

The Psychology of Success



By

Walter E Jacobson, MD

How To View Setbacks On The Road To Success

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When we set our sights on a goal, no matter what it might be, and someone or something gets in our way, our first impulse is often to feel badly about it.

We tend to get angry, anxious, depressed, frustrated, discouraged, and/or demoralized, due to our interpreting what has happened as a setback.

This is a mistake. At any one moment in time, we don't really know if something that happens is, in the long run, going to be in our best interests or not. At any one moment in time, we don't really know if something is good luck or bad luck.

The truth of it is: What we think is good luck today could prove, at a later date, to have been an unfortunate turn of events that led us down a road to nowhere. Equally so, what we think is bad luck today could prove, down the road, to have been a huge blessing in disguise that was pivotal in getting us to the ultimate place we wanted to go.

We just don't know. We aren't able to see the bigger picture at the moment something is happening to us. Therefore, it's best that we not presume anything is good or bad for us and it's best that we not make assumptions about the impact any event is going to have on our future. In which case, it's best we not react emotionally, in a positive or negative way, to events as they occur, but rather stay calm and objective.

There's no need to assume that something is an obstacle or a barrier to our success, simply because it's blocking our path, and become discouraged by it. Conversely, there's no need to assume that something seemingly positive is going to be our ticket to heaven and that we should start celebrating.

Of the two scenarios, perceiving something as a setback and driving ourselves emotionally into the ground because of it, tends to be the more damaging one that deserves closer attention. Let's take a look at an example.

Let's say I am an aspiring author. I send a query letter to an agent, seeking his representation to help me sell my book, and the agent sends me a curt note saying that, "The book will never sell. Better keep your day job."

I have a choice. I can fill my mind with doom and gloom, with fearful, catastrophic thoughts that, "I'm not good enough. My book isn't good enough. I'll never get an agent. My book will never see the light of day. Nothing is ever going to work out. I am going to be an eternal failure."

Or I can tell myself that the agent's rejection doesn't mean my book is worthless and won't ever sell. Nor does it mean that I am worthless and will never amount to anything. I don't have to go down that road in my head.

His rejection simply means that he doesn't like my book. It simply means he is not going to be the one who's going to represent me. It simply means he's not in the final equation of my success. His rejection actually says nothing about my potential to succeed in the long run. It speaks more to who he is than to who I am.

I don't have to fill my mind with catastrophic fear thoughts of a lifetime of failure and frustration. I don't have to get depressed or anxious. I don't have to get angry, bitter, and resentful. I can stay positive, be grateful that a dead end has revealed itself, and be confident that the opportunity I'm looking for is just around the corner.

In truth, rather than feeling beaten up by the agent's letter, I can choose to view him as a great friend and ally, who has done me a huge favor by getting out of the way so that I can focus my energies on finding the right person who will share my vision and help me hit a home run out of the ballpark.

It is our fear that makes us assume the worst when something doesn't happen the way we think it should or hope it will. It is our fear that makes us jump to negative conclusions about our future based on one isolated incident, the true value of which cannot be adequately defined in the moment it's occurring. It is our fear that generates our catastrophic thoughts that we are not good enough and that nothing will ever fall our way.

Rather than give in to these catastrophic fear thoughts and allow them to terrorize and demoralize us, it behooves us to find another way to look at every seeming setback, to discover the blessings in every disguise, to examine every cloud for its silver lining, and to consider the possibility that, regardless of what is happening, we're exactly where we are supposed to be, in which case, it behooves us to stay calm and confident, learn from our mistakes, move forward without fear, and smell the roses while we're at it.

How To Succeed By Neutralizing Negativity

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

Many of us resist change because we are more comfortable with the known, as bad as it may be, compared to the unknown, which we fear could be far worse. Many of us resist change because we fear it may make others uncomfortable to the point where they distance themselves from us and possibly leave us, triggering our abandonment issues in the process.

Consequently, instead of making efforts to change and being willing to deal with the uncertainty of the unknown and the possible abandonment of others, we cling to the past, we cling to the unsatisfying relationships and circumstances of our lives, we don't take risks and we accept a life less lived.

So what can we do about it? First, we have to deal with the prevailing fear which is dominating our resistance to change. We must make the conscious decision that it's better to risk potential disappointments, in an effort to reach for the stars, rather than accept a life of dormant dreams and quiet desperation.

