

Health Newsletter

-Generali China GBD

May 2023



Historical Newsletters

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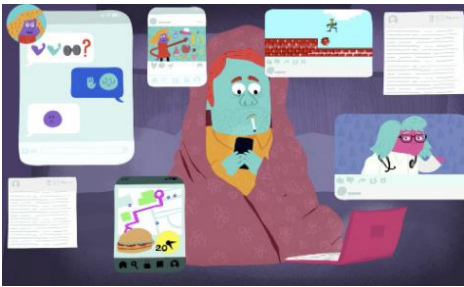
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Grow a Positive Mindset



Changing Lifestyle Help Improve Health

We live differently today. More things are available to us than ever before just through the touch of a button. This means we're not moving as much, and we're relying more than ever on machines to do our work, deliver our food, entertain us, and take us from place to place.



What are “Lifestyle diseases”?

As countries become more industrialized and dependent on technology for activities of daily life, rates of so-called “Lifestyle diseases” are increasing. “Lifestyle diseases” are illnesses such as heart disease, liver disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes and many other conditions with a link to a poor diet, smoking, alcohol consumption and a lack of physical activity. Your risk factors for many of these diseases can be reduced by making healthier choices.

What lifestyle factors can we change?

Your lifestyle choices influence your health. And your current health is the accumulation of many choices made since birth. There are factors you're born with which you inherited from your parents and cannot change (e.g. Hair color, eye color etc.), but there are things you can change-these are lifestyle factors.

These factors are the everyday choices you make about what you eat, how you spend your free time, and whether or not you monitor and take care of your health.

This person developed poor diet and exercise habits that started in childhood, which were then carried into adulthood.



...while this individual was active from a young age learned to cook healthy meals, and enjoys time outside hiking, walking and biking.

There are some things about your health you can-not change, but there are many that you can. Choose healthy habits every day that can help avoid illness in the future.

A close-up photograph of a person's neck and lower face. The person has light skin and dark hair. A thin gold chain is visible around their neck. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white. A dark brown rectangular box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing white text.

Know the Thyroid Nodule

With the continuous development of medical examination techniques, thyroid nodules are appearing more and more frequently around people. Many patients may fall into anxiety; do I have a malignant tumor? Will it turn to be malignant quickly? Does it need emergency surgery? What should I pay attention to in my daily life? Now let's talk about the thyroid nodule.



What is thyroid nodule?

Thyroid nodules are lumps formed by abnormal proliferation of thyroid cells. The adult incidence for thyroid nodules is 4% and the ratio between male and female is around 1:5. Statistics show that the detection rate of thyroid nodules in normal population by ultrasound is as high as 19-68%.

Why do I get thyroid nodules?

There are many causes of thyroid nodules. Currently, thyroid nodules are believed to be mainly related to excessive iodine intake. Of course, insufficient iodine intake, family heredity, radioactive exposure, physical constitution, gene mutation etc. are also the possible reasons

Are thyroid nodules the cancer?

Once a thyroid nodule is identified, the biggest concern is whether it is cancerous or not. Statistically, only 5-15% of nodules are malignant. The health effects of thyroid nodules depend on their pathological properties, size, growth pattern and functional status etc.

Inflammatory nodules: such as subacute thyroiditis will lead to pain and fever in the anterior neck area, and some patients will lead to changes in thyroid function, such as hyperthyroidism or hypothyroidism.

Functional nodules: If nodules can secrete thyroid hormone excessively, it will cause hyperthyroidism symptoms such as panic, fear of heat, excessive sweating, easy hunger and emaciation.

Neoplastic nodules: if the nodules are too large or invasive, they will compress the trachea, esophagus, nerves and so on, causing symptoms such as chest distress, difficulty in breathing or swallowing, choking cough, hoarseness and so on. There might be distant metastasis with lymph nodes, lung or other organs if it is malignant feature.

How to check thyroid nodules?

Thyroid ultrasound is the most reliable and cost-effective test for the diagnosis of thyroid nodules. In addition to ultrasound examination, the doctor may also suggest the blood test for thyroid function examination, which can not only confirm the presence of nodules, but also determine the presence of hyperthyroidism, hypothyroidism and Hashimoto's thyroiditis. Common ultrasonography positive findings for suspected malignant thyroid nodules includes: ① Solid hypoechoic nodules; ② Vertical growth surpass horizontal growth; ③ The nodules are irregular in shape and margin; ④ Micro calcification or pinpoint calcification; ⑤ There were also abnormal changes in cervical lymph node.

