



# Healthy Mindsets for Super Kids

A Resilience Programme for Children Aged 7-14

Stephanie Azri • Illustrated by Sid Azri

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Stephanie Azri

Foreword by Jennifer Cartmel

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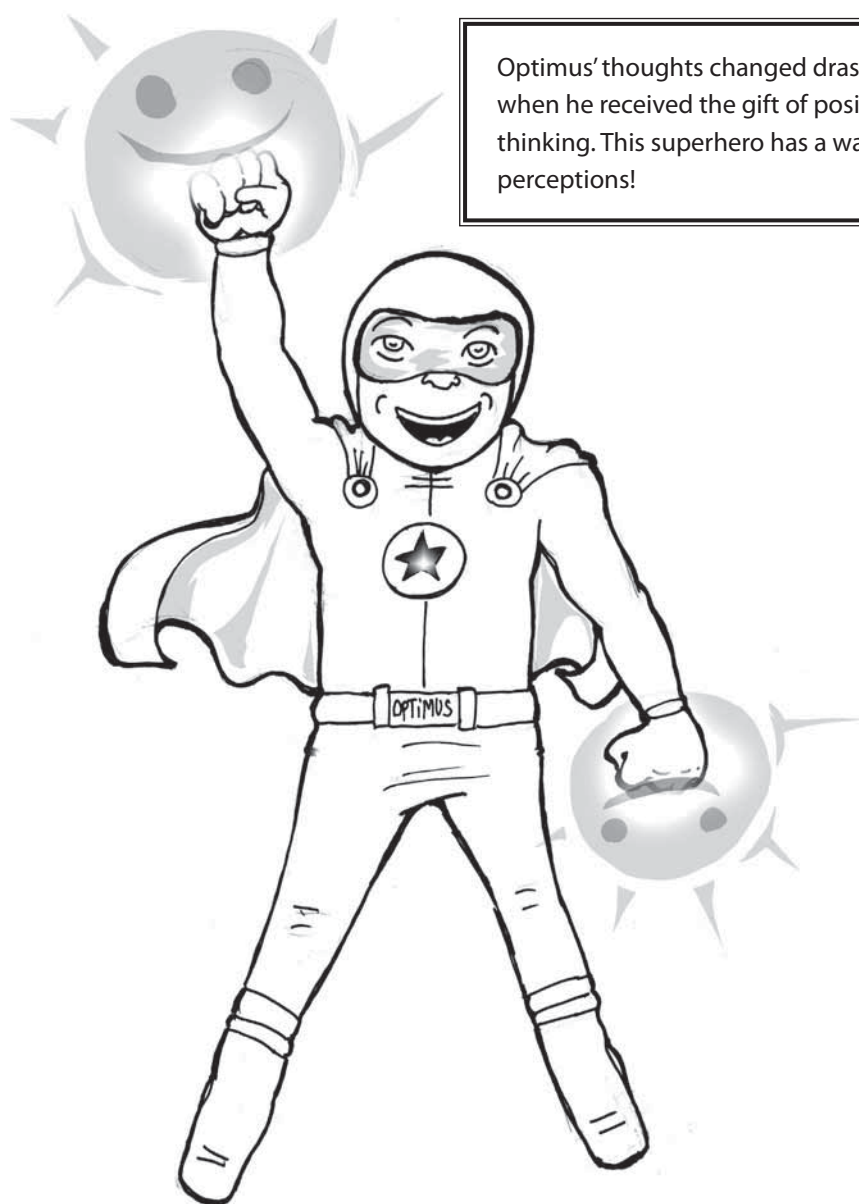
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# Session | 3

## Positive Thinking Part 1



Optimus' thoughts changed drastically when he received the gift of positive thinking. This superhero has a way with perceptions!



## SESSION 3: POSITIVE THINKING MODULE 1

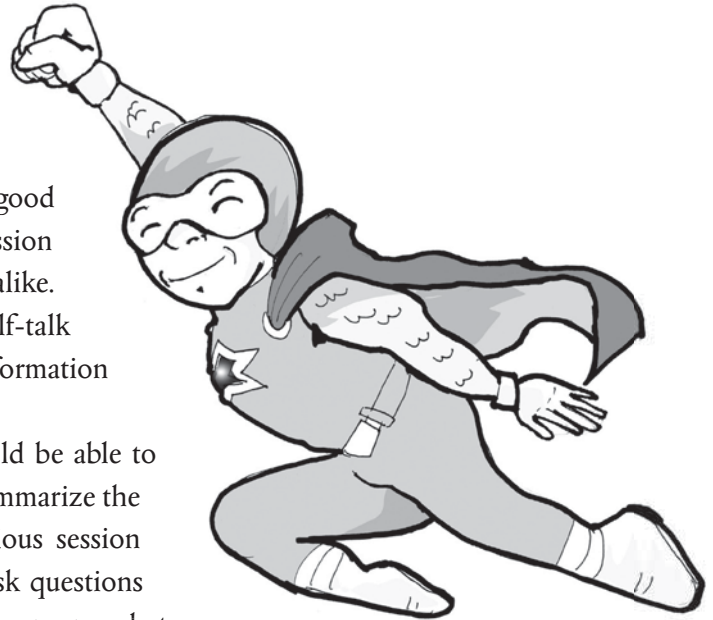
### 1. Greeting the participants

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The third module of the programme on positive thinking is a core topic and is split into two parts to allow the content to be facilitated slowly and surely. Positive thinking – trying to see the good side in most things – is the basis for depression prevention in both children and adults alike. Mastering the concept of positive self-talk ensures that children are able to process information in a positive way.

