

## An Organic Approach: Cultivate the Authentic You™ Lesson Two - Acceptance

*"For after all, the best thing one can do when it is raining is to let it rain."*  
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*"Take your life in your own hands, and what happens? A terrible thing: You have no one to blame."* -Erica Jong

You may have trouble with this concept - **acceptance**. No one wants accept things in their life they're unhappy with. Now, let's get this straight: To accept things in your life doesn't mean that those things have to stay that way, so just give up and make the best of it. No!

Acceptance is actually a starting point so that you **CAN** have those things be different and more to your liking. Yet, right now, in this present moment, it is what it is! Right? And, the more you **resist** the things you don't want, the more power they seem to have in your life. To continue to fight against the circumstances in your life is to play the role of the victim -

**Life has done this to me!**

**It's not fair!**

**I hate my life!**

**This doesn't feel very empowering, does it?**

Believe it or not, the imperfections and failures in life are good - they provide us with **contrast** to learn what we **DO** want. Instead of wallowing in the negative emotions of how terrible it all is, use the information to launch yourself into what would feel more joyful. Examine each of the things in your life that you dislike or are unhappy about - you'll find clues about how to make things different.

Here's an example. Let's say you hate your job - it's making your life miserable. What about the job do you hate? Is it what you're doing? Are you just working for the paycheck and it's not really your calling? Is the problem who you're working with? The pay? The hours? Do you throw out the baby with the bath water and quit? Or, is there some small change that could turn the situation around entirely? Sometimes, just a change of perspective can do the trick. You consider your boss to be very difficult to get along with and she's driving you to the point of quitting. You go in to deliver your resignation and when you do, she breaks down in tears and tells you that her child has cancer and she's trying to hold it all together at home, at work, at the hospital. How could that change how you feel about your situation? Compassion towards yourself and others often is key in accepting a situation.

And, speaking of compassion, most of us need a big boost of self-compassion and self-love. Dr. Michelle May says, *"If there's something you'd like to change about yourself or your life, do it **BECAUSE** you love yourself, not **SO** you'll love yourself."*

I see the need for this compassion in another familiar situation: Clients who come to me for help with weight management, thinking if they could just lose the weight, they would finally be happy. They hate that they are fat. They don't want to accept it - they want to be thin **NOW** and they're angry that they aren't. Once again, not to sound cold, but it is what it is. Ask, what can I learn about myself - what is this thing I don't like trying to tell me? If I'm overeating or eating when I'm not hungry, which is causing me to gain weight, I'm obviously trying to comfort myself about something that is wrong with my life.

Coach Kate Larsen reminds us that, *"Unhealthy behaviors are the tragic expression of unmet needs."* What needs are unmet for you? Once you begin to meet the needs, the weight will begin to come off.

**Acceptance is the first step to taking charge of your life, because you come to realize you're the one with the power.**

### Questions for Pondering and Journaling

1. Get quiet, ponder and list some things in your life or about yourself that you are having trouble accepting - things that you **dislike** about your life, things you are **unhappy** about, things you complain about.
2. What can you learn about yourself - what is this thing that you're unhappy about trying to tell you? What needs are unmet for you?
3. Ask yourself how these external dislikes affect who you are and how others feel about you. Even though you're overweight, are you still a loving wife/partner or mother? Does it affect how smart you are or how well you do your work? Do your friends and family still love you? How would the real, authentic **YOU** be different if your external circumstances changed? How would the real, authentic **YOU** be different if your external circumstances remained the same?
4. What ghosts from the past are attached to these things you dislike about you or your life? How are you projecting the outcome of these things into the future? If you can let go of the past and the future, what baby steps could you take to begin to make things different **today**?

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