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Be Gentle On Yourself

John C. Kimbrough

Individuals who want to bring about any kind of change in their life face a number of challenges.

First, they may have to deal with the repercussions of awakening to the fact that they should or have to make a change.

We can sometimes be overwhelmed when we are faced with the fact that we are not perfect people or that we have to put forth some effort to make a change.

Another is that they may not be clear about how they should change or what will be the best way to facilitate that change.

But even after we decide how we want to change and have made some kind of enthusiastic and sincere commitment and effort to it, we will face two other challenges.

One will be that there may be a number of forces in our environment that will work against us making any change.

The other is that we will at times have moments, or hours, or even days and weeks of weaknesses in our new practice.

We may even experience what is known in 12 step programs as "backsliding", where we fall back into the old actions or behaviors that we are trying to overcome.

We can think of this tendency to backslide as being an internal force that works against our progress in our new way of living or path of practice.

So, how do we handle these two things?

As far as our environment, we may, if we are financially able and emotionally and mentally focused and strong enough, leave the present environment and the people in it.

We may be ridiculed in making such a move, so we need to be sure that it is in our best interest at the present and that the obstacles that are being thrown up to our new way or path of practice are serious and ongoing.

We need to make some effort to talk with those people in our family or environment so they will understand how we feel and what it is we are trying to bring into our lives and achieve.

We need to understand that any kind of habitual ridiculing or tendency to make fun of us is a form of abuse.

This is just another challenge that we will come upon and have to deal with when we are engaged in any process of change.

The second challenge will be dealing with tendencies, thoughts and feelings that lead us to backslide.

First of all, we need to understand and remember that the change we are trying to bring about in our lives may be tremendously challenging and it may be unreasonable for us to make such a change with no problems or a tendency to backslide.

If we backslide once and a while and the depth of our backsliding is not so strong or intense, there may not be any reason to become too hard on ourselves.

If we do, all we are doing is just bringing more stress and discomfort to ourselves and on ourself.

In making any change, we can be gentle on ourself in two ways.

One is trying to get away from those environments and people that ridicule, abuse or stand in the way of our new interests and path in life.

The second is to not be too hard on ourselves when we encounter tendencies and experiences where we backslide or fall back into old ways of thinking, speaking, or acting and behaving.

If we are sincere and honest in what it is we want to achieve, we will make progress.

It will take some time, but one thing that life, stopping bad habits within ourselves and learning and working new paths of living, such as Yoga or Buddhism teach us, is that there will always be a new awakening or challenge to face and deal with.

John teaches Yoga, Buddhism and English and lives in Bangkok, Thailand. He can be reached at johnckimbrough@yahoo.com