

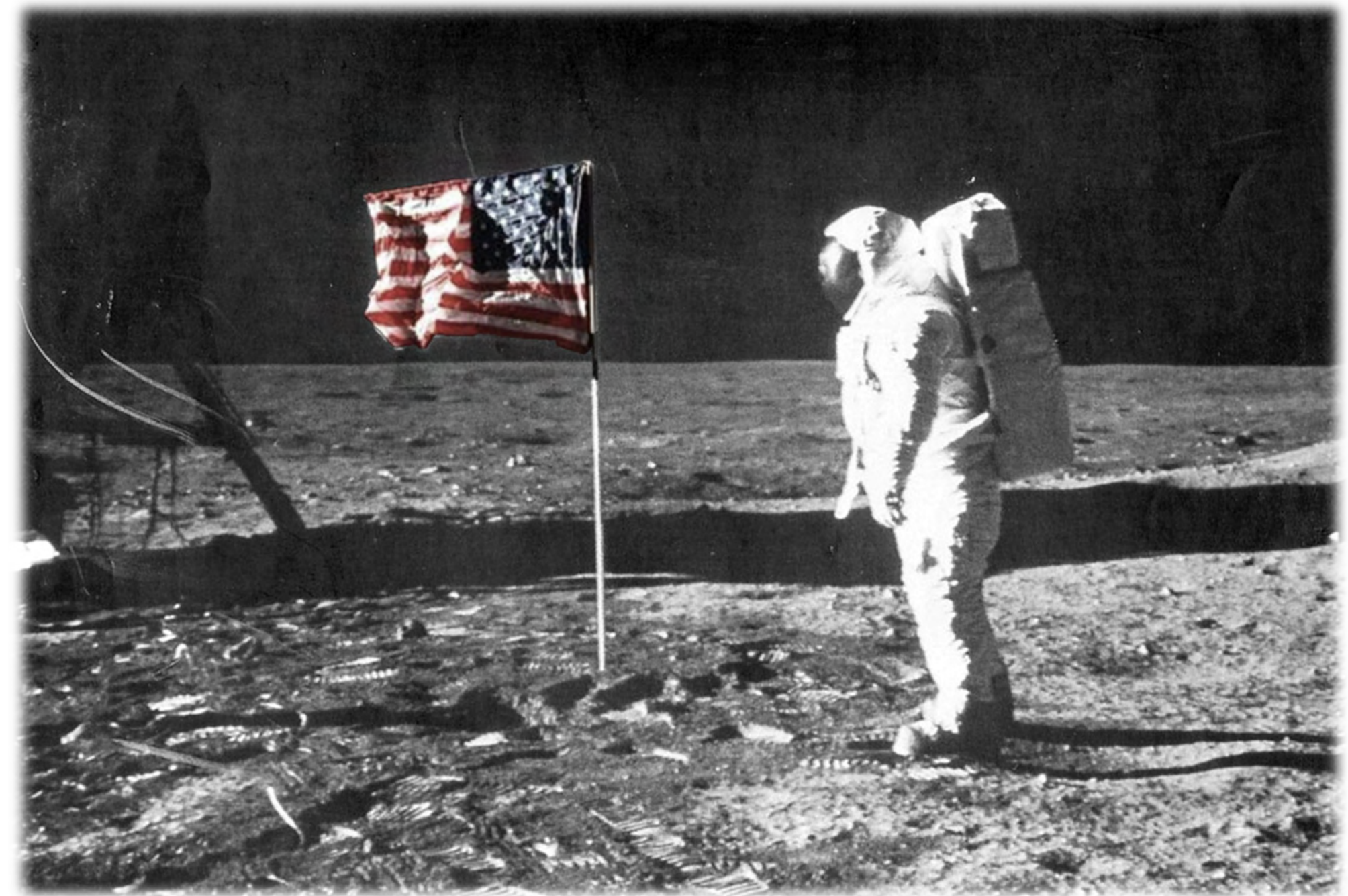
Resilience & Learned Optimism

Two psychological traits that can help you in life

“Here men from the planet
Earth first set foot upon the
moon. July 1969 A.D.