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Through thyroid ultrasound examination, thyroid nodules are generally divided into 6 classes:

Ti-RADS Class 1: Normal;

Ti-RADS Class 2: Benign;

Ti-RADS Class 3: Benign possibility, malignant; 5%;

Ti-RADS Class 4: Malignancy, 5-95%;
4a: low malignancy possibility (5%-45%)

4b: moderate malignancy possibility (45%-75%)

4c: high malignancy possibility (75%-95%)

Ti-RADS Class 5: Highly malignant, 95-100%;

Ti-RADS Class 6: Malignant lesions confirmed cytological or histologically, untreated.

Is fine-needle aspiration biopsy necessary?

Although the ultrasound examination can assess the malignant risk of the thyroid nodules, but the "appearance" of the nodules to judge if it is a "good citizen" or "mob". Sometimes you can't judge a book by its cover. Ultrasound-guided thyroid puncture biopsy is necessary if the results of ultrasound screening indicate that malignancy is more likely or the patient has special requirements. The accuracy of high resolution ultrasound plus FNA (fine-needle aspiration) for the diagnosis of benign or malignant thyroid nodules is more than 95%.

The diet advice for people with thyroid nodules?

People with thyroid nodule need to pay attention to the intake of food contained iodine. What kind of food contains more iodine? The answer is seafood. Because the iodine in seafood is somewhat higher than others.



People with the following thyroid nodules, including functional thyroid nodules (hyperthyroidism), high functional adenoma, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, nodular goiter, need to strictly limit iodine intake. They should not eat seafood and switch to non-iodized salt.

Although avoiding food with high iodine content will not lead to the shrinkage or disappearance of thyroid nodules, but it is meaningful for the control of further development of the disease.

How to treat thyroid nodules?

There is currently no medication that can subside thyroid nodules. As for benign nodules, generally it just needs regular review without surgical treatment.

But if the thyroid cancer is diagnosed, the surgery should be performed timely. Generally, benign nodules are more likely to be considered for Ti-RADs 2 or 3 classes. If the nodules are not large, surgery might be unnecessary, and it is good to repeat in every 3-6 months for progress. When a benign thyroid nodules need surgery? If the nodule has symptoms of compression, or is located behind the sternum, or is secondary to hyperthyroidism, or interferes with daily

life and work, surgical removal could be considered. In general, the diameter of benign nodules over 4 cm in size are also recommended for surgical removal.

It is recommended to visit the thyroid specialist if thyroid cancer is suspected for class 4 or 5 thyroid nodules. If the nodules are in a good location and the nodules are smaller than 5 mm for some class 4 or 5 thyroid nodules even through suspected thyroid cancer, a close follow-up could also be considered, follow up every 3 months is generally recommended. But if class 4 or 5 nodules are located close to the trachea or thyroid capsule, or nodules are larger than 5 mm, the possible thyroid cancer is suspected clinically, Surgical resection still needs to be considered.

The health advice of prevention for thyroid disease?

The prevention of thyroid nodules can be carried out in many ways. People in iodine deficient areas need to actively supplement iodine elements, such as eating high-iodized salt. But if the iodine level in the body exceeds the normal standard, the incidence rate of thyroid nodules is also raised. Therefore, iodine supplementation cannot be too high or insufficient.

At the same time, the attention should be paid to maintaining an optimistic and positive mood in daily life to avoid depression and anxiety. Long term of stress, tension and fatigue may cause endocrine disorders, leading to an increase in the incidence rate of thyroid nodules. In addition, having adequate rest to avoid fatigue, smoking cessation and alcohol consumption limitation are highly advised.



Tobacco Cessation

We all know that smoking is harmful to health! But what you may not know: about 33% of adults worldwide smoke; tobacco kills around 6 million people each year, China's smoking population is of about 350 million people and the number of passive smoking is up to 540 million people. The facts about Tobacco are as follows:

Cause Death

Tobacco dependence is a chronic disease that deserves treatment.

