



Create the Future You Want for Yourself and Others

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MAKING HOPE HAPPEN

By Shane J. Lopez, PH.D

Summary

Making Hope Happen is an inspiring book for the readers that believe that the future can be better than the past or the present. It is not solely about money, intelligence, or luck. In this book readers will be provided with an alternate pathway in order to make this happen.

Hope can help us get through tough times and lead us to a more fulfilling life. Hope is much more than an emotion. It is actually a resourceful tool that is available and abundant. We just need to learn how to create and share it with others.

The author of this book has used real people as examples to show us how their journeys went from thriving to suffering and then back to thriving again. For example, there was John, a farmer, who received a medical diagnosis that had him become suicidal. However, after

setting goals, and feeling accomplished and needed again, John was showing signs of improved health.

This book is divided into four main parts with a total of fourteen chapters. The first part takes a look at how we are always thinking of the future and that our thoughts and actions have an effect on the future that we will experience. The second part is about how it is up to us to make a choice for a better future. In the third part, we learn about hope strategies that will help us in being hopeful people. Then in the last part of the book we learn how hope is contagious.



Raising Hope

Image Source:
<https://willfulcaboose.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/balloons-in-sky.jpg>

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About The Author

Shane J. Lopez, PH.D.
1970 - 2016

Mr. Lopez was a Gallup Senior Scientist and was the world's leader on the psychology of hope.

Mr. Lopez has published many professional books, including the *Encyclopedia of Positive Psychology*.

Through his research with

hope, Mr. Lopez was able to encourage others to create a more meaningful future.

He was able to link hope, success, and well-being together.

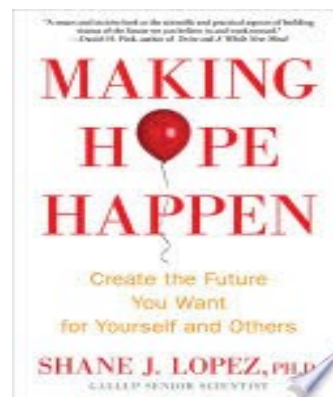


Image Source:
<http://www.simonandschuster.ca/books/Making-Hope-Happen/Shane-J-Lopez/9781451666236>

Special points of interest:

- Hope matters.
- Hope is a choice.
- Hope can be learned.
- Hope is contagious.

Thinking About The Future

1. What the Man with No Future Taught Me About Hope

This book opened with a story about a man who felt that he had no future. Shane, was in his final year of clinical training at the Eisenhower VA Medical Center in Leavenworth, in the Fall of 1997. One day, his mentor Dr. McNutt, threw him a curve ball by making him attend to a man that just received bad news and became suicidal. John was just told that his kidneys were failing and that he would now need to start dialysis. This was difficult news for John to take as he was a hardworking man throughout his lifetime. He was a Korean War veteran and a farmer. To John, the diagno-

sis plus dialysis equalled a death sentence (p.5). He felt trapped because if he did not do dialysis, he would lose the farm and if he did dialysis, he would still lose the farm (p.5). Shane did manage to prevent John from committing suicide. While Shane worked with John, he would reflect on the situation. One of his reflections was on a book titled *The Psychology of Hope*. From this book, he thought about



Sometimes being hopeful is the only way out.

people's relationship with the future. He thought about how we go from Point A to Point B. From this, he realized that John had lost his way, his Point B and needed new strategies for getting to his old goals, or he needed a new Point B (p.6). As time passed, John's health improved with each goal he set and accomplished. Through Shane's work with John, he realized that how we think about the future- how we hope - determines how well we live our lives (p.9).

Image Source:
<http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-ciSiwcvm-PA/Ttyua5qk3DI/AAAAAAAAERQ/sBPpxGMXyuQ/s1600/open-door-blue-sky.jpg>

2. Looking for Hope

In this chapter, Shane went on to do some thought experiments involving the future. From these experiments, he came to two realizations; first, we think about the future a lot because it gives us an emotional boost and because other people such as parents, teachers and marketers, encourage us to do so (p.16); second, not all thoughts about the future are created equal (p.16). One of his experiments involved him in writing down his thoughts about the future in fifteen-minute intervals. He found that sometimes he was fantasizing, at other

"There are four core beliefs that hopeful people have: one, the future will be better than the present; second, I have the power to make it so; third, there are many paths to my goals; and fourth, none of them is free of obstacles" (p. 18-19).

times he was dwelling and sometimes there was a balance between fantasizing and dwelling, which was when he was hoping. Shane noticed that hoping felt different than the other two types because that was when he felt compelled to act. Through Shane's client, John, he learned that hope was active, not passive.