We must make the conscious decision that if people can't accept us for choosing to change, it may be painful, but we'll deal with it. We may feel abandoned by them, but we won't abandon ourselves. We have faith that others will enter our lives, attracted by what we are striving to achieve, who will appreciate and support our growth efforts.

Once we make a commitment to change, we must vigilantly monitor our thoughts and neutralize our Inner Critic, that negative, disparaging, shaming and degrading voice inside our head that keeps telling us that we're not good enough, that we're not loveable, that we're unworthy, that we don't deserve success and happiness, and that it is a pointless waste of time to try to become something more.

We must de-fang our Inner Critic and give it no power to fuel our fear and our doubt, to discourage us and derail us. We must de-throne our Inner Critic and replace it with our Inner Colleague, that inspiring, encouraging, uplifting voice inside our head, that loving and nurturing voice of our Higher Self that truly knows what's best for us.

For far too long we have kept that voice soft if not silent, relegating it to the back seat of our consciousness. But now, having made the commitment to change, we pump up the volume and use it to repeatedly reinforce positive, optimistic messages that neutralize the negative, critical labels from our Inner Critic and, at the same time, fuel our passion, our persistence and our perseverance.

Bottom line: We don't have to sell ourselves short. We don't have to settle for less. There is great joy and abundance available to each of us when we release ourselves from the bondage of "I can't" and other limiting self-definitions.

Truth be told: We can break out of the habits of our past. We can become whatever sort of person we wish to be. We can manifest our destiny and create the life we desire. To do this, we must dare to put aside the judgments and limitations of our past. We must dare to have faith in our capacity to deal with change. We must dare to savor the challenges of emotional freedom. We must dare to discover our authentic self.

Above all else, we must dare to stay positive and optimistic, grateful and happy, regardless of any chaos and turbulence in our lives, regardless of any obstacles and pitfalls in our path. By doing so, we accelerate our progress and insure our eventual success.

Neutralizing Negativity From Others On The Road To Success

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

Over time, repeatedly hearing negative, judgmental messages from our Inner Critic which put ourselves down, we develop a consistently negative, cynical, and pessimistic attitude about ourselves which gets translated into self-destructive, self-sabotaging behaviors which generate setbacks, rejections, and failures in our lives.

Although neutralizing our Inner Critic is of paramount importance, it is also important that we neutralize the Inner Critic of others which directs negative, judgmental messages to us about ourselves as well.

The Inner Critic of others, which tends to be bitter, jealous, resentful and judgmental, sends us a variety of negative messages in the form of disapproving facial expressions and body language, outright verbal assaults, sarcastic, snide, demeaning comments, passive-aggressive comments, and pessimistic comments in regard to our efforts and aspirations, all of which can have an extremely negative, destructive impact on us if we are either unaware of them or are aware of them but do nothing to neutralize them.

Just as we cannot afford to let our own Inner Critic go unchecked, it is extremely important for our success and well-being that we recognize and counter the negative messages from the Inner Critics of others.

To do this we must be vigilant over the thoughts and actions of others, paying close attention to what they are saying and doing to us.

There are two approaches that are important to consider:

(1) When we recognize criticism and negativity directed to us from others, we must examine the content. If, by some chance, the criticism is legitimate, it behooves us to learn from it and make changes in our lives. This will help us succeed.

If the criticism is baseless, a function of the negativity of others, we must make sure to correct it in our mind, telling ourselves that it is not true and that we need give it no power.

(2) It might be to our benefit to say something to the other person, pointing out the judgmental negativity and/or pessimism directed towards us, and asking them to please avoid repeating such behavior in the future.

Keep in mind, however, that sometimes it's not necessarily in our best interest to say something to the person, insofar as it could generate denial, defensiveness, anger, and aggression of an extremely abusive nature which could generate more antagonistic, destructive behaviors and possibly severe consequences that we are not prepared to deal with.

Certainly, if we say nothing, it's not going to be fun to continue to be the recipient of negativity directed at us from others, but if we follow approach number one above and disempower the negativity of others with positive self-talk from our Inner Colleague, it is unlikely that the negativity will reinforce our potential for self-sabotage.

Dealing With Obstacles On Our Path Toward Success

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

Obstacles are normal. It is rare, when we are pursuing a goal, that everything is smooth sailing without any resistance whatsoever. Most things we want to achieve in life have built-in obstacles of some sort. Movement towards success usually involves two steps forward, one step back. Just because we hit a snag doesn't mean that the game is over.

