

Simple, Yet Powerful



To Change Your Life

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The Idea of Change



Self-improvement also known as self-development has a broad definition that applies to multiple topics. In this e-book it refers to the act of teaching ourselves to offset negative self-defeating thoughts and emotion and turning them into empowering actions and points of views.

The process of self-improvement happens when we decide there are parts of our lives that can be richer and fuller. It involves improving one's self through our own efforts; if this sounds familiar to you, it should, we all strive whether consciously or subconsciously to improve the parts of our lives we are not happy with. Another way to look at it is to consider the process of change, it's a part of life and cannot be prevented; you can either choose to position yourself to take advantage of it, or just let it happen. Through the

process of self-improvement, which leads to change, you can create the life you want. As empowering as self-improvement sounds, it is not a quick fix for life disappointments and feelings of failure. It is however a process that can help to strengthen parts of your life that needs to change. Through self-improvement you can learn how to think positively, set reachable goals and create steps to offset negative self-talk.

If there are aspects of your life that can be improved, using self-development to help won't hurt. So use this guide as a tool to begin your self-development. Read the words below and commit to either guide change or let destiny propel your life.

Tools to Use

There are acts and tools you can use to empower and guide self-development. Consider using a paper or electronic journal to document the changes you want in your life and the process and progress you make.

Accept Yourself



The first thing to consider before pursuing the path to self-improvement is acceptance. Some of the things you love and hate about yourself is an innate part of who you are. Those flaws and strengths create your character, the part that makes you unique. At the same time, accepting yourself and wanting to slowly change factors in your life that you are unhappy with is possible. In order to improve the quality of your life, you should not only accept the things you cannot change, but be willing to change the things you can. Consider incorporating the steps outlined below.

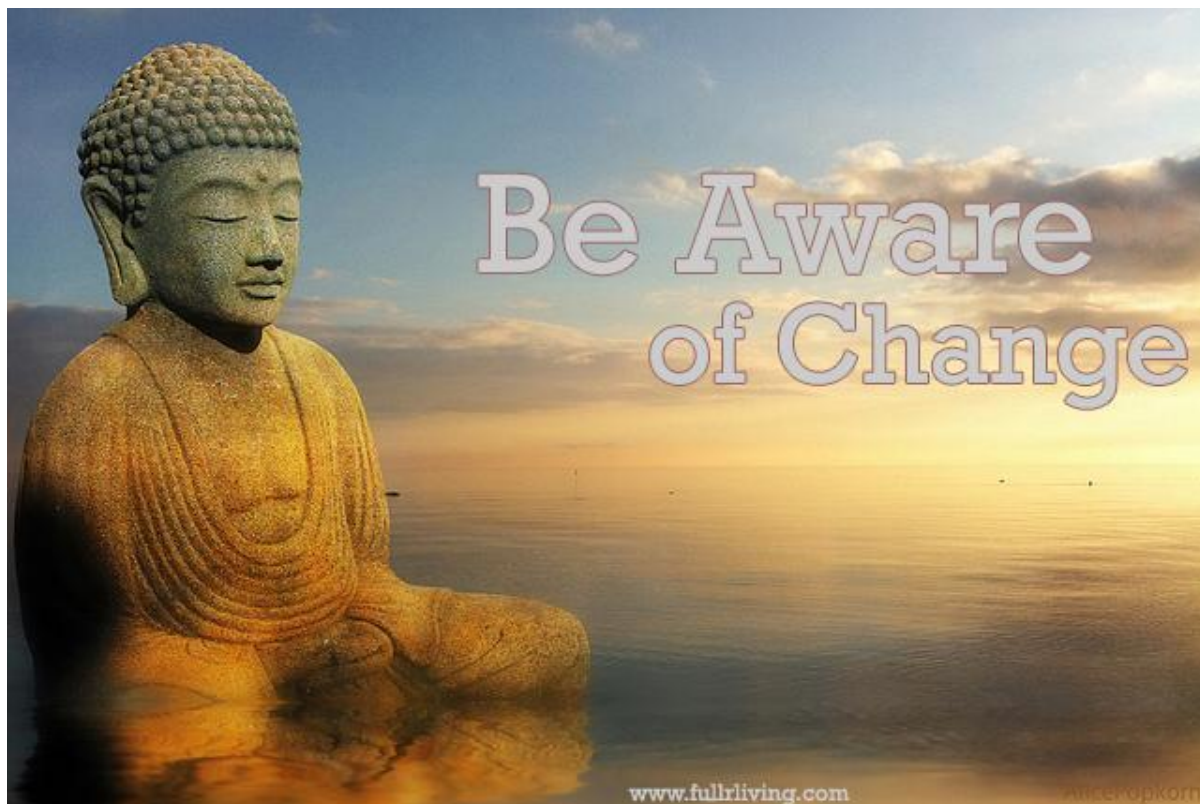
Celebrate - We each have strengths that create the uniqueness of who we are. In order to acknowledge your strengths you must know them. Take the time to discover where your strengths lie by using tools such as a journal and reflection to pinpoint and celebrate your uniqueness.