We came in peace for all
mankind.”

– plaque on Apollo 11 lunar module



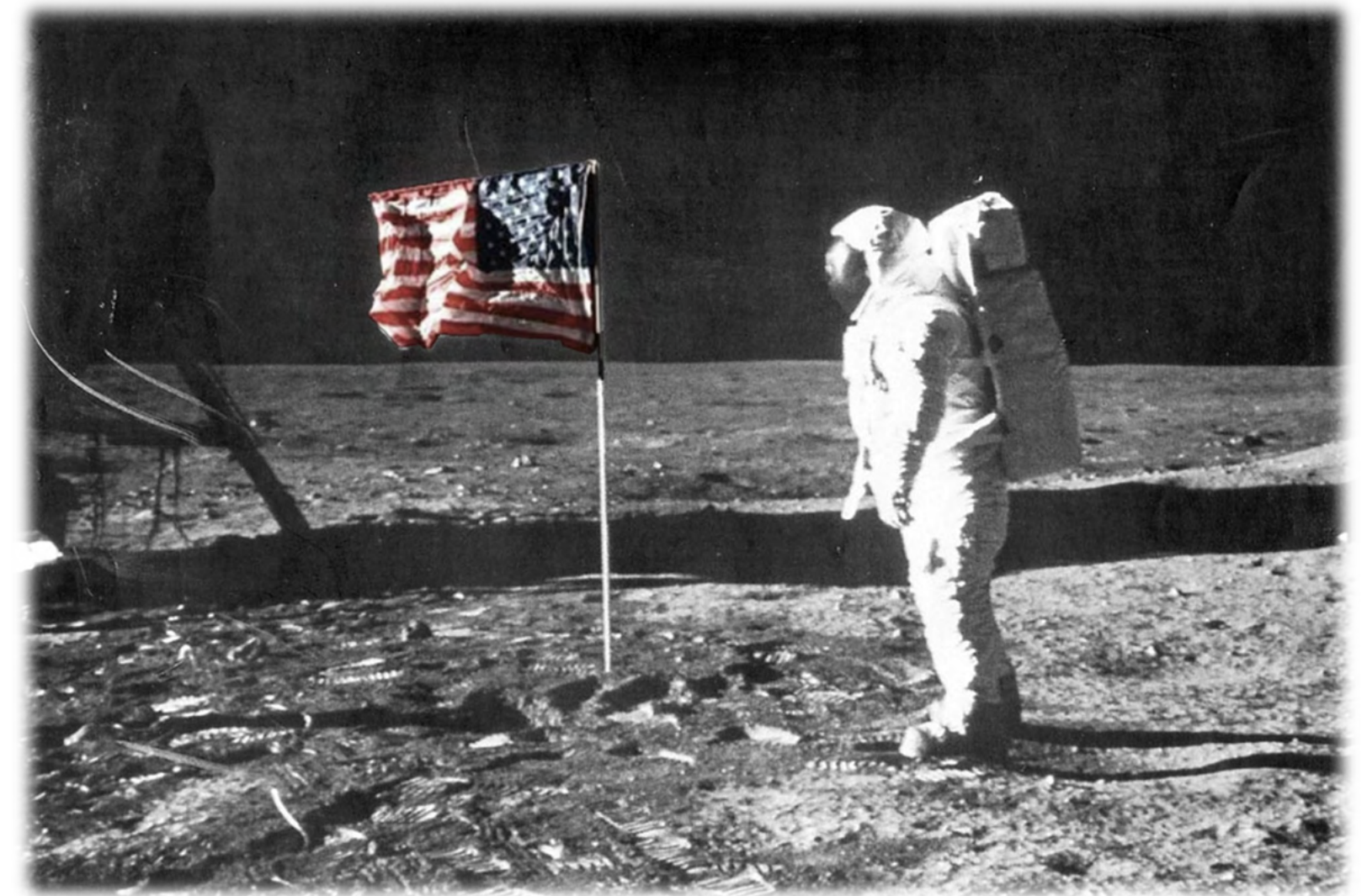
Psychological Traits

The Apollo space program suffered many setbacks before Apollo 11 landed the first man on the moon.