Tobacco kills up to half of its users.

Tobacco kills around 6 million people each year. More than 5 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while more than 600 000 are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

Cause Disease

Cancers, Cardiovascular Diseases, Respiratory System Diseases , Others



Change Your Appearance

Electronic cigarettes are increasingly being used by an increasing number of people and are considered a popular and cool trend. We must know that the use of any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe for people. E-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth since 2014. In 2020, CDC and FDA data showed that at least 3.6 million U.S. youth used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. Many young people who use e-cigarettes also smoke cigarettes. There is some evidence that young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.

There are some facts about E-cigarettes:

- E-cigarettes have the potential to benefit adults who smoke and who are not pregnant if used as a complete substitute for regular cigarettes and other smoked tobacco products.
- E-cigarettes are not safe for youth, young adults, pregnant adults, as well as adults who do not currently use tobacco products.
- While e-cigarettes have the potential to benefit some people and harm others, scientists still have a lot to learn about whether e-cigarettes are effective in helping adults quit smoking.
- If you've never smoked or used other tobacco products or e-cigarettes, don't start.

We call to quit smoking

Never too late to quit! We can get Immediate and long-term benefits from tobacco cessation. Quitting smoking takes preparation and planning:

- Deciding to quit
- Formulating a quit plan (may involve medication; hypnosis; written plan; online, telephone & in-person support, etc.)

- Setting a quit date and asking for a support Consult a doctor and dealing with withdrawal
- Staying "quit" (maintaining a tobacco free lifestyle)
- Most former smokers say a friend's support helped them quit:
- Tell them you are proud and happy to help them.
- Ask what would be most helpful.
- Offer to call and check in on a routine basis.
- Remember the quitter is in charge.
- Expect your friend to have changed moods and energy levels. Don't take it personally.
- Celebrate every day they succeed in being smoke-free!



LIFE AS A NONSMOKER: MAKE IT FOR A MONTH, MAKE IT FOR LIFE

Day 1 Hang this page where you will see it every day.

Day 2 Get rid of all ashtrays, matches, and lighters.

Day 3 Drink water. Breathe deeply between sips.

Day 4 Avoid places with smoke-filled air, such as bars, clubs, or the smoking section of restaurants.

Day 5 Keep track of how much money you save by not smoking.

Day 6 Avoid boredom. Keep a good book with you or go to the movies.

Day 7 Reward yourself! One week without smoking!

Day 8 Make a dental appointment to get your teeth cleaned.

Day 9 Decide how you will turn down a cigarette before it is offered to you.

Day 10 Review your reasons for quitting.

Day 11 Distract yourself. Stay active to keep your mind off smoking and to relieve tension. Take a walk, exercise, read a book, do a crossword puzzle, or try a new hobby.

Day 12 Exercise. Get off the bus before your stop or use stairs instead of escalators.

Day 13 Call on friends for support and encouragement.

Day 14 Reward yourself! Two weeks without smoking!

Day 15 Practice deep breathing exercises.

Day 16 Bet a friend that you can stay a nonsmoker.

Day 17 Ask to sit in nonsmoking sections of restaurants.

Day 18 Hang up "No Smoking" signs.

Day 19 Think of yourself as a nonsmoker.

Day 20 Each morning, tell yourself you will not smoke.



Day 21 Reward yourself! Three weeks without smoking!

Day 22 Think of smoking in negative ways.

Remember how it stains your teeth, gives you bad breath, and shortens your breath.

Day 23 Eat a nutritious breakfast.

Day 24 Do not relive your days as a smoker.

Day 25 Hold a pencil in your hand when talking on the telephone.

Day 26 Tell all your friends you do not smoke.

Day 27 Think about how much better food tastes.

Day 28 Remember, one cigarette is one too many.

Day 29 Take up a hobby that will keep your hands busy.

Day 30 Congratulations! One month without smoking! Give yourself a big reward.

Intestinal Health

Recently, the barbecue in Zibo has become popular, and many people travel thousands of miles to eat barbecue. Although barbecue is delicious, we should not eat too much because it is not good for intestinal health. Incomplete combustion during grilling and smoking can produce a large amount of PAHs, among which benzopyrene is highly carcinogenic in animal experiment. Food in contact with flame or hot metal during grilling can also produce heterocyclic amine, which are harmful to health and may cause tumors in the digestive tract system. Therefore, we need to limit the consumption of barbecue and grilling food. Let's take this opportunity to discuss how to maintain good intestinal health.



