

CHANGE? HOW DO I DO THAT?

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It doesn't matter if you want to change the way you tie your shoes or wash the car or relate to another human being or stop your bad habits. All changes involve three basic steps: (1) Recognize that something you are doing is not working for you; (2) Own your part of the mess that's not working for you; (3) Try something new and different. If your new attempt doesn't work, you're back at step #1; begin again. What you are doing is not working for you, own your part in it, and try something new. Keep going until you find what does work.

The hardest part of changing is *recognizing* that something you are doing is not working for you, and that you need to change it. We all tend to stumble around in old patterns, repeating them over and over, almost as if we're on automatic pilot, and not really thinking about how we're responding to people, places, things, and events in life. You might recognize that you're not happy, but you often tend to not recognize that *something you are doing* is the thing that is not working for you. You get caught up in blaming others for your unhappiness and looking "out there" for the cause of your struggles and misfortune. When you point a finger at someone else, notice that three fingers are pointing back at you!

When you begin to see that something you are doing is causing the problem, then you can own it. You cannot change what you don't own, and you cannot change anyone else. Goodness knows you have enough trouble changing yourself, let alone anyone else. When you own it, you're responsible for it and can begin to alter it. Change your mind, and change your life.

Most likely, the old patterns you've been using were learned from your parents or others in your early life. When you demonstrate those old patterns, you're really demonstrating someone else's truth. You haven't yet discovered your own truth, so you use their methods and tactics. Admit that their methods are not your best choices, and that you have not been demonstrating the truth about who you are. You can demonstrate your truth, but only after you've discovered it, and to do that, you must look inside you to find your own character and integrity, your own truth.

After you recognize what it is that you are doing that does not work, and you "own" it, you can choose an alternative option, pick a new method, try something different. Keep trying new things until you find one that works for you and allows you to feel better or happier about your life. I suggest you always pick the most loving thing you could possibly do; you'll get more positive results that way.

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