Certain psychological traits can help you in life — especially when you're facing difficult challenges or setbacks.

Let's look at what research in psychology shows about two of those traits:

Resilience and Optimism.



Definition of Resilience

Have you ever heard a person described as being resilient?

What does that adjective mean to you?

Resilience: the ability to bounce back after a setback or stressor.

Do you know any resilient people?



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Despite falling during doing her vault routine, Simone Biles still won the 2018 World Gymnastics Championship held in Qatar.



Are you a resilient person?

Do you think you're good at coping with difficult situations and overcoming challenges?

How would you rate yourself now, from 1 (poor) to 5 (great) in terms of your resiliency?





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Here is an online quiz you can take to get a more accurate measurement:

<https://resiliencyquiz.com/index.shtml>



Resilient people rebound

Resilient people tend to be more successful in life.
They overcome challenges more quickly and can emerge
from difficulties with even greater strength and resources.



What kinds of things can a person learn
from going through a difficult experience?

Resilient people rebound

A lot of it has to do with how you “frame” a situation and how you “talk to yourself” about it.



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How do you view challenges?

How do you “talk to yourself?”

Let’s say you have a big test coming up. Which way are you more likely to think about it?

A: This is manageable. If I prepare properly, I can handle this.

B: This is disastrous! I’m doomed!

What about if you messed up on something – how are you likely to think about it afterwards?

A: That was unfortunate, but it’s over. What can I change so that it doesn’t happen again?

B: I’m such a screw-up! Nothing I do ever goes right!

How about if you had your hopes set on something, and it didn’t happen?

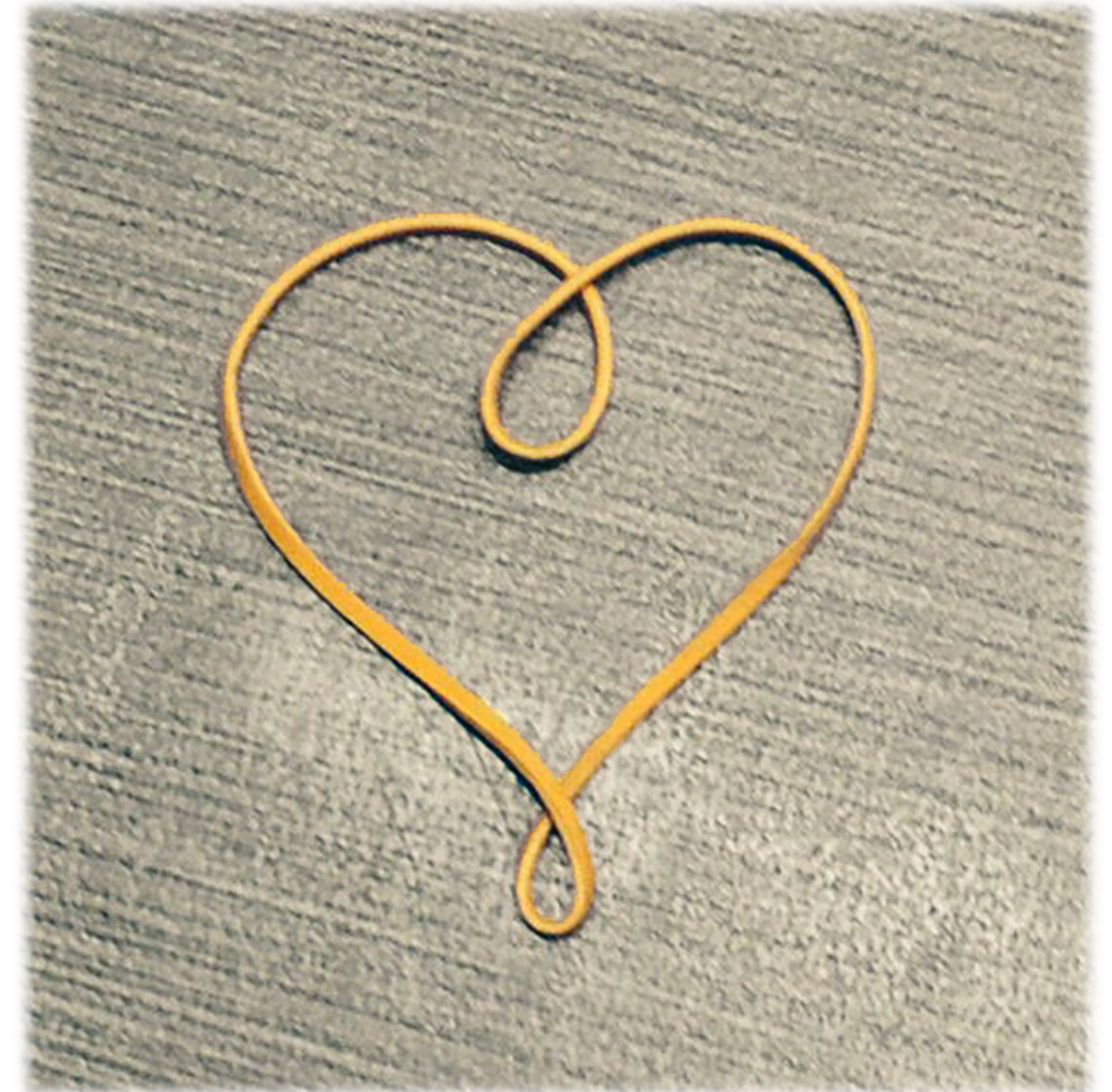
A: I’m disappointed, but I’ll keep trying until I succeed.