Forgive - Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself. I love the quote by Les Brown where he says “We should forgive ourselves for our faults and mistakes and move on.” You will never truly begin the path to improvement if you don’t realize that your mistakes are behind you and your future is ahead of you.

Remove - In addition to forgiving yourself, you must also be willing to remove additional roadblocks that will prevent you from totally accepting yourself. These blocks can be related to your past, as well as the person you are today. Remove those blocks by connecting with yourself, that connection start with forgiveness.

Be Kind - Someone once told me to be kind to myself because no one else will. Kindness and forgiveness are inter-related, but kindness is what happens after you forgive. It’s so easy to acknowledge a mistake, then berate yourself for making the mistake to begin with. Turning off your inner-critic allows forgiveness to rise from within, it’s a gift no one else can offer.

Choose The Change You Wish To See



The truth is we all evolve. For every day we're alive change happens. Are you conscious of these changes? Chances are you are not, but they are happening! Consider the first job you've ever had; now compare it to what you're doing now, would you find satisfaction in that same job today? Most likely, the answer is no. You've become more knowledgeable, more experienced, and your abilities, skills, and the person you are has changed. Did you notice? Was the change intentional? Hopefully, the condition of your life right now is a direct reflection of your awareness and constant efforts. Change happens, you can either choose how it happens, or simply let it happen. If you choose to be proactive with the changes happening in your life, consider incorporating the attributes mentioned below and remember the words of Mahatma Gandhi: "Be the change you wish to see."

Release - *Your inability to implement change due to fear or failure; of not being strong enough to make it happen. While you may not know the*

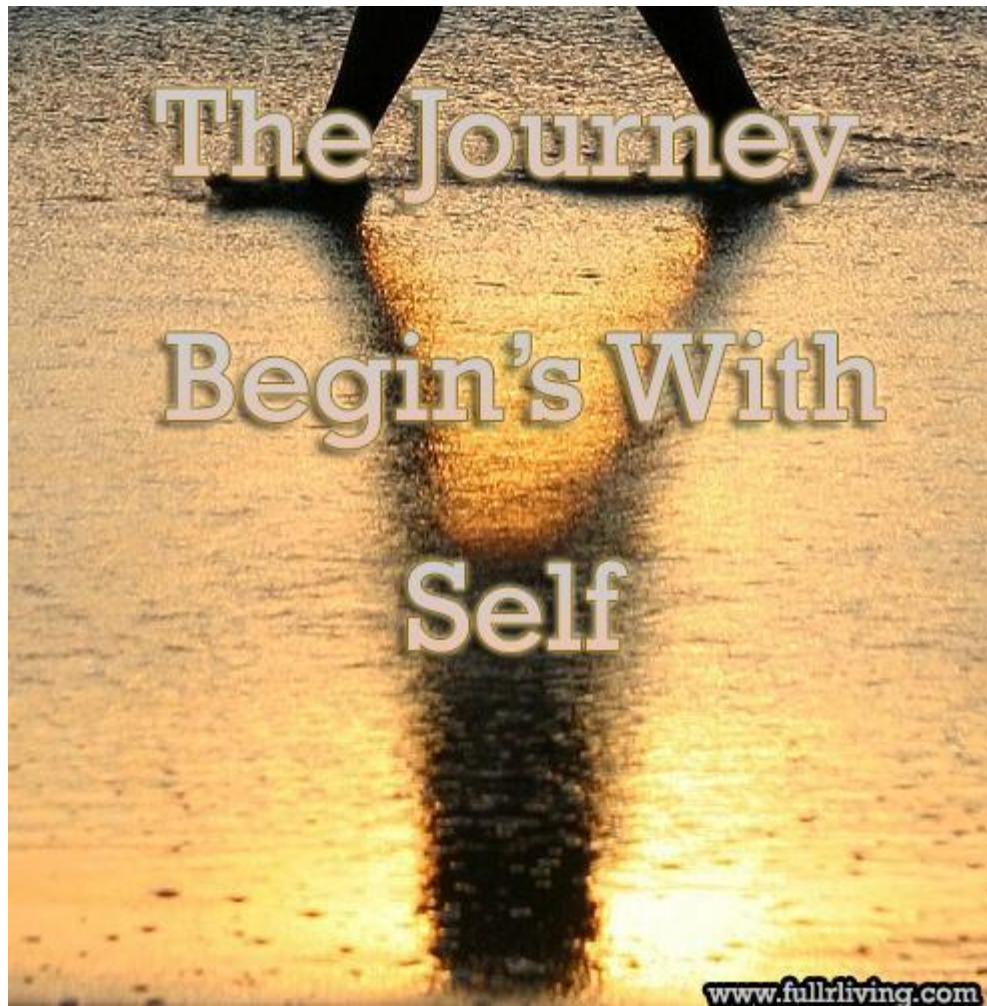
outcome of your efforts, you should release fear by realizing you will be the best person you can be - that's one result that's guaranteed.

