



WOMEN OF WITNESS

TIPS TO BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

The 3 C's of Attitude

By Dr. Alan Zimmerman

A woman told me recently, "I don't wake up with a bad attitude. I scroll my way into one."

She said she could start the day feeling peaceful, but after fifteen minutes of headlines, comparison, complaints, and unanswered emails, she was already tense before she had spoken to another human being.

That is the danger. A bad attitude is not always chosen in one big decision. Sometimes it is absorbed in little doses.

You may not have a bad life. You may simply have too many bad inputs.

Have you ever noticed how easy it is to catch a bad attitude?

You open your phone "for one minute" and thirty minutes later you have absorbed three arguments, two crises, a breaking-news alert, and a work message that makes your stomach tighten.

Or you walk into a meeting feeling pretty good, and within ten minutes the cynicism in the room has rubbed off on everybody.

That is why this article matters.

Because your attitude is not a minor personality trait or a cute little "be positive" slogan. It is the emotional atmosphere you carry into your home, workplace, conversations, leadership, and future.

And make no mistake. Your attitude good or bad tends to attract a similar response.

A defensive attitude attracts defensiveness.

A hopeless attitude attracts excuses.

A grateful attitude attracts cooperation.

A confident attitude attracts possibility.

Years ago, I wrote that success is all about attitude. I still believe that. But in today's world, I would say it even more strongly.

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Your attitude may be one of the few things you can still control. You cannot control every headline, price increase, organizational change, AI disruption, delay, disappointment, or person who drains the energy out of a room.

But you can control the attitude you choose, the commitment you practice, and the confidence you build. So let me give you three attitude checkpoints. I call them the 3 C's.

1. Choice: "I have decided how I am going to show up."

All of us, at times, act as though our attitude was assigned to us.

Most people do not choose their attitude. They borrow it from the loudest voice in the room.

That voice may be a circumstance, a coworker, a family member, a cable-news commentator, a social media feed, or the critical voice inside their own head.

"The traffic made me mad."

"My boss ruined my day."

"That customer got under my skin."

"The economy has everyone stressed."

"My family knows which buttons to push."

Maybe so. But there is still a choice between stimulus and response.

One of the managers I work with says he starts every Monday meeting with one simple question: "What kind of week are we going to create?"

Not "What kind of week are we afraid this will be?"

Not "What problems might get in our way this week?"

That is a choice question. It does not deny reality. It directs responsibility.

The most successful people I know do not wait to see what kind of attitude the day deserves. They decide what they will bring to the day.

Action step: Before you check your email tomorrow, finish this sentence: "Today, I choose to bring _____ into every room I enter."

Fill in the blank with one word: patience, courage, focus, kindness, energy, discipline, gratitude. Then behave as though that word is your assignment.

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2. Commitment: “When I hit roadblocks, I will not quit on what matters.”

Choice gets you started. Commitment keeps you going.

And that matters, because we live in a quit-quick culture.

People quit goals when progress is slow.

They quit conversations when they get uncomfortable.

They quit healthy habits when they miss two days.

They quit relationships emotionally long before they quit them officially.

They quit on themselves by saying, “That’s just the way I am.”

But commitment says something different.

Commitment says, “This is harder than I expected, but it still matters.”

Commitment says, “I may need a new strategy, but I do not need a new excuse.”

Commitment says, “I am not going to let one bad day turn into a permanent defeat.”

I think of the person who has tried to get healthier five different times.

He buys the shoes. He starts walking. He eats better for three days. Then he misses one morning, eats badly one night, and says, “See, I knew I couldn’t stick with it.”

No. That is not proof he cannot change. That is simply the first roadblock. And the first roadblock is where commitment begins.

A bad day does not mean you have a bad life. A slow start does not mean you are a failure. A setback is not a stop sign.

The same is true at work. A leader does not build trust by giving one inspiring speech. Trust is built when the leader follows through again and again, especially when everyone is tired, skeptical, and busy.

Your attitude is not tested when everything is going your way. It is tested when the roadblock shows up.



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Action step: Identify one thing you have been tempted to quit too soon.

Then ask: "What is the next faithful step?" Not the next perfect step. Not the next dramatic step. The next faithful step.

Take it today.

3. Confidence: "I believe I can learn, grow, and handle what comes next."

Confidence is not arrogance.

Arrogance says, "I already know everything."

Confidence says, "I can learn what I need to learn."

Arrogance refuses feedback. Confidence uses it.

That distinction matters. Today, a lot of people are quietly wondering, "Can I keep up? Am I too old, too young, too late, too ordinary, too behind, too tired, or too stuck?"

Some are anxious about technology. Some are worried about money. Some are exhausted from caregiving. Some are overwhelmed at work. Some are carrying private burdens nobody else can see.

That is why your internal conversation matters so much. Your self-talk is either coaching you or contaminating you. You would never follow a leader who stood in front of the team and said:

"I'm terrible at this."

"I always mess things up."

"I can't handle this."

"Nobody wants to hear what I have to say."

"It's too late for me."

You would lose confidence in that leader almost immediately.

And yet, if you are honest, you may be talking to yourself that way far too often.

Be careful. Those are not harmless thoughts. They are instructions. And if you repeat them often enough, your behavior starts to obey them.



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One teacher understood that. She had her students write down every “I can’t” statement they could think of. Then she put the papers in a box, marched the class outside, and they buried the box. From that day forward, “I can’t” was officially dead in that classroom. They were forbidden words.

Maybe you need your own “I can’t” funeral.

Action step:

Write down three “I can’t” statements you have been repeating.

Then rewrite each one into a more truthful, useful statement.

“I can’t change” becomes “I can take one small step.”

“I can’t speak up” becomes “I can ask one honest question.”

“I can’t keep up” becomes “I can learn the next skill.”

You do not need fake confidence. You need practiced confidence.

Takeaway: Your attitude is not fixed. It is formed. And it is formed one choice, one commitment, and one confidence-building action at a time.

Keep growing. The best is yet to come!

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