By the third session, the children should be able to recognize and recall each others' names. Summarize the communication skills learned in the previous session and give the children the opportunity to ask questions or share examples of their 'successes'. Ask everyone what they thought of last week's session. What did they learn, like or dislike? How did they apply the things that were discussed in the last session and what happened?

Introduce Optimus and explain that he wasn't always so positive! Optimus used to be fairly negative, actually. Through his story, the children will learn to think positively and they will learn about this when they read his comic strip, which introduces this module on positive thinking. Provide the children with the comic strip at this point.



### 2. Introductory activity

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Introduce the topic of positive thinking and the notion that positive self-talk has the potential to lead people to feel happier by transforming thoughts and, as a consequence, the interpretation of events. The introductory activity will involve using the Icebreaking Cards (found at the back of this book). Spread these either on the floor or on a table. Invite the children to choose a card which represents the way they routinely view things in their life (e.g. angry, scared, unsure, confident, happy, etc.). Ask whether they always view things happily, always negatively or sometimes a bit of both. Ask how they think their outlook on life is.



### 3. Why do I feel like this?

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This part of the module explores the reasons why children may feel sad about things and introduces Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) principles published in the literature. This should be explained slowly and clearly as these concepts can be difficult for children to grasp.

#### HANDOUT 1: WHY DO WE FEEL SAD OR ANGRY?

Distribute the handout – this is a written summary of why we may feel the way we do. Children may be allowed to colour in the picture on the handout as it is discussed (at the discretion of the facilitator and depending on the children’s developmental needs).

Explain to the children there are a few reasons why some people might feel sad about things while others may not be as sad in the same situation. The first reason may be that they have a sad way of thinking about themselves. Another reason might be that they have a sad way of looking at the events.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Do you recognize any of these reasons either in yourself or other people? When you get sad, which is your biggest problem – the way you look at things, the way you look at yourself or how you think about the future? How do you think those things affect you?

## WORKSHEET 1: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A HAPPY VIEW OF MYSELF?

Now distribute the first worksheet, which enables the children to explore how they view themselves. It introduces the ‘bright and bubbly thoughts’ and the ‘dark and gloomy thoughts’ and how those affect Optimus, the character of this module. The purpose of this worksheet is to emphasize that prior to his transformation, Optimus had pretty negative thoughts. After the transformation, he was able to have positive ideas. Read the worksheet aloud with the group.

Ask the children to write down the way they could look at themselves, using bright and bubbly thoughts. This involves them applying the bright and bubbly thoughts *about themselves* to examples of their choice. You may prompt the children if necessary.

Tell them that we can look at ourselves in two ways: a dark and gloomy way or a bright and bubbly way.

### DISCUSSION

What happened to Optimus when he was bright and bubbly? What about when he was dark and gloomy?

## WORKSHEET 2: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A POSITIVE VIEW OF THINGS?

Now distribute the second worksheet. This introduces the ‘give yourself a pat’ (positive) view and the ‘crawl under a mat’ (negative) view of events. As with the previous worksheet, read and explain the worksheet to the group.

Explain that when things happen to us, we can see them either in a horrible way or in an exciting way, and sometimes this depends on our mood or the things we’re going through; this is OK but we should practise seeing things in a way that makes us feel better. Tell the children that they are going to read about Optimus and how things didn’t go to plan when his baby sister got sick.







## SESSION 3: POSITIVE THINKING PART 1

### Handout 1

#### Why Do We Feel Sad or Angry?



Let's start with why some children feel sad. There are a few reasons children may be sad about 'little' things:

1. They have a sad view of themselves (e.g. 'I am fat', 'I'm not clever').
2. They have a sad view of the things that happened to them (e.g. 'This is so terrible', 'This is the worst thing that could ever have happened').

If this is the case, then we could reverse this and assume that happy people are happy because:

1. They have a happy view of themselves (e.g. 'I am smart at maths/singing', 'I did my best and that's OK').
2. They have a happy view of events (e.g. 'It's not the end of the world', 'It could have been much worse – I should be grateful').



**SESSION 3: POSITIVE THINKING PART 1**  
**Worksheet 1**  
**What Does It Mean to Have a Happy View of Myself?**

Imagine that there were two of you. One of you was so dark and gloomy it wasn't funny and the other you was bright and bubbly. Which one would you be and which one would make you feel better?

Let's see how Optimus' 'two sides' felt about themselves.

*Optimus – dark and gloomy:* 'I'm so stupid. I screwed up that football game. I mean, I always screw up everything at sports anyway. I'll never be good at anything. I should just start eating out of the rubbish bin or something...'

*Optimus – bright and bubbly:* 'I'm a pretty cool dude even though I'm not perfect! I like how I wrote that story with pictures and everything. I am proud of myself... I rock!'

How do you think Optimus felt when he was dark and gloomy, and bright and bubbly? Which one made him feel better?

What about you? How do you talk about yourself? How does it make you feel? Can you try to replace the dark and gloomy side with the bright and bubbly one? Write your name and practise in the space below:

(Your name) \_\_\_\_\_ is bright and bubbly: .....

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