



Releasing Control



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Our resident Counsellor, Life Coach and Cognitive Behavioural Therapist points out that one way to ensure you live a life full of frustration, non-contentment and a lack of harmony is having the urge to control situations, people and all things external.

Generally, a person with control issues has an underlying belief that they are smarter, more competent or better equipped with the tools and information to live a superior life than others around them. They feel 'secure' and 'happy', when everything outside of them (people/situations) are running to the way they wish them to. Controlling others is a negative personality trait and is difficult for the person doing it and also for those being controlled. The subject victims can be spouses, children, friends or even work colleagues.

The person with control issues lives an insecure, highly stressed and non-harmonious life. The reason this is so, is because controlling external events, people and just about everything, just does not work, ever. It is a non-achievable task for the controller, as it will never be to their satisfaction, there will always be a detail that was not done 'correctly', there will always be something to control further. There will always be something or someone that is resistant or unable to flow with that plan.

The person with controlling behaviour never realises or accepts that their efforts to get others to think, act and behave the way they wish to is a pointless struggle that breeds internal discontentment, low self esteem and a severe lack of focus in their own life. Until this is accepted, only then can room for creating another more positive habit be made.

Most people never want to be controlled. Think about how you tend to react when others give you advice or want you to do something their way? Well, nine times out of ten, you rebel, resist and do what you think is your best choice, as you have your own set of

thinking patterns and beliefs. What also occurs is a deep resentment towards the person trying to control you. All control is, is someone with a superior complex that lacks trust in who you are and your abilities to run your life how you choose to see fit.

The cycle of control hurts all that are involved. The controller is always unhappy, never satisfied and constantly struggling to get their way and for the person being controlled: guilt, never feeling good enough and resentment are the negative emotions that hold them back.

Those that are a master at trying to control situations have developed a coping

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mechanism, which equates to a thought of, “happiness comes from changing everything around me that appears ‘unstable’ or ‘unwanted’ to me”. However, that is a false, unrealistic and illusionary thought to hold within. Happiness can never come from manipulating external events to be the outcome you wish for. Happiness will never come from making someone do what you feel is ‘right’ or from expecting your required outcome. Happiness is an internal feeling that comes from a deep acceptance and contentment for ourselves and others around us (no matter how they choose to live their lives).

If you feel control is perhaps an issue you struggle with, if you tend to feel temporarily happy when others only do what you tell them to and it is something

you wish to deal with, the following can help. Here are five brief steps to overcoming the desire to control and manipulate all that is external to you:
Step 1 - admit you have an issue with control.

Step 2 - ask others to criticise your habit when it occurs (never become defensive).

Step 3 - allow your spouse to make some decisions you would normally make.

Step 4 - focus on filling your own life with joy. Self-focus IS the focus.

Step 5 - practise meditation/affirmation/ breathing techniques when the fear rises up and you have a need for control.

Allow another emotion (acceptance/understanding that this change you ‘need’ does not make happiness), to replace the fear.

We can never be responsible for other people’s lives, that is, as outlined previously, living in fear mode. If

we respect others, we must recognise that they have a right to their own thoughts, fears and feelings. They have a right to make all the choices they do in life, it is THEIR life. By letting go of the need to control, fix, repair, we allow ourselves and others to be free. The only thing we can control is our reaction to all events, by focusing on our own paths and never another’s path. This then allows happiness, contentment, the release of all burdens and change to occur in our lives ■

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