B: I’m devastated and now I’m going to give up.

Which of these two types of responses is more likely to lead to success in the end?

Good News: You can become more resilient!

You can practice and learn better ways of framing situations and talking to yourself, so that you can build greater resilience.



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Professor Martin Seligman, from the University of Pennsylvania, believes that our way of thinking, and talking to ourselves, plays a major role in how we face difficulties in our lives.

One way leads to flourishing, and the other to difficulties.



Difference Between an Optimist and a Pessimist



Do you know the difference between an optimist and a pessimist?

According to Prof. Seligman's research, the mindset of optimism is more likely to lead to positive outcomes.

More Good News!

Even if you're naturally pessimistic (many of us are), you can still develop the skill of optimism, so that you have better outcomes in *your* life.

In other words: **you can CHOOSE** the thoughts that you think. So, you might as well choose **thoughts that will *help you in your life!***





Optimism



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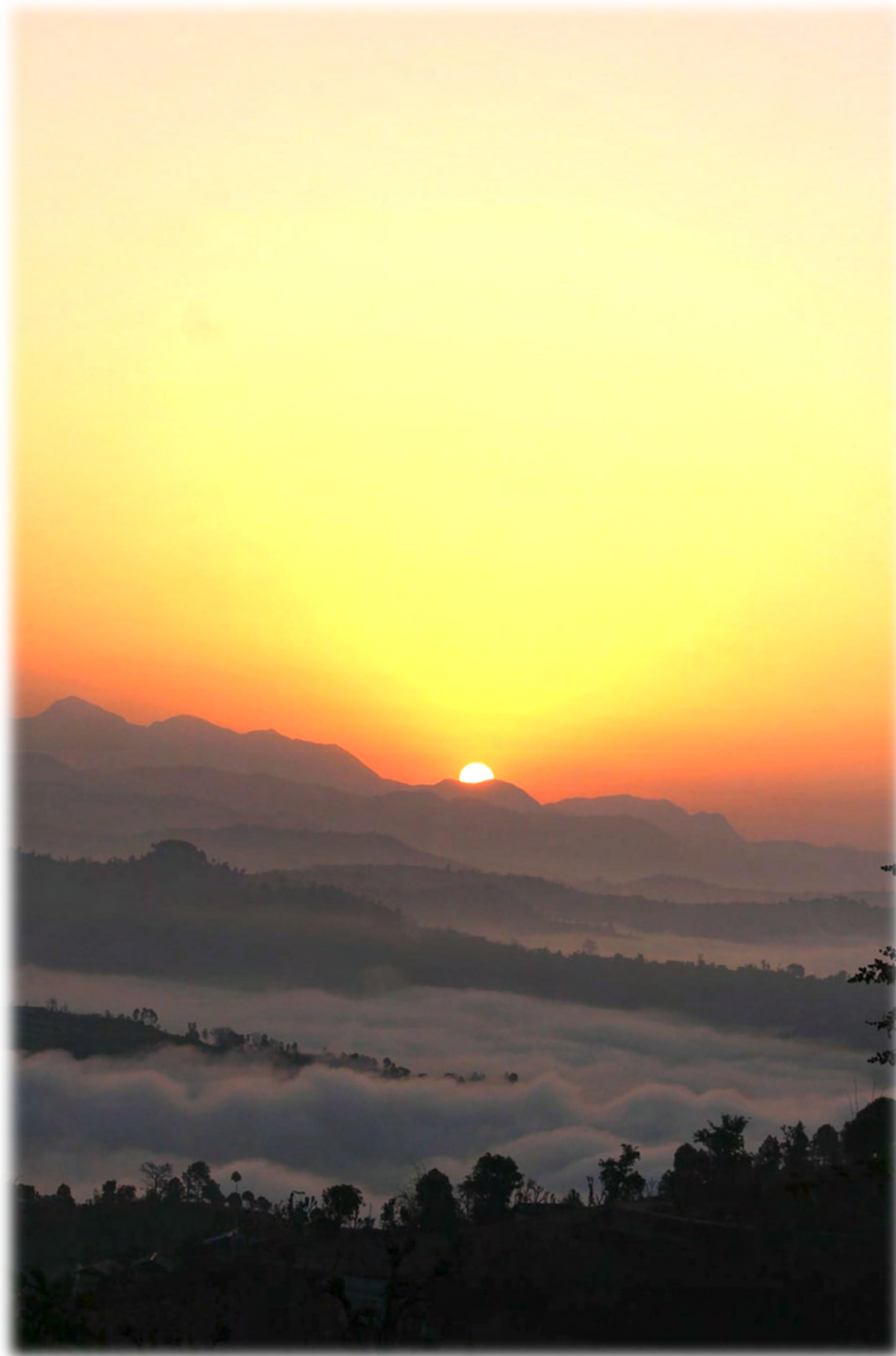
We **ALL** experience a bad situation (adversity) from time to time. What matters is what you say to yourself about it.

Pessimists will explain a bad situation to themselves like this:

“It will never change, it’s my fault, and it ruins everything.”

In other words, it’s **permanent, personal, and pervasive**.

Optimism



An optimist turns this around to make it **temporary, impersonal, and specific.**

In other words, “It won’t last, and even though this one area of my life is affected right now, other parts of my life are going just fine.”

Learned Optimism

Let's look at a few examples:

You walk into the cafeteria alone, and all the seats where your friends are sitting are taken. You have to sit at a different table. **What do you say to yourself?**



Learned Optimism

The pessimistic response:
Permanent, personal, and pervasive
I don't have any friends and no one will ever want to sit with me. They hate me and my day is ruined!

The optimistic response:
Temporary, impersonal, and specific

I see that my normal lunchmates are over there today. It's probably because they're all on the volleyball team. Who shall I sit with today?

