



DODReads Executive Summary

The Power of Positive Words

What You Say Makes A Difference

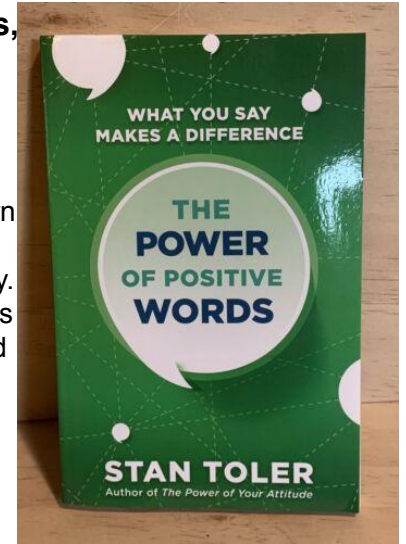
Thesis: Positive language can transform lives, improve relationships, and increase productivity, highlighting the immense power of words in shaping our attitudes and behaviors.

- **Stan Toler:** A renowned Christian author, speaker, and pastor. Toler was born in Oklahoma in 1940 and raised in a Christian home. He was a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Toler wrote more than sixty books, many of which were bestsellers. His books focused on topics like growth, leadership, and relationships. He also believed it was important to create a healthy lifestyle by caring for one's body, mind, and spirit.

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[The Power of Positive Words](#)

Why this book is important for the Military Professional:

Military professionals should read "The Power of Positive Words" by Stan Toler because it offers valuable insights on how to use positive language to improve relationships, increase productivity, and achieve personal and professional success. The book's importance on positive self-talk and reframing negative experiences can help develop mental resilience, which is crucial in high-pressure situations.

Power / (pow-er) trans. noun **a:** ability to act or produce an effect: [Power](#)

Part one: The Truth About Words

Words create:

- Yehuda Berg stated, "Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity. We can choose to use this force constructively with words of encouragement, or destructively using words of despair."
- Words have the power to destroy or create positivity and possibility.
- Words create a path of communication, caring, and understanding.

Words shape your reality:

- Every word we speak flows through our minds first.
- Many people can relate to the good angel on one shoulder and the devil on the other. They are both constantly fighting one other. The one that dominates our mind or life is the one we feed.
- Positive self-talk comes from parent figures that provide affirmation and encouragement.
- Negative self-talk comes from parental figures that instill feelings of failure, criticism, and condemnation.
- Negative talk takes tremendous effort to change into positive talk if you grew up with a lot of negative talk

Words shape other people's reality:

- You can shape someone else's reality based on the words you use.
- If you fail to affirm your children, coworkers, or subordinates you can significantly impact their reality.
- Effectively communicating with your staff members can develop and encourage a positive work environment.

The right words at the right time:

- There will be times when you must keep silent and a time to speak. Knowing when to use your words at the right time will create better connections with employees, family, and friends.
 - Words of affirmation create encouragement.
 - Words of confidence create feelings of security.
 - Words of humility create and inspire humility.
 - Words of peace create calmness.
 - Words of wisdom create assurance and well-being.
 - Words of encouragement create an environment people can thrive in.

Words have value:

- Words have a value that can build someone up or cut and deflate.
- Words can motivate people based on the delivery.
- We have all heard the saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." This is not necessarily true because words can hurt and stick permanently.
- Words that assure have significant value. "I'll be there!"
- Words meant to inform are valuable because of the communication or information relayed

What cheapens words?

- Our words can lose meaning based on how we use them:
 - Words of insincerity are valued less.
 - Words of carelessness are worthless.
 - Words of negativity can diminish a person.
 - Words of profanity can cheapen your message.

How to make your words worth more:

- The value of our words can be worth more if you:
 - Choose your words carefully
 - Communicate clearly
 - Aim your words precisely
 - Speak your words sincerely
- To show others you value their words, you must listen to learn, not listen to respond.
- You must listen actively and with your eyes to show others you value their words.

Words endure

- Words that make us remember potentially joyous or painful memories endure
- Words that are well written or well spoken with intention, startling, and eloquence endure.
- Catchy words can clearly and concisely endure.
- To guarantee your words endure, always accentuate the positive.
- "Make your words positive. Eliminating negative words and negative insinuations. Words endure. By eliminating those 'horrible worlds' from our vocabulary and refusing to hurt others, we will go a long way towards creating relationships as well as words that endure." (Toler)

Part two: Strategic Word Use

Filtering words:

- Toler stated, "Just as a filter is needed to remove contaminants from drinking water, you need a filter for your words."
- Thinking the best thoughts go hand in hand with filtering your work.
- Ways to filter your thoughts start with:
 - Getting a grip on social media

- Limit how much television you watch
- Understanding how we filter our thoughts
- Focusing on your thoughts can not be accomplished when the mind is racing.
- Focus your thoughts on words that inspire, motivate, and produce.

