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MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

WHO WILL YOU BE TOMORROW?

Why Patience Pays Off

Parenting from the Heart

Helping your child achieve
mature independence



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I recently came across this short quote: “Remember, if nothing ever changed, there’d be no butterflies.” It made me stop and reflect on how important it is to continue to keep growing and changing—both personally and professionally. If I don’t, I’m in danger of stagnation, and I will probably end up feeling rather unfulfilled, regardless of how successful or accomplished my life may seem.

I sat down and took a long and hard look at my situation, and I re-evaluated my current goals. Then I made a list of some things I definitely would like to change and improve in. It included a habit or two I know I need to break, and some personal and career goals I would like to reach. I also added some things to my list that would help improve the lives of others.

The next question was how to go about making these changes. The articles and stories I found on personal change and how to make improvements were inspiring, and a number of them were especially helpful, and seemed practical and doable.

Taking a little time to refocus on my life’s goals had a good effect on me. I felt challenged and refreshed. It’s not always easy to admit that we need to change in different areas, and making those changes can be even harder. But ultimately, like that little quote I read, we can’t do without change—or “there’d be no butterflies.”

I hope the stories, articles, and quotes that inspired me, which I included in this issue of *Motivated*, will have the same positive effect on you, and help you to conclude, as I did, that change is good.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*



Who Will You Be Tomorrow?

By Steve Goodier, adapted

A man sat at a stop light. The woman in front of him was going through papers on the seat of her car, and when the light changed to green she didn't go. A green light is not a suggestion, you know, it is more of a commandment. But she didn't notice.

When the light turned red again, she still had not moved. The man in the car behind her now started screaming epithets and beating on his steering wheel.

A policeman tapped on his windshield. "You can't arrest me for hollering in my car," the man said. The cop asked for his license and registration, returned to his car, talked on the radio for a while, and finally handed the papers back. The driver protested, "I knew you couldn't cite me for yelling in my own car!"

The officer replied, "I didn't want to cite you for shouting in your car. But I was directly behind you at the light. I saw you screaming and beating your steering wheel, and I said to myself, 'That man is out of control. He's going to hurt someone!'"

"Then I noticed the bright yellow 'Love Is a Choice' license tag, and the 'Give Peace a Chance' bumper sticker, and I was sure you must have stolen the car."

His behavior did not reflect his license tag and bumper stickers. But let's not be too critical. Are we always the people we want to be?

We make changes by stretching. Personal transformation can happen when the person we presently are does not yet resemble the person we hope to be. Better to set high ideals and occasionally fall short than to settle for mediocrity and succeed.

The important question is not, "Who am I today?" It is better to ask, "Who will I be tomorrow?" ■

3 Thoughts on How to Make Personal Change in Your Life



By Tim Milburn, adapted

I was listening to talk radio the other day. They were discussing who they thought the hardest working actor in Hollywood was. After going round and round, they came to the conclusion it was Sylvester Stallone. If you don't know the history of Mr. Stallone, here's a brief snapshot:

"After getting no career traction as an actor in his 20s, Stallone attacked his 30s like any 5'3 man should... He wrote a movie where he was an all-American hero with unbelievable success in sports. That movie was "Rocky"... He banged out

the "Rocky" screenplay in three days, in between working at a deli counter and as a movie theater usher... and it launched his career with an Academy Award for Best Picture."

The moral of the story, at least for this post, falls in line with the following quote from Max DePree: "We cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are." If you and I want something to change in our lives, it means we have to change personally. It starts with us.

Personal change just might be the hardest change you can make. Yet it's

also the most necessary change you need to make. Growth doesn't happen without change. With this in mind, here are three thoughts for you to consider as you make personal change happen in your own life.

1. You CAN change yourself but you CAN'T change another person.

The most frustrated relationships are those where one person spends a lot of energy trying to change the other person. You have the ability, the power, and the resources to change only ONE person in this world: Yourself. Yet there is an incredible paradox at work here. When you and I take the time to make the necessary personal changes in ourselves, it has an effect on the people and the culture around us.

2. You need to CHANGE the way you look at CHANGE.

Most people are change resistant. When it comes to making a change in our lives, even change that leads to positive growth, we often respond in negative ways.

- a. We avoid it.
- b. We complain about it.
- c. We ignore it.

The first step to overcoming these tendencies is to change the way we think about change. Change is a fact of life. We're all going to change. The good news is that, most of the time, we have some say in the type of personal change we're going to engage in. This starts in our thinking.

Start by changing the thought, "I sure hope things will change," to the thought, "The only way things will change for me is when I change." Or instead of thinking, "I don't know why I am this way," start

thinking to yourself, "I am the way I am because that's the way I want to be."

