



Mental Wealth

Newsletter

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YOUR LIFE CAN BE DIFFERENT..

Are we helpless or hiding? By Karina Stell

What does helplessness feel like to you? It is often expressed as feeling like a cork in the sea. Bobbing with each assault, being reactive to what is brought to bear on it, but with no real direction of its own or ability to extricate itself from what goes on around it.

This image is one that often pops into my mind when I hear clients describe where they sit in the midst of their world and their issues. Utter helplessness. Being thrashed from one emotional assault to another. There have been periods in my own life that I too have experienced that sense of helplessness and it has made me wonder how I reclaim my power at those times in order to help my clients do the same.

Often there is a cycle that can resemble the hamster on the wheel. No matter how hard we try, we end up at the same place. Important to notice is as much as we see ourselves as helpless in some situations, we are often in fact an active part in keeping things the same. It goes something like this - I do this and then my world does that and then I respond with a committed but up until now useless 'this' and we all end up in the same place and this

is who I now am in the world and I'm helpless to make it any different. We often don't notice the part we play in the dance of reinforcing dysfunction. Whilst we continue to make the same choices, it is little wonder we end up in the same place and surprising that it feels so unexpected.

There is also room for the possibility that change is scary and that the suffering we have come to know and understand is less frightening than something new. Our inaction again contributing to keeping things the same.

What I have come to understand is that if we all can just do one small thing differently, however minor, we can end up somewhere different. We can exert some power. We can become a self-directed ship at sea and not just a cork.

One of the things we talk about constantly in our Groups and sessions is the power of play. A good starting point is often just to play with the notion of change, especially when the thought of taking any action seems too big a mountain to climb.

For example, if you are afraid of getting in a lift, play with the idea. Talk about it. Say

the words, "one day I may get in a lift" and then follow with your usual anxiety if you need to, deny the possibility straight after if you have to, but let your mind hear you say something different, even if they are just words and there is no lift in sight.

Play with what your life would feel like if you weren't a cork. What could you do? And most importantly of all, how would things be different! Identifying the change you want is a huge step. Just play until your mind gets familiar with new words coming out of you.

Change can come ever so slowly and if we resist the urge to pull out our big fat judgment ruler to measure that 'it's not fast enough' or 'it should be better', change is meaningful no matter how small. If it brings us closer to the life that holds more meaning for each of us, it is a triumph because we are no longer reactive but proactive! We are driving the ship and no longer just reacting to life. We make choices and before we make choices, we may even just play with the idea of making choices. All of it matters.

NEWS

As a member of our Groups, you are a very valuable individual AND part of a team. Your input in supporting others is meaningful and helps others move through their challenges. Equally, others are there to support you.

In order to really honour the role each of you play in this important dynamic, we have devised the following rules. This is because at times we find people come to group and are privy to some of your most painful experiences and then just disappear with little explanation. We feel this is a place that needs to be respected. So as well as speaking an oath of confidentiality for all new members, we believe these new rules are also respectful of you sharing these very private experiences.

4 Simple Group Rules

1. Group attendance is a commitment unless there is illness or very important reasons you need to be elsewhere
2. When you are accepted as a member of group, you are in a place of privilege, hearing about others' very private lives and feelings and so your place in Group becomes valuable and important to others. Please remember how important you are in this Group dynamic.
3. When the time comes you would like to leave Group, in order to make this a process that allows others to end their Group relationship with you, we ask that you give one Group's notice and then others can share and say goodbye. After all, you have shared in probably more intimate places in their lives than many of their family members. Saying goodbye is important.
4. It is also important that when you feel Group is becoming too confronting, that you discuss this with the therapists, as this is when the most important work can be done. Running from difficulty/pain/anxiety may be the coping mechanism you have exercised in life that has proved unhelpful. Working through pain and challenges is what Group is all about and it is not always easy, but is part of your work.

New 4 part Workshop – *Register Now!*

Why is putting the toilet seat down so hard??

6pm – 8pm

Monday 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th July

128 Clyde Street

\$195 for 4 week workshop per person

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| Week One | What's going wrong? |
| Week Two | What are you really wanting your partner to hear? Decoding the message and finding the need. |
| Week Three | News ways of being which nourish the relationship and not just each individual. |
| Week Four | Practice, Role Play and Real Experience. |

Register online by visiting www.mentalwealth.com.au and pressing the Payment Tab. Make your payment and use your surname and reference LW1

For Couples and Singles!

This should be an exciting workshop and we look forward to seeing you there!

The idea for this workshop, began when we noticed the amazing issues couples raised as the major annoyance between them and yet they are never surprising to us.

“He breathes on me before brushing his teeth”; “She says we’re going to buy bread and we have to visit every clothing store”; “He takes the bin out and puffs up his chest as if he’s done me a favour”; “She is always too tired for sex – How tiring can looking after one little baby be?” And so it goes.

What we see beneath all these seemingly insurmountable clashes is a very painful unmet need somewhere. At first sight the complaints are really self-defeating remarks and we experience an ‘ouch’ since we know the originating place is “notice me”, “hear me”, and “care about what matters to me”. However the form they are presented in sends the opposite message, which is simply “you irritate the hell out of me”.

How do we remedy this? Come to the workshop and see!
– Michael and Karina