PERCEPTION SNAPSHOT
[EXTERNAL]

"Just because something feels real does not make it true"

How's Life? **Perception is reality.** Little else has a greater impact on how we live our life at any given time or overall. In contrast to your Internal Snapshot of your character traits, let's explore perception with how you interpret and understand your external experiences.

While perception is the primary filter in our window to the world, what appears obvious is our actual situation. What is that anyway? How full is your glass?

Personality traits, behaviors and our disposition surely play a major role. There's something to be said about the power of positive thinking and being mindful about staying in the present. Then again, there's the state of our Mood Health. Could brain chemistry be the biggest difference in how we perceive the world around us?

We can perceive the same set of life circumstances very differently on any given day.

ACTIVITY 1: – CHOOSE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE (TIME: 3-5 MINUTES)

How are you right now? Let's take a **Perception Snapshot** with the grid below. Feel free to alter it to better align with your life priorities. Then simply go down the list and decide whether to mark each category with a plus or minus sign. The challenge is choosing.

LIFE PRIORITIES	POSITIVE (+)	NEGATIVE (-)
Basic Needs Met		
Personal Health		
Romance		
Family / Kids		
Friends		
Finances		
The Job		
Boss/Coworkers		
Work-Life Balance		
Personal Development		

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ACTIVITY 2: EXPERIENCE GRATITUDE (TIME: 2 MINUTES)

Take two. You've just stopped all the moving parts in your life. If you've somehow chosen everything to be in the positive column, that's tremendous!

Hopefully, at the very least, you can maintain and feel good about having your basic needs met and that you and all your loved ones remain healthy. If that's the case, then isn't everything else just circumstantial? Before answering that, take two minutes to isolate everything in the positive column and just feel grateful for the good things in life. Nothing is too small or insignificant. Use the timer on your phone. Set it for two minutes and stay focused on the task at hand.

ACTIVITY #3: PUT PERCEPTION INTO CONTEXT (TIME: 3-5 MINUTES)

Begin by being proud of yourself for following through on that gratitude practice exercise. It's far from the last one.

It's also more than likely that 1 or more life priorities are less to your liking. Consider yourself normal! Now put things into context in terms of true severity of each priority,

1) Is the situation really all that bad?
2) Can this situation improve?
3) Do you know what and how long it will take to shift the answer to the positive column?
4) Will you make it through this? Is this truly permanent?

Could it be as simple as making a conscious decision to shift your perceptions? Are these things really all that bad? You might find it helpful to rate and rank each one. Can you see some light at the end of the tunnel? Is it an accurate statement to say that this too shall pass? If certain stressors truly are what they are, to what degree can you improve your coping skills? Take heart. Today will be soon be in your review mirror. Tomorrow can bring a fresh start. Put your mind to it and see what happens.

Take note: you've already overcome the many other challenges throughout your life, so it stands to reason that's still the case. Sometimes there's no other way but through. What's the best route to take?

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