

“Just think happy thoughts, you need to be more positive, you get out of life what you put into it, just go outside”. We’ve all heard little sayings like this. Seen the Insta post giving tips on how to cure depression through meditation and daily journaling. In some way or other I think everyone has been exposed to Positivity Culture. This idea, that I believe has stemmed from a growing awareness of mental health, that the trick to being happy is to immerse oneself in endless positivity. That simply choosing to be happy is all it takes to actually be happy. Thinking in this way is honestly rooted in ignorance of the actualities of mental illness. In some cases the pushing of Positivity Culture on someone who is suffering from a mental illness can worsen their symptoms. Telling

Just
be
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someone that they just need to be positive to be happy insinuates that they are at fault for their unhappiness, which in the case of mental health is false. Now Positivity Culture comes from a good place, I am in no way saying that people should stop being positive. However, as someone who is utterly unaffected by these little sayings I think that for mental health to find a truly open and constructive place in our culture we need to dismantle Positivity Culture. Sometimes bad things happen and no amount of “bad things happen for a reason” is going to change the fact that the bad thing happened. Realizing that negative emotions are a fact of life and learning how to both accept and healthily cope with these emotions is a key facet of improving mental health.

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