Intestinal health is defined by the absence of gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g., abdominal pain, diarrhea) and disease (e.g., inflammatory bowel disease, colon cancer), as well as an absence of other unfavorable local conditions.

A new survey recently revealed that an increasing number of white-collar workers suffer from various gastrointestinal issues. Some 73% of the 3,017 respondents said that they suffered from various stomach ailments, including indigestion, inflammation, and ulcers, and 94% had experienced bloating and heartburn, common symptoms of poor gastro health.

Let us understand the manifestations of an unhealthy gut

You may notice a few symptoms if you have reduced gut health. Here are seven of the most common signs:

Upset stomach. Stomach disturbances can all be signs of an unhealthy gut. They include:

A high sugar diet. A diet high in processed foods and added sugars can decrease the amount of “good” bacteria and diversity in your gut. Research suggests this may lead to increased inflammation throughout the body. Inflammation can be the precursor to several diseases, including cancer.

Unintentional weight changes. Gaining or losing weight without changing your diet or exercise habits may be a sign of an unhealthy gut. An imbalanced gut can impair your body’s ability to absorb nutrients, regulate blood sugar, and store fat.

Sleep disturbances or constant fatigue .Research indicates that an imbalance in gut bacteria may be linked to fragmented sleep and short sleep duration, which may lead to chronic fatigue.



Skin irritation. Skin conditions like psoriasis may be related to types of bacteria present in the gut. Lower concentrations of beneficial bacteria may impact the body’s immune system. This, in turn, may lead to conditions that affect the organs, including the skin.

Autoimmune conditions .Many studies have found connections between the gut and the immune system. An unhealthy gut may increase systemic inflammation and alter the proper functioning of the immune system. This can lead to autoimmune diseases, where the body attacks itself rather than harmful invaders.

Food intolerances .Food intolerances are the result of difficulty digesting certain foods. This is different than a food allergy, which is caused by an immune system reaction to certain foods. Research indicates that food intolerances, like lactose intolerance, may be caused by poor quality of bacteria in the gut.



How to promote Gut Health? **We have the following 5 methods**

The following ways to improve your gut health may sound surprising because they're not just about diet.

Eat the right foods .Balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides the fiber that builds good bacteria and gut health. Other foods that build a healthy digestive system include fermented milk drink which is rich in probiotics and other fermented or pickled foods (such as kimchi, sauerkraut and pickled ginger). Ask your health care provider about foods for specific problems such as constipation or bloating.

Get more sleep. Not getting enough sleep is linked to a higher prevalence of obesity, which sets you up for digestive system disorders.

Regular exercise. As with other aspects of health, exercise is the best way to lose weight and maintain a healthy body weight to ward off digestive system problems.

Limit Your Alcohol Intake. Drinking too much may negatively affect your microbiome. Repeated alcohol use is linked to gastritis, an irritation of the gut in which it becomes inflamed. Such inflammation can lead to heartburn, chronic discomfort, ulcers and bacterial infections. Drinking too much is also associated with intestinal inflammation, which is a sign of an unhealthy gut. Research suggests that this kind of inflammation alters the microbiota—including how well it works—and can throw it off balance.

Manage stress .Reducing stress is fundamental to reducing heartburn. Please try relaxation therapies along with other distraction techniques.

Tips for Travel Dining

Advise travelers to select food with care. Raw food is especially likely to be contaminated. Raw or undercooked meat, fish, and shellfish can carry various intestinal and systemic pathogens. In areas where hygiene and sanitation are inadequate or unknown, travelers should avoid consuming salads; uncooked vegetables; raw, unpeeled fruits; and unpasteurized fruit juices. Foods of animal origin, including meat and eggs, should be thoroughly cooked; milk and milk products, including milk used in soft cheese, should be pasteurized.

In many parts of the world, particularly where water treatment, sanitation, and hygiene are inadequate, tap water may contain disease-causing agents, including viruses, bacteria, and parasites, or chemical contaminants. In areas where tap water may be unsafe, only commercially bottled water from an unopened, factory-sealed container or water that has been adequately disinfected should be used for drinking, preparing food and beverages, making ice, cooking, and brushing teeth.

