

Being Comfortable With Negative Feelings

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Feelings that are familiar give us a sense of security. Our brain tells us "I know this feeling! This is familiar. This is safe." The feelings we are familiar with were shaped by our families when we were growing up.

If you lived in a family where the motto was "Stand up for yourself," when someone insulted you, chances are you learned to fight back, and you're familiar and comfortable doing so. However, if your family upbringing was "Don't make trouble," then it's more comfortable for you to not say anything and accept the insult.

If you want to change the way you feel, you must first understand why you feel the way you do.

Feelings

can lead you to act in self-defeating ways. If you fill your head with depressing and negative thoughts, and you allow yourself to feel shameful and angry feelings, you will never be able to act confidently.

Many

of us have picked up negative feelings growing up that become the normal way for us to feel. If we learned to feel ashamed to express interest in girls when we were young, it won't get any better as we get older. So whatever negative feelings you experienced growing up are considered "normal" by you, so that when good feelings come along, we may feel insecure and scared. When this happens, we actively seek out those negative feelings we've become accustomed to, even if they are painful.

Each of us naturally assumes the emotional traits of his own family. Your family is the one that sets the starting point of your development. Whenever you feel good or bad, you are basing that on the standard your family set for you.

When things go

bad, we work to try and raise our feelings back to that set point. When things go good, we also work to lower those feelings back to the same point. There's an internal barometer we all have that lets us know what we're feeling, and we're always working to return to what feels normal to us.

It's the times where we feel too good that can be the most uncomfortable.

When

this happens, we will actually WORK to spoil a good time for us. For instance, let's say you meet a really beautiful woman that you really like, and its a great opportunity for you to hook up with her! But based on your comfort zone, you might think:

“Wait, this girl's too wonderful, she'd never go for a guy like me.”

This

type of reaction reduces the good feelings you were having and brings you back down to what you're familiar with – a feeling of unreservedness – that you probably grew up feeling accustomed to.

Remember:

familiar feelings = a sense of security. This is why so many people are more comfortable feeling bad about themselves than good! They've actually trained themselves to feel comfortable feeling bad! They'd rather not seek pleasure than avoid feeling pain.

When your familiar feelings are negative, they will damage your confidence.

The interesting thing about this is that we *logically* know that what we're feeling isn't right, or healthy, or even true! But for some reason, our logical brain is out of sync with our emotions, and we accept what we feel over what we think.

For many people, their feelings of shame are a form of logic. Our feelings literally shame our brain into accepting those negative and untrue thoughts, even when it knows better!

But remember that shame comes from self-criticism. Those who are self-critical imagine that everyone else is just as critical of them as they are of themselves! When you think like this, any type of confidence is almost impossible to achieve.

So what are the origins of your negative habits? What are the root causes of the feelings you experience? Chances are it can be traced back to your parents, but be careful not to blame them! It's more important to understand your parent's influence on your feelings so that you can stop blaming yourself for your current situation, rather than trying to figure out who to pass judgment on.

HOMEWORK:

Sit down and think of how your parents would describe themselves. Are they using any of the five myths? Write down how your parents would describe themselves in those terms.

Would your mother consider herself “Old” and “Ugly?”

Would your father consider himself “Stupid” or a “Loser?”

Now look at how they describe you. Do any of these statements sound familiar?

- • “Your brother is the smart one.”
- • “Don’t be so stupid!”
- • “You’re too fat! You need to lose weight.”
- • “Don’t miss out on life like I did.”
- • “You’re too old to start over.”
- • “You’re short, like my side of the family.”
- • “Enjoy your hair while it lasts, because you’ll be bald like me some day.”
- • “You will never amount to anything.”
- • “Prepare for the worst.”

Some families only predict dark times in the future and discourage their children from all types of positive habits, such as ambition and

success. This is especially true when it comes to your sexual development. Do these sound familiar?

“You better not have sex before you’re married.”

“Just settle for what you can get.”

“Don’t date out of your league.”

“You better not let me catch you with a girl in your room.”

“You’ll never get a good woman looking like that.”

“If you don’t have a good job, you’ll never be able to get married.”

The list could go on. But you get the idea. Your parents, when they said those things, were instilling negative feelings about yourself and women in your head. They made your starting point one where you were never good enough, or attractive enough, or you had to feel guilty about your desires.

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