

Influence Begins Here

By Silver Rose



I wish I could tell you I practice what I preach perfectly but, alas, I do not. I'm not sure it's actually possible but I'm giving it the old college try!

In the book *Change Your Brain, Change Your Life*, Dr. Daniel Amen tells us, "Spending time with positive people is essential to the health of the brain's deep limbic system—the bonding and mood control center." This is important because we are influenced by other people's moods. Hanging out with positive people stimulates us positively. Most would agree with that; how about you?

Having agreed on that let me ask—who do you hang out with more than anyone else?

When I ask this question in my programs, I get a variety of answers:

- My family
- The people at work
- My community

The answers vary depending on an individual's lifestyle but the answer that's true for *everyone* is that you spend most of your time with one person—YOU! Uh-oh!

YOU are the person you spend more time with than anyone else.

So, if you're no picnic to live with...

When I'm in a bad mood, there is such a strong pull to wallow. Does that happen to you? Even though I KNOW it's keeping me from attracting what I want, I somehow think I "have earned" the right to be grumpy. Some choice.

Many of us long to influence others in a positive way. I know I do. But the sad reality is, if I am unable to influence my own thinking then it will be incredibly difficult, if not impossible to influence others.

Just as charity begins at home, positive influence begins inside your own mind. How can you be your own positive influence? It's simple to say but it takes work to do. You start by insisting that NOTHING is more important than you feeling good. GASP! "Silver," you might ask, are you advocating that we be *selfish*?" Why yes, I am and here's why. In order for you to influence your own thoughts (that will in turn influence your mood), you must recognize that allowing negativity to creep into your thought process does no one any good—least of all you. So being selfish enough to insist on feeling good actually helps everyone around you!

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The beatings will
continue until
morale improves!

I am reminded of the sign that was popular years ago. You may have seen it; it hung in many offices. Most people find the sign pretty amusing because it makes no sense. Neither does it make sense to think that feeding Miracle Gro' to the garden of negativity in your mind will result in anything good.

Charity begins at home and so does the ability to influence. If you're interested in increasing your ability to influence others, first practice on yourself and do so continually. **The very best way to influence is through asking great questions.** Of course, the best questions to ask yourself when you're in a bad mood were developed in 12-step groups and they are CRITICAL to ask first. The acronym for this is HALT (Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired):

- Are you hungry? Then eat.
- Are you angry? Write about it or call a friend who is good at calming you down.
- Are you lonely? Go somewhere where there are people, call a friend or go online to an interactive social media group.
- Are you tired? Take a nap or plan for when you can.

If addressing those issues does not take care of your bad mood, here are a few more questions to ask yourself:

- What's one thing I am grateful for?
- What *always* works to put me into a better mood? (And then do it.)
- If a friend or loved one were in a similar mood, what would I want to say to them?
- If I had a perfect friend, what would s/he say or do that would guarantee to pop me out of this mood? (Then give that to yourself!)

Your ability to influence your world starts with you. Positive self-talk works well but asking good *questions* of yourself? That works even better!

May 12, 2015

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