



What Controls You?
...Understanding Your Self™

This information has been made available to evaluate the basic concepts of the “**What Controls You? ...Understanding Your Self™**” presentation. Due to the unscripted interaction between the presenter and students, it is only possible to give a general guideline of the direction this program can take. Much of the learning process involves using real life experiences provided by the attendees.

Program Outline

Have you ever heard that “our life is 10% of what happens to us, and 90% of how we react to it?” Then why do we spend most of our time trying to control the 10% of what happens to us instead of learning to understand how our nature reacts to life’s challenges?

We invest the majority of our time trying to control our outside world because we haven’t been educated about the importance of understanding how our inner world works. Most of our attention is placed on the physical world. However, it’s imperative to know that there is more to us than our physical body. To really understand what controls us, we must look into the non-physical aspects of human nature.

What controls us?

Our thoughts and feelings control the outcome of our lives. What we focus on becomes our reality. If we unknowingly give our attention to the wrong thoughts and feelings, especially those containing negativity, we become the victims of their nature. Unless we accurately understand the human condition, we will not be able to control ourselves in all situations. We are about to discuss what most people are unaware of. Because the content of this seminar is rarely addressed, this may be your only opportunity to learn about these principles that govern your life. So, please pay close attention and work hard to understand the information provided today.

Do you have what it takes?

At this point there’s only one thing you need in order to develop yourself to reach your full potential: the **will** to improve. Without that burning desire to be the very best you can be, you will not care enough to receive this information in a serious manner. And, unless you work very hard to use the principles we’ll discuss today, your life situation will not improve. I’ll provide you with the key, but you must unlock the door.

Let’s take a moment to think about the following questions:

- 1) How much time do you spend trying to control the events outside yourself?
- 2) What are the results of your efforts?

If you haven't learned to identify and eliminate your negative thoughts and feelings, then all other attempts to control your life will be fruitless. Understanding your "self" is the key.

(Audience Participation)

We'll need a volunteer to demonstrate this next principle.

What just happened inside when I asked for a volunteer? You probably said to yourself "not me, I'm not going to take the risk of looking foolish, or saying something stupid in front of all these people." Why do you feel this way? It's due to your fear of the unknown. Well, if you really think about it, all of life is an unknown. We have no control of what life throws at us. But, we do have control of how we react to what life gives us.

Now, let me show you what I'm talking about.

(Introduce the volunteer to the audience. Place the volunteer 10 feet away from the speaker.)

I'm going to throw this ball to you. I don't want you to catch it. (Throw the ball). Very good. Things went exactly as planned. How do you feel right now? (The volunteer should feel fine because he/she accomplished the task set before him/her.)

Now I'd like you to catch the ball. Keep in mind, it is very important to catch it this time. The entire game depends on you catching it. Your whole team is counting on you. If you do catch it, you'll be considered a hero and will receive the MVP of the game. Get the picture? Are you ready? (Deliberately throw the ball so it is not catch-able.) What happened? How are you feeling? What are your thoughts telling you right now? Are your emotions getting involved? Who are you blaming for not catching the ball?

The fact is...

The ball was not catch-able. That's it! Dismiss all those negative thoughts and feelings. They will get you nowhere. You had no control over the situation. If you gave your very best effort, that's all that can be expected. But now, you've got a major problem. Your thoughts will continue to take energy from you because of your misfortune. This is when you must become aware of how negative thoughts work and how to overcome them.

Have you ever heard the serenity prayer? It addresses this very concept and goes like this:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Let's take this one step at a time. 1) *God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change* - What can't I change? I can't change something that has already happened. That's it! It's impossible to change the past. 2) *The courage to change the things I can* - What can I change? I can change how I react to the situation. 3) *And the wisdom to know the difference* - How do I know the difference? The event is something that happens outside of yourself, your thoughts and feelings happen inside. You can make the choice to control the inner but not the outer.

The Laws of the Opposites.

The laws of the opposites are always in motion. For every thing, there is an opposite. For every action, there is an opposite reaction. Good/bad, right/wrong, left/right, up/down, positive/negative, etc. Let's take a look at how the laws of the opposites work in connection with our thoughts.