Most people think of hope as an uplifting feeling but it is actually a range of emotions. When we are hopeful, our thoughts and feelings work together. Hope can be explained through the hope cycle. This cycle combines the core beliefs into a three-part cycle. The three parts are: goals, agency, and pathways (p.24-25).

3. Nexting and Prospecting

Nexting, as described in this chapter, comes naturally to kids and is a way of practicing hope (p. 33). The combination of imagination and time sensitivity gives all humans the power of mental time travel, the capacity to think of ourselves experiencing any and all instants of past and future (p. 36). As human beings, we have a tendency to tell stories about ourselves. We often edit our past experiences and what may happen in the future. Reliving previous experi-

ences through hopeful stories also makes it likely that we will prelive a future experience with a hopeful bent (p. 38). Neuroscientists can now track hopeful thoughts in the brain (p. 41). The author calls this the prospection pipeline (p. 41). This pipeline begins at the hippocampus and ends at the prefrontal cortex. The more positive and hopeful our future plans are, the more activity that can be seen in the prefrontal cortex.



Hope is a miracle of the human mind.

Image Source:
https://openclipart.org/image/2400px/svg_to_png/272632/brain-in-profile2.png

4. Hope Matters

Hopeful people tend to be more persistent in finishing what they have started, even when it is challenging. They hold fast to their vision, maintain their excitement about their goal, and, when one path or resource is shut down, find new routes to their desired future (p. 49). According to studies, hope has an effect on absenteeism. Hopeful people will be absent less than those lacking in hope. The same goes with productivity. The more hopeful an individual is, the greater the outcome will be.

Hope has also been linked to happiness in the same way. Hope for the future is clearly linked with daily habits that support health and prevent disease (p. 58). Thus, hopeful people tend to live a longer life than less hopeful people.



Nothing can be done without hope.

Image Source: http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-JYHn8L0IaLE/TnYEhaji9I/AAAAAAAAABYy/ZIiD_-M0qKs/s1600/Empty+Hands.jpg

5. How Investing in the Future Pays Off Today

In this chapter, the author points out how hope for tomorrow changes your life today (p. 65). The immediacy of return on your investment in the future is what sets hope apart from willpower, optimism, and wishing (p. 65). When we see a connection between the future and our attitudes and behaviours today, our commitment and effort soar (p. 67). Wishing on the other hand can be bad for you. There is also a difference between hopeful and optimistic. A person that is optimistic believes that eve-

When we hope, we have high expectations for the future and a clear-eyed view of the obstacles that we need to overcome in order to get there. We are primed for action. But wishful thinking can undermine our efforts, making us passive and less likely to reach coveted goals. Wishing ourselves into failure and loss is bad enough. But when we push our wishful thinking onto others and call it hope it is potentially destructive.” (p. 71)

rything will turn out well, as is. However, a hopeful person will work at making the future better. When we fantasize, it is like we have already reached our goals, which gets us no-

where, therefore, it is probably better that we imagine ourselves surmounting obstacles, problems, and setbacks (p. 74).



Image Source: <http://cfile28.uf.tistory.com/imag/e/145278374F532C0C09799C>



Image Source: <http://cfile27.uf.tistory.com/imag/e/2323BD4551F1D97231D290>



Image Source: <https://shobanakarthisk.typepad.com/.a/6a00d83473f9dc69e20147e0819b63970b-800wi>

Choosing A Better Tomorrow

6. The Future Is Ours to See

Future thinking could be good for us. It releases us from the burdens of the past and the anxieties of the present, buffers us from the stresses that come with daily life, excites the mind, and lifts the heart (p. 79). However, at the same time, future thinking can lead us down the wrong path. Most of us overestimate how much control we have over the future and yet some of us don't exercise the bit of control we



Every thought we think is creating our future.

have, becoming passive about the future (p. 79). This would simply be called wishful thinking. Therefore, when we do act, or hope, we are being courageous. Often too, our predictions of how we may feel once we have reached an event, tend to be wrong.

