

Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Handling Frustration

Dealing with frustration

Life is full of frustrations. From the minor irritations of losing your car keys to the major anxieties of continued failure towards a goal, frustration is not a pleasant emotion in any magnitude. Because of the unpleasantness of this emotion, people will often avoid anything that might lead to it. Unfortunately, many of the things we truly want to experience such as triumph, joy, victory and purpose require a great deal of frustration. Being able to manage frustration allows us to remain happy and positive even in trying circumstances.

In order to successfully manage frustration, you need to first understand what causes it. Frustration is simply caused whenever the results you are experiencing do not seem to fit the effort and action you are applying. Usually frustration is caused by a narrow focus on a problem that isn't resolving itself as you had hoped. This is a very simple concept, but it is an important step to solving frustrating problems.

Frustration is Energy Consuming

Our energy as human beings is our primary currency we use to do anything. Physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energies all fuel discipline, creativity, courage and motivation. Anthony Robbins includes energy as the first key to success in any area of life. Stress in excessive doses is a negative emotional state that weakens the immune system and raises blood pressure is the direct result from a lack of energy. When we run out of energy we become useless.

Frustrating problems are incredibly energy consuming. Because these problems consume our energy in such great quantities, we need to be extremely careful that we don't try to keep running with an empty energy reserve. When this happens we burnout and require a long time to recover. The initial reaction of most people is to work harder when they encounter frustration. Although the intention to work harder makes sense, it often results in trying to spend more energy than we have available.

Why are frustrating problems more energy consuming than normal tasks? The answer to this is relatively simple. Because your action is not producing the results you expect, your brain naturally goes into full gear, rapidly consuming mental energy to solve the problem at hand. In this time it is very easy to run out of energy. When your energy stores are depleted this is when you become irritable, tired, stressed and sometimes even angry.

To get a little perspective on your issue, try broadening your focus from your current problem outwards. Try thinking about how the problem looks when you view it from a few weeks from now, a year, ten years or your lifetime?

Go outside and look up at the sky. Viewing the incredible expanse of space and time will ultimately make your problems look very small indeed.

Getting perspective when you are frustrated isn't a particularly difficult practice; the difficulty is in remembering to do it. It will be difficult to do this at first, but after diligent practice it will become a habit and happen automatically.

Nobody likes to feel frustrated. Unfortunately, frustrations are part of life. Learn to manage your frustrations so they don't leave you stressed, burned-out or depressed. Take breaks from your frustrations to recover your mental and creative energies. Reward your actions, not just your results and remember to gain a little perspective when you begin to feel overwhelmed. Don't let your frustrations prevent you from setting goals and living your life to the maximum.

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