When we want something, there is automatically an association of not getting it. You cannot want without the fear of not getting it. This fear is due to a mental image in your mind of non-attainment. Unfortunately, many times we focus on the wrong side of our wish to have something. We visualize the outcome of being without, and how that would feel, instead of remaining focused on the achievement.

Let's see how this works:

Let's say I'm a little league pitcher. I throw a bad pitch into the dirt. I immediately get down on myself for the bad pitch. It's only one pitch of hundreds I will possibly throw in the game, but it could be the start of many more bad pitches to come if I focus on my misfortune. Thoughts now enter my mind wondering how I could not have controlled my actions. Let me ask you this: do we have complete control over every pitch we throw? Of course not! Major league pitchers can't even throw a perfect pitch every time. But what does our mind tell us? It tells us that we were not good enough in our attempt. Then, we follow that line of negative thinking instead of understanding that we're not perfect and these things will happen.

Look at it this way: Even when we do throw a perfect strike, there's a chance that the batter is going to hit the pitch. The batter doesn't even have to be very skillful. Sometimes he can even be lucky to hit the ball. What does that tell us? Once that ball leaves our hand, we have no control over the outcome of the event. In fact, sometimes we'll throw a terrible pitch way outside the strike zone and the batter will hit it. Is that in our control? No, so remember the outcome of the event is out of our control. Once the pitch is thrown, we must learn to accept the outcome and move forward with our task. Stop wanting the outcome to match your idea of how it should be.

What are wants?

Wants are a human being's personal wish to **seek pleasure** and/or **avoid pain**. So much emphasis is placed on 'wants' because they make us feel more alive and closer to immortality. This is the goal of every living thing - to continue to live. When events bring us closer to attaining our wants, we feel alive and well. When things don't go the way we've imagined they should, we feel closer to our demise. Life versus death, again, the laws of the opposites are in motion. It's the way our minds work. However, to know and understand this is our ticket to real freedom and a peaceful mind.

So where does the problem lie as it relates to our ability to be happy? When you seek to perform at your highest level, and something comes along that threatens your goal, you start to focus on the opposite of your wish to succeed. These thoughts and feelings have gone unnoticed our entire lives. But, knowing this is happening to us is the first step to overcoming it.

The next steps are: 1) To remember your true self as being separate from the negative thoughts about the event; 2) See the negative thoughts as self-defeating; 3) Then dismissing them from your mind as unwanted intruders. You see; negativity also strives to survive. Every time it gets you to act on its nature, it scores a big win for survival. Are you going to let negativity get away with that? Especially if you know its intention is to keep you captive in its clutches? Your challenge is to really see how this works.

Remember this:

When your idea of how life should go meets the way life actually goes, many times, conflict arises. Think about this. When you can't get what you want, you look for reasons why you didn't get it. Most of the time you'll blame other people and things outside yourself as the reason things didn't work out. Let me ask you; do you have any control over the actions of other people? Of course not! We can't even control how we act and feel, so how can we expect to control others?

Start controlling yourself by taking full responsibility for your thoughts and feelings. Don't play the blame game. People act the way they do because they are not aware of what they're doing; at the time they're doing it. They're completely unaware of their thoughts and feelings. As human beings, we can rise above this dilemma of unconsciousness. It's what separates us from all other living things on earth.

Goals are good!

Now, I'm not telling you not to set goals. Goals are absolutely an important part of success. But, when your goal is not accomplished, does it do any good to become negative? We are only given a certain amount of energy every day. Negative thoughts and feelings take energy. Learn to recognize negativity, stop it in its tracks, and save your energy for positive action.

Know Thyself!

Many people know the intricate workings of an automobile, or the complicated design of a computer, or the specialized field of engineering, but very few know how the human machine works. We know more about the physical world outside of us, than we do the psychological world within us. Doesn't that seem odd? How can we truly understand our lives if we do not seek to know the inner workings of our nature? In almost every major religion, the underlying message is to 'know thyself.' This is what we should seek first before attempting to understand anything else in life. If you get the right order of understanding, know thyself first; all else will fall into place effortlessly. Get to know the real you! Know thyself!