The Dark Side of Blue Light & Screen Time

In the old days, the sun was our major source of lighting which left us to spend our evenings in relative darkness. Ultimately, with the invention of artificial lighting, much of the world can enjoy illuminated nights. Both natural and artificial blue light can boost your alertness and mental sharpness. But too much of it may keep you awake when your body needs to wind down. We're exposed to artificial lighting on a larger scale than ever before – and we may be paying a price for all this convenient exposure.



What are the different colors of light? What is blue light specifically?

Not all colors of light have the same effect. Each light wavelength comes in different “colors” based on the type of electromagnetic radiation contained within. Some colors of the visible light spectrum include: white light (a combination of all the colors), red light, yellow or orange light, and blue light.

Blue wavelengths are beneficial during daylight hours because they boost attention, reaction times, and mood. However, these seem to be the most disruptive at night. And the abundance of electronic devices with screens, ranging from phones, laptops, and televisions, as well as energy-efficient lighting, is increasing our exposure to blue wavelengths.

Exposure to all colors of light helps control your circadian rhythm (your natural sleep-wake cycle). However, your eyes are not good at blocking blue light – almost all of it passes through your eyes to the back of your retina. While any kind of light can suppress the secretion of melatonin (a hormone that makes you sleepy), blue light at night does so more powerfully. Many scientific studies conducted at Harvard and the University of Toronto found that blue light is a potent suppressor of melatonin by comparing melatonin levels in subjects and control groups after exposure to blue light versus green light.

How is our circadian rhythm regulated?

Circadian rhythms are finely-tuned 24-hour cycles that help signal our bodies when to carry out essential functions and coordinate our mental and physical systems.



For much of human history, these rhythms were closely aligned with sunrise and sunset, which points to light as the most important factor.

During the day, light exposure causes our “master biological clock” to send signals that generate alertness and help keep us awake and active. As the sun sets and night falls, our master clock initiates the production of melatonin and then keep transmitting signals that help us stay asleep at night.

Through this biological pattern, our circadian rhythms align our sleep and wakefulness with day and night to create a healthy, consistent cycle of rest that can increase our daytime activity and productivity.

How can blue light harm sleep?

Sleep disturbances occur when human activity disrupts our natural circadian rhythm. But it's important to emphasize that blue light is not innately bad. Blue light and white light exposure during the day is good for your health and overall wellbeing. What we need to be habitually aware of is how overexposure, especially at night, can have a negative effect on your sleep cycle.

The bottom line is, you're less drowsy than usual at night and it takes you longer to fall asleep. Chronic disruption of circadian rhythms can also lead to many negative health impacts, including metabolic disorders and mental health conditions such as depression. With the significant health consequences associated with exposure to blue light after dark, it's important to understand the sources of blue light and ways to reduce the risks.

What are the most common sources of blue light?

These days, most of the world's population is exposed to blue light on a daily basis. And ever since how the Covid-19 pandemic shifted many workplace environments, many people work under artificial lights and constantly interact with electronic devices. Common sources of blue light include: Fluorescent lights, LED lights – more energy efficient but also tend to produce more blue light, Smartphones, Televisions, Computer monitors, Tablets, E-readers (for example, Kindles), Video game consoles. Ways to manage blue light and protect yourself.



It's highly important to be aware of how much time you spend exposed to blue light on a daily basis. Whether it's exposure from lights in your home or your workplace, or even from the electronic devices you use throughout the day.

The simplest way to lower your exposure to artificial blue light is to avoid looking at bright screens 90 minutes before bed. Schedule your smartphone or tablet for a Power Down Hour, which creates a specific cut-off point for device usage.

Cut down on overall screen time 2-3 hours before bed.

Wear blue light-blocking glasses – widely sold now; amber or brown-tinted glasses may help the most.

Dim the brightness on your devices using night mode and/or dark mode.

Install blue light-filtering apps on devices – they filter a lot of blue light from reaching your eyes without causing any difficulty seeing the display.

Exposure to lots of bright light during the day – this will boost your ability to sleep at night, as well as your mood and alertness during daylight.

Use a dim red lightbulb as a nightlight – red light is the color that least affects your circadian rhythm.

