

Creating Better Days

Regardless of the Hands You're Dealt



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CREATING BETTER DAYS

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3 Boys, Some Beer...and a Cop!

THE QUALITY OF OUR DAYS

1. External factors (the ever-changing things “out there”)

- The people, situations & events we encounter
- Not always what we would prefer
 - These factors change continuously
 - We have only limited control over them

2. Internal factors (the true measures of quality)

- Our emotions
- The feelings we experience during our days
 - Most people’s feelings change frequently
 - Most people are convinced that they have limited (or no) control over their feelings

3. How those factors play out

- There is a relationship between the external and internal factors
- It is NOT the relationship we have accepted as truth (what we believe)
- We participate in creating the quality of our days
- We use—or, more accurately, misuse—those creative powers daily!
- Most of our “creative work” is done unconsciously
- Many of our creations are inconsistent with
 - What we claim to be seeking (“good days”)
 - What we profess to believe

CONCLUSION

**Where our creative efforts are concerned,
*Most of us are unconsciously incompetent***

4. Most of us persist in our frantic search for “Happily Ever After(s)”

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ACCOUNTABILITY & VICTIMHOOD

A TALE OF TWO PERSPECTIVES

Two Perspectives on the Quality of Our Days

1. Inside-Out

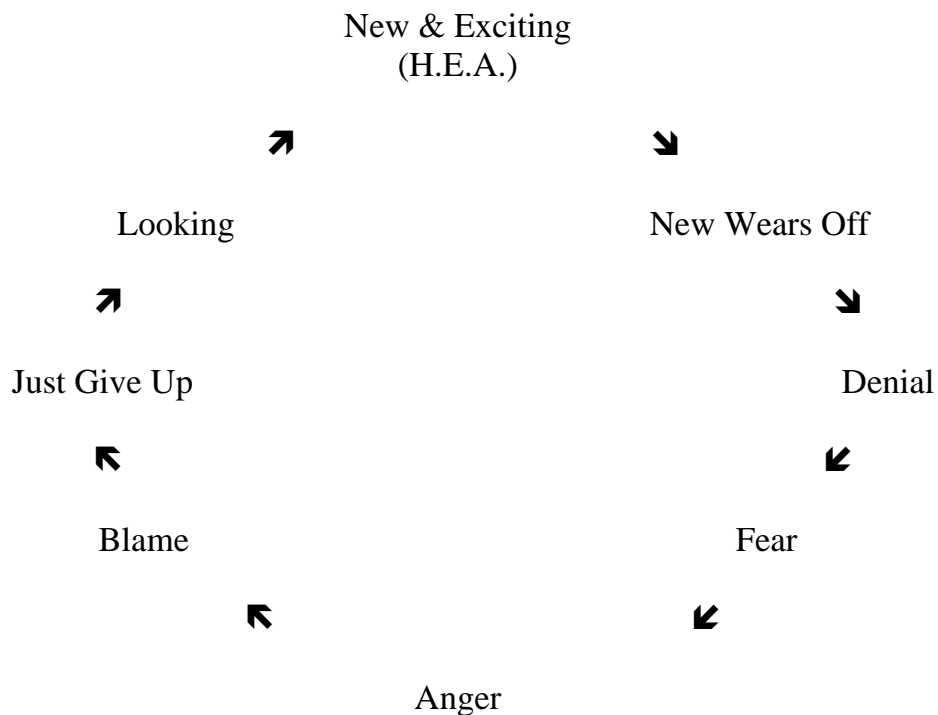
- Based on a valid belief about cause & effect
- Conscious accountability
- *We'll come back to this one*

2. Outside-In

- Based on a widely-held but mistaken belief about cause & effect
- "Professional victimhood"
- *We'll move past this one*

"Happily Ever After(s)"

The Outside-In Perspective at Work



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ACCOUNTABILITY & VICTIMHOOD
BELIEFS, PERSPECTIVE & QUALITY OF DAYS

Victimhood

Accountability

Beliefs

My feelings are the emotional consequences of what happens out there.

My feelings are the emotional consequences of the mental choices I make about w.h.o.t.

Choices Based on Beliefs

Establish "rules" for what must or must not happen out there (heavy emotional attachment)

Define the things I prefer to happen or not happen out there (less emotional attachment)

In the Real World

"Rules" will be broken
Setbacks are inevitable

Preferences will not all be met
Setbacks are inevitable

Choices Made About Setbacks

Blame, Wallow, Quit
Wait, Wish, Hope

Get Over it!
Get On With It!

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

**Acknowledged ownership of the choices we make
And of the consequences those choices produce
*ALL the choices & ALL the consequences***

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

**Not a trait or characteristic to be developed;
*A Truth to be Acknowledged***

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FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

- 1. Three “time zones” related to the quality of our days**
 - The past
 - The present
 - The future
- 2. The quality of our days—as measured by our feelings—is experienced only in the present**
- 3. QUESTION: *How often do we use the past or the future to create feelings in the present?***

Exercise #1

- 1. I want you to think about an unpleasant event or experience from your past or a future event or experience that you're not looking forward to.**
- 2. QUESTIONS:**
 - What sort of feelings were you experiencing before you started thinking about that past or future event?
 - What sort of feelings did you begin experiencing while thinking about that past or future event?
 - So what really caused you to have those feelings while thinking about that past or future event?
 - The event
 - Your thoughts about that event

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Exercise #2

Going Forward

1. Some basic premises to keep in mind

- You can create better days (more positive feelings) without changing the outside factors in your life, the people, situations & circumstances you encounter
- By creating better days (more positive feelings), you will also improve your effectiveness at dealing with the people, situations & circumstances you encounter

2. Steps in the process

- Catch yourself “bummed out” (angry, frustrated, anxious), and simply acknowledge those feelings
- Then identify the outside factor that you associate with those feelings
- Next, I want you to identify the thoughts you were having, including:
 - What you were thinking about (probably the outside factor, but you might also find that you were thinking about something from the past or in your future)
 - What you were thinking, the thoughts you were having about the outside factor or about the past or future

3. That's it - *When you consciously acknowledge the thoughts you are using to “feed” the negative feelings, you stop “feeding” them, and they will subside or even disappear*

4. CAUTION - *When you go back on “autopilot” (stop observing or witnessing your thoughts) you'll probably revert back to unconsciously creating negative feelings about the same or another outside factor*

5. When that happens, simply repeat the steps in this exercise

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HOW YOU'LL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF YOUR DAYS
IN THE REAL WORLD

- 1. Progressively**
 - Over time, not overnight
 - Perseverance after the new wears off the process
- 2. Little bit of theory; LOTS OF EFFORT**
 - You can pretend to be committed to making better choices
 - *You can't pretend to make those choices*
- 3. Some success; some failure**

**Success & failure will characterize your efforts
to create better days.
Your commitment to doing so is best measured
By your responses to your failures.**

- 4. From the inside-out**
 - The choices you make about *what happens out there*
 - Victimhood or accountability – your choice

THE RULE (ORIGINAL)

ONLY YOU CAN CHOOSE THE QUALITY OF YOUR DAYS

APPLICATION (ORIGINAL)

**TO HAVE EXCEPTIONAL DAYS,
STOP LOOKING FOR EXCEPTIONS TO **THE RULE****

THE RULE (REVISED)

_____ **THE QUALITY OF YOUR DAYS**

APPLICATION (REVISED)

_____ **EXCEPTIONS TO **THE RULE****