See the difference?

3. The NUMBER ONE challenge to making personal change in your life is FEELINGS.

One of my goals this year is to increase the number of posts I write on a weekly basis. Since January, 2012, I have tried to offer 4-5 posts per week. It is a personal change that has helped me in a variety of ways. But I'll be honest—there are many days when I don't FEEL like posting. I FEEL like doing something else. Even writing this post, I had to fight the initial feeling of doing something else. Some have called these feelings names like: the resistance, the lizard brain, the slacker mindset, apathy, helplessness, and procrastination.

One of the best ways to learn to control these feelings is by learning how to control your thinking. Our feelings are often a result of the thoughts in our head. It's not to say that feelings aren't useful. But sometimes they lie to us. It takes maturity and discipline to know when to act in harmony with one's feelings, and when to act in spite of or against them.

At some point in his life, Sylvester Stallone had a dream bigger than his current circumstance. He had to make some changes in his life that provided the opportunity he was looking for. As a result of his personal change, he changed the culture by making "Rocky" a household term.

Think about it:

What is one personal change you need to make in your thinking or your behavior to move you one step closer to your goals? ■



HOW TO BREAK A BAD HABIT (AND REPLACE IT WITH A GOOD ONE)

By James Clear, adapted

Bad habits interrupt our life and prevent us from accomplishing our goals. They can jeopardize our health—both mentally and physically—and can waste our time and energy.

So why do we still do them? And most importantly, is there anything we can do about it? How can we delete our bad behaviors and stick to good ones instead? I certainly don't have all of the answers, but here's what I've learned about how to break a bad habit.

What causes bad habits? Most bad habits are caused by two things: Stress and boredom. Everything from biting nails to overspending on a shopping spree to overeating every weekend to wasting time on the internet can be a simple response to stress and boredom. Of course, sometimes the stress or boredom that is on the surface is actually caused by deeper issues. These issues can be tough to think about, but if you're serious about making changes then you have to be honest with yourself. Recognizing the causes of your bad habits is crucial to overcoming them.

You don't eliminate a bad habit, you replace it. All of the habits that you have right now—good or bad—are in your life for a reason. In some way, these behaviors provide a benefit to you, even if they are bad for you in other ways.

Sometimes the benefit is biological, like with smoking. Sometimes it's emotional, and in many cases, bad habits are a simple way to cope with stress.

These "benefits" or reasons extend to smaller bad habits as well, such as checking Facebook or opening your email inbox as soon as you turn on your computer, which might make you feel connected. At the same time looking at all those messages destroys your productivity, divides your attention, and overwhelms you with stress.

Because bad habits provide some type of benefit in your life, it's very difficult to simply eliminate them. If you expect yourself to simply cut out bad habits without replacing them, then you'll have certain needs that will be unmet and it's going to be hard to stick to a routine of "just don't do it" for very long.

How to break a bad habit. The first step to breaking your bad habits is awareness, which will show you how to actually make change. Ask yourself:

- When does your bad habit actually happen?
- How many times do you do it each day?
- Where are you?
- Who are you with?
- What triggers the behavior and causes it to start?

Simply tracking these issues will make you more aware of the behavior and give you dozens of ideas for stopping it.

Choose a substitute for your bad habit. You need to have a plan ahead of time for how you will respond when you face the stress or boredom that prompts your bad habit. Cut out as many triggers as possible: If you eat cookies when they are in the house, then throw them all away and don't buy them. If the first thing you do when you sit on the couch is pick up the TV remote, then hide the remote in a closet in a different room. Make it easier on yourself to break bad habits by avoiding the things that cause them. If your environment makes your bad habit easier and good habits harder, change your environment and you can change the outcome.

Join forces with somebody. How often do you try to diet in private? Or maybe you "quit smoking" ... but you kept it to yourself? (That way no one will see you fail, right?) Instead, pair up with someone and quit together. The two of you can hold each other accountable and celebrate your victories together. Knowing that someone else expects you to be better is a powerful motivator.

Visualize yourself succeeding. See yourself throwing away the cigarettes, or buying healthy food, or waking up early. Whatever the bad habit is that you are looking to break, visualize yourself crushing it, smiling, and enjoying your success. See yourself building a new identity.

You don't need to be someone else, you just need to return to the old you. It's very unlikely that you had these bad habits all of your life. You don't need to quit smoking, you just need to return to being a non-smoker. Even if it was years ago, you have already lived without this bad habit, which means you can most definitely do it again.

Use the word "but" to overcome negative self-talk. One thing about battling bad habits is that it's easy to judge yourself for not acting better. Whenever that happens, finish the sentence with "but"...

