

HOPE IS POWER



"Poverty is not just about a lack of money. It's about a lack of power."

— john a. powell, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society

In 2015, The Salvation Army USA launched the Pathway of Hope initiative to address root causes of generational poverty. Pathway of Hope attends to families' immediate needs while expanding access to opportunities and resources that result in transformational change in caregivers and their children. The initiative is so named because people with high hope are more likely achieve their goals for financial and personal well-being.

SCIENCE OF HOPE

The science of hope is an evidenced-based framework for increasing a person's sense of personal empowerment. Studies on hope consistently demonstrate the power of hope in the areas of education, work, physical and mental health, social relationships, family, and trauma recovery. Persons with high hope overcome trauma better than persons with low hope. A person with high hope has goals, pathways to achieve the goals, and the determination to overcome challenges. Hope is not simply an emotion. It is not a wish. Hope is an active process. Hope is a psychological strength that can mitigate anxiety, rage, despair, and apathy.

WHAT IS HOPE?

Hope is the belief that the future will be better than today and that you have the power to make it so. A person is optimistic if they think their future will be brighter. A person is hopeful if they believe the future will be brighter AND they believe they have a role in making their dreams a reality. Hope requires a person to take responsibility for their wants and desires and to work towards them.

Hope is a cognitive practice that involves the intentional act of setting goals and working toward them with purpose. Thus, hope can be learned and acquired because it is thought process not a wish or desire. The essence of hope is your ability to understand the way things are now and imagine the way the future could be. Hope is the positive expectation for the future, grounded in three elements: goals, pathways, and willpower.

GOALS

Goals are the cornerstone of one's positive expectation for the future. They are the endpoint of planned behavior. An individual's goals must be for things that excite them. To motivate behavior, goals must be attainable, clearly articulated, and measurable.

PATHWAYS

Pathways refer to the ability to identify routes toward goals and to find new routes around obstacles. Pathways are like roadmaps that allow individuals to chart their journey to a brighter future and check their progress. The hopeful person can identify multiple pathways toward a goal and plan alternative strategies when barriers arise.

WILLPOWER (AGENCY)

Willpower is the motivational aspect of hope. Willpower is the ability to remain determined to move along goal pathways in spite of obstacles, anxiety, or fear. It is the inner drive to persevere and exert energy to pursue pathways. Willpower leads to self-belief, self-determination, self-control, and goal-directed critical thinking.

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In summary, hope is the idea that a person has goals they want to achieve, pathways to those goals and the willpower to pursue them. Pathways and willpower produce the reality of hope: you can get there from here. This simple yet powerful trilogy – goals, pathways, and willpower – confirmed in hundreds of published studies, has become the science of hope. The Salvation Army Pathway of Hope initiative utilizes this framework to enable caregivers to create their economic future, realize their human potential, and move their families from surviving to thriving. **HOPE IS POWER!**