Acceptance - The path to acceptance is mentioned a few pages back, if you've read this far, you now know how important it is to look in the mirror and love the person looking back. That person looking back at you is the key to any improvements you are trying to accomplish in your life. So stop reading this, go to a mirror and look at yourself, offer encouraging words that will motivate and embrace the person you are now.

Recognition - Recognize that change doesn't happen instantly, It takes time. Give yourself the time needed to discover your unique way of processing, exploring and applying change.

Opportunity - A part of noticing change happening in your life is to acknowledge it's benefits; one of those benefits is growth. In fact, you cannot grow if you don't embrace change and you cannot change if you are not willing to grow. Opening yourself to the opportunity of change is yet another reason to be aware of how change impacts your life and the opportunities that result from your efforts.

Realize The Journey



Throughout life, there are events and moments that influence your life, some of which you have no control over, some of which you do. Improving yourself is one of the things you can control and can work on slowly to produce change. In order to create change, you must first realize that change is needed. You must be willing to learn about yourself; to reflect on the type of person you are and want to be. Self-improvement doesn't happen overnight, it is a journey that begins with your ability to pull from within, the elements needed to begin your journey. Consider the ones listed below and augment them with ones that are a part of the unique you.

Know your purpose - "Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom" wise

words by Aristotle and words we all should consider during our lifetime. You will never find your purpose in these words, or any ever written, because it is an individual process that starts and end with you. It involves your ability to reflect and accept your original self. Allow yourself to be open to the possibility of change and enjoy the journey, know that the reward is well worth the process.

Believe in yourself - Trust your instinct, trust the core of who you are. don't allow self-doubt to creep into your mind and strip you of what confidence and strength you have. Believe that you are capable of overcoming any fear and anxiety that may arise during the process of finding yourself and achieving change.

Reward yourself - Every effort your make deserves to be acknowledged and rewarded. Rewards are how you stay on track with your goals, it's a way of realizing and accepting how much you've changed. Your reward can be as simple as buying something new, or it can be as intricate as helping others. You know how challenging it is to change, helping others to achieve their goals can be a reward you cherish, as you see others reaching their goals and accomplishing their dreams.

Know That Timing Matters



Like most things in life, timing and patience are two of the important keys to success. You are setting yourself up for failure if you decide suddenly to stop a habit, or some other activity you are unhappy with, while expecting overnight results; you must allow enough time for adjustment and re-adjustment of your efforts. Improving your life involves nurturing your efforts while acknowledging there are aspects of your life that can be improved. Do your best to not judge or berate yourself if it doesn't happen fast enough. In addition, consider incorporating these key attributes:

Patience - Change is hard, realizing that you need to adjust your life and find

the patience needed to allow it to happen is harder. Improving and moving forward isn't easy; patience will help you slowly adjust and accept what improvements are needed in your life.

Persistence - Is an important ingredient in any effort you make to improve or make changes in your life. It's the distinguishing factor between success and failure.

Focus - A part of being successful with your goals, is having a definite idea of what you are trying to accomplish. A clear vision of your goal, or goals will prevent lapses and enable you to focus your efforts. Read more about ways to focus on page 14.

Action -In addition to patience, you must also know when you are ready to take action and move forward. Going from a place of inability, to a place of strength and awareness happens when you are ready for it. You know you are ready when you are willing and able to step back, reflect and subsequently act.

Use Tools To Improve

Reflection



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Another important step toward self-improvement is reflection. Reflection is the ability to consider what's holding you back, and to figure out the best possible solution to move forward. If used correctly, reflection can aid with and improve elements in your life you are unhappy with. Alternatively, it would not be hard to use it in a narcissistic or conceited way. There is a fine line between selfishness and self-reflection. Being aware of this and working towards developing certain conditions in your life should be the goal. Make every attempt to not become preoccupied with your own thoughts, emotions and life - self-absorption is not the same as reflection. Consider using assistive tools such as journaling to help you focus and attain inner clarity.

The process of using reflection to discover what is holding you back is one of the best things you can do to develop your sense of self. The results of not connecting with your subconscious would be the same as living reactively,

instead of progressively. When reflecting, consider the three key points outlined below:

The right state of mind - When reflecting, make sure to give it your full attention, it's important to not be distracted by your surroundings. Try and create an atmosphere that is peaceful and distraction free. While self-reflection is not meditating, it's similar in a sense that you need to give it your full attention.