Speaking the best words:

- Speaking the right words at the right time can be vital to unlocking an important relationship.
- Larry King suggested that some of the characteristics of great talkers are that they can engage others meaningfully. Below are some attributes of great speakers from Larry King:
 - Looking at things from a new angle
 - Having broad horizons
 - Enthusiastic
 - Curious
 - Empathetic
 - A sense of humor
 - Developed their style of communicating
- Filtering our words is no easy task. We must train ourselves to think positively, hear the best ideas, and speak the right words.

Truth-telling:

- Being truthful is the power behind our worlds and is tremendously important.
- People lie for many different reasons:
 - Protect themselves
 - Personal transgressions
 - Avoidance
 - Promote themselves
 - Personal advantage
- Not telling the truth is not easy and takes great effort and a sharp mind.
- Some truth-tellers are truthful without regard for hurt feelings or using soft language. Others will try to soften the blow by being tactful with their words.
- People tell the truth because it is the honest, courageous, and kind thing to do.
- Truth telling leads to a good conscience, holds us accountable, and integrity.
- Toler stated, "Honesty really is the best policy. Be a truth-teller. You can live with yourself and sleep at night with a clear conscience."

The power of silence:

- Silence is golden. Silence can be quite difficult for most people.
- At times, we may have the opportunity to be silent but elect to speak and end up saying the wrong thing.
- Why do humans tend to talk too much?
 - To fill the silence
 - To entertain
 - Hear our voice
 - Our story is better
- Controlling the urge to talk can be a difficult task. Do not always feel obligated to say something.
- If you don't have an opinion or have anything to say, it is okay not to talk.
- Pay close attention to people's body language. If someone is tapping their foot or not engaging it is probably time to wrap it up.
- Silence comes with some advantages:
 - Learning
 - Opportunity for growth and development
 - More effectiveness and proactive thinking
- One must learn when to speak and when to be silent.
- There are times when we say nothing while our minds are racing with unproductive thinking. We must learn to silence or shut down those thoughts to build a more positive lifestyle

Part three: Attitude Before Words

Your attitude says everything:

- Toler stated, "Words do not live in a vacuum. They always come from an attitude, and attitude is the atmosphere in which words live and breathe. A positive attitude produces positive words. A negative attitude produces negative words. Your attitude says everything."
- Toler suggests the truth about attitudes is that they are habits of action, and everyone is responsible for their own.
- Everyone is responsible for their attitude and will determine what you find.
 - Your attitude about yourself
 - Your attitude about circumstances
 - Your attitude about people
- Although uncomfortable, we all can change our attitudes.
 - We must choose the right attitude toward change.
 - We must take action to change.
- Stephen Covey once said, "Whatever your present situation, I assure you that you are not your habits. You can replace old patterns of self-defeating behavior with new patterns, new habits of effectiveness, happiness, and trust-based relationships."

Choosing your words:

- Choosing the best words can come from having the right attitude. When your mind is in a good place, the likeliness of using the right words comes easily.
- By carefully choosing the right words we can:
 - Make people better
 - Inspire decisiveness
 - Encourage development
 - Promote accountability
- Toler stated, "Any day we choose to do so, we can make the change to treat people differently, to speak to them differently, to look at them differently. We can do that today or tomorrow or next week or next month. The choice is ours."

Positive word power:

- Embracing a positive attitude is the key ingredient for constructing positive words.
- Humbly practicing self-affirmation will contribute to creating positive word power.
- Practicing self-affirmation despite criticism in any circumstance will allow you to choose to live positively.
- While self-affirmation is important so is complimenting and praising others. Below are ways to affirm others:
 - Stop throwing barbs
 - Make it short and positive
 - Put it in writing
 - Applaud good work

Negative word power:

- Toler said, "Even the best strategy can be failed or undermined, so we must guard against having a negative attitude by choosing words that are not destructive."
- To avoid negative talk and negative attitudes avoid:
 - Idle talk
 - Rumors
 - Gossip
 - Being argumentative

Hold your tongue:

- Our tongue can get us into trouble even when it's not intended.
- To protect us from our tongue getting us into unnecessary conflict, we should avoid careless speech.
- Taming your tongue can be established by:
 - Pausing each morning
 - Surrender your "right" to complain

- Apologize for any unkind words you have spoken
- Practice speaking words that uplift and encourage
- The use of profanity should be avoided so that it doesn't diminish the message you are trying to get across.

- Military members work in a team environment where communication and trust are critical. The book's emphasis on using positive language to build strong relationships and enhance communication can help military members foster a positive and productive working environment, leading to better collaboration and more successful missions. Additionally, military members often face challenging situations where conflicts arise. The use of positive language to resolve conflicts can help military members find solutions that benefit everyone involved and create a more peaceful and harmonious environment.

*This executive summary is composed of both verbatim excerpts and summarizations from **The Power of Positive Words** by Stan Toler.*

If your office or command is in need of one book or a hundred we would be honored to [source them](#)