

PAL Blog

In the last blog post I discussed change...

The desire to grow and expand as a person and deepen our enjoyment and satisfaction with life. I also mentioned that the only person you really can change is the person staring at you in the mirror. An important (and hopefully encouraging) point to make here is that as you change, you create space and opportunity for your addicted loved one to change! Please take a moment to reflect on this concept... it's an incredibly important axiom for recovery.



Also introduced was the WholeLife Model that I use to help individuals visualize their lives.

Then I provided an exercise to assist you in choosing “That One Thing.” This “one thing” is a specific internal or external change you commit to focus upon. It’s your personal goal!

Now that you have your goal identified let me introduce some steps / guidelines to increase your chances of succeeding. **Sound good? Are you ready? Let’s do it!**

1. Attach a concrete action (behavior) to your goal.

Richard Rohr reminds us... “you don’t think yourself into a new way of living, you live yourself into a new way of thinking”

The action you are going to take needs to be clear, specific, repeatable and reasonable. Don’t miss your mark by being vague or unrealistic (start small and work up.)

Example:

Goal: Better Boundaries with my child

Concrete Action: I will say “no” to requests for money

2. Attach a time frame to your goal... and repeat daily.

Remember: Studies indicate it takes on average 66 days for a new behavior to become automatic.

Take each day as it comes and practice your new behavior every day. If you fail? Get right back at it the next day. Everyday ask yourself “What is my ‘one thing’ that I must do today?”

Example:

Goal: My “one thing” is to be a more thankful and positive person

Concrete Step: List 5 things I am grateful for in my journal each evening and then read them again the following morning.

Warning: Expect resistance from your loved one, other family members, or yourself (usually emotional resistance i.e. guilt, fear, doubt, etc.)

3. Attach accountability to your goal.

This is important given the resistance you will experience. Don't try to undertake change alone. An important principle in recovery (our recovery) is recognizing our powerlessness and need for help. So let someone know your intentions and check in regularly during the next 30 to 60 days. Implement a buddy system or use your group. Celebrate your successes and disclose your failures. Be open, honest, and persistent.

4. Attach an assessment to your goal.

After 30 days assess how you are doing. Are there any changes to your approach that you need to make? Get feedback and then proceed for another 30 days. This will help you cement your goals!

When you feel confident that the desired change has taken root you can then choose to either:

Expand your goal i.e. I will say “no” to requests to come to the house as well as requests for money.

-OR-

Add a new goal i.e. I will begin giving back to my support community.

In either case it is important to attach a concrete step, time frame, and accountability.

Best of luck as you seek to deepen, enrich and reclaim your life.

Blessings,

Ron

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