"I'm fat and out of shape, but I could be in shape a few months from now."
"I'm stupid and nobody respects me, but I'm working to develop a valuable skill."
"I'm a failure, but everybody fails sometimes."

Plan for failure. We all slip up every now and then. Rather than beating yourself up over a mistake, plan for it. We all get off track. What separates top performers from everyone else is that they get back on track very quickly.

Breaking bad habits takes time and effort, but mostly it takes perseverance. Most people who end up breaking their bad habits try and fail multiple times before they make it work. You might not succeed right away, but that doesn't mean you won't at all. ■

WHY PATIENCE PAYS OFF



By Viral Mehta, adapted

As a kid, patience was not my thing. In fifth grade, when Mr. Gardner asked a question, my hand would often shoot up in enthusiasm. After giving me a few opportunities, he would try to give other students a chance. My hand, though, would remain in the air, and after some time, I'd impatiently start waving it around; at some point, that move got dubbed, "The Viral." Then, there was the time I enrolled in drumming classes. I was excited to jam, but all we were allowed to do in the first class was practice one beat over and over again. I never went back.

I would've done terribly in the Stanford Marshmallow Experiment. In this classic study, researchers gave children a choice between one marshmallow right away, or two later. The results showed that those who could wait 15 minutes ended up scoring 210 points higher on the SAT. Break down the word patience and it actually traces back to the Latin

"pati," which means "to suffer, endure." This is the popular interpretation, and one that leaves us in awe of stories like that of the frail, landless Asian farmer who painstakingly moved a mountain. This man chiseled away solo for 22 years, until he finally created a 1 km long, 16-ft-wide passage connecting his village to vital resources like hospitals. So clearly, delaying gratification and bearing up under pain have their benefits. But a deeper exploration of patience goes beyond risk and reward.

Cultivating patience keeps us from being stuck to preconceived notions, and helps us let go of our fixation on outcomes. We come to accept that we don't always or immediately know what is best, and learn to recognize that our reality is in constant flux. Patience elevates our understanding of deeper truths and helps us transcend our limited views. And therein lies its virtue.

Consider this powerful quote by Lao Tzu: “Do you have the patience to wait until your mud settles, and the water is clear? Can you remain unmoving until the right action arises by itself?” We might think of “waiting” as taking time, but it’s actually less about clock time and more about inner space. Of course, there are moments when our immediate gut-level response to a situation is a flash of intuition that can be trusted, moments when it’s crystal clear what needs to be done. But at other times, an experience stirs up some of that inner mud, and at those times, patience engages us in the process of becoming still.

An unclear mind, one in which right action isn’t obvious, isn’t a “bad” thing. Wisdom, after all, develops at the edges of our understanding. Our fundamental questions can frustrate us, or create a positive sense of wonder and possibility. The challenge is to develop enough stillness to allow the questions to pose themselves without judgment. This is where patience comes in. Needing answers isn’t the point—patience is in finding value in the questions, in and of themselves. The root word for question, after all, is “quest,” and so this spirit of adventure is embedded within true questioning.

That’s not to say that answers aren’t important. They do come, but often not the ones we’d expect, and often ones that open up to even deeper questions. In this way, those moments of fuzziness, when dealt with patiently, become opportunities to turn our boundaries into edges of exploration. When we think we know, we expect to find a solution in the direction in which we are looking; when

we don’t know where to look, we remain open to all directions.

But remaining open and “unmoving,” as Lao Tzu suggests, isn’t about being passive or lacking conviction. There’s lots of committed activity happening beneath the surface—it takes great effort and discipline to remain alert to what’s happening within. This sharp alertness awakens us to the power of the subtle: the mental seeds we sow become the roots of our skillful words and actions. And it is patience which creates that inner space.

First, the mud—our unexamined reactions and habituated patterns of interpretation—rises to the surface, but then eventually it settles. Our view clears. We find that those initial, rigid interpretations relax, and a multiplicity of perspectives emerge. We start to see in a way that is more real, more whole, truer, and we become freer to consciously choose our actions.

Through it all, the journey of patience is rooted in knowing that our current reality inevitably gives way to change. But change won’t always happen when we think it should, and patience with ourselves comes from accepting that there are things we can control and things we can’t. And though we must make diligent efforts to keep pushing the boundaries of our awareness and to deepen our ability to rest comfortably in the present moment, how fast we develop isn’t up to us.

That same fifth grader who couldn’t wait to blurt out answers, now sees the value of meeting questions with a heart of patience. Patience, then, is a kind of withholding of judgment and conclusion, a valiant invitation for our development to unfold just as it needs to. ■



HELPING YOUR CHILD ACHIEVE MATURE INDEPENDENCE

By Renee Heiss, adapted excerpts

Children constantly strive for independence from the time they begin walking to the time they move out of the house, but parents continually stifle that quest for freedom. How? By telling their children what they should do, how they should do it, and where that should happen.