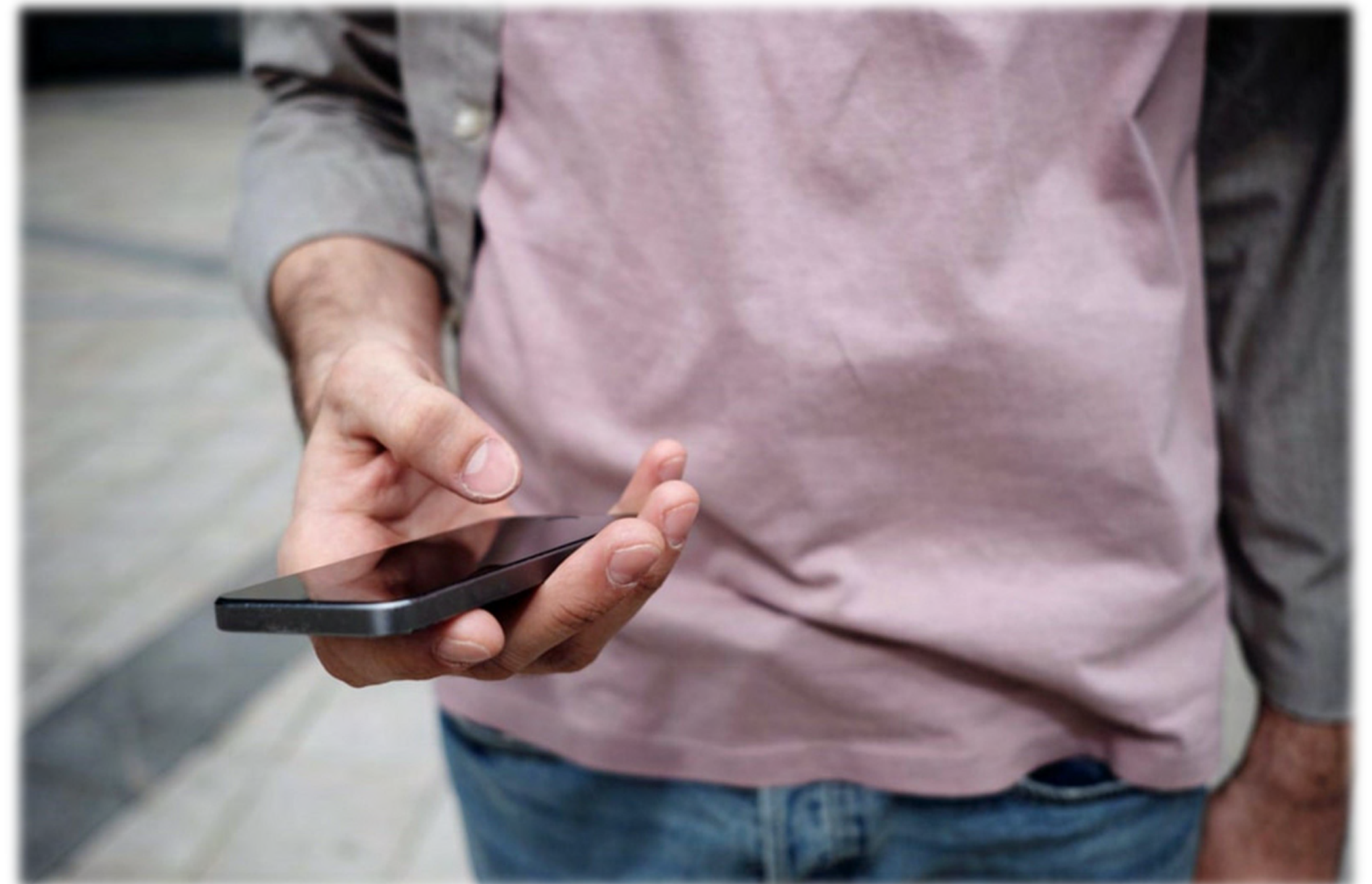


Practice Learned Optimism

You invite someone over, and you get turned down.