It's like getting a flat tire. We're driving on the road. We're heading towards our destination. We want to get there at a certain time. And then we get a flat tire and now it takes time, money, and energy that we didn't want to expend. We tend to get depressed, anxious and irritated. But truth be told: Eventually the tire gets fixed. We get back in the car. We get back on the road. And we're on our way, once again, towards our destination.

We are our own worst enemy when we allow our fear thoughts to derail and defeat us. Obstacles are not dead ends. We can go around obstacles. We can overcome obstacles. We can use obstacles to our advantage. When one door closes, another door opens. Every failure, every setback, has the seeds of success within it. It's all how you look at it.

It's a mistake to look at one moment in time and define our future by that moment. If we look at barren, fruitless trees in the wintertime, define trees as perpetually barren and fruitless, and then cut them down for firewood, we have misinterpreted reality, we have inappropriately defined the future, we have reacted to our misinterpretation, and we have defeated ourselves.

Success is in the eye of the beholder.

There is always a bigger picture. It always behooves us to step back and look at the forest from the trees. Oftentimes, what seems to be bad luck, later on down the road appears to have been good luck. And vice versa.

For example: Let's say we lose our job. We decide that's bad luck. We send out resumes to find another job. A week later, we get an offer for a new job, with more money, closer to home, with fewer hours, greater responsibility, and room for advancement. We decide that's good luck.

So was losing our job bad luck or good luck? The point is we can't say. It's a mistake to judge anything on the face of it at the moment that it's happening. We really don't know what the future has in store for us. Rather than judge something as good or bad, it's better to just decide that it is what it is, and that we'll deal with it, and move forward as best we can.

That being said, the next time we hit a wall, when we feel ourselves being overwhelmed with anxiety, depression, frustration, impatience, anger, or any other emotion, we don't overreact. We don't freak out. We STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN.

We stop and get calm. We don't make a soap opera out of our lives.

We look at the data quietly and objectively. We ask ourselves what's the evidence that, because an obstacle has appeared, it means we're going to fail, that our life is not going to go where we want it to go?

And then we listen. We listen for the answer from our higher self which knows the truth, that when an obstacle appears in our path, it says nothing about whether or not we will succeed in the long run.

We stop, look, and listen. And then we take appropriate action, continuing on our path towards our goals, doing the best we can to make them happen.

Eliminating Catastrophic Thinking On The Road To Success

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

It's just not that easy, these days, to whistle while we work and row our boat gently down the stream. Nevertheless, these are the very things we need to do. A whole lot of whistling and a whole lot of rowing. Gently.

One way to do this is to stop catastrophic thoughts which feed on our insecurities and magnify our worries, such as: "I'm going to lose my job." "I'm going to lose my house." "I'm going to have to declare bankruptcy." "I'm going to get cancer and I won't have health insurance." "I'm going to be stuck in my dead-end job forever." "I'm going to be homeless." "I'm never going to be able to retire." "I'm never going to sell my novel." "I'm never going to catch a break." "I'm going to be living with my parents forever." "I'm never going to be rich." "I'm never going to be happy." "I'm always going to sabotage my relationships." "I'm never going to get married." "I'm never going to have children." "I'm going to die alone."

These catastrophic thoughts terrorize us. They flood us with fear. And for what? All the time spent terrorizing ourselves with fear doesn't make us wiser. It doesn't make things better.

If anything, catastrophic thinking makes things worse. It contributes to depression, anxiety, irritability, reactivity, impulsivity, low energy, low motivation, impaired attention and concentration, a loss of interest in things we normally like to do, and feelings of demoralization, helplessness and hopelessness.

Catastrophic thinking generates stress which dampens our immune system and our resistance such that we are more susceptible to illness with less capacity to recover and heal.

Over time, chronic catastrophic thinking contributes to our making poor choices that affect our health, our happiness, our relationships and our careers.

All of which is to say: Now is as good a time as any for us to stop catastrophizing. And so we stop dwelling on failure scenarios, regardless of whether they are likely to occur one day or not.

We remember that expression about leaving tomorrow's anxieties to tomorrow. We tell ourselves that we'll deal with the catastrophic event in the future, should it happen, that we're not going to put any energy or angst into it now. We remind ourselves to focus on what's in front of us today, to keep our eye on the ball.

And so we choose our thoughts carefully, knowing full well that they create our emotional state of mind, regardless of what is happening in our lives and all around us.

