I'm a student first and a teacher second, and the student in me tries to learn and practice everything I teach. In fact, many years ago in my quest to be more positive I read all of the research in the emerging field of positive psychology and ultimately wrote a book to help people cultivate more positivity and energy in just 10 minutes a day.

Long before books such as *The Happiness Advantage*, *Happiness Project*, *Stumbling on Happiness*, and *Positivity*, I created a positive energy plan that I implemented in my own life and shared with others. Robert Emmons, the leading researcher on the impact of gratitude and a major contributor to the field of positive psychology, wrote this about my book, *The 10 Minute Energy Solution*: "Drawing

on the latest scientific research, Gordon convincingly makes the case for an evidence based approach for energetic living. Just reading the book increased my energy.”

However, for several reasons, including the title, the book didn’t reach as many people as I hoped. I remember being at a book fair to sign copies and sitting next to me was John Grogan who was signing copies of his book *Marley and Me*. I had 10 people in line. He had hundreds of people in a line that stretched outside the building. At the time I smiled and thought, “One day I’m going to write a story about a dog that becomes more positive.” So this book has been many years in the making and I’m thankful you have it in your hands.

Since my initial idea to write this book many years ago there has been an abundance of new research in the maturing field of positive psychology. Much of this research demonstrates the benefits of being positive . . . and following this introduction you can read eleven of these benefits. But perhaps you are someone that is motivated more by negative consequences rather than positive benefits. In this case, I have also included research that reveals the cost of negativity as well. My hope is that knowing the benefits of being positive and the cost of negativity will inspire you to read this story and implement the action plan in the back of the book.

I know there are some who may not think this book is serious enough, complicated enough, big enough, or

x

Introduction

valuable enough because it's a story about a dog that learns to be more positive and, yes, the dog talks. But please don't underestimate the message in this book because it features pictures and talking dogs. ☺

At my company, one of our core principles is *simple is powerful*, and I have shared the simple, powerful strategies in this book with Fortune 500 companies, professional sports teams, college football teams that have played in national championships, school districts, and hospitals—and I know they work. The proof is in the thousands of emails I have received from people sharing with me how these strategies have influenced their life and work. The strategies in this book have grown sales revenue, motivated salespeople, improved team performance, developed positive kids, enhanced careers, improved marriages, and lead to greater individual and team success.

The goal of this book is to take much of the research on positivity and make it simple, fun, and actionable so anybody, even a child, can benefit from feeding the positive dog. In this spirit, I hope you enjoy the book, have fun with the story, follow the action plan, and experience the benefits of being positive. Like me, you may not be naturally positive, but as the research shows, you can become more positive and improve the direction and quality of your life.

11 Benefits of Being Positive

- 1.** Positive people live longer. In a study of nuns, those that regularly expressed positive emotions lived an average of 10 years longer than those who didn't (Snowdon, 2001).
- 2.** Positive work environments outperform negative work environments (Goleman, 2011).
- 3.** Positive, optimistic salespeople sell more than pessimistic salespeople (Seligman, 2006).
- 4.** Positive leaders are able to make better decisions under pressure (Institute of HeartMath, 2012).
- 5.** Marriages are much more likely to succeed when the couple experiences a 5-to-1 ratio of positive to negative interactions, whereas when the ratio approaches 1-to-1, marriages are more likely to end in divorce (Gottman, 1999).
- 6.** Positive people who regularly express positive emotions are more resilient when facing stress, challenges, and adversity.
- 7.** Positive people are able to maintain a broader perspective and see the big picture, which helps them identify solutions, whereas negative people maintain a narrower perspective and tend to focus on problems (Fredrickson, 2009).