

What's Your Story?

By Lady Rabia Abdul-Hakim



We have all grown up hearing the phrase, “You are what you think”. But have you ever really considered how **true** this might be? Well, you should be careful what you **think** about because your thoughts DO directly impact your physiology. What is the best demonstration of this? Think of a lemon. Usually, your mouth will start to water. Similarly, researchers have found that the way you **think** and **explain** the **causes of events** in your life affects your overall wellbeing. Yes, even those silent, horrible scenarios, and stories, you play over and over in your head, all day long, are probably wreaking havoc on your health and is probably affecting your weight loss.

Most of us have been conditioned to think negatively from childhood having constantly being told things like, “Don’t get your hopes up”.

Adults often tell kids this to prevent them from being disappointed and we carry this mentally into adulthood, using pessimistic explanations for events I like to refer to as “stuff that happens” (STH) and instilling pessimistic expectations for our future outcomes.



Good Event: *You meet a great guy*

Your explanation: *He’s probably married...there HAS to be something wrong with him...it probably won’t work out.*



Bad Event: *A horrible break-up*

Your explanation: *All men are dogs...maybe he would have been more attracted to me if I were slimmer...I will never find anyone...I should have listened to my mother.*

Seeing the darker side of things is not always bad. It allows you to

feel less stressed. But this type of thought process prepares you mentally for failure, it erodes your hope and is horribly disempowering.

Optimistic people tend to explain adversity and challenges as **“local – just this issue”** and **“temporary - it won’t last forever.”** Pessimistic people are the polar opposite, explaining adversity and challenges as **“global – it’s everywhere”** and **“permanent – it’s going to always be like this.”**

What “spin”, do you put on things? Before you can stop the negative story’s you weave, you need to become really **mindful** when you are actually doing it. That means you need to **think about what you are thinking about and how you explain “stuff that happens”** to you.

During my ordeal to recover my children from their abusive father, who was holding them in the Kingdom of Jordan, I became very mindful of how my thoughts **empowered** me. I had travelled alone to Jordan with only a small amount of money. I didn’t know anyone there and I didn’t have a job. But I summoned up all my courage and will and decided that I was going to do whatever it took to get my children back. One evening, while on an outing with the children, we were befriended by a Jordanian man. Noting that we were foreigners, he asked why we were in Jordan. When I told him my story, his eyes widened and his mouth dropped with shock.

“You are stupid!” he said.

“Pardon me?” I snapped.

“You are stupid to come here like that - with little money, no job and no family to protect you”.

I smiled at that.

“I had never **thought** of it that way – that I was being stupid,” I said. “I just thought I was being courageous.”

My explanation of my story was much more empowering than wallowing in self pity and contemplating the dire circumstances of my reality.

In my story, I played the spirited protagonist; the feisty, little underdog, who was hell-bent on overcoming any obstacle that stood in the way of my recovering my six children. Many days, I was hungry, lonely and deathly cold, but my explanation of my story warmed me. **I inspired myself** to remain vigilant. My story gave me hope and allowed me to constantly renew my conviction.



What's your story? How do you explain the "stuff that happens" in your life?

Check if your explanatory style is positive or negative by taking the free quiz here:

http://stress.about.com/library/optimismquiz/bl_15optimism_quiz.htm

Lastly, remember this is **YOUR STORY** and **you** can determine how it's told.

Be affluent, fearless, FAB & phenomenal!

About Lady Rabia Abdul-Hakim

Lady Rabia Abdul-Hakim is an international motivational speaker and author. She is dedicated to helping women, globally, to develop their brilliance to lead fearless, phenomenal lives and be healthy, wealthy, happy and wise. Lady Rabia is also the Founder & CEO of ContessaBlack Entertainment, which develops signature characters and media content for the Caribbean and Middle Eastern markets that are cross branded into books, merchandise, large-scale musical theatre, games and animated television series. A gifted author, poet and illustrator, Lady Rabia is the creator of the first children's media property from the Cayman Islands, *Kaa Kaa & Tokyo*. She is also the author of *Rising: Powerful Poetry* and the co-author of the children's series, *The Biography of the Noble Prophet Mohammad*. Her upcoming books include humour titles, *Growing Up Carib* and *I'm Taking Bids, Who Wants Six Kids?*, the self-help title, *The Power of a Promise*, and her dramatic memoir, *A Mother's Promise*. Her speeches and programs on illustration, writing, empowerment, success, self confidence and parenting include her trademark, wisdom, honesty and humour.

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