

How Not Letting Go of Your Past can Hurt Your Future

Experiences, whether good or bad, are sometimes all we have, and most of them reside in the past. So you may ask, why should I let go of my past when much of it is filled with beautiful memories and serenity?

Well, that is certainly not what I mean. What I do mean is when a past is littered with seemingly overwhelming pain, it impedes one's ability to move forward and adjust to this ever-changing world. A good analogy would be of a backpack filled with distressful memories that one tries to swim with, but it always seems to weigh you down, allowing you to merely breathe, is quite fitting.

This backpack, even though not physically attached to one's body, seems like some type of appendage that ridding oneself of is unbelievably difficult or painful. So, as humans do, we many times avoid, at all costs, the detachment of this pain because it has indelibly been written into a past as if in stone.

Therefore, using it as an old wooden crutch to not live our lives to its fullest potential, is how many people see their past. These excuses fill our lives with procrastination and that procrastination is an excellent way of delaying a healthier future, devoid of these negative memories.

If, for example, a series of painful experiences throughout your childhood, like verbal or sexual abuse, always seem to haunt your ability to progress in your interpersonal relationships. In turn, you subconsciously sabotage these relationships by not giving enough of yourself, or verbally giving too much of yourself.

Fundamentally, the mindset of intertwining the past with the present hurts everything you come in contact with, because the backpack is still around your aching shoulder.

Getting rid of the backpack may be the hardest thing you can do, but consider the cost of maintaining its existence? A mind polluted with pain is not only counterproductive, but can sometimes be dangerous, given the wrong person and situation.

Well then, how do I know if my past is hurting my future?

A hurtful past surfaces subconsciously, if not properly let go. Moreover, consciously you are the only person who can detect and determine what pain you carry with you, so that becomes your antidote.

When appropriately analyzing your current mental condition, you need to set all pride aside and begin to delve into your past. False pride can mask what a more lucid-thinking individual could obviously see as painful. Therefore, a lucid and logical mindset is of the utmost importance.

Identification of particular events that are painful and then indexing them in their level of importance, is also important in knowing to what degree certain memories are hindering your progression.

In the indexing phase, one should identify and compare or look for the memories that cast the longest shadow.

When this is completed, the arduous task of letting go must proceed. Ask yourself truthfully, is this memory worth keeping this close, or would letting it go to its grave make my life easier? This cost benefit analysis should be done with all the toxic memories, in order to understand their role in suppressing your life.

Although letting go of a broken past is extremely helpful in ones future, it cannot be overstated that this process is just that, a process and cannot be done overnight. Working on these memories and coming to terms with them by not accepting them anymore, can take years. As each one diminishes from your memory, you will not only be able to feel the backpack become lighter, but you will be able to start moving more freely into your future.

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