

**Select Readings, Second Edition**  
**Upper-Intermediate, Chapter 3 Test**

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

**Positive Thinking to Overcome Tough Times**

Times are tough. The nightly news is filled with stories of people who have lost their jobs due to the economic crisis, or lost their homes in a fire or natural disaster. Have you ever seen people who have just endured an awful situation? Some focus on what they have lost, and this is easy to understand. But other people focus on what they did not lose, and they start thinking about a better future.

One good piece of advice to remember is that you cannot always control situations or other people. The only thing you can control is your own personal reaction to bad situations. Sometimes a situation may really be overwhelming<sup>1</sup>. However, in many cases, you really can influence our own moods by the way you think about negative situations.

Imagine two families: Both have lost their homes and all their belongings in a devastating storm. One family cannot mask their grief. They feel that everything they hold dear has been destroyed. They cannot imagine how they will ever be able to replace things and start over again. Their normal life seems to have been completely lost. In contrast, a second family is crying with joy. All of the people in their family are unharmed and safe. This family is just happy that everyone has survived. This family is already trying to figure out how they can recover.

You can't really blame the first family for experiencing a very normal reaction to a terrible situation. However, the second family certainly seems to be better off. They are thinking about making progress rather than focusing on the tragic events.

Though this scenario is extreme, everyone experiences setbacks that seem just awful at the time. This could be a job loss, illness, or problems with family members. Nobody gets through life without having some bad things happen.

In these situations, try to focus on the steps you can take to remedy the situation, instead of how awful the setback is. By doing this, you will be laying the foundation for a better tomorrow. And you will not suffer as much pain today.

Actually, controlling how you feel and trying to maintain a positive attitude can help you through many tough situations. The bottom line is, no matter what the problem is, you are more likely to fix it if you can stay positive and work out a plan. Also, never be afraid to seek help when you need it. The advice of a friend, family member, or even a professional may be all it takes to get back on track.

It may sound like a cliché. While a positive attitude may not be the answer to every problem, it can certainly give you an advantage in surviving most of life's minor setbacks.

1. The reading passage is primarily about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. feeling angry when there is a crisis
  - B. the different types of disasters people face

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<sup>1</sup> **overwhelming** very large or hard to deal with

- C. a family who lost their home in a storm  
D. the benefits of maintaining a positive attitude when bad things happen
2. The author talks about \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. two ways that people may react to problems
    - B. one way that people may react to problems
    - C. the worst ways that people react to problems
    - D. the best ways to avoid problems
  3. The author says you can control \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. your reactions to bad situations
    - B. the things that happen to you in life
    - C. other people
    - D. situations
  4. In the third paragraph, the article says that \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. only one family focused on how they felt
    - B. one family focused on the negative aspects of the problem, and the other family focused on the positive aspects of the problem
    - C. both families focused on the negative aspects of what happened
    - D. both families focused on the positive aspects of what happened
  5. We can infer that the author thinks that the statement “a positive attitude will help you solve problems” \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. has no meaning
    - B. isn't true
    - C. is true
    - D. is just a cliché
  6. Which of the following is not mentioned? Focusing on ways to improve things when you have a problem will help you \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. figure out practical steps to deal with similar situations that may arise in the future
    - B. not suffer as much emotional pain in the present
    - C. not have the same problem in the future
    - D. not just focus on the problem itself
  7. In the third paragraph, ‘hold dear’ means \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. have
    - B. hold gently
    - C. love
    - D. embrace
  8. In the ways for dealing with tough situations, the following is not mentioned in the article:
    - A. Get the advice of a friend before you go to a professional.
    - B. Stay positive.
    - C. Develop steps in a plan.
    - D. Consult a professional to help you.
  9. In the third paragraph, the word ‘mask’ does not mean \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. hide
    - B. cover up
    - C. ignore
    - D. reveal
  10. In the fourth paragraph, from the words “you can't really blame the first family for....” we can infer that the author \_\_\_\_\_.
    - A. blames the second family for their reaction
    - B. thinks it's understandable that the first family had the reaction they did
    - C. blames the reader for feeling badly about the first family's reaction
    - D. thinks the first family had a stranger reaction than the second family