We reject catastrophic, fear thoughts. We embrace thoughts of self-love, self-acceptance and self-empowerment.

When we find ourselves running a catastrophic "tape loop" over and over again in our head, we remind ourselves that there's absolutely no point in crying over milk that hasn't spilled yet.

With right-minded vigilance, practice and perseverance, we can be free of future fears (as well as past pains) and be in the present moment, in the Eternal Now, free to enjoy what is happening, free to be happy, free to be spontaneous, free to make the most of our world and our lives regardless of the obstacles the universe has thrown at us.

The Destructive Nature Of Negative Thinking

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

We are our own worst enemy when we indulge in negative thinking. A major problem in this regard is that, for the most part, we're so used to our negative thinking that we aren't even aware when we're doing it. Consequently, we need to listen closely to the content of our thoughts.

When we recognize negative, catastrophic thoughts about our future, we need to stop them and counter them with alternative messages that are positive and optimistic, based on truth, not fear.

To be sure: Just because things haven't worked out in the past doesn't mean they never will. Just because we've been rejected in the past doesn't mean that is our eternal fate. Just because we've been plagued with failure doesn't mean that is the way it will always be.

Truth be told: We are masters of our fate who have allowed our negativity to victimize and define us.

On an unconscious level, our negativity is a defense mechanism, a protective device such that if something bad should happen, we won't be blindsided and devastated by it. By anticipating failure, we think we are softening the blow of failure should it occur.

Unfortunately, this is not a good plan. The negativity of anticipated bad luck and failure actually helps to create them because it contributes to us not putting our best foot forward. It blocks the flow of positive energy and directs the Law of Attraction to attract negative consequences rather than positive outcomes. It reinforces our fear and insecurity, and it diminishes our confidence and faith in ourselves and our objectives.

In this regard, negative thinking is actually a form of self-abuse. Certainly, it is important to be aware of the things that can go wrong so that we can have a strategy to address them and push forward, should they occur. But to beat ourselves into submission with our negative fear thoughts such that we don't take risks and don't go the distance in order to protect ourselves from disappointment, shame and humiliation is simply self-punishment.

Rather than anticipating failure, we should anticipate success, while at the same time telling ourselves that should failure occur, we will be emotionally capable of dealing with it, that we will pick ourselves up, brush ourselves off and continue on our path toward our goals because that is the only way we will get where we want to go.

It's best that we remind ourselves that there is less shame in failure and defeat than in never trying at all, that many great hearts and minds have risen from the ashes of multiple failures and defeat to reap the rewards of great success and prosperity.

Bottom line: We must be vigilant over our thoughts, stop the negativity and be positive and enthusiastic regardless of adversity and seemingly overwhelming odds against us, and push forward with one true thought always in the forefront of our consciousness: Win, lose or draw, it's much better to play the game than watch from the sidelines.

Every No Gets Us Closer To Success

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

Consider this example: Using a hypothetical number, since I am not aware of the statistics involved in car sales, let's assume that for every ten prospective customers that walk through the showroom door, one will be converted into a sale.

That being the case, a car salesman can expect to get a no from nine people before he closes a deal. Consequently, when he gets one no after another, there is no need for him to get depressed, anxious, or angry. He doesn't need to take it personally by interpreting it as a failure on his part. He doesn't need to get discouraged or demoralized. He doesn't need to perceive it as a setback or an obstacle. He doesn't need to look at it as the universe giving him a hard time.

He simply needs to remind himself that it's all part of the plan, that it's all part of the law of averages, and that every time he gets a no, he should actually be celebrating, because it brings him closer to the statistical number that equates to a yes.

Oftentimes, we get frustrated by things not happening on our timetable. Rather than seeing each no as one step closer to our goal, we interpret the no as a delay holding back our success. This speaks to our desire to control the universe so that it will do our bidding as we think it should and when we think it should.

The problem with this is that we can't control the universe. People and circumstances that will eventually cooperate with us have their own timetable that we need to accept. Any attempt to manipulate and accelerate the process is oftentimes a mistake in the sense that it can lead us to either burning a bridge that could have been an appropriate path or finding ourselves heading down a path that, in the long run, will prove to be a road to nowhere.

ACCEPTANCE & PATIENCE

It is better to accept that it takes time for people and circumstances to come together in a beneficial way for all concerned and to not try to force outcomes. Sometimes it's best to accept the ebb and flow of things. Sometimes it's best to not paddle furiously but rather to row our boat gently down the stream. Sometimes it's best to let things happen at their own pace and have faith that when things don't happen the way we think they should, it doesn't mean that they never will.