Be aware of negative messages that will feed fear and challenge hope. These negative messages can come from others and from oneself. Normally, a person with high hope will take a supportive stance rather than extend any negativity on you. When we start to feel like we are unable to move forward, then it would be a good time to try and figure out where this fear is coming from.

Image Source:
http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-IIcYUB-HcL0/ThOZxXWwASI/AAAAAAAAAEdE/KxJtdMqOy3M/s1600/Smiley_Pondering_Thought_Bubble.jpg

7. The Present Is Not What Limits Us

Many people believe that our current circumstances and characteristics influence our future. This may be true to a certain extent. However, and for instance, having a high IQ does not always bring one success and happiness (p. 94). In fact, just because a person is smart, does not mean that they are hopeful too, and vice versa. The same can be thought about those that are rich. Money can buy a lot of things but there is no correlation between money and hope (p. 96). Those that

are rich do not necessarily have more hope than those that are not as fortunate, and vice versa. In fact, those that are very hopeful have access to lots of resources. It is found that hope is also not dependent on ethnic group. It is, however, dependent on mindset (p. 97). When we are feeling down or feel like our life is in chaos, we need to try and focus on what really matters to us which can awaken the hope resource within us.

"Hope is an equal opportunity resource that is available to everyone" (p. 104).

8. The Past is Not a Preview

Paul Meehl named the idea that "Past behavior is the best practice of future behavior" as Meehl's maxim (p. 108). This simple idea has been a guiding factor in decision making for many. However, this prediction is not a very good one since various day to day factors affect our behavior for each day. Now if we take the past and hope together, these would be better predictors of the fu-

ture. In terms of hope and fear, it is best to find a balance. Fear makes us behave like we have blinders on and hope takes off the blinders (p. 112). It is a benefit to keep an open mind when thinking about the future. In this way, we are able to create resources (p. 114). When we are in the "sweet spot" of hope, we are able to take the right risks to keep moving forward.



The "sweet spot" of hope.

Image Source:
https://openclipart.org/image/2400px/svg_to_png/17940/AJ_Cotton_Candy.png

Practicing The Three Hope Strategies

9. Futurecasting: Making Your Goals Come Alive

From the moment that an individual awakes, one is already travelling into the future with thoughts. It might be as simple as thinking about an appointment that one may have at 1:00 p.m. or it could be thoughts about what one is going to do upon graduation from university. When we set goals, we are most driven by those that we are excited about. In turn, this excitement fuels our energy. In other

words, a goal should add to your life rather than subtract from it (p. 131). Goals that are stated positively yield better results than those that are stated negatively. When picking goals, start with what you do well. It is most likely that we will spend time on goals that catch our attention. Sometimes we just got to take our future for a test drive,



much the same way as we would when purchasing a new car. If that is not possible, we can also have a conversation with a person who is already living our future. Those that can connect the present and the future are better able to act in their own best interests (p. 139).

Image Source:
<http://theswirlworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/keep-calm-and-set-new-goals-257x300.png>

10. Triggering Action: Putting Agency on Autopilot

This chapter shows you how to hold firm to the belief that you have the power to make the future better than the present by putting hope on autopilot (p. 144). We can set up systems that kick in when we are too tired, too busy, or too distracted to keep our eyes on our goal (p. 144). When hopeful people use these strategies, they don't have to muster up as much willpower, self-control, or agency to keep moving forward, to shield themselves from people who might undermine their efforts, or to act in line with their best interests (p. 144). Two strategies that hopeful

Sometimes we just need to defend ourselves from those that try to put a damper on our goals and spend more time with those that keep our energy going.

people use are called cues and defaults. An example of a cue would be shutting off the television and turning off the lights. These cues would be a sign that it is time to go to bed. An example of a default would be the set up of a savings account where your money is automatically transferred into at certain times.

A third strategy is to set up a goal contagion. The excitement that we feel for our goals is contagious. Therefore, it would be a benefit to surround ourselves with others that share our goals. Other helpful strategies include making a pre-commitment to hopeful actions and making when/where plans.