The Five Senses:

We currently operate under five senses. Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. All our life experiences are based in these five senses. We use these sensory tools to find the peace and happiness we desire. The only problem is that peace has to come from within, not through our senses which look outward for fulfillment. Our senses are like a double-edged sword. They can work for us or against us. There are very practical uses for our senses, but not when they are harbored by negativity.

There is an alternative.

We have another sense that is not evident to our physical body. It's the ability to observe our selves independent of the other five senses. Now, this is a very complicated concept to understand. Many people live their entire lives without even a clue as to its existence. However, it is very real and can be experienced with a sincere effort to understand it. I'll teach you how to use it in a moment. Because the odds are against you that you've ever experienced this before today, you shouldn't feel bad if you can't succeed on your first attempt. We'll work very hard together so that you can at least get a glimpse of its nature. **(Audience Participation)**

Dismiss all your thoughts. Be aware of yourself sitting in this room. Know that you're here. See yourself in your "minds eye" sitting here. You can close your eyes to prove that you aren't using your sense of sight. Can you see yourself? Can you feel yourself? Are you aware that you exist? Right here, right now in this room? If so, you are experiencing a higher level of consciousness. It's called living in the present moment. Most of our life is not spent in the present moment. But, isn't that where life actually happens? In the here and now? Can you change the past or predict the future? The only thing that is real is right here, right now. Our problem is; we rarely know that we exist. We follow our thoughts from moment to moment without a clue that we are not aware of ourselves all day long.

Have you ever had the experience of driving somewhere, and upon arrival, had no recollection of how you got there? You were lost in thought. That can be a very dangerous situation, especially if you're the driver. Can something that is not conscious produce positive results? Perhaps sometimes, but something that is conscious has a much better chance because it's acting from a level higher than our normal waking state.

Think of it this way:

There are 4 basic levels of consciousness.

- 1) **State of sleep – physical sleep**; you're pretty much unconscious to your situation
- 2) **State of so-called waking consciousness**; your 5 senses are working
- 3) **State of self-remembering**; a higher level of awareness of your situation exists
- 4) **State of objective consciousness**; you know and understand how all of life works and can accept anything that happens in life. And, you know; that's the only way life can go given the circumstances that surround it. Otherwise it would have been different.

By the way: There is a lesson to be learned in every single event that happens in life. Your challenge is to find the lesson, understand it, and grow from it.

Starting from the state of sleep, can you see that each level contains more awareness than the previous? Which state is most beneficial to you? Obviously objective-consciousness. However, it takes years of knowledge and practice to really understand the mindset of this state. Since you've only experienced the first two states for the majority of your life, the third state alone is hard to grasp. But this third state, self-remembering, is the way to overcome negative thoughts and emotions. It's the awareness of yourself that observes negativity and allows you to see it for what it is and dismiss it as unnecessary.

Let's go through another exercise to experience *self-remembering*. (Audience Participation)

Keep this in mind; if you are aware of yourself, no other thoughts can intrude on your awareness without your permission. Awareness is higher than your senses, just as an eagle flies above the crows. The higher your nature, the greater your potential.

Hold your hand out in front of you. Observe it. Look at it closely. Know that it is a part of your body, but not a part of the "you" that's observing it. Separate the two. Let yourself know that it is an extension of the body that lives in life, but separate from the higher part of you. What would happen if you lost your hand in an accident? Would that make you any less of a person? If you think it would, then you identify yourself as your body alone. Jim Abbott was born without a right hand. That didn't stop his ten-year career as a major league pitcher. He realized there is more to himself than his body, and he overcame all the mental obstacles that came with his physical disability.

Back to our exercise. Do you know 'what' is observing your hand right now? That's your higher nature. Human beings are the only species on earth that can observe themselves. But, very few know of this valuable tool to overcome their negative thoughts and feelings.

Our body is only a vehicle that is used to experience life. Our awareness is our true nature that observes what life is trying to show us. What observes is always higher than what is being observed. It's a universal law. You can prove it to yourself. Can your hand observe the inner you?