Challenge yourself - Reflecting is asking the hard questions and the willingness to answer them honestly. Your goal is self-improvement, you cannot improve, if you are not willing to ask and answer questions about your life and the things you are trying to change.

Commit to your decisions - Once you've answered the hard questions and determine the possible outcome, commit to that decision. Whatever you've concluded, that conclusion is the key to your personal self-development. By moving towards the outcome you desire, you are taking the necessary step towards creating the success you want.

Be Accountable



Accountability is one of those words you can easily view negatively. It can be associated with paying penance, or serving time; of being held accountable for actions such as those associated with committing a crime or wrong doings. How accountability relates to self-development in this context has more to do with making a decision and being accountable to that decision. It's very similar making a commitment, the difference is, committing has no consequence associated with it, while accountability has the burden of guilt. Once you hold yourself accountable for following through on a decision or a plan, it's very difficult to back away without feeling as if you failed. Listed below are steps to help you be accountable with regards to making the changes you want and creating the life you desire.

Be Committed - Commitment is the beginning of accountability - It's important to commit to your decisions in order to reach your goals. It is the driving force behind your ability to be focused. Your commitment ensures your willingness to open yourself to change.

Be Honest - An important part of being accountable is admitting when you need help, or if you've made a mistake. Don't be afraid to tune in to your intuition and let it guide you. Honesty with yourself will prevent disappointing yourself and those helping you to meet your goals.

Be Flexible - There will be times during the process of development and change when you will have to adjust and readjust your process, to allow change to happen. Your resiliency ensure your ability to be focused, even when you realize that what you are doing to improve is not working.

Be Responsible - Another important part of accountability is knowing when you've extended too much of yourself. For example, don't commit yourself to waking up early to exercise if you know you are not a morning person.

Set Reachable goals



You've considered what needs improving in your life, now break them down into goals that are reachable. Don't tell yourself you will change a habit within six months, it's too vague. Chances are, your vaguely defined goals won't be met and you will lose your motivation to set new ones. Prevent ambiguous goal setting by outlining the steps you plan to take to reach them and reviewing your list daily. Also consider using the steps below to help make your goals more attainable.

Set S.M.A.R.T. Goals - While nothing can guarantee success, using the S.M.A.R.T. system will ensure that your goals meet five key criteria:

Specific - Your goals must be clearly defined.

Measurable - To determine your success, the details are necessary.

Achievable - Set goals that's realistic and attainable.

Relevant - Set goals that's suitable for your situation and reachable.

Time-based - Keeping in mind the importance of patience, set a realistic time frame to reach your goal.

This method have been used by many high achievers to produce success. Using the SMART System enables consistency, and contributes to a sense of purpose.

Tell someone - share your plans with family and friends. Set in motion another level of accountability; by not disappointing those that's close to you.

Join or create a group - While the goal of joining a group or creating one may seem obvious. The true reward in helping others attain their goals would be to help yourself in the process, you will in effect create an associative effect.

Know The Benefits of Self-Improvement



The true benefit of self-improvement is the feeling you get when you've accomplish something you never thought you would. Suddenly you feel capable, connected with the part of you that knows what your abilities are. While there are other benefits that your accomplishment will bestow that feeling is the epiphany of everything you've hoped for and worked to accomplish.

The bottom line: Self-development enables growth; growth of self, growth of every aspect of your life, which includes:

Increased Self-Confidence - Most likely you're more confident, because of the rippling effect of accomplishing goals you've set and reached. That feeling of confidence and willingness to act will flow into other aspects of your life.

Expanded Ability to Focus - Let's face it, you could not have reached this point without focus. You've fine tune your ability to enforce the changes you desire. You've learned that with intended focus, you can realize your goals.

Self-Discipline - Another major bonus of creating change is discipline. Consider your inability to focus on your goals before you began; now think about how you've changed? You now know that without discipline and focus you cannot reach your goals.

Conquered Fear- One of the biggest roadblocks to accomplishing anything you set your mind to is fear. Most don't act because they are paralyzed by it. Not you, you stared it in its face and kept going, you succeeded in spite of it

Understand Self-Improvement is Not Measurable



Musician David Lee Roth once said the problem with self-improvement is knowing when to quit. I disagree, the problem that most people don't understand about self-improvement is, it's not measurable and there is no finality to it. Redefining yourself is a constant effort that requires discipline. Chances are you've spent a lot of effort trying to get to where you are right now. Don't let a good decision turn into a bad one, by believing that you can change then it's over. Change, self-improvement is a continuous process; that's not calculable. What's more, you cannot maintain growth if your mindset is that of being finished. It will take effort to maintain any changes you've made. You never want to be defeated by falling into an old yet familiar habit. You prevent defeat by adapting the correct mindset and using the skills you learned during your development process.