

The Smart Social Skills Course

→ **Week 4: An Attractive Attitude of
Optimism and Giving Value**

Copyright Henrik Edberg, 2013. You do not have the right to sell, share or claim the ownership of the content of this course.

This course is for informational purposes only and it contains my opinions based on my experience. You should always find the advice of a professional before taking action on something I have published.

An Attractive Attitude of Optimism and Giving Value

This fourth of the Smart Social Skills Course week will be a little different.

Up until now we have focused on very practical techniques and habits you can use and add to your life to create better first impressions, conversations and to overcome shyness and social nervousness.

This week we will take a look at a very important underlying fundamental not only for your social skills and relationship but for anything in life really.

And that is your attitude.

With an attitude that helps you people will open up and respond to you better. Your relationships will go a lot better and deepen. And you will keep going even if you encounter setbacks.

My attitude used to not be very helpful. I was not very open and I was pessimistic. I wasn't very proactive and I did not take many initiatives socially.

And that becomes a big obstacle even if you get the hang of using FORD or assuming rapport for example. If the underlying attitude and energy you send out into the world is negative then you'll get that back in most cases too.

We tend to get what we give socially.

So be careful about what you give.

Improving one's attitude to a more helpful one is a course of material in itself. In this week's guide I will however share a few of the most powerful and important things that have helped me.

The two parts of the helpful attitude I am talking about are:

- **Giving value.** By that I mean what you can add to other people's lives. Because what you give you get back and a relationship and just a conversation is built upon the value that people share with each other.
- **Optimism.** By being an optimist you'll be able to face rejection, disappointment, mistakes and failure in a more helpful and growth oriented way. Instead of giving up and going home after a few bumps in the road to better social skills and relationships. Plus, people tend to like optimists and someone who can add positivity and good energy to an interaction of any kind.

Let's start with the first part of this attitude, giving value.

What is value socially?

Well, it can be a lot of things. Some of them you have already learned about and practised.

Such as:

- **Setting a good mood for a first conversation.** By breathing + assuming rapport. Or by using the three steps from last week for handling approach anxiety.
- **Being interested.** When you used FORD you asked and talked about what someone valued most in his or her life. That is bringing a lot of value to a conversation and a relationship because people want to be understood. They want someone to listen and take an interest in what they got going on.

There are many more ways you can add value to someone's life. And many of the upcoming weekly action-steps will be about that too.

But let me just list some of the other and most powerful ways to add value to someone else's life.

Truly listen.

Just be there fully and truly listen to what they are saying. Lend an ear and just let someone vent and figure things out. We will go more into listening during next week.

Help them out.

This could be practically by helping someone move, by asking someone you know for good advice that your friend needs or by connecting someone with someone else.

It could be by giving them some advice or perspective on a challenge they are facing.

Or it could simply be by thinking about how you can add some value to the life of someone in your life and take action to do so.

Take the first step.

People often stay still and do not take the first step because of fear of failure or rejection, lack of time, laziness or some other reason.

So add value to the lives of your friends by taking care of planning and fixing the party or picnic.

Send out an email to someone in your business world you would like to get to know better.

Ask someone for a date instead of circling around each other any longer.

Be kind and accepting.

By being accepting and by helping to raise someone's self-esteem you can add a whole lot of value to a friend's, family member's or partner's life. We'll take a closer look at this during week 8.

These are some of the most powerful and common ways to give value.

A very simple way to make this into a daily habit is to ask yourself two questions during your day:

- How can I give value to my world today?
- How can I give value in this conversation?

Now, let's move on to the second part of the attractive attitude.

As I mentioned early on in this guide; I used to be a big pessimist.

What helped me to turn that around?

Two of the most important habits for me have been to...

Ask yourself questions that let you see the optimistic viewpoint.

When I'm in what seems like a negative situation my most common way of making something better out of that is to ask myself questions that promote optimism and helps me to find solutions.

Questions like:

- What is one thing that is positive or good about this situation?
- What can I learn from this situation?
- What is the opportunity within this situation?

When things didn't go so well on your date or on a meeting it might not be easy to ask yourself these questions right away. That is normal and OK. You may need some time to process your thoughts and emotions.

But after that first period of time, don't drag yourself down with negative thoughts and make yourself feel bad about yourself.

Instead, use the questions on the previous page. See what you can learn from what happened that you can take action on.

Maybe you want to prepare more or get more feedback about your presentation before the next meeting.

Maybe you'll find you became too nervous or the conversation dried up on the date and then you can practise assuming rapport or mindfulness or using the conversation tactics from week 2 before the next date.

By going about things this way you will continue to improve and you'll feel a whole lot better in the process compared to if you had given up or beaten yourself up for two weeks.

Get optimistic support from the world around you.

One the most important factors for being able to stay optimistic are the influences around you. Optimism is – just like enthusiasm – contagious.

So find ways to create an environment that supports you.

The people in your life are usually the most important external factor for your own optimism and attitude. We will look more into that in a while, during week 10.

In the mean-time, focus on the other very important environmental factor: the information you let into your mind.

One of the simplest things you can do to create and support your own optimism is simply to replace sources of negativity and pessimism with positive sources. Like regularly reading blogs and books and listening to or watching recordings created by optimistic and positive people.

It is darkest before the dawn.

Let me just share one final and powerful thought before the action-steps for this week.

This thought has helped me to hold on when things have felt very difficult and I felt like giving up and going home. Because I have found it to be true.

When things seemed to be at the lowest point with my dating life, with my social skills after I had tried and things didn't go so well or with my motivation in life in general something always happened.

Probably quite often because being at that low point forced me to change something in how I did things.

But maybe also because life seems to have some kind of balance if I just keep going. If I just keep taking action instead of giving up and doing nothing then something good always happens.

Seeing this repeat itself strengthened my belief in taking action and to keep going even during rough days or weeks. And it brings some comfort even when things look pretty dark.

Keep this thought in mind when things do not go so well. And when they continue to be tough or look like you are stuck for a while.

Things will change if you keep moving and keep learning from your experiences. So don't give up and don't go home.

Get up again and take a new small step forward.

Now, have a look at the action-steps on the next page.

The Action-Steps for This Week

Here's a quick summary of the action-steps to take this week:

1. Day 1: Choose 1 person in your life. Figure out how you can give value to him or her this week in a way you haven't before or haven't in a long time. You could for example help out with something specific, call and give him or her a pep talk or a listening ear if needed. Think about it, use the worksheet and give this person that value this week.
2. Day 2-7: Add one source of optimism and positivity to your life on day 2. It could be a blog you subscribe to, a book, a podcast or audio recording or a TV-show for example. Use this source of positivity for 5-10 minutes each morning for the rest of this week to get a good start to your day.
3. This week: Continue your mornings after using your positive source with asking yourself: How can I give value today? Take action on that.
4. Day 7: Use the worksheet to see how things went this week and to find clarity.