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Fight the Urge to ‘Get Back’

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Fight the Urge to ‘Get Back’

By Brenda Kelleher-Flight

Introduction

When we feel hurt or ashamed, one of the mechanisms we can use to reduce the pain is to deflect our feelings. Where do we release these feelings? Some people will run or engage in a contact sport. Others will yell at the moon, hit a pillow or scream at an imaginary image. Recognizing those socially accepted methods to release our feelings, some of us will still feel satisfied with them and will look for ways to ‘get back’ at another person. This article addresses this issue and outlines the pros and cons of this decision.

The Benefits of Focusing On Another Person

Hurt, anger, and sadness builds over time if we do not find ways to deal with each incident as it happens. What starts out as a minor issue gathers energy the longer it goes unresolved. Often small incidents build and build until we reach a boiling point. How does this happen. To illustrate what is meant, think of the following situation described in the box below. Please remember, the story is only a way to demonstrate this point.

One Story

You are expected to hold a cup of coffee. You do not like coffee and do not intend to drink it. At first it feels fairly light, just a few ounces. However, the longer you hold it the heavier it feels. Knowing that you cannot put it down makes it feel even heavier. The more you try and refrain from focusing on the coffee cup, the more your attention moves to it. It feels heavier and heavier over time. Now you start to get a little irritated and wish someone would come and remove the cup. They do not appear and you know you cannot put down the cup or ignore it. You begin to feel agitated toward the person who asked you to hold the cup and begin to create a story in your mind.

“Where is this person? How inconsiderate of X to leave me holding their cup. Why doesn’t he come back and take this darn coffee? I’ll never be left holding his coffee again. He is always inconsiderate. I figured that out about him before. This is getting on my nerves.”

When we temporarily focus on another person, we frequently feel temporarily better.

Some of the ways we focus include:

- Gossiping
- Nitpicking
- Shaming that person in front of others
- Committing to do something and not following through
- Deliberately excluding the person
- Refusing to make eye contact
- Refusing to answer that person’s questions
- Providing incomplete information to that person, and
- Shunning that person and making your efforts overt.

We may pat ourselves on the back for succeeding at some of these methods. The question is, “If we are willing to treat another person that way, are we also willing to

have others treat us the same way?” If the answer is no, what are the long-term benefits of such behaviour? We are still carrying around the negative energy and the other person is still carrying on with their lives as usual.

At this point, you may be asking, “What about that person feels just as negative about me?” If a person feels negative towards you, you have a choice. You can accept their negativity or refuse to accept it. If you accept it, then you are bringing their negativity into your energy system. Over time you will not be able to differentiate between what is your true energy and what you have absorbed from another person. A wise person once said, “If we accept others’ negativity into our systems, it is like drinking poison and hoping the other person will die.” Protect your own energy and let other people keep theirs.

The person who suffers from negativity is the person who is experiencing it. The result from long term ‘dis ease’ often ‘disease.’ Therefore, it is essential to evaluate our beliefs, know ourselves thoroughly, and adjust our thinking over time.

The Benefits of Focusing On Our Own Wellbeing

We can only take responsibility for ourselves. We cannot coerce, cajole, or threaten others into changing any aspect of their behaviour. We can provide rewards sufficient enough for others to temporarily avoid exposing certain aspects of their personality. However, these effects usually do not last. This is unfortunate, when one hears stories about behaviours colleagues, friends and partners demonstrate when they get to know people well and believe that they trust them. We hear of forms of abuse, stealing, and other behaviours in advertisements and in the news every day.

Therefore, it is essential to know yourself, take responsibility for your own behaviour and have a realistic sense of your strengths and needs. To assist with this process fill in the form in the box below.

| Personal Characteristic | Where did this belief come from? | Is it true or was someone else reflecting their weaknesses on me? | How do I need to change my thoughts to ensure I am thinking things that are actually true? |
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Two books that might help you build a 'reel' experience about the true you include

1. *Silva Mind Mastery for the 90's* by Dr. Tag Powell and Dr. Judith Powell (<http://www.ebay.com/ctg/Silva-Mind-Mastery-Judith-L-Powell-and-Tag-Powell-1996-Paperback-Reprint-/695002>), and
2. *The Charisma Myth* by Olivia Fox Cabane (http://www.amazon.com/The-Charisma-Myth-Personal-Magnetism/dp/1591845947/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1366732899&sr=1-1-fkmr0&keywords=1.%09Olivia+Fox+Cabane).

It is vital to know the following:

1. What you believe to be true about yourself
2. What that story looks like when you present yourself to the world (posture, clothing, non-verbal behaviour)
3. What you sound like (how you speak, your tone, and warmth)

4. How you present to other people (presence and kindness)
5. How you help others, and
6. The techniques you use to refuse to absorb other's negativity.

You were not born with negative thoughts. You were not born with prejudices or thinking that it was necessary to make others feel wrong in order to survive and thrive. Those are thoughts you absorbed from others in your life. These are people you trusted and who you thought knew better than you did.

Negativity may have served in the past. However, there is another way. It is not easy to learn but it is possible to do so. Take control of your life. In doing so, some of the people you trusted in the past may leave or try and convince you to remain as you were in the past. Do not buy their story. Listen to your own voice. Do what is best for you. Others around you will change when you change.

Final Comment

We grow up believing so many things that we would not accept if we took time to evaluate where those thoughts originated and whether they serve us well at the present time.

Stop and take the time to evaluate why you would want to 'get back' at someone else and question whether or not there are better areas to place your energy. We create our own worlds. Our external world is an extension of our thoughts. Therefore, we can change our thoughts and ultimately change our lives.