Improve your sleeping hygiene & environment – use an eye mask to block out sources of light that you cannot dim or turn off.

It's sadly true that our devices, especially our smartphones, have become an essential part of our daily lives. But it is vital to try using them in moderation in the evenings and at night to ensure you get good quality rest and sleep. A little mindfulness can go a long way!

Grow a Positive Mindset

You may have noticed in everyday life that some people seem like a little 'sunshine', regardless of how the day is going, they seem to be able to get through it in a calm and positive way.

At first you may think that they are just being chill and carefree, but gradually you'll know that they are not just being naively optimistic. Their energy comes from a strong and consistent mindset of positivity. Not that they don't see the challenges and difficulties of life, they do and they believe that things will always get better if they keep working on it.





We all come across setbacks and make mistakes at some point in our lives. People with a positive mindset allow room for changes and improvements and believe that setbacks and mistakes are not the end. They also believe in themselves and that they can always break through and change the situation.

Now let's explore some ways to develop a positive mindset:

First of all, being positive doesn't mean getting rid of negative emotions.

As mentioned previously, people with a positive mindset are not being naively optimistic. They don't believe that they can get rid of all negative feelings and never fail. Having no negative feelings is not normal nor possible. In fact, negative emotions to a certain degree are very important to a healthy being. Anger gives us energy and power, fear helps us stay away from danger, and sadness allows us time to say goodbye to the past. This means that we simply can't get rid of negative emotions. They are here to keep us stay awake and grounded.

Positive psychologist Barbara Fredrickson believes that we pursue happiness by increasing positive emotions while reducing negative ones. We feel happy when the ratio is 3:1.

Second, change the attribution.

Attribution is a term used in psychology to indicate how individuals understand the world and how we perceive the causes of events and behaviours. In order to effectively control and adapt into the environment, we learn to consciously and subconsciously interpret the world around us. There are two types common attributions: internal attribution and external attribution. The former is to attribute positive outcomes to individual's characteristics or efforts, and the latter is to attribute to the environment.

Obviously there are many factors influencing and contributing to an outcome. It can't be caused by either just internal or external factors. Psychologists believe that people with a positive mindset tend to have 'self-serving bias' to an extent. It means that they tend to attribute positive events and successes to their own character or actions, but see negative results are caused by external factors unrelated to their character. To a certain degree this approach can help with enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence, especially when facing challenges and setbacks. However, too much self-serving bias can have negative effect where one can become too optimistic and irresponsible of their own behaviours.

Third, double check your negative feelings and thoughts

It is only natural that we develop negative feelings and thoughts when facing setbacks, such as self-blame, 'Is it me that I wasn't able to get the job done?' or 'People must dislike me now'. We can't get rid of these emotions by simply erasing them with an eraser, but we can look at them in a healthy and appropriate way instead of believing them.

To start, take a deep breath without jumping to conclusion or action. Check your thoughts and feelings by asking yourself: 'is it really so?'. This will allow you time and space to look at the reality and look for exceptions. Then you may realize that 'what I'm doing is actually not easy and it's not easy for most people.', and that 'actually my friend texted me today to ask how I'm doing. People do care about me.'

Once we realize the feelings and thoughts are not entirely true, we can start re-constructing how we talk to ourselves and learning to check those feelings and thoughts whenever they come up.

Fourth, build up a positive network of support

Apart from self-practice, it's important that we learn to build a positive mindset through social interactions. When we socializing, not only do we communicate and exchange information, we also share emotions and feelings. You may have noticed that when your friend was telling you about an experience with joy and excitement, although you were not there in the experience with them, somehow you could almost simultaneously feel the joy and excitement as if you were in the moment with them.

This is 'mirror neuron' in function. It allows us to be empathy and feel what others might be feeling. You may notice that when you hang out with positive people you seem to be more open and optimistic. You might consider taking the initiative to build a relationship with these people and show interest to their invites too. You can connect with them by finding your commonality, openly sharing yourself and being accepting and providing them with your affirmation and emotional supports. All these will help you build a positive mindset through social interactions. A strong positive support network helps grow and sustain your positive mindset that helps you get through difficulty times which will then feed back into your support network. This then becomes a positive and healthy network cycle.





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