Mental pictures.

The mind thinks in pictures. Not words, not ideas, not concepts, not abstracts. In pictures. Hard to believe? Let me give you an example. For a moment, think of an apple. Okay, what came to mind? The words and letters a-p-p-l-e? No, of course not. A picture of an apple instantly popped into your mind. Now, think of the Sears Tower. What happened? A big, tall, tower picture pops into your mind. The reason these images are thrown on your mental canvas is because you don't think in words, you think in pictures.

Did you know that you have a mental picture of yourself? In fact, a very flattering picture as well, totally independent of how you actually are. This picture has thousands of excuses attached to it for times when your idea of yourself doesn't fit reality. So what happens when something comes along that is contrary to your image? You fight to keep that image alive and well. Even at the expense of what is true. We'll do almost anything to keep our imagined-self alive.

Here's a condensed version of a story once told by the great author, Guy Finley:

A cruise ship sailing across the Arctic Ocean suddenly collides with an iceberg. The ship is torn and tattered after a mighty jolt. The ship is sinking! A man in the captain's quarters awakens from the crash. Water is quickly filling the room. Looking into a mirror, he finds himself wearing the captain's uniform. Major concern for his life is aroused. Will he have to go down with the ship? That's what captains do! How did he get into this situation? After a moment or two, he realizes, he was only visiting the captain's quarters and decided to try on his uniform when the ship wrecked. He wasn't the captain after all. His concern immediately vanished because he then knew his life wasn't threatened. He would soon be put on a lifeboat and driven to safety.

Just as the man in our story became aware of his true nature, we must also observe our condition to see the real person behind the charade of our thoughts. It exists! But first we must strip away the mask of our false personality.

These pictures that portray us in such high regard must be challenged. By the way, something that truly is of a high esteem doesn't have to justify itself. It is, what it is. The actions justify the state. So strip away the pictures and what do you have? The real you. A being that cannot be threatened by anything that happens in life. Does that sound too good to be true? Don't take my word for it. You can prove it to yourself. Here's a suggestion: **be humble**. You don't need security when you're humble. You are everything you need to be at the moment, just as you are. Life will take care of the rest. Without judgment, let life flow.

Now, let's see how mental pictures can affect you subconsciously.

Let's say that when you were younger, your dog was hit by a car and killed. Did you know that the potential exists that whenever you hear a dog, or see a car, your mind associates it with the death of your dog? You may not even be aware it's happening. All of a sudden you'll feel sad and don't even know why. It's an automatic picture association. The more traumatic the experience, the more probable a recurring thought or feeling will emerge.

Or, maybe at the age of 10, you got sick eating Aunt Suzie's meatloaf. And, it was awful! It sat in your stomach like a brick. Now, every time you see or smell a meatloaf, your stomach becomes upset.

Let's take some situations from the audience and see if we can trace them back to specific events. (Audience Participation)

Your mind works in ways that you aren't even aware of. That's another reason why you must be aware of your negative thoughts and feelings and stop them in their tracks. Do not identify with impressions coming in from outer life. Observe them – then dismiss them for what they are. They're mental triggers that can activate harmful pictures from the past. The past doesn't belong in the present moment.

Eliminate negative emotions.

"Learn to control your emotions or they will control you." Edgar Martinez

Fear, worry, doubt, anxiety, anger, jealousy, hatred, and self-pity are just a few of the negative emotions we experience. Let's take them one at a time and see what causes them to make us feel bad when they appear. We'll also discuss some of the experiences we've had with these emotions and what we can do to overcome their presence in the future.

Fear – Fear is a mental response to a perceived danger or threat. Fear lives in our mental picture of the future, so it's important for us to remain in the present moment, out of harms way. Fear is most active when we don't understand our situation. Knowing fear is only a response to our lack of understanding at the moment becomes the first step in dismissing it as useless and unhelpful in our quest for a peaceful mind.

Worry – Worry is the concern of what will happen in the future. Ninety percent of what we worry about never happens, and, the other ten percent we have no control over. It's a mind game that revolves around the question "what if?" *"The absolute worst thing a receiver can do is worry about not catching the ball or about getting hit,"* said Jerry Rice, formerly of the San Francisco 49ers. Jerry knows that what you focus on becomes your reality.