Bottom line: We needn't be afraid of rejection and failed efforts. Take Thomas Edison, for example. Every time the universe said no to one of his attempts to invent the electric light bulb, he saw it as a help rather than a hindrance. He saw it as an opportunity to put aside an ineffectual approach he was taking so that he could redirect his attention to an alternative approach that might yield the success he was looking for. Every failed attempt

brought him closer to success by enabling him to eliminate a wrong way so that he could eventually find the right way.

There is a right way for all of us, regardless of what goals we have set for ourselves. But we will not find it if we get derailed by perceived setbacks, obstacles, rejections, delays, and outright failed attempts. Best that we be okay with every no we get and every failed attempt, seeing each as a positive steppingstone to our ultimate success.

Best we stay true to our vision. Best we stay confident and positive. Best we be flexible and stay open to alternative paths so as to modify and adapt our plan when necessary.

Above all else, we don't give up. We keep on trucking. We remind ourselves that it's never over till it's over.

Yes Is The New No: Be Your Own Hero

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

Oftentimes when something is suggested to us as a possibility or we are asked if we'd like to do something, our first impulse is to say no. "I can't... I'm too busy... It won't work... That's never going to happen."

It appears to be a natural tendency for people to be doubtful, cynical, pessimistic, fatalistic, and passive. Perhaps it is born of a need for self-preservation and security. Perhaps we think that by saying no, by not pushing the envelope, by not taking risks, and by not investigating something prior to rejecting it out of hand, we are somehow going to keep ourselves safe.

Certainly, there is truth to that old expression, "Better safe than sorry." If we don't take risks, don't investigate possibilities, and don't venture forth into uncharted territory, we won't get hurt. We won't get disappointed. We won't get rejected. We won't feel the sting of failure.

However, the way I see it, sometimes safe equals sorry, in the sense that regret is one of the greatest sorrows and burdens to bear as we grow older.

To have had the opportunity to try something new and to not have done it or to believe that there was potential for us to achieve something great and to have allowed the ultimate naysayer in our mind to discourage us, can leave us with a haunting regret that no sense of safety can soothe.

Truth be told, who's to say that safe is actually safe? Sometimes doing nothing is a decision that can lead to greater insecurity, frustration, and disappointment, insofar as sometimes passiveness, inertia, apathy, negativity, resistance, and procrastination can leave us in the dust as the future rushes past us and we're left scrambling for crumbs.

It's easy to say no. Everybody does it. You'll be in good company. You'll never be lonely for the companionship of the mundane and mediocre.

It's not easy to say yes. It takes courage. It takes the willingness to coexist with uncertainty and be okay with it. Should our efforts not yield the hoped-for results, we still pat ourselves on the back for being an activist and not a passive-ist, for being proactive and not reactive, for being at cause and not at effect in the making of our world.

Bottom line: Don't be so quick to say no. Don't be so quick to reject opportunities and possibilities. We needn't be impulsive and reckless in our commitment to open-mindedness and new frontiers. We just need to keep our eyes open as we venture forth.

If our path takes us into shadows, we remind ourselves that love is the light that dispels the darkness of fear.

Seeing The Glass As Half Full vs Half Empty

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

Although some people might think that seeing all the negatives, all the potentially catastrophic what-ifs in every situation, places them in a superior defensive survival mode, it's simply not true.

Being an optimist, seeing the glass as half-full rather than half-empty, does not imply or suggest that we lose our grip on reality or on the devastating possibilities in this chaotic, angry, frightened world. It does not mean we are wearing blinders which will prevent us from effectively defending or preparing ourselves.

We do all the critical thinking. We consider all the scenarios, good, bad and ugly. We do it all and we do it just as well as the pessimistic, half-empty crowd.

The difference is that by maintaining a positive outlook, by finding balanced ways of looking at events and their impact on us, we keep fear instincts and emotions in check, thereby avoiding angry, judgmental, aggressive, impulsive actions that are not in anybody's best interests in the long run.

When we keep our fear thoughts in check and maintain a balanced emotional outlook, we communicate more effectively, we problem-solve more effectively, we discharge our stress and aggression in healthy rather than maladaptive ways, we increase our odds of weathering any storm with minimal personal and collateral damage. We maximize our potential for recovery and prosperity, however we define the term.

