

Burkeman Sample Essay #7

Many people often try hard to avoid negative emotions, such as misery. However, our relentless effort to feel happy and achieve certain goals is what makes us miserable. I agree negative visualization is more likely to make people happier than positive visualization because expecting things to turn out bad encourages me to change and act. Also, I believe negative visualization can bring more pleasure and reduce my fear for the future. Expecting and visualizing the outcome negatively is what makes me a better athlete.

For example, when my teammates and I knew we were going to play against a team that was hard to beat, we practiced harder and played with more effort. This encouraged me to focus on my technique and to condition myself so that I was prepared for the game. Honestly, there were times when my team and I thought we were going to win against a beatable team. This assumption resulted in a lose, a very close game, or to overtime. Even if we were to win, we would all be displeased and disappointed because we knew it should not have been that close of a score. Expecting the negative made us a better team and made every win more special. Another example, negative visualization can deliver more pleasure because thinking about the possibility of losing something or someone can alter one's perspective. As a teenager, I sometimes get sick and tired of listening to my parents and older siblings constantly telling me what to do. I don't really think about what they have done for me all my life. Now that I know I will no longer live with them when I go off to college, my perspective has changed. Every moment I spend with them is even more special. I don't mind doing favors for them and listening to them because I will lose that physical connection between my family and I. Negative visualization has made me appreciate what my family has done for me.

Lastly, I believe negative visualization helps me reduce my fear for the future. My current fears is leaving my family to go to college, fail in college, and not having enough money for food, shelter, and supplies. A way it has helped is by encouraging me to apply to many scholarships, programs, study harder, and learn more about the life of an adult. If I visualize my future as perfect and with no problems at all, I think I would not try as hard and would not be prepared for what lies ahead. Negative visualization has taught me to advocate for myself and has made me more calm.

In conclusion, I believe Oliver Burkeman's view on negative visualization is correct. I agree negative visualization is more likely to make people happier than positive visualization because expecting the worse can make moments more special when they turn out well. Negative visualization also reduces shock and calms the mind

because one is already prepared for the worse. Expecting things to turn out well does not necessarily mean that everything is going to be fine. Also, negative visualization does not mean that one is unhappy all the time.

SCORE: This essay received a score of 4.

RUBRIC LANGUAGE: A 4 paper is satisfactory, though uneven in its delivery. It demonstrates an understanding of the prompt and presentation of a thesis, though that thesis may not be logically positioned or clearly stated. Still, the thesis does have support in the form of examples, though the examples may not be fully developed, and some examples may not directly support or relate to the position and topic. The reasoning may be marginal in some parts of the response, and the response in general will be less developed and accomplished than a 5 paper. A 4 paper demonstrates adequate accuracy in sentence control and sentence construction and adheres to the conventions of written English.

COMMENTARY: Essay 7 illustrates Burkeman’s ideas, using examples from the writer’s own experience, primarily in expecting the negative visualization to serve as a spur to achievement. And the writer exemplifies that point by talking about their team although the sport remains unspecified. The essay also discusses the writer’s experience attending college, leaving siblings and parents behind and appreciating them more knowing that that separation is about to occur, as well as possibly flunking out and becoming destitute as the worst-case scenario which compels the writer “*to apply to many scholarships, programs, study harder, and learn more about the life of an adult.*” These examples are serviceable and appropriately developed, and the essay demonstrates a general control of language, grammar and sentence structure.