

You Have Two Choices

Ian Paterson

I like to illustrate the point that ‘The way you think about a situation determines your emotional and physical reaction’. In other words, if you have the correct mental approach to your tinnitus, it will cease to be a problem. This change in mental approach is fundamental to getting on top of your tinnitus and is the basis of the 4 keys to managing tinnitus that we teach in the seminars.

While sorting through the emails that arrived at my computer recently, I came across one from another co-worker with whom I had been discussing the difference in mental approach of my other two co-workers that illustrated the point perfectly. The email was not about tinnitus, but like so many stories illustrating how to get the most out of life, it has a powerful and very pertinent message that any person with tinnitus should understand and live by. The author of the story is unknown, but I would like to share the story with you and encourage everyone to examine how changing your attitude to your tinnitus could improve your perception of your tinnitus and ultimately your quality of life.

Jerry is the manager of a restaurant. He is always in a good mood. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would always reply “If I were any better, I would be twins”

Many of the waiters at the restaurant quit their jobs when he changed jobs, so they could follow him around and work where he worked.

Why?

Because Jerry was a natural motivator. If an employee had a bad day, Jerry was always there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Observing this made me curious, so one day I went up to Jerry and asked him “I don’t get it! No one can be a positive person all the time. How do you do it?”

Jerry Replied, “Each morning I wake up and say to myself, I have two choices today. I can choose to be in a good mood, or I can choose to be in a bad mood, I always choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim, or I can choose to learn from it. I always choose to learn from it”.

“Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining, or I can point out the positive side of life. I always choose the positive side of life”

“But it is not always that easy” I protested

“Yes, it is,” Jerry said.

“Life is about choices, when you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people will affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or a bad mood. It’s your choice how you live your life”

Several years later I heard that Jerry accidentally did something you are never supposed to do in a restaurant, he left the back door to the restaurant open and in the morning, he was robbed by three armed men. When Jerry was nervously trying to open the safe for the robbers, his hand slipped off the combination. The robbers panicked and shot him.

Luckily Jerry was found quickly and rushed to hospital. After much surgery and weeks of intensive care Jerry was release from hospital with bullet fragments still in his body. I saw Jerry 6 months after the shooting and asked how he was. He replied, "If I was any better, I'd be twins." I asked Jerry what had gone through his mind as the robbery took place.

"The first thing that went through my mind was that I should have locked the back door, then after they shot me and I remembered that I had two choices, I could choose to live, or I could choose to die. I chose to live." When the paramedics got me to the emergency room and I saw the expressions on the faces of the staff, I knew that in their eyes I was going to die. I knew I needed to take action.

At the time there was a nurse shouting questions at me asking if I was allergic to anything." "yes I replied" The doctors and nurses stopped working waiting for my reply, I took a deep breath and yelled "Bullets". Over their laughter I told them "I am choosing to live. Please operate on me as if I am alive, not dead". Jerry lived because of the skill of the doctors and his will to live.

I learned from him that every day you have the choice to either enjoy your life or hate it. The only thing that is truly yours and no one can take it from you is your attitude to life.

So you have two choices, you can choose to allow tinnitus to rule your life, or you can choose to get on and live life to the full not allowing tinnitus to interfere in your life in any way.

