

## PESSIMISM

Pessimism means to expect the worse possible outcome. If several possibilities or outcomes could occur in an event, the worst possible outcome would be prediction of the pessimist.

In the cartoon “Flintstones”, a character by the name of “Bad-Luck, Slip-Rock” was always associated with the worst outcome; whenever he showed-up, a figurative black cloud loomed over the group. All this is recalled from many years ago, so my memory may not be completely accurate; but his very approach would lead into a chorus of “Oh No, It’s Bad-Luck, Slip-Rock” by the new teen-generation of the “Flintstones”. Though he may not have been a pessimist, his arrival meant some calamity and thus, pessimism in advance.

All cartoons aside, pessimism can be a disease of its own that can strike an individual, a group, or much larger populous. Turning to our peace-loving source again, Sir Winston Churchill describes the symptoms as

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

- Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

finding *difficulty in every opportunity* as opposed to *opportunity in every difficulty*.

Given the source and his critical role during *England’s finest hour*, Sir Winston Churchill should have known the differences between a pessimist and an optimist; he should have recognized that England would have to remain hopeful and vigilant in the continued struggle against the Nazi aggression. The view of each English citizen and, in turn, the collective view of the nation was central to the outcome of the Battle of Britain and strategy for the Allied forces in staging military resources. Evidently, optimism prevailed over pessimism.

Presently, I am reading a book called The Book on Leadership, by John MacArthur. Among the attributes of a good leader is **optimism** and **enthusiasm**. The central story of the book is Paul in route from the city of Caesarea to Rome. Though a prisoner aboard a ship, Paul becomes a leader through appointment from God; during the voyage, Paul is told by an angel that a severe storm awaits the ship, and that the remainder of the voyage should be delayed; though the ship continues the perilous voyage, Paul reassures them that they will survive the journey.

Even the seasoned sailors had much to fear as the storms lasted two weeks, and the ship was bound together by ropes to keep it intact; yet, Paul remained faithful to God’s word and projected assurance, optimism and enthusiasm. He imbued a sense of hope and power into the crew that gave them the desire to press on, to not give up, and to never stop trying.

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