Doubt – Doubt is caused by a low self-esteem. It's a feeling containing reasons why you can't do something. It mainly involves your own negative self-talk. What part of your nature doubts? Your negative thoughts and feelings are the guilty parties. It's their chance to become animated by posing as insecurity.

Anxiety – Anxiety is the feeling of getting something accomplished so that the uneasy rushing feeling will end. However, once anxiety is present, it builds and grows to continually produce more of itself. Have you ever heard yourself saying that you ‘can’t wait to do or get something, and then you’ll be happy?’ What happens after you get what you wanted? You then have something new to be anxious about. It’s a never-ending cycle. Like a cat chasing its tail.

Anger – Anger is most active when you’re playing the blame game. It’s your way of taking the responsibility off of yourself and focusing on things external to you. Anger keeps negativity going strong. When you respond to what anger tells you to do, you lose. It wins, and keeps itself alive by continuing the internal rage. You must notice this process happening within and control your actions.

Jealousy – Jealousy happens when you recognize strength in another that you secretly wished you had. You negate the efforts of another to help make yourself feel better. But wouldn’t it be more beneficial to become an ally with the victim of your jealousy? Perhaps some of their strength will be passed along to you in return for your support.

Hatred – Hatred is a very strong emotion that requires a lot of energy. It’s the response to something that is in opposition to your self-love. Hatred of another person involves the perception that they are against your best interests. Your reaction to this perception is negativity at its best.

Self-pity – When you feel sorry for yourself, your thoughts become the sympathetic advisor that try to console you. Don’t fall for this type of negativity. It’s a trap! If your thoughts do not bring you closer to peace and happiness through positive action, they are harming you and winning the battle for survival.

Negativity is a real living thing...but it needs you to survive.

You must treat negativity as a real living thing. But remember, its life is not possible without you. That’s how it gets life force - through your thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Think of the moment before an event happens. Was there something in ‘you’ that was negative about the event? Of course not! But when your thoughts and emotions processed all the information the event offered, and realizing that this is not what you want, negativity took over and started providing solutions to your new problems. These solutions are coming from the nature of the problem. Do not accept resolutions from the source of the crisis. You must receive the answers from a level higher than the cause. Instead of acting from the second level of consciousness (waking state), take it to the third level of consciousness and become aware of yourself. You’ll be able to see the situation for what it really is without the negative emotions attached. You’ll then be able to act in the most reasonable manner possible to handle the event.

What’s in the box? (Audience Participation)

(Holding a sealed box up for all to see, tell them there is something in the box that can have either a positive or negative effect on each and every one of them.) What do you think could be in the box? How would revealing the contents have an impact on your life? What do you think it could be? What are some of the alternatives your mind is considering? Are you thinking more along the lines of negativity? Whatever the case, you are definitely thinking of something.

Before we continue, I’m going to remind you to be conscious of your thoughts right now. Know what’s coming into your mind at this very moment. Identify those thoughts containing the emotional presence of anxiety, fear, worry, and doubt.

Now, STOP YOUR THOUGHTS! You should not have any concern over what you may think is in the box. The only fact that is evident, right now, is the presence of a box. And, only a box. Don’t speculate as to what it contains. Your thoughts will carry you away on a journey right out of the present moment. Let the right moment present the facts of the situation. Don’t make assumptions based on thoughts alone.

Would someone please come forward and without looking, reveal what is in the box through your sense of touch? It's a whistle! Uh oh, what's the whistle for? Catch that thought! Don't let it take you away. All the volunteer did was tell you he felt a whistle. Now, I'll show you the whistle. What does that mean? Nothing! Now, I'll blow the whistle. It shouldn't mean a thing! Now you've touched, seen and heard a whistle. That should be the extent of your experience. But for most of us it's not. We'll draw life experiences from the past to attach to the presence of the whistle. Don't do that! The lesson here is to let the moment unfold in its own natural way without any interference from your thoughts and feelings.

