

## Burkeman Sample Essay #3

Adapting to failures, insecurities, and worst-case scenarios catalyzes mental resistancy and evolution. A person who utilizes negative visualization prioritizes their happiness by preparing for any situation. Because a person, unfamiliar with failure, is more prone to sadness, preparing for a negative outcome leads to a mental state of bliss and tranquility.

Taking dosages of negativity is the cure for unhappiness. Fantasizing too long on accomplishing unrealistic goals “reduces motivation” (Burkeman); skipping mental preparation for failure risks facing a foreign outcome. Instead of visualizing the best possible results, one must have stored alternative situations in order to avoid a mental breakdown or “a greater shock when things go wrong” (Burkeman). Because California is a ticking-time bomb for earthquakes, it is frequently advised to be prepared; prepared residents with safety plans decrease their anxiety and chance of being gradually affected by earthquakes. Inserting too much faith in an situation, without preparation, decays happiness.

No human is destined to live a perfect life; self-awareness is crucial for a healthy mental state. Exposing a person to reality prevents them from living “a life of unrelenting misery” (Burkeman). Failure is too common to ignore. The more a person experiences rejection or failure, the more resistant they are to negative outcomes. Disposing an “obsession with optimism” (Burkeman) gets rid of always expecting perfection. Walking into an important exam, it is beneficial to have a back-up plan in case of failure. Assuming a perfect score is unhealthy; lowering expectations is more safe than raising them to unrealistic levels. If a perfect score is earned, then the person will be congratulated with an abundance of unexpected happiness rather than stress. Negative visualization boosts mental immunity and prevents sadness.

Imagining the worst-possible scenario decreases anxiety. Because negative visualization forces the thinker to envision “finite and manageable” (Burkeman) results, no happiness will be lost. A person secures their happiness by remaining calm. Nothing is left to loose when the worst is already expected. It is more satisfying to risk failure but being prepared with alternative solutions than risking success. Waiting for college acceptances is nerve-wrecking and stressful. Unsure of being accepted is both exciting and fearful. Decreasing the assumption of being accepted to a dream school is beneficial. A back-up plan is always needed in case of a rejection.

The more a person gets less used to thinking positively, the more they become resistant to disturbing outcomes. Self-awareness is essential for happiness; everyone falls victim to failure. Becoming used to the idea of failure and rejection is a defensive

method. Thinking negative forces a person to be comfortable with their enemy.  
Decreasing the fear of failure increases happiness and satisfaction.

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**SCORE:** This essay received a score of 2.

**RUBRIC LANGUAGE:** A 2 paper indicates a student is likely to receive significant benefits from instruction in reading, essay organization, and sentence generation. Typically, the response is basic in nature and often presents unclear logic or coherence throughout, and because of these qualities, the essay often diverges from the text or topic. Its prose is usually characterized by at least one of the following: simplistic or imprecise word choice; use of a single type of sentence construction; many repeated misunderstandings of grammar and syntax.

**COMMENTARY:** Essay 3 represents a significant misunderstanding of the topic, in that it doesn't report Burkeman's ideas or respond to them although Burkeman is indeed cited parenthetically. The other dominant feature of this essay is that the sentence structure is monotonous and choppy to the extent that each sentence tends to present an idea as if it were standing alone without being linked to the sentence before or the sentence after.