

What the World Gains from Optimism

By: Chandler Bodimer

That seemed like a really easy thing to talk about. Optimistic attitudes are used to get through difficult times, and we encourage others to have this positive attitude during their struggles. It would be easy to talk about how optimism gives you strength, or how it walks you through tough times. Only I realized, that wasn't the topic.

The topic addresses gains from Optimism. The speech suddenly got a lot harder to write. Optimism is a great tool to have in your tool kit, but what does the world gain from it? So, I started asking family and friends.

Problem was, every person I talked to saw the world gaining something different! And, that was when it hit me. One person can't tell you what the world gains. So, I won't. I'll let the world tell you. Well, as much of the world as I could fit into a five-minute speech.

One night I set out with my idea, to ask as many people as I could what they saw the world gaining from optimism. I got some surprising answers. I found some insightful looks at the world I never thought to consider. Even the youngest I interviewed saw how optimism has added to our world throughout the past and how it can continue into the future.

One person I interviewed was a girl named Lauryn. After hearing my question, she paused, then said, "trust". The world gains trust from optimism. Optimism is trusting everyone is working with good intentions. If we all believe in each other, we will always find good people to turn to when needed.

Lauryn made me realize trust, in itself, is one of the most basic gains from optimism. Imagine living in a world without trust.

Imagine how lonely we would be if we went through life not trusting anyone. Nobody would be close to us; no relationships would be formed. There would be no growth, because there would be no teamwork. No trust, means no society.

The world really does gain trust from optimism. Our belief that we can rely on someone not to betray us, that people really do believe in us, that we can believe what people say to us; that's based on optimism.

I also interviewed Phoenix. Phoenix said the world gains "support" through Optimism. He told me that if we are optimistic about other people's lives, we are more willing to support them.

When we see someone struggling, we see our own struggles in them. We all know what it's like to struggle, but we persevere. So, through our optimism, we believe others can as well. People like Phoenix are optimistic that we, as a people, will offer support to those who need it.

He was right. The world does gain support through optimism! If it didn't, there would be no soup kitchens, no rehab centers, there would be no charities. These resources rely on the fact we are optimistic we can and will support each other.

One other person's answer really stuck out. His name was Kurt. Kurt explained to me the world gains progress from optimism. He told me optimism is *recognizing* we have a better future out there, we just have to create it. Being optimistic drives us to innovate. This drive pushes us to create, pushes us to find answers, pushes us toward a brighter future.

I thought about how much of our history demonstrates this. If the American colonists weren't optimistic we could live without Britain's support, there would not have been a revolution. If African American's were not optimistic that obtaining success and equality was even possible, there would not have been a civil rights movement. If we didn't have optimism that we could progress to a better future, we would not be where we are today.

From my interviews, I came home with so many ideas, so many things the world gained! I heard everything from happiness to lightbulbs. And the funny part is, they were all right! Optimism may guide you through tough times, but it's a tool in your tool kit. You use tools to produce something. Optimism has produced great gains. Among them, trust, support, and progress. And its from these 3 powerful principles, we continue to gain more and more from optimism each and every day.