



MAKE NO EXCUSES!



It seems that everywhere I listened in to conversations last week, someone was making an excuse, blaming someone else for their discomfort, or accusing life itself as the reason for diminishing opportunities. Last week, even President Obama was advising graduating high school students to take responsibility for failure as well as success. He said, “Don’t mimic Washington by making excuses.”

And then I read an article that I wrote over 10 years ago that said, “Is blame on the rise, or is it just because it’s my business to notice it?” I do notice, and I coach people to take accountability for whatever shows up around them in business, family, and life itself.

Why?

Because you have the power to make decisions now that will move you forward or keep you stuck. But when you keep hearing about the decline of the American worker, business, economy, or family, you might be inclined to add that information as evidence that someone else is to blame. But that evidence can point you away

from the real problem.

The real problem is the habit of focusing on what’s wrong, rather than on what can be done.

Of course, you must clearly identify the problem in order to solve it, but the intention is to do something about it, not to complain, moan or groan about how unfair life is. Or whine about what you don’t have instead of doing something about it.

You can start by asking questions like:

- What do I want?
- What’s the opportunity?
- What else could I/we do?

As a business, a family, a student, or as an individual, you can ask: What’s my vision of a life worth living? What step can I take today to make it happen?

Sometimes the results you want are a reaction to what you don’t want. For example, you don’t want to get irritated around a certain person. You exert your will, make new promises with yourself not to let that person get to you, and then almost predictably, you break your new promise. *That person is irritating, frustrating, and darn it, everyone agrees with me!*

Sometimes after a series of “I will do it,” the next move is, “It’s not my fault,” and then the ultimate excuse, “I just don’t care anymore.” That my friends, is resignation. You do have to have the will to get started, and also the commitment to continue so you have a sustainable result. To end the resignation cycle that says you can’t do anything about your concern—which is a manifestation of blame—you first accept what’s happening instead of resisting what’s happening. Not just one time, but as a way of being. What is happening is the fact of the matter. Accept that it is happening. Then you can take accountability for your feelings, your ideas, your actions, and your willingness to move out of the comfort of excuses to the discomfort of the unknown response of another person, or the unknown outcome of your efforts.

Let’s return to the person who irritates you! When I coach people to have the conversation with the other person, I usually have to wade through their excuses: they won’t understand, be responsive, it won’t work, or they won’t change. When I ask, how they can so perfectly predict that future outcome, they’ll stop and realize that they’re making it up, and holding an intention that whatever they do, it won’t work, or it won’t be sustainable.

When we can come to just the simple statement, I don’t know, then a world of possibility opens up, and we can discuss how to shape a conversation or action, with the intention of creating something new.

So here’s your practice this week:

1. *Understand your intention behind every word you speak, and every action you take. Let what you want shape your intention. If what comes to mind is what you don’t want ... ok ... thank you. That’s what you don’t want, now what do you want?*

2. *Focus on what you want. Patience, persistence, joy, and daily progress replace excuses and resignation. Fulfillment is in the action you take right now. It may take work and sacrifice to achieve anything beyond current reality, however, what you'll find most often is that the sacrifice needs to be your limited thinking about what can be done.*

3. *Get a mentor, coach, or inspiring example of what you want to achieve in your practice. Think of how that person would respond. This will stretch your thinking to include what's possible. I have several coaches in business, health, simplicity, peacefulness, and out of the box thinking, that inspire me when I get stuck in habits or comfortable ruts that no longer serve me.*

Let me know your progress as you engage with the idea of no excuses, especially where excuses are habitual and keep you from exploring and having what you want.

My love goes with you as you work with this Uplifting Moment.

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