



Compassion

Peace

Inspiration

MyQuest

By Daniel Labbe

Today's Meditation - We humans are created with an amazing gift: an internal compass. This compass is continually pointing to the things - hang-ups, attachments, fears - that keep us from love. Unfortunately, we aren't raised to see this compass as the incredible tool that it is, ~~instead~~ Instead, many of us see it as an annoyance to be extinguished.

So what exactly is this compass? Our emotions, of course. How do our emotions point us to those things that keep us from love? To answer this let's take a quick look at the nature of emotions.

In the 1960's a man by the name of Albert Ellis figured out that our emotions are not a product of the things that happen to us. Instead, our emotions are the product of our interpretation of the things we experience. For example, if you saw a pit-bull running toward you it is ~~reasonable~~ ^{reasonable} to say you would experience fear. But what if in the same situation you recognized that the dog was your own lovable pet? Same event, different emotion, and it would all be due to your interpretation. Through the pioneering work of Albert Ellis and other cognitive behavioralists like Martin Seligman a new way of working with emotions was born. Eventually it came to be called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, or CBT.

The heart of CBT is this - it is our thoughts that create our experience of life, not events. The implications

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of this truth cannot be underestimated.

Now let's say that we have a goal to live with a powerful sense of peace, love, and joy. I mean, isn't everything we do just an effort to gain one of these states? We could say that the effort to avoid pain is an effort to gain peace. In the light of what we know about CBT and how emotions work, the real obstacle to living a life of peace, love, and joy is our own minds.

Before we move on, let's clarify one point. Of course it is unreasonable to ~~hope to~~ think that we can avoid all pain and all uncomfortable emotions, nor would we want to. After all, doesn't anger often show us the problems that need to be addressed? This is why I ~~first~~ started this meditation with the ideal of love. Love ~~can~~ can exist even when there is anger, sadness, grief, loneliness, or pain (so can peace and joy, ~~is~~ but that's for another meditation). We always have the choice to respond to life from a place of love.

This is how our emotions can help us identify those things within ourselves that keep us from love.

So often when we get angry we blame some source outside ourselves then we go on a mission to change ~~the~~ the situation in order to quell our anger. But what about another way of dealing with life? What if when we ~~are~~ are first notified by our anger that a possible problem exists, we thank our anger for alerting us, let it go, and choose now to respond ~~with~~ with love and

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Compassion? How much more effective would we be then? How much more would we enjoy life?

Now here is how our emotions act like a compass. If we can't respond with love, in the light of what we know about CBT, then the reason isn't the fault of any source outside ourselves. Rather, we are held back from love by our own hang-ups, misconceptions, selfish desires, attachments, and fears. So now when we find that love is not possible, that we are stuck in anger or sadness or ambition, we can use whatever emotion that is present as a compass ~~point~~ that guides our attention to an issue within ourselves.

Here's an example: Say a friend of ^{mine} is always late. Whenever we make plans he is sure to be late and usually his excuse is something like, "Oh, I'm sorry, I slept in late." One night we have plans to go to a movie I've been dying to see, but of course, he's late and we miss the movie. I am understandably angry. But once the anger has alerted me of the problem I just can't stop thinking about it. I'm furious. I've had enough. Who does he think he is? Doesn't he know how disrespectful that is? Does he think he can just do whatever he wants? When I talk to my friend about the issue I lose my temper and yell at him.

In this situation the initial anger was helpful in ~~pointing~~ telling me that I had an issue to address. But the intensity of my anger and my inability to deal with the issue from a place of love (for I have chosen love as my ideal response) is a signal that there is an issue within myself.

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Daniel Labbe
1 Administration Rd
Bridgewater, MA 02324

Core Principles: Intention, Self-worth, The Freedom to Choose, Personal Responsibility, Forgiveness, Rational Thinking (CBT), Mindfulness, and Compassion. I believe these eight principles form a solid foundation and outline a great way to achieve Personal Transformation. I know these are what helped me overcome so many of my issues and become the person I am today.

The Basics will be more like a course, a workbook full of exercises, tips, and practical explanations of the principles and how they directly apply to our lives.

I have the rough draft finished, and I am now working on revisions. I hope to have a typed manuscript ready by early 2022.

~~My~~ My hope is to get it published and available to inmates for no cost or very little cost. This will require some financial aid from foundations or other interested parties.

I plan on having the book reviewed by psychologists and other relevant professionals. If you think you can help in any way or know someone who can, please contact me.

That's all for now - Happy Questing!

Today's Quote - "What love we've given, we'll have forever; what love we failed to give will be lost for all eternity." Leo Buscaglia