

# Man in Near-Fatal Wreck Offers Secret to Truly Happy Life

Looking for happiness in the wrong places?

The answer is in this true story that comes from Lou Vickery's book, *Reach Beyond: How to Jump Over Hurdles and Land on Success*.

Peter Nondemand is the kind of person who makes many people feel uncomfortable. You see, he is always upbeat and positive. His optimistic thinking has led to optimistic outcomes.

Study after study shows optimistic people have more energy, make better decisions, are more productive, are less stressed, are happier, live healthier and live longer than their pessimistic counterparts.

## **Peter, the Optimist**

Even around the office, Peter is a noted encourager. He is rarely critical, focusing on cheering others to perform better. He makes every effort to demonstrate what it means to be a positive thinker and what it takes to maintain an optimistic mindset.

On April 11, 2004, Peter was put to a test. He was involved in a terrible automobile accident where three people lost their lives.

Many broken bones and severe internal bleeding threatened his life. As medics struggled to remove him from the wreckage, rather than lament, Peter encouraged them as they went about their duties.

Soon the ambulance was at the hospital. As the medics rushed him into the emergency room, still aware of his surroundings,

Peter displayed his optimistic self.

But while the doctors attended to his wounds, Peter noticed a worried look on the face of one of the nurses. He suspected that his condition was not good; her look confirmed it.

Before he was put to sleep for lifesaving surgery, these were Peter's last words, "Treat me like I'm going to live, not die."

Peter lived. And went forward with his life, being his very optimistic self.

### **Be Like Peter**

Can we all be like Peter? Optimism is tough when, let's be real: Life stinks sometimes. How can we help but complain?

Sometimes we curse and, in our mind, and with our words, over and over again, repeat the negative details, being somewhat reckless with our tongue. But God says, "The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Prov. 12:18, NIV).

Peter chose his own healing even before his accident by his ability to choose. He had the same choices you and I have—the choice to see the worst, or find the best. The choice to complain, or to comment on the good. The option to sink into the problem, or step into God's promise.

Peter's choice for optimism took him to see good things, making this verse come alive: "From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things, and the work of their hands brings them reward" (Prov. 12:14).

Peter chose life even before his accident. He chose to live with edifying words, thoughts and attitude. We can too because "The tongue has the power of life and death" (Prov. 18:21a). We have the power to invite happiness or sadness. A happy life is not one that's filled with positive things, but one that's

empty of negativity.

### **Let's Pray**

*Father, thank You for granting me the wisdom to choose words that edify, encourage and praise You in all circumstances. In Jesus' name.*

When facing adverse situations, what words come from your lips? {eoa}

**Janet Perez Eckles** *is an international speaker and the author of four books. She has helped thousands conquer fear and bring back joy.*

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