



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Anchors Away

A recent television advertisement focused on the benefits of a product designed to enhance the performance of a car's engine. It featured a car driving down a highway dragging (among other things) a massive anchor. Sparks flew from beneath the anchor as the car struggled to gain a little speed. It looked like a nice car, but obviously, something was holding it back.

The image of the struggling car is not that far removed from the image many of us project as we enter this new year. We have a life to live, paths to explore, goals to achieve, and good to accomplish. We are strong, competent, capable, energetic, gifted with skills and abilities, and eager to use them. We enter the new year with the best of intentions ("resolutions", we call them), yet struggle to make consistent, meaningful progress. We tire, lose focus, and become discouraged. It's almost like we're ... dragging an anchor.

What's going on here? How can great intentions digress into disappointments?

While there are many external challenges that can impede or even

derail our best intentions, some of the most potent challenges to our progress come from within ourselves. Yes, from within! Let's consider four of the more common ways we hinder our own growth.

1. **Fear** - Fear is a useful emotion designed to activate us and protect our survival. Certainly, there is much in this world that is dangerous and worthy of appropriate fear. Yet, as with any good thing, when fear grows to excess, it becomes a handicap, robbing us of our confidence. Fearing change, even healthy change, can strangle the potential out of any positive intention, starving it of the freedom and focus it needs to flourish and grow.

2. **Guilt** - Guilt feelings, while generally accepted as a productive part of life, are actually destructive and disempowering. They attack our sense of value, significance, and strength, leaving us without the power or motivation to change. However, by replacing guilt feelings with constructive sorrow focused on meaningful change, we not only put ourselves on a positive path of improvement, but we also reinforce the strength we need to walk it.

3. **Regrets** ("if onlys") - Regrets come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and we all have lived long enough to have history we can regret. But the more time and energy we spend living in our regrets, the more inclined we are to see ourselves as stuck, without the hope of change. We allow our past to declare our present "too big to change", robbing our future of its potential.

4. **Failure to Forgive** - When we become too "justice"-bound, seeking revenge, repayment, or recognition for injury done to us, we shackle ourselves to the past with bonds of resentment and bitterness. We live life focused on the past injustice, shaping our identity around it and pouring our energy to it. Sadly, there isn't enough energy or desire left to empower improvement or growth.

Forgiveness offers us a different path. By side-stepping justice, our choice to forgive releases us from the past as we cancel the debt owed to us. We are free, then, to take fresh steps toward health and growth without being confined by the past.

It's a new year, full of potential and promise. Let's not step on our own feet as we stride into it!



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work.

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Spirituality and Anchors

Let's recall - anchors can either keep us stable and secure, or they can hold us back. It all depends on whether they are working for us or against us. While there are many anchors within and around us that inhibit our growth, there are also powerful spiritual anchors within the Christian faith that provide us with an unshakable foundation of truth, should we choose to embrace them. They are called the promises of God.

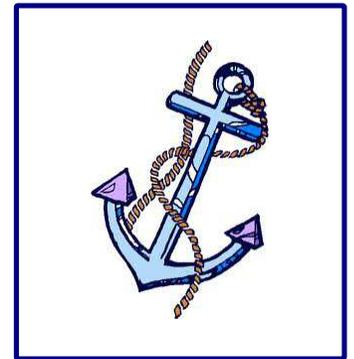
Throughout Scripture, our Creator God promises:

- 1) ... that nothing can separate us from His love (not even our own mess-ups).
- 2) ... that He will never give us a burden or challenge that is more than we (along with Him) can bear.
- 3) ... that He is in control and is working our His plan for us even when chaos seems to reign.
- 4) ... that He will never leave us or forsake us.
- 5) ... that He will use whatever happens to benefit us in the long run.

And these are only a small sampling of His promises.

What's fascinating is that the more we lay claim to these spiritual truth anchors, the more we are released from the inner emotional anchors that hold us back. Clearly, healthy spirituality has a large positive impact on healthy living.

Remember - truth in ... anchors away!



"Every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future."

- Oscar Wilde

"All change is not growth, as all movement is not forward."

- Ellen Glasgow