11. Planning for ifs: Discovering New Pathways

A key skill of high-hope people is the ability to plan for the ifs, the ability to anticipate obstacles and create multiple pathways to each and every goal (p. 160). This skill is rooted in two core beliefs of hopeful people: there are many paths to goals and none of them is free of obstacles (p. 160). When we set goals, our hope creates positive energy. However, when we run into obstacles, our energy depletes. Therefore, instead of trying to overcome an ob-

stacle in the same way, we need to create new paths before we have an energy crash. Often, in our roles, we want to provide others with solutions rather than see them struggle a bit. There is a benefit though in allowing others to solve some problems on their own. The more pathways that you can think of, the farther that you will go. This is a skill that can be learned. Thinking about how to do more of what you do best can lead

you to many pathways to growth (p. 167). Focusing on your



Every journey begins with a first step.

strengths first also keeps your mind open to fixes for your

Image Source: <https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/pictures/40000/nahled/footprints-outline-clipart.jpg>

Creating A Network Of Hope

12. Leading With Hope

Followers need hope (p. 177). The most influential leaders are those that meet the needs of their followers. The psychological needs of followers include compassion, stability, trust, and hope (p. 178). When those needs are met, followers give their commitment, creativity, mutual trust, and engagement (p. 178). According to Gallup research, a ma-



Leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders.

ajority of leaders spend more time reacting to problems than making hope happen (p. 178). Lopez (p. 179) states that people that want to spread hope and motivate followers need to practice three tactics:

- Create and sus-

tain excitement about the future.

- Knock down existing obstacles to goals and don't put up new ones.
- Re-establish goals—regain—when the circumstances demand it.

Image Source:
<https://www.missbsresources.com/images/Blog/Leadership/followership.png>

13. Teaching Hope to the Next Generation

Lopez (p. 190) stated that in order to teach hope to our children, we need to do the following:

- Link children's current thinking, efforts, and learning to their future lives.
- Teach children specific, multiple pathways to meaningful goals.
- Conduct community audits to preserve and recruit extra agency for children.

These three tactics will only work if the child is already connected to the future, if they have at least one caring, hopeful adult in his or her life, and if the child is excited about at least one thing in the future (p. 190-191). Today, it is difficult for young people to see the importance of education. However, this link between education and the future is crucial. When young people are able to create goals that involve a good job and family, they are able to move forward.

"Many young people believe that they can do anything but lack the ways to reach their goals" (p. 196).

14. Networking Hope

Lopez (p. 204-205) stated that you can make hope contagious for your friends, workplaces, schools, and communities by building a network of hope through three tactics:

- Model hope through stories and deeds.
- Provide hope through instrumental or intrusive support.
- Become a Super Empowered,

Hopeful Individual (SEHI).

You can surround yourself with hopeful people and your hope can be shared with others (p. 205). Models of hope are all around and they seem to know when to show up. Even the tiniest ripple of hope can make a huge change.



Share your hope with others. You may not even know where your hope came from.

Image Source:
<http://www.rizomatica.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Community.jpg>

**Prepared by
Virginia Favel**

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Advances in Leadership and
Followership: Theories and
Promising Practices

Fall 2018

Professor Keith D. Walker,
PhD, DD (hon), University of
Saskatchewan

► **Be the kind of leader
that you would follow!**

There is always hope!

Reflection and Discussion

1. Think about a time or situation where you have used hope to your advantage. Explain how you used hope, how you felt while using hope, and what the end result was.
2. Think about a time or situation that could have used hope. Explain how hope could have been incorporated and how the end result could have been different.
3. What can you do right now to make hope happen in your daily life?

Lopez, Shane J. (2013). *Making Hope Happen: Create the Future You Want for Yourself and Others*. Atria Books, A Division of Simon & Schuster Inc.

Critique

Making Hope Happen is an enjoyable book that is easy to read and understand. It is an excellent reminder to be mindful of what we are thinking, saying and doing. What is learned about hope from Shane J. Lopez can be beneficial both on a personal and professional basis. The true stories that are shared in this book fully support the importance of hope in life. One simply needs to make their own personal connections to the stories and relate hope in their own lives or the lack of hope in their lives. After reflecting on what is shared in the book and my own experiences, I truly believe in the existence of hope and the role that it plays in creating the future that we desire.

This book delivered exactly what I expected and that is, a plan on how to create the future that I want for myself and others by making hope happen. As I read the book, I began to utilize the tools in the book at work. It certainly helps with my daily interactions with others. I do appreciate Shane J. Lopez's explanation of how we can use hope to create a future that is better than our past or present. Hope, is definitely, a resource that matters. It is a choice, can be learned, and is contagious!



Once you choose hope, anything is possible.

Image Source:
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/what-are-your-hopes-for-our-schools-tickets-51674648264>