

The Bucket and the Dipper



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Each of us has an invisible bucket. It is constantly emptied or filled, depending on what others say or do to us. When our bucket is full, we feel great. When it's empty, we feel awful.

Each of us also has an invisible dipper. When we use that dipper to fill other people's buckets -- by saying or doing things to increase their positive emotions -- we also fill our own bucket.

But when we use that dipper to dip from others' buckets -- by saying or doing things that decrease their positive emotions -- we diminish ourselves.

Like the cup that runneth over, a full bucket gives us a positive outlook and renewed energy. Every drop in that bucket makes us stronger and more optimistic.

But an empty bucket poisons our outlook, saps our energy, and undermines our will. That's why every time someone dips from our bucket, it hurts us.

So we face a choice every moment of every day: We can fill one another's buckets, or we can dip from them. It's an important choice -- one that profoundly influences our relationships, productivity, health, and happiness.

Lesson: Lift other people's spirits and you will also be happier