

Main Points of Embracing Life Changing Moments

How bad our situation is will always be just a matter of perspective AND that perspective is always based on how that situation makes us feel!

Three things that can be used to define a life changing moment:

1. **Rocks your world** – makes you feel unsafe, shakes you up real good
2. **You can't stop thinking about it** – you think about it when you look in the mirror, when you talk to others, when your at work or school, when you try to sleep. This preoccupation lasts longer than 48 hours.
3. **Changes you** – the way you see yourself, the way you look, act, think, feel, how you look at others, etc

Two possible outcomes from the changes:

The Hero Role: This person accepted the changes this experience brought and climbed the ladder. She probably experienced some set-backs and extra challenges, but, one rung at a time, made it to the top. In the end she did something brave, scary and saved her own life – achieving the status of a HERO. Any resentment, bitterness, anger or regret has vanished and the hero can actually talk about the situation with no real emotion at all.

The Victim Hole: This person can't get past the situation... it's becoming a part of her and weighing her down. She can't move on and think about other things – it won't let her. This can be a very frustrating place to be and few of us go here willingly (at least at first). In an effort to justify not making the climb, this person starts focusing on all the negatives. Every time she thinks about the situation she feels strong negative emotions like; resentment, regret, bitterness, blame (towards self or others), anger, etc, and starts digging deeper.

How we can help...

No matter how much we might want to, we cannot lift the person out of this hole. As long as she is carrying her shovels with her she will simply dig a new hole or fall back in the old one. It does us no good to climb down in the hole with her and blaming ourselves for her experience is not helping anyone. So, we sit on the rim and wait...

Things to be aware of while sitting on the rim:

- Pay attention to shovels and how you might be helping her dig. Being a good listener does not mean agreeing with or confronting her ranting & raving...it simply means accepting her where she is.

When she's ready you might help her shine a flashlight on any feelings that are digging her in deeper and see if you can help her set them aside at least for the moment.

- Avoid trying to tell her what she should be doing. When we are "being there" for someone we are providing company and often that's all that is needed. Although it might be well-meaning, telling someone to just get over it, move on, or think positive doesn't help when they are sitting in a hole.

If she asks for ideas, brainstorm with her what one rung up might be – this can be different for every person and every situation, so don't feel like you have to know all the answers.

- Careful not to make the victim hole too comfy. Although most of us would never willingly go into this hole in the first place, when we figure out we can get a lot of attention and things done for us when we're in there, it can change our attitude about getting out.

The rule of thumb – give the least amount of support necessary to help a person move towards positive changes.

- Watch out for the tendency to point your finger at the person in the hole. Even a gently worded – you knew this might happen right? – can feel like a judgment and pushes that person towards justification rather than acceptance.

Be as non-judgmental as possible and remember life changing moments aren't punishment, bad karma, serving anyone right, embarrassments or anything else – they are a part of our journey and when embraced provide opportunities to soar.

From the personal perspective, if you can taste bitterness when you share a story from your past, or feel waves of regret about how you wish it had turned out, you are still holding strong to the emotion of the experience and not allowing personal growth to occur.

- Recognize that your situation is an important part of your journey in life... This is not to say there is no way it could have been avoided... but instead suggesting you recognize you are here now so you might as well deal with it. You can climb the ladder or start digging a hole – which way would you rather go?
- Learn to recognize your shovels and when you feel the urge to pick them up, take out your coin and flip it to the "good" side. Take full responsibility for being in this situation (without turning it into self-blame) then start

focusing your energy on what you can do to help yourself. It's great to ask for support – you just can't ask other's to fix it for you.

- Climb out and up carefully and recognize that progress might be slow. You won't be able to just jump out of the hole and catapult up the ladder. Real growth happens slowly and this stuff is life changing! Take baby steps where possible – reach for one better feeling, take one course, set one or two goals at a time, and recognize that set-back are simply part of the experience.
- Avoid comparing your situation with others – although our journeys might seem similar to others they really are incomparable. Celebrate your own growth as you complete each section of your ladder and be open to the many different ways life might look at the top. If you lock yourself into an outcome before you get there – you might feel like you've failed to reach your destination, when honestly you've been there for ages.

It's not easy...we signed up for some pretty "Incredible Journeys". If we can learn how to embrace those opportunities, shift our perspective to see the good side of the coin – we truly can climb higher and farther than we ever even imagined.

Debbie is the Chief Empowerment Officer for Empowering NRG and offers programs and support to both parents and people in the helping professions.

The featured program for this keynote is for those in the helping role:

Embracing Life Changing Moments; Bringing out the Hero

Helping people recognize when a life changing moment is holding them back is challenging and delicate work. Having plenty of ideas to help our clients shift perspective, release emotional ties and find a way out of this hole is critical. This ½ day workshop promises to be inspiring, insightful and interactive.

For more information on workshops, trainings and resources on this topic, contact Debbie Pokornik at debbie@empoweringnrg.com (204)792-6228.