

One Way We Might Subvert Resolve in 2012

New Year's resolutions are on the tip of most everyone's pen and tongue. Thousands of suggestions, "how tos," and "best ways" are being offered to help folks make and carry through on their New Year's resolutions. Sadly, as in past years, 98% of those who make resolutions will have given up or failed by Valentine's Day.

Three major causes of failure are: (1) most folks' resolutions are "mental" — that is, they are simply thoughts that are wrapped in a burst of enthusiasm that is ephemeral, and short-lived, (2) intentionality does not come from "inside" — from our Core Self, our heart and soul and (3) many folks are caught in a "victim mentality" where scapegoating runs their lives. Victims are so obsessed with blaming that they lack the strength to gain clarity about why they resist change or fail to follow through on their intentions.

When we understand the nature of the "victim consciousness," we gain insight into how true and real change occurs.

The victim is rife with self-limiting and self-sabotaging habits and patterns of living, working and relating. It is these self-limiting patterns that prevent us from doing and being from a place of integrity, responsibility maturity, accountability, dedication, and commitment. It is our subconscious drives that cause us pain and suffering.

When we look deeply inside, honestly and self-responsibly, we uncover our shadow self – a self, feeling victimized, that lives a life of greed, ruthlessness, egocentricity, blind ambition irresponsibility, inaction, self-sabotage. Choosing to reflect and become conscious of these habits, patterns and programming in an effort to release them supports us to evolve to a place where clarity and a truthful picture of our inner and outer realities will serve us well.

When we look deeply inside and reflect, we become more able to transmute the energies of our self-limiting habits and patterns into the energy of authenticity, integrity, and trustworthiness – supported by our inner qualities of courage, commitment and steadfastness.

Four characteristics of a victim mentality are:

lack of clarity about our goals: ping-ponging between and among realistic and unrealistic or illusory expectations and goals, and blaming others for our lack of clarity;

inability to deal with time and resource limits and constraints and blaming other people and events for our inability to use time and other resources effectively and intelligently;

confusion around the law of cause and effect – lack of awareness about how we are creating/causing the current events in our life and a lack of clarity about how we can change our thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, intentions, behaviors and actions to effect positive change, believing that my issues are not about "me" but about others who are responsible for my issues;

denial that my life choices have positive or negative mental, physical, emotional and spiritual and spiritual effects on my overall health and well-being, even in the midst of my own pain and suffering; that my pain and suffering are caused by some external event or circumstances.

Mired in the quicksand of victimization, we find ourselves constantly projecting our anger and negativity on to events, circumstances and others for our predicament. We project our (unconscious) inner frustration with ourselves out towards anyone or anything we feel we can blame for our state in life. Sadly, we're actually creating our own universe but blaming others because it's not what we want.

Taking time for honest and conscious self-reflection supports us to take responsibility for our self – including our "dark side." Self-reflection sheds light on the "stories" we make up to avoid taking responsibility for how we project our "stuff" on to the world. Self-reflection supports us to identify how our emotional programming – anger, fears – create our lives at work, at home, at play and in relationship.

When we are honest and clear about our wants and needs, and what we are willing to do, we can create a solid foundation for our personal growth and development. We attract and relate with others who share the same self-empowering life view.

When we understand the lessons we need to learn from our current situation, what we need to do becomes obvious. Then we have to choose to take action. However, this understanding requires focus, commitment, consistency and compassion for our self.

Spending time in our inner world through meditation, silence, journaling, etc., is both emotionally and spiritually nourishing. This nourishment supports awareness of the "how" and "why" things appear in our lives – how we are creating our personal universe. Time in our inner world nurtures our capacity for self-love and self-kindness – which support us to create and inhabit a love-based, victim-less universe.

In this place of safety and protection, we begin to extricate our self from a victim mentality and move forward from a place of positivity and steadfastness. In our inner world, there can be no victimization as it's a place of neutrality – a place of soul qualities – clarity, peacefulness, groundedness, stillness, surrender and allowing.

Self-reflecting helps us observe how we use our emotions to create our inner and outer worlds, our worlds of victimization. For example, are we being "nice" to accommodate others in our attempt to feel acknowledged, seen and loved or because we authentically wish to engage in adult, heart-felt, mature relationships – are we holding our physical, emotional and psychological boundaries with others or allowing others to threaten and abuse our boundaries so we can feel wanted and liked?

Once we have cultivated support, self-love and solid ground within, we can expand our space to include others. But we must be very conscious not to include any event, circumstance, idea, thing or person who will take us away from our center, from our self-love and move us back into feeling the victim.

Many "resolutions" are not conscious choices. They are knee-jerk reactions to something we don't like about our self – and it's usually about our "packaging" or some surface issue.

When we surrender to someone else's agenda, at work, at home, at play and in relationship, we enter their universe as a victim. The important question is why we allow others to control us. Perhaps, (1) We lack our own solid and self-confident life agenda; (2) We aren't in touch with our heart and soul and we don't trust ourselves; (3) We look to satisfy our wants and needs outside ourself and accommodate and compromise to be taken care of; or (4) We follow a path of least resistance in an attempt to avoid conflict and "keep the peace." In all of these, we give away our power and become the victim.

Inner work and self-reflection, done diligently can often support us to (1) to realize our own authority, (2) to assume responsibility for what we create and (3) to own the consequences of our choices, decisions and actions.

Inner work and self-reflection can support us to focus on what really matters, to let go of what holds us back, to trust our soul and Spirit for guidance and to use our core, inner strength (not "willpower") to take positive action for our self instead of engaging in self-destructive and self-sabotaging actions, releasing our self from the stranglehold of victimization.

So, some questions for self-reflection are:

- Who or what is my guiding authority? How is this authority working for me?
- What are my core values and how do they direct my choices and decisions at work, at home, at play and in relationship?
- How do I choose and implement my personal standards?
- Am I self-reliant? How so?
- Do I ever explore the dynamics of my inner world?
- What bright light shines in my inner world?
- What does not shine in my inner world? Do I know why not?
- What feelings and thoughts inhabit my inner world? Are they supportive or limiting?
- Who's in my personal world? Are they supportive or toxic? Do I want them there? How have I attracted them into my life?
- Did I (or others in my family) experience being a victim when I was growing up? How so? What was that like?
- How can I create a more nurturing, loving and compassionate inner world for my body, mind and emotions?

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