

*"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, the education, the money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our Attitudes." - Charles R. Swindoll*

I have had this quote saved on my computer for years, but I have actually never looked up the man who said this, until this post. To my surprise, Charles Swindoll is an evangelical Christian pastor, author, and radio preacher. I am surprised only because I am not really even a little bit religious, so I am not sure where I originally found this, but it eloquently and unambiguously sums up a very important idea I hold.

I chose this quote because over the past few years, I have done a lot of personal research on the topics of mental health, happiness, mindfulness, therapy methods, mediation, and general physical health, and one thing that came up repeatedly in my research was how important it is to understand that you are in control of your own attitude and reactions. You don't have to react solely based on your gut, you can be aware of and respectful of your negative emotions without letting them drive you. You have the power to manage your expectations and reactions to everything that life hands you in a positive manner. That may all sound simple, but you would probably be surprised how often you get angry simply because of your own expectations regarding a situation (e.g. traffic jams happen, but you're in a hurry and angry that it is happening *to you*, right?). Each time I came across this nugget of information, in the various ways the writers addressed the matter, it sunk in a little further.

I am really a lot more relaxed and tolerant than I used to be. When people are hurt and reacting strongly, I can remain calm and hear the pain between the angry words. I am learning to listen to others better. Most importantly, my own happiness and productivity are increasing; and these two things are more closely related than people acknowledge.

This all applies to my journey because your attitude influences your life. Your attitude affects your physical health, mental health, and your actions, and why I am attending Full Sail is to learn how to build an app that helps people manage their lives when they are struggling. Mindfulness and self-awareness can be a key part in improving your mental health. If you are depressed and you can take steps to actually improve your mental health and lessen your

depression, you can make better progress on your physical health, and your mental health can actually start snowballing in a positive direction. Everything ties together, but you will not reach your potential (or potential level of happiness, for that matter) with a poor attitude.

Reference:

Goodreads. (2016). *A quote by Charles R. Swindoll*. Retrieved 22 January 2016, from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/59284-the-longer-i-love-the-more-i-realize-the-impact>