So, what can you do when you know your child is running astray, but you don't want to seem like that overbearing boss? Here are some ideas:

- **Encourage independence gradually as your children mature.** For example, when you read stories to your two-year-old, allow her to turn the pages, rather than turning them for her. When she grows older, she's more likely to make wise decisions if she was allowed to make little decisions when she was young.
- **With parenting, less is sometimes more.** In other words, the less you do for your children, the more they'll do for themselves. When my girls were ten, I began "allowing" them to do their own laundry. After a while, they began to see these little chores as rites of passage to mature independence.
- Teach your children skills that will help them cope with emergencies rather than

overprotecting them. Help your child to understand that life's road is seldom smooth and sometimes very bumpy. When you ride in your car, present hypothetical scenarios and discuss with your teen how he would react. Studies have proven that the forward motion of the car actually facilitates conversation with teenagers who are reluctant to share their thoughts.

- **Offer guided choices.** Guided choices provide alternatives that you can both live with. They are not ultimatums. For example, you might say to your six-year-old, "It's bed time. Do you want a story first or do you want to brush your teeth first?" Either way, you get what you want—a child in bed by 8:00, but the child gets independence through your guided choices.

A child's job description includes testing parents. Expect that the above suggestions will work most of the time. However, there will be times when absolutely nothing works. That's when you need to be firm about what needs to happen. However, that should occur only 5% of your time with your children. The other 95% should involve a happy relationship as they achieve mature independence. ■

The Last Thing I Did

By Bob Perks, adapted

“The last thing I did was the most exciting thing ever!” he said.

I couldn’t wait to hear what it was.

“Well, my friend, I can’t imagine what you might have accomplished, but whatever it was you must share it with me,” I said.

The older man looked at me with somewhat of a surprised look on his face.

We stared at each other and I became a bit uncomfortable. Had I misunderstood what he said? Did he say something else and I insulted him?

“Oh, I’m sorry. Did I misunderstand you?” I finally said.

“What did I say?” he replied.

“Didn’t you just say, ‘the last thing I did was the most exciting thing ever?’” I repeated.

“Well, yes I did.”

“What was it? What was the most exciting thing ever?” I asked.

“Oh, I see,” he replied. “You’re waiting for me to tell you that I won something or accomplished some great thing, right?”

“Well, yes. Isn’t that what you implied?” I asked.

“In a sense, yes. But permit me to clear things up,” he said.

I couldn’t wait to hear this one.

“You look like a healthy man, are you?” he asked.

“Basically. I mean I have problems but nothing life-threatening that I know of.”

“Then you might not understand this,” he said. Then placing his arm around my shoulder he explained.

“About a year ago I nearly died. I had a heart attack that nearly ended my life. It was an experience that took me to my knees and lifted me back up again. It was then that I really began to see how valuable every moment is in my life.”

He then crossed in front of me and placing his hands on my shoulders, said, “Every last thing I do is the most exciting thing I have ever done. It’s one more moment, day, week, month past the day I almost died. That’s exciting!”

How very powerful that thought was.

Feeling down? Thinking you have nothing to be excited about in your life?

Think again. Try appreciating life so very much that the last thing you did would be the most exciting thing ever. ■



Personal Growth

NOTABLE
QUOTES



You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of.—Jim Rohn

We can each define ambition and progress for ourselves. The goal is to work toward a world where expectations are not set by the stereotypes that hold us back, but by our personal passion, talents and interests.—Sheryl Sandberg

Those who improve with age embrace the power of personal growth and personal achievement and begin to replace youth with wisdom, innocence with understanding, and lack of purpose with self-actualization.—Bo Bennett

Disciplining yourself to do what you know is right and important, although difficult, is the highroad to pride, self-esteem, and personal satisfaction.—Margaret Thatcher

Intelligent, successful, attractive people can be intimidating. They force us to hold a mirror to ourselves; we can be disappointed, jealous or inspired toward personal growth.—Ian K. Smith

Sometimes, in order to follow our moral compass and/or our hearts, we have to make unpopular decisions or stand up for what we believe in. It can be difficult and even frightening to go against the grain, whether it's a personal disagreement with a friend, partner, or family member or a professional decision that affects coworkers and colleagues.—Tabatha Coffey

The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: Decide what you want.—Ben Stein

If you want to feel proud of yourself, you've got to do things you can be proud of. Feelings follow actions.—Oseola McCarty

