

Burkeman Sample Essay #6

Writer Oliver Burkeman proposed a perspective that “negative visualization: is more likely to make people happier than “positive visualization.” He insisted that true happiness is achieved through embracing negative feelings and becoming familiar with failure. Experiment by German-born psychologist Gabriele Oettingen and Stoicism supported his argument. Experiment showed that focusing on success reduced the motivation to achieve it. Also, Stoicism argued that ideal state of mind is tranquility, which should be achieved by chasing happiness, but by remaining calmness toward one’s circumstance. Stoics thought that happiness could be sought by imagining the worst case scenario and facing the circumstance with tranquility. I agree the opinion of writer Oliver Burkeman which shows the benefit of negative visualization in seeking happiness.

Negative visualization helps people to overcome the failure and generates not only calmness but also happiness toward bad circumstance. Steve Jobs was co-founder and formal CEO of Apple Inc. which is the world’s largest technology company by total asset. Apple was successful for selling personal computer in 1970s and 80s. However, sales of Macintosh plummeted due to its high price and deficient application. This provoked a crisis on company. As a result, Jobs got kicked out from company he established. Steve Jobs told [illegible] that when he woke up every morning, he imagined about death which is the worst case. He got stimuli and even felt happiness by imagining the worst scenario. After his resignation, he managed Pixar and NeXT successfully. Apple decided to merge NeXT and asked Jobs to return to the company. Apple has been on a roll with sales of iPod and iPhone since return of Steve Jobs. Normal people like myself would give up if experiencing failure after huge success. However, Steve Job’s negative visualization helped him to overcome the failure and give happiness through achieving his goal and success.

Furthermore, Ferdinand Magellan, Portuguese explore, showed the profit of negative visualization. He accomplished the circumnavigation of Earth with fleet of five ships. In spite of several hinderances such as starvation, scurvy, and riot of crew, his strong volition led the success of circumnavigation. He never gave up the voyage even though one ship ran back to Spain. He believed that such danger and hinderance was not the worst scenario and proceed the voyage.

In conclusion, negative visualization rather than positive visualization is the better way to achieve happiness. Fearing the failure and pursuing only bright side make hard to remain happy. Negative visualization could give peaceful happiness by not being afraid of failure and calm indifference toward bad situations.

SCORE: This essay received a score of 3.

RUBRIC LANGUAGE: A 3 paper demonstrates that the student will benefit from additional instruction in reading, logic, and sentence construction. The response may indicate an unclear understanding of the text or topic, and the examples may benefit from additional development and analysis. A 3 paper may be characterized by any of the following: little sentence variety, word choice that could be more appropriate and concise, occasional misunderstandings of major concepts in grammar and usage, or frequent minor misunderstandings at the sentence level.

COMMENTARY: Essay 6 shows an understanding of the demands of the prompt. It has a first paragraph that explains Burkeman's ideas to readers although it uses wording that is very close to Burkeman's sentences. The paper also offers two examples, one about Steve Jobs, the other about Ferdinand Magellan, that are intended to illustrate the value of negative visualization. The problem is that neither of these examples is shaped in a way that's responsive to the idea of negative visualization as Burkeman has presented it. There's very little in the Magellan example that relates to anything that Burkeman has said. In the example about Steve Jobs, the essay offers a long and detailed discussion of Jobs' career, and at one point, the paper claims that Jobs, *"imagined about death, which is the worst case, in rebounding from his failure."* But that short detail, housed in a much longer and unfocused discussion doesn't really make the example appropriate as a response to Burkeman. In actuality, the examples in the paper are not about negative visualization as much as they are examples of overcoming adversity or of perseverance. The essay also contains some grammatical issues such as omitted articles in front of words such as *"experiment"* (twice in the first paragraph), supplying articles in some cases where they're not needed, *"fearing the failure,"* for example, in the last paragraph, and omitted plural endings, like *"total asset"* and *"personal computer,"* that can be seen throughout the paper.