

Forcing Ourselves to take action

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"This is of course a dance of balance, because there are also times in which I need to force myself to take some action (which is a very different thing from trying to force an outcome.)" - Joy2MeU Update Announcement 3-24-2000

Taking action is one of the most valuable tools in the recovery process and is very much connected to the principle of taking responsibility. It is very important to become proactive in our own healing process. That means that we need to align our will and our will power with healing instead of with the disease.

In our disease we were reacting to life out of a dysfunctional belief system. We were playing the game of life according to a set of rules that do not work to bring us happiness, serenity, and fulfillment.

There is no happily ever after on this plane, in these bodies. The goal is not to do life "right" in order to reach a destination. True success is achieved by learning, growing, and enjoying the journey - not by reaching a specific destination.

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"Life is a journey, a process - it's not a destination. Life is continuous and constant change and growth. We were taught to fight and try to control the change, to resist the growth. We were taught to swim upstream, to go against the flow. No wonder we get tired sometimes.

We were taught that death is a great tragedy and that we should spend our lives fearing and ignoring it. We were taught to fear death and to never live life. That's backwards.

Death is a transition, a transformation, death is a milestone in the longer journey. It is not a tragedy to be feared - it is an eventuality to be accepted. What is tragedy is not enjoying living while we are here."{/xtypo_info}

Quote from Codependence: The Dance of Wounded Souls

Living can only be done one day at a time. Today is all we really have. If we spend all of our time focused on the future we will miss out on today.

We were taught to be human doings rather than human beings. The ability to "be" here now, in the moment, is one of the goals of healing and recovery. To be able to be present for, and live, in the moment is a gift (a present) that we can give ourselves by aligning our will and actions with healing.

That does not mean that being here now is the only goal. Some people use "being in the moment" as an excuse to indulge in instant gratification. Instant gratification is not bad or wrong, but if we are constantly empowering instant gratification we are not taking responsibility for being co-creators in our life. Because of our childhood wounds, the majority of the time when we indulge in instant gratification, what we are doing is letting the child's wounds run the show - the "King/Queen Baby" within us whose mantra is "I want what I want and I want it now!"

Having grown up in dysfunctional, emotionally repressive societies causes us to want immediate gratification that helps us repress the feelings and/or nurture the wounded child inside of us. Substances like Sugar, alcohol, drugs, etc., activities like isolating, obsessing, doing something (anything) rather than being in our bodies and feeling our feelings, are ways of escaping being in the moment.

What we are looking for in recovery is balance. What we are doing in recovery is growing up so that we can relate to life as a mature healthy adult who is able to have the choice to be in the moment at the same time that we are owning our responsibility as the co-creator of our life. We are learning how to be in the moment in a "stop and smell the roses" type of way instead of out of instant gratification.

Taking Responsibility for Being Co-Creators

We are co-creators in this life experience we are having. That means that there are some areas over which we have some power and control and some areas that we do not. The essence of the dysfunction of the condition of codependence, which is the human condition in my definition, is that we were taught to try to control things over which we have no control - and were not taught how to have healthy control over that which we can control.

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"I spent most of my life doing the Serenity prayer backwards, that is, trying to change the external things over which I had no control - other people and life events mostly - and taking no responsibility (except shaming and blaming myself) for my own internal process - over which I can have some degree of control. Having some control is not a bad thing; trying to control something or somebody over which I have no control is what is dysfunctional. It was very important for me to start learning how to recognize the boundaries of where I ended and other people began, and to start realizing that I can have some control over my internal process in ways that are not shaming and judgmental - that I can stop being the victim of myself."{/xtypo_info}

Quote from Codependence: The Dance of Wounded Souls

I cannot control other people. I cannot control life events. I do not have the power to force a specific outcome in my life in a way that will work to satisfy the need that I think it will satisfy.

It is possible to force an outcome. Someone with enough money and/or power (political, physical, corporate, emotional, etc.) can sometimes force other people to do what they want. It is possible to bully, intimidate, rape, take over, force out of business, steal, lay on guilt trips, etc., to get an outcome you desire.

It will not fill the hole in your soul however. It will not slake the thirst you are trying to quench in a way that is lasting. It will not ultimately meet the need which you fixated on that outcome to gratify.

It will not bring peace, fulfillment, and True Love into your life. Forcing an outcome is ultimately dysfunctional.

Likewise, life events cannot be controlled. You can work and slave to buy the dream house - and have it wiped out in a matter of moments in a fire or earthquake. You can scrimp and save for retirement - and have your life savings wiped out in a financial disaster, or die the day you retire.

There are no guarantees what tomorrow will bring. Focusing all of our time and energy on the future is dysfunctional - not only because it causes us to miss out on today - but because it simply does not work to guarantee an outcome.

The out come (end result / destination) is what we are powerless over. We can take action towards an outcome, but then we need to let go of the results. We can plant the seeds of the garden we wish to grow but we cannot guarantee that the results will be what we envision - or will satisfy our underlying need.

Our job as co-creators is to imagine the garden, plant the seeds and nurture them, and enjoy the process that we are involved in today. We are ultimately powerless over the outcome. We do have the power to be present for the journey no matter what the destination ends up being.

If we are always focused on the destination, we are not living today. I spent most of my life feeling like my life would begin when ____ - I got the money, or the success, or the relationship, or whatever. That is dysfunctional and codependent and sets me up to be a victim of life and other people.

In order not to be the victim it is necessary to own our power to make choices. It is necessary to exercise power in the areas that we have some power and control.

The things that I have the power to control to some extent are my own attitudes and behaviors. I have the power to choose what actions I take.