Consequently, regardless of how horrible our lives might be, it behooves us to count our blessings, to be grateful for what we have despite whatever lack or limitations we're faced with, to remind ourselves that things could be worse, that there are many others on the planet who have it a lot worse than we do.

In times of great stress, it can be very beneficial to look for the blessings in disguise, to look for the silver linings, to look for the lessons.

And so we focus on what can go right as opposed to all the things that could go wrong. We stop assuming the worst. We remain hopeful. We keep our mind open to unexpected outcomes, possibilities and alternatives.

And, perhaps most important of all, we remember that seeing the world as half-full vs half-empty is a choice. We don't necessarily have control over what happens to us, but we do have control over how we perceive what's happened to us, how we react to it, whether we allow it to demoralize and defeat us or whether we choose to find a way to overcome it and transcend it.

Additionally, keep in mind that being positive is ultimately the only game in town. Regardless of what is going on, in the long run, being positive, optimistic and hopeful, as opposed to choosing negativity, pessimism and hopelessness, will serve you better physically, emotionally and spiritually.

How To Succeed In Business By Spiritually Trying

By Walter E Jacobson, MD

If we continually procrastinate and sabotage ourselves to the point of not getting the lives we want, we need to re-program our subconscious minds because it is not our being a victim of bad luck or some more concrete scapegoat that is getting in our way. It's us.

When one self-improvement effort after another has failed to deliver us our aspirations, it behooves us to keep our Shakespeare in mind. Particularly, that "the fault, dear Brutus, lies not in the stars but in ourselves that we are underlings."

Point being: We can be masters of our fate or victims of our fears, fantasies and foolishness. We can continue to know what we need to do and not do it, and not get where we want to go. Or we can recognize that everything we've tried hasn't worked, so we best do something different.

Self-Sabotage

In order to do something different, best we know the root cause of the problem and then design a unique and effective solution.

The root cause is self-sabotage. Consciously, we want to make money, make friends, lose weight, get healthy and fit, find our soul mates and partners, and by golly we're gonna start tomorrow morning for sure, you betcha. This time I really mean it.

New Year's Resolutions come and go. Again and again. Year after year. Unconsciously, our resistance to change is great and our resolve to put into practice the principles and techniques we've learned is weak. The resistance wins out, any attempt at establishing a habit of behaviors, a pattern of focused thoughts and exercises all devoted to the achievement of expressed goals fails sooner or later.

We're back at step one. With another healthy dose, so to speak, of guilt, shame and self-loathing that we've failed another attempt to attain our goals, whatever they might be.

Why is the unconscious resistance to change so great? It's because of what I just made reference to: guilt, shame and self-loathing. Buried deep in the unconscious mind is the belief that we are not good enough and don't deserve abundance and success.

That core thought compels the subconscious to act in ways that creates that reality. We experience a world which reflects that self-concept that we are not worthy. Rather than attracting success, happiness and prosperity into our lives, we attract accidents and potholes.

If this premise is correct, then we must change our core thoughts about ourselves which compel our subconscious mind to do our bidding if we are to attract the life we want

without resistance, negativity, obstacles and unpleasantness.

We must rid ourselves of the unconscious guilt, shame and self-loathing. Not a simple task. Nonetheless, a worthy one. And the way to do it is to be of service to others, to engage in estimable acts towards others as best we can, without conditions, exceptions or expectations.

As we esteem others through our respect and service to help as best we can, we are esteeming ourselves and sending our subconscious the message that we are good enough. But that's not enough. We must forgive ourselves as well if we are to eliminate the deeply submerged guilt and shame.

As we forgive others, which involves letting go of our harsh judgments of them, we are actually forgiving ourselves, letting go of our harsh judgments of ourselves. It's Confucius's Law of Reciprocity. It's a Golden Rule sort of thing. It's the way this world of ours works. It's all projection. People are mirrors of our thoughts. Trust me, there's a lot of that going around.

As we forgive others, we forgive ourselves. It's as simple and as difficult as that. Esteem others, let go of judgments and resentments and anger, forgive others for they know not what they do, among other things, and be of service to others. We get out of ourselves.

We get out of the crazy thinking in our head which makes us feel alienated and frightened. We help others. We count our blessings. And guess what? Things get better. Life gets better. Life has greater meaning in addition to greater clarity, direction, transformation, happiness, contentment and good fortune.