

Living with "If Onlys"

Sometimes I find myself wondering how things would have turned out if only I would have acted differently or been able to cope with what life sent my way. This can be a slippery slope if I am not careful.

First off I must recognize that I am not in control of other people. The only responsibility I can own is for my own actions. If I start questioning "what if so & so would have done this or that" I am wasting time and beginning to wallow and lean towards self pity. Let me share with you from my own experience. I feel I can do so after a very dear friend graciously shared her own experience with me. It is not often an easy thing to do to allow ourselves to be transparent before others but it can be helpful for all.

I was out of prison, for the third time! Life seemed so overwhelming I was just freaked out. I was close to two people, one the best friend I ever had, or one of two, his name was Jack. His wife was terminal with cancer and was in rough shape. I loved and respected her. I had a ex-common law wife who was on me to take my oldestboy for a few weeks, but I was couch surfing at my friends place. Money was an issue and added to that when I went to get my license i paid out over six hundred only to be notified a month later in the mail my license was being denied because of past child support. Do you get the picture? Add to that the fact I am a severe alcoholic, prideful to a fault and unable to relate my weakness to anyone.

Now if I start with the "if only I would of got my license" or "if only The ex would of eased up" that kind of non-sense, I would be spinning my wheels and feeling sorry for my self. The past belongs in the past, I am not in control (thank God!) and my only responsibility is to examine myself, my actions and were I went wrong, then leave it behind me. Here are a couple of profitable "If onlys".

If I would of recognized that often this life we need the help of others to deal with the hard stuff, no shame in that. So now I find I can and do open up about my weaknesses, like now. :) Another profitable "if only" for me is to realize at times I will have to tell people I care about "No, I cannot do what you wish". Basically the big "if only" for me is being open to others and not holding it all in until I turn to booze and numbness.

I simply went wrong by caring to much about how I looked to others, which turned out to be such a joke, when how I looked to others in the end was a hopeless, useless drunk!

So we can profit from thinking about "if only", filing away the info and moving on, being prepared to put into practice our "if only" the very next time circumstances present themselves.

These days I only listen to country, bluegrass, Galic folk and Gospel, but Black Sabath used to have a song "You Just Got To Be Real"

Let us all be real with ourselves and all we come into contact with. The only shame in not asking for help when we need it is what is sure to follow when we don't!

russ