The pessimistic response: Permanent, personal, and pervasive

The optimistic response: Temporary, impersonal, and specific

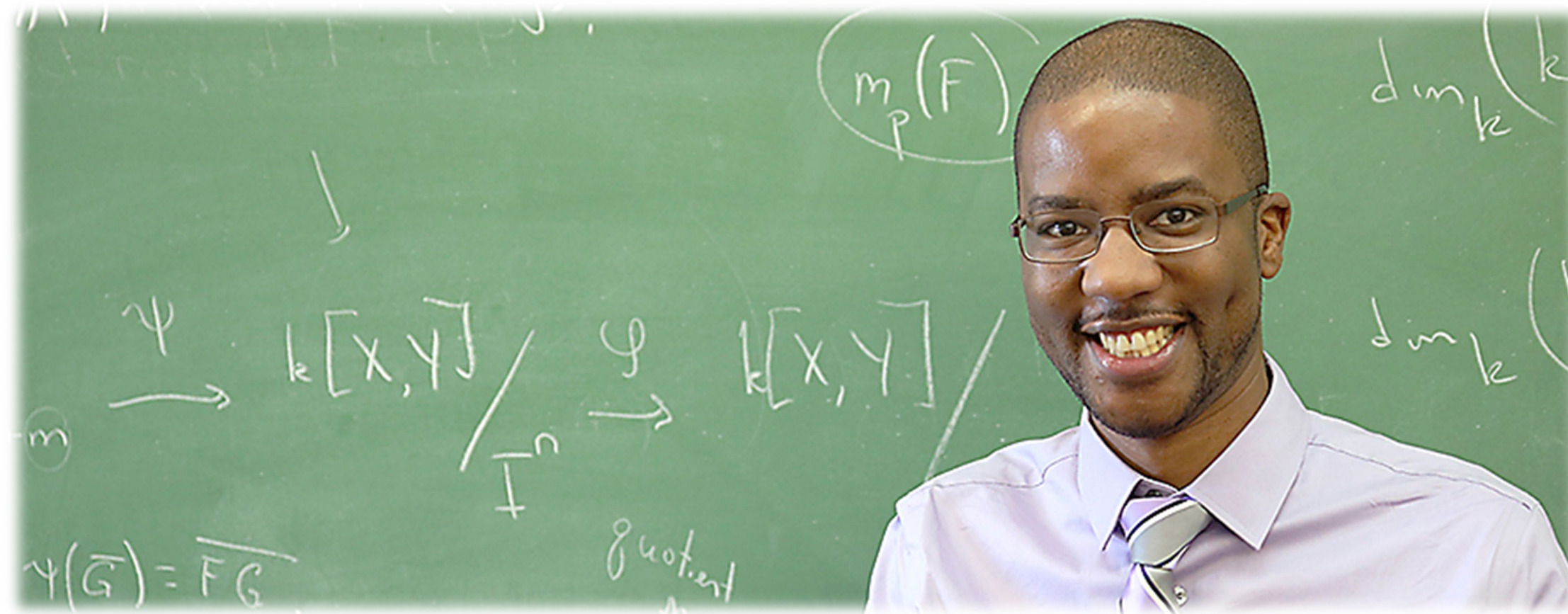


Practice Learned Optimism

Your teacher gives a pop quiz in class, and you get a “D.”

The pessimistic response: Permanent, personal, and pervasive

The optimistic response: Temporary, impersonal, and specific



Practice Learned Optimism

You really wanted to make the team, but you got cut after tryouts.