Now, let's be creative and put this exercise to work and produce a positive effect.

From this point on, use the sound of a whistle to stop your thoughts and feelings. You'll have many opportunities to hear a whistle in your life, especially if you like to watch sporting events; so, it can act as a good reminder to remember this exercise. When you hear a whistle, become aware of yourself in the moment. Let this be your trigger to remember yourself. Remember that you exist right now. Notice what is trying to enter and control your life. Stop these thoughts in their tracks by going quiet. Welcome yourself to the present moment. Focus your energy on the task at hand. See your goal and proceed with your newly found energy. And if you fail, give it another try. Be persistent!

Learn how to fail successfully.

Each failure can become a stepping stone to success. Think back when we were learning how to ride a bike. Sure, we can all ride a bike now, but there was a time when it seemed almost impossible. However, every time we fell off the bike, we learned a little more about balance and before we knew it, we were off riding with no hands on the handlebars. Our will to ride a bike overshadowed our fears of failing. We were younger then, and our fears were not as strong as they are now. But, through the years, our fears have become more real to us. Take the conscious risk of failing. That's what leads to success. Turn your failure into a source of wisdom and learn from your mistakes. It's nearly impossible to succeed without failing first. It's a necessary process. It's like Knute Rockne, Notre Dame's head coach in the 1920's always said: *"Build your weaknesses until they become your strengths."* He only lost 12 games in thirteen years.

Get into the zone.

Remember what it feels like when you're in the zone and everything is going your way? Your entire attitude is positive. Unfortunately, it's not always possible to naturally be in the zone. However, you can increase your chances by using the following technique.

In the movie "For Love of the Game," Kevin Costner portrayed a character named Billy Chapel, a 40-year-old pitcher for the Detroit Tigers. Chapel used an effective technique to get into the zone. He would say to himself *"Clear The Mechanism."* At that point, all of his senses would work together to accomplish his task at the moment - throwing the baseball into the center of the catcher's glove. This was his way of concentrating on his objective by blocking out all distractions surrounding him, including negative thoughts trying to enter his mind.

You can develop your own mental trigger. I use the phrase *"right here, right now"* to become aware of myself in the moment. We already know that if you are aware of your condition, negativity cannot enter without your permission. And why would you knowingly give anything harmful to your nature a chance to survive? It's all about being conscious in the moment, every moment. And, it's probably the most challenging thing you'll ever do.

Let's try an exercise to see negativity in action. (Audience Participation)

I'll be the negativity. My goal is to get you to think and feel negative. You are a person that is now aware of the motives of negativity. Let's see if you can control my efforts to take over your life.

- ➔ You're a loser!
- ➔ You are so stupid!
- ➔ What's wrong with you?

- ➔ You'll never be successful!
- ➔ It's not your fault; you just don't have the right people around to help you.
- ➔ Maybe if your parents had offered you more opportunities to learn, things would be better.
- ➔ Nobody understands you.
- ➔ Why should you work harder, nothing will change?
- ➔ It's always been the same story. One step forward, two steps back.
- ➔ Why should I listen to this instructor about my mental attitude?

Did you observe your responses to my negativity? Or, did you let the negativity tell you how to handle itself? You had two options. There was only one correct way to handle the situation. You should have had no problem identifying the negativity just now. After all, I made you aware that it was coming. That's my exact point! When you're aware of the situation, you can control it. However, it's much harder to be aware when you're caught up in the moment of an unwanted event. It will take some time to master. Early in the stages of self-awareness, you'll realize what happened after the fact. But, as time passes, you'll be able to catch yourself at the time of the occurrence.

Let's see how we can put negativity in its place. (Audience Participation)

Here's your chance to unload negativity on me. One at a time, shout them out with conviction. But, give me a chance to respond to your negativity. Let's see what my true nature has to say about your comments.

Remember this, anything that talks to you in the absence of goodness, is not operating from the part of the universe that is right and just. We do not have to accept this level of evil. We have a choice, and that choice should always be for what is good and true. Learn to separate what is good from what is evil. The only way to accomplish this is to become the silent observer in the moment an event occurs.

