

# Positive Thinking Doesn't Work; Here's What Does

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## *New York Magazine:*

We were told for years, by Oprah and others, that positive thinking was the key to achieving our goals. Now mounting evidence suggests exactly the opposite: that spending a lot of time *thinking* about your hopes and dreams may make you less likely to put in the work required to actually achieve those dreams. So if positivity is out, what should goal-oriented people replace it with?

This week on the “Psychology Podcast” — a newish venture from cognitive psychologist Scott Barry Kaufman — New York University psychologist Gabriele Oettingen talked about a four-step plan she’s come up with from her years of research. (Oettingen is the author of the new book *Researching Positive Thinking: Inside the New Science of Motivation*, which Science of Us ran an excerpt of in October.) Oettingen explained the plan to Kaufman; it’s a delightful little acronym that spells *WOOP*.

Read the whole story: [New York Magazine](#)