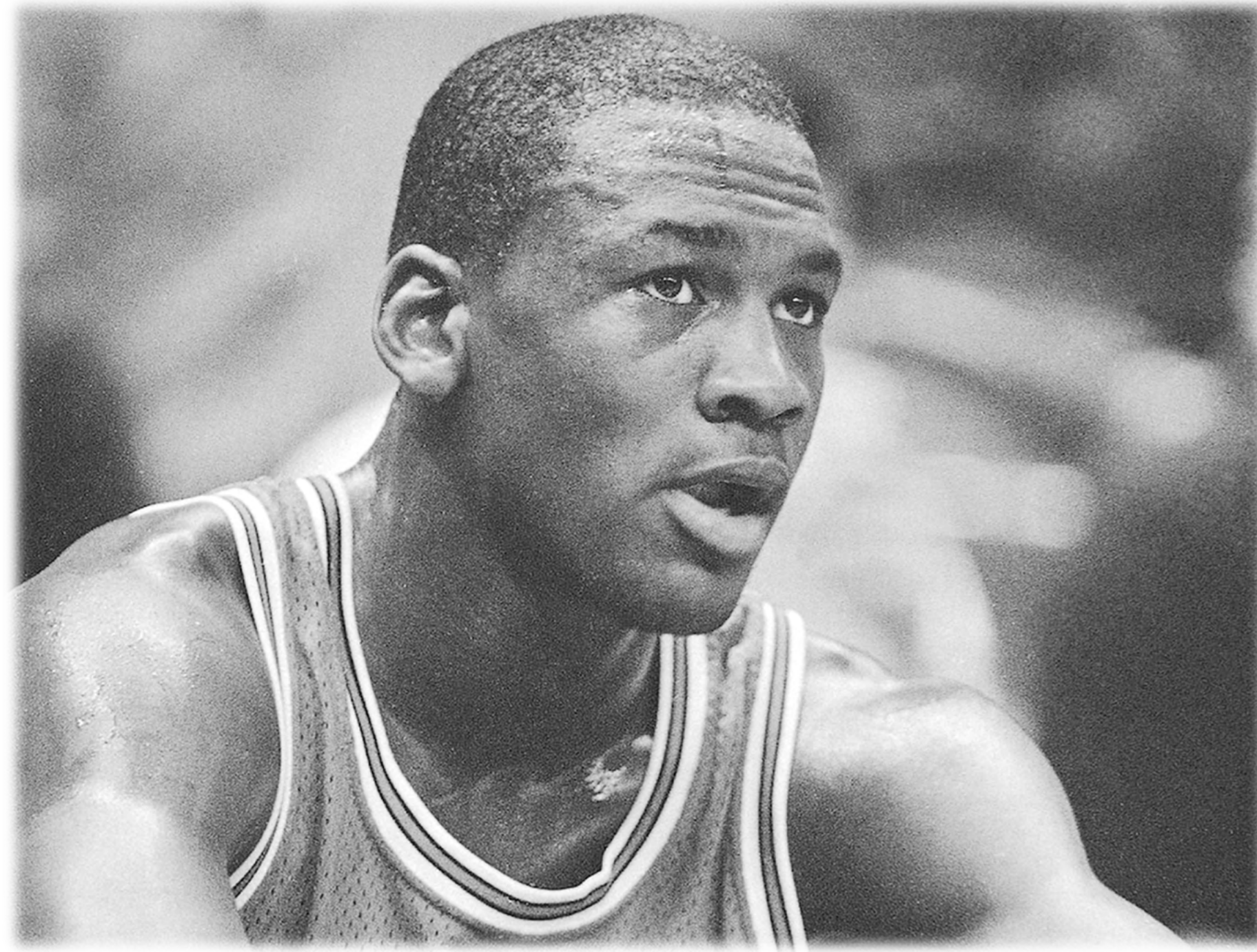
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Optimism

You know who else got cut from the team in high school?

This guy:



How do you think he responded?

Optimism

Michael Jordan's response to being cut from his high school's varsity basketball team:

“Everybody goes through disappointments, it's how you overcome those disappointments. I just wasn't good enough. In terms of the best thing that could happen to me was to get cut, 'cause it made me go back and get caught up with my skill level at my height.”

– Michael Jordan



Practice makes perfect

Optimism is a skill that can be learned, but it takes practice.

Learning to challenge pessimistic thoughts and replace them with optimistic explanations reduces anxiety and depression and increases your ability to overcome and bounce back from life's tough moments.





Your mind is a garden
The thoughts are the seeds
You can plant flowers
Or you can plant weeds



What will you plant?



The Choice is Yours





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