Paper Folding Exercise (Audience Participation)

Ask a volunteer to fold a piece of paper into three equal parts. After the task is completed, yell at the volunteer for not doing it correctly. It should have been folded the opposite way. Ask the person what they were thinking. How could they have done it wrong?

Ask the group to notice what just happened. Can you see how my expectations were different than the outcome? And, my negativity transferred right over to the participant. The volunteer also became negative. See how contagious negativity is?

Ask them to remember this: If someone treats you in a manner that is not in the best interest of what is good, you don't have to accept the treatment you're receiving. You must see the situation for what it really is. That doesn't mean to become disrespectful of the other person. Disrespect is also negativity. Perhaps it's just not obvious to the offender that their actions were not appropriate. You have the right not to become negative. You shouldn't have to accept negativity from anyone. Remain calm and observe what your thoughts are telling you to do. Stay in the present moment and be better than the other person by stopping the negativity from spreading any further. Then, you are in control of your own life.

Allow me to make a suggestion:

The next time an event comes along that challenges your 'right' state of mind, here's what to do: observe it, smile, congratulate the negativity for it's bold attempts to capture you, and then say goodbye with your refusal to cooperate with it's suggestions. Then, move on to the next moment by letting your mind go silent. At first it will not let you dismiss it so easily. It'll put up a fight and try numerous ways to attract your attention. Laugh at it; say 'nice try' and move on. It becomes easier as time goes by. The more you identify negativity, the more frequent you become conscious of the moment. And soon you'll learn what it means to live in objective consciousness. That's where life really happens! And it happens the only way it can under the circumstances that surround it. Otherwise it would be different. **Stop trying to control life, instead, control your reaction to it.**

A real life example:

Just recently, my family and I drove up to Door County in northern Wisconsin for a five-day vacation. On the second day, I turned into the hotel parking lot and the car stopped dead in its tracks. Thinking that a tire went flat, I stepped out of the car to diagnose the problem. To my surprise, the left front wheel was almost parallel to the ground. The car had broken an upper ball joint. It would take a qualified mechanic and several hundred dollars to repair. What were my options? I could choose to let this setback ruin my entire vacation, or, I could find a way to make this potentially negative experience a positive one.

I chose to look for the positive in this event. Here's what I found. Can you imagine what could have happened if the wheel would have broken with my entire family in it traveling at 55 miles per hour? We could have been killed. This was a blessing in disguise. Sure it would take some effort to find a mechanic in an unfamiliar town to fix the problem, but it was a small price to pay considering the alternative. My family was safe from harm's way. I was overjoyed with thanks for my car breaking down when it did.

We can always find a positive outcome in a negative situation. It only takes the will to find it. The lessons are available everyday. Seek to find them and you'll put negativity in its proper place.

Let's take some negative experiences from the audience and try to find the hidden lessons. (Audience Participation)

Remember, it's a lot easier to find the lesson after the fact. The key is to search for it during the experience. As time goes by, you'll become more efficient in this task.

The importance of teamwork:

Learning the psychology of human behavior with friends and family has great benefits. The major advantages are in the positive reinforcement and constant reminders that your peers can provide. It's much easier to catch negativity in action through group awareness than by yourself. Observing others' actions is also an important part of the learning process. The more experiences you have with awareness, the more comprehensive your understanding will be. If your social circle makes a dedicated commitment help each other become more aware of their negative thoughts and feelings, the results are exponentially more positive. Constant reminders must be given to help make this understanding part of your nature. Perfect practice makes perfect performance.

Final Observation:

Now, listen to what your mind is saying about this information. Is it positive? If so, you know there lurks a negative thought in the immediate area. It's going to try to win. Is your true nature going to let it? Or, will you succeed in turning away this unwanted intruder. Who will be closer to sustaining its life? You or the negative thought? That's up to you.

So, now you have a choice. Choose in favor of what is good for your true nature and live your life the way it was intended. Develop your awareness of your condition and experience peace and contentment within. Then, your goals and dreams are within reach because you'll be in control of your life. Be aware! Right here, right now! Know thyself!

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