

Emotional Self-Empowerment
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When it comes to living, you have two options: you can use it to empower yourself, or you can use it to dis-empower yourself. There are no other choices. Every day you empower or dis-empower yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Every day you either empower or dis-empower yourself in your relationship to yourself, your relationships with others, professionally, financially, etc. You name it: the choice is always the same.

There's a simple rule that governs the entire empowerment process, no matter what area concerns you. Where you start is where you end up. To put it another way: What you focus on is what you get. It's that simple. That's why it is so important to learn to focus less on getting done whatever you do each day, and focus more on how you are (peaceful or tense, happy or unhappy, calm or frustrated) as you go through each moment of doing whatever it is you are doing. You need to let go of doing in favor of being. This is very different from the typical attitude that most people have of thinking they have to sacrifice how they feel in the moment in the name of struggling toward some goal that they think they have to first achieve in order to feel alright. When people take that attitude they actually justify to themselves feeling terrible! And practicing feeling terrible just lays the groundwork for feeling even more terrible further down the road. We need to let go of justifying feeling tense, or angry, or fearful, or frustrated, by saying the situation justifies us in feeling that way. Instead, we have to make our focus learning how to be calmer and more balanced and centered in whatever situation we are in. There's a simple and practical reason for take this approach: life gets better and better when we do.

We all get caught in the race of continually destroying our present peace of mind for the sake of some goal in the future. What we're really doing, however, is teaching ourselves habits of discontent, fear, and anxiety, that only breed more of the same. By focusing instead on practicing being more peaceful, more effortless, we actually start getting what we want. By focusing on being what you want on the inside, you create it on the outside, without struggle and lack.

Are things really that simple? Let's look at a few examples from everyday life. If you think that you won't enjoy yourself at the party you've been invited to, chances are high that you won't. If you worry that the headache you've had for the last three days is going to recur, it probably will (Or maybe you'll get a backache instead. That's just another version of the same thing, invented by your subconscious.) If you think a partner might be unfaithful, you'll probably drive him or her to be just that. If you spend your time concerned about financial security, your chances are higher of not getting that raise you want, or of losing your job, or even of losing your pension. (Trust me, I've seen it happen!) Do you get the drift?

When you think negative thoughts, you act them out and create outer reality in your inner image. Put psychologically, we act subconsciously in ways that end up fulfilling our fears. Put energetically, we draw to ourselves what we focus on. If we focus on our lacks, that's just what we get: more lack. Similarly, if we focus on ill health, we get more of it. But if we focus on feeling that we have and are what we want, we invite what we want to come into our reality. We invite outer reality to match inner reality.

The challenge is to learn to empower ourselves, to learn to let go of negative habits of thinking, feeling and acting. That's a four-step process.

First, we have to become aware of our negative beliefs and emotions. Every one of us has negative beliefs and habits that we project outside ourselves, rather than recognizing them as our creation. For example, we may tell ourselves that we feel lousy and nervous because others boss us around. The truth, however, is more likely the other way around: our own anxieties lead us to behave in a way that invites those controlling types to take advantage!

We all have reasons for our insecurities, fears, angers, and resentments. We all have those original wounds that make us overly sensitive, or overly needy, overly demanding, and so on. We all have memories that leave scars. And we need to heal those scars by loving ourselves, and perhaps by getting love too. But surely it's also our job not to keep acting in a way that reactivates and validates those scars!

The way we stop continually reactivating our old wounds is through becoming aware, becoming aware of what is going on inside, and seeing that it is a program that has been engrained in us, and not a reality. A big piece of developing awareness is training ourselves to have a quiet mind and body, so that we can see what we're doing that is contributing to giving us a hard time. That is why meditation, and learning to not think can be so important. It helps us to develop a neutral space from which we can see our habits of self-sabotage.

Second, once we can see what we're doing that is making our life miserable, once we can see our negative mental, emotional and physical habits, we then can begin to release those habits. After all, they are not reality anymore, they're just habits!

Third, as we release our negative habits, we do the work of consciously substituting empowering habits in their place. For example, instead of practicing feeling

depressed (which is a habit), we begin to practice feeling terrific (using visualization, body training, role playing, etc.) While this might seem artificial at first, we quickly learn that it is not. It only feels artificial because it is not the habit we're used to. A light begins to dawn. It turns out we're creating our reality all the time, so why not create one that feels good and affirms us! Reality might just accommodate our inner vision! (And it turns out, it does)

Fourth, we recognize that the process of creation is constant, and we commit ourselves on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis to that creative energy, to continuously embracing effortlessness, abundance, health, courage, whatever it is that turns us on as a way of being. No one else can take away from you what you want to be and what you want to create. Only you can.

We are all in this all-too-human soup of self-disempowerment. Life is about learning to climb out of that stinking soup pot. We are meant to encourage each other towards empowerment, and not to act as victims with each other. We are on our way, all of us, together, into effortless freedom, power and abundance. Keep your focus there!