

Loving The Bad Times
By
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“Vex not thy spirit at the course of things; they heed not vexation. How ludicrous and outlandish is astonishment at anything that may happen in life.” – Marcus Aurelius

We all have dreams and heart's desires. The good news is that by pursuing any one of our dreams, we can find fulfillment. We don't have to pursue them all. We do not have to achieve a dream to find this fulfillment – it happens along the way. When we are pursuing a dream we can contribute not only to ourselves, but also to everyone around us. So, you had this great dream that you were pursuing ...but life happened.

We are trained to honor something more than our dreams. It's our comfort zone – that personal idea of how things are supposed to be according to our expectations/visualizations/affirmations. When we are in situations that are unpredictable we feel fear, guilt, unworthiness, hurt feelings, anger - all of those things that are uncomfortable. The irony is that the feelings that we have been taught to call uncomfortable are the very tools we need to fulfill our dreams.

To expand the comfort zone we must learn to love the emotions that keep it limited.

Emotion is energy in motion. Whether it is joy, sorrow, pain, or pleasure, this is energy that we have put in motion according to our belief system. Many will abandon their dream to avoid experiencing negative emotions. Rather than working to eliminate this energy, we can use them as tools. Fear is the energy to do our best in a new situation. Guilt is the energy for personal change. Unworthiness (best described as humility) keeps us on track. Hurt feelings remind us how much we care. Anger is the energy for change. Discouragement reveals our courage.

To put this into practice let's imagine discomfort in various areas of life:

Illness: The body is a mirror to our inner thoughts and beliefs. It is always talking to us, but we seldom take the time to listen. Every cell responds to every single thought you think and every word you speak. Fear is the energy to do your best in a new situation of healing. Guilt is the energy for personal change and making new decisions. Unworthiness keeps you humble in appreciating the magnificence of the temple you live in. Hurt/pain responds to forgiveness of self and others. Anger gets you moving and doing something positive. Discouragement inspires your courage to go on.

Work: If you are in a job you don't like, if you want to change your job, if you are having problems at work or are unemployed, try this. Realize that this is only a stepping-stone on your pathway and that these negative emotions have a message for you. Fear is the energy to do your best in a new situation – maybe something that is beyond your present level of accomplishment. Guilt is the energy for personal change. Unworthiness keeps you on track and the ego in check. If “they” are not treating you the way you want to be treated, examine how you are treating yourself. Hurt feelings show how much you care and how much more you are willing or able to do. Anger is the energy for change. Discouragement can bring forth more courage to pursue new ideas and answers outside your present comfort level.

Relationships: Think about someone you don't like and ask, “How/when am I like that?” When you are willing to change, these negative patterns, habits and beliefs will be gone from your thinking and behavior, and conflicts will be alleviated. We change others by changing ourselves first.

Love relationships: Fear is the energy to do your best in a new situation. Love comes when you least expect it and not when you are hunting for it. Hunting only creates loneliness and unhappiness. Guilt is the energy for personal change as you think about past behaviors. Unworthiness/humility keeps you on track and respectful of one another. Hurt feelings show

your capacity to care. Are your actions aligned with your intention and integrity or are you trying to prove how good you are? Anger is the energy for change, especially important in leaving abusive situations. Discouragement can inspire you to examine what you want in a relationship and what standards you have set. The courage will then be there to love and accept yourself, even with your faults.

And so, love it all – the fear and the excitement, the guilt and the power to change, the unworthiness and the worthiness, the hurt feelings and the joyful feelings, the anger and the energy, the encouragement and the discouragement. It's all called LIFE. And when you don't love any of it, love that too.

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