



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

Published monthly by
Free to Be
Life Coaching
and
John Rottschaefer PhD
Certified Life Coach
Volume 48 - Dec 2009

Leftovers ... Again

Holiday cooking and leftovers ... they seem to go hand in hand. We create a great meal, organize a potluck, thoroughly enjoy a home party buffet, and then package the leftovers for later consideration. Some of us enjoy revisiting the food the next day (or week), while others of us avoid it at all cost. Whatever our course, the leftovers stay in place until we decide what to do with them

And so it is with life. For the past eleven months, we have had the privilege of feasting on the experiences and opportunities of the year 2009. Some have been enjoyable, some challenging. As the year draws to a close, we look forward to next year, curious about what it will bring, perhaps even eager to set goals, make resolutions, and celebrate a new start.

But what about the leftovers from this past year? What leftovers? Let's consider two types.

1) Unmet goals - It's a rare person who enters the new year knowing that all their goals for the previous year were met. Many of us are all too aware that many of our goals, whether personal,

professional, or relational, have only been partially accomplished. While this certainly need not be a disaster, it does raise a few questions. Why wasn't a particular goal completed? Was it too ambitious, too difficult, too unrealistic? Did we get distracted and lose sight of the goal? Were we really not that serious about the goal or committed to achieving it in the first place? Was it really not as important to us as we had initially thought? Was it really *our* goal, or was it someone else's goal for us?

It's good to assess the status of our unmet goals so we can decide what to do with them. Are they still significant enough to draw our focused energies? If so, let's restate them as a new goal for the coming year. If not, let's respectfully retire them and leave them behind.

2) Unfinished business - Unlike unmet goals that we want to achieve, unfinished business refers to those things we should have taken care of during the past year but avoided because they make us uncomfortable. Perhaps it's a needed physical examination or a dental checkup. It might be a financial assessment with a newly established budget. It may even be a legal settlement or the reassessment of our current path of

employment. Often, unfinished business involves our relationships and our emotional connections with others. The unfinished business may be a conflict that lingers, needing to be resolved. It may be a statement of love waiting to be expressed. It may be an apology long overdue, or forgiveness freely given. It may be the release of lingering emotional toxins such as anger, bitterness, and resentment that threaten to infect the new year.

Whatever the unfinished business, it will take courage to identify and address it. Remember, it wasn't avoided by accident, so it will take a conscious, committed decision to deal with it. Sadly, our natural fear and pride work against us, encouraging our avoidance and justifying our carry-along leftovers. But dragging leftovers into the new year is like entering the new year with pockets full of sand. They just get in our way, weigh us down, and little by little sap our strength.

Read on as we consider the cost of carrying the leftovers of this year into next year. Then, let's celebrate the freedom we can experience through intentional, courageous conversations with our self and those around us.



Pause with Purpose

Volume 48 - Dec 2009

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.

You can contact me at:
John Rottschafer, PhD
Free to Be Life Coaching
12317 Verlin Dr
Gowen, MI 49326

phone - (616) 450-4615
e-mail -
john@freetobelife coaching.com
www.freetobelife coaching.com



If you do not wish to receive this letter, please share this request at the contacts above and your name will be removed from the mailing list.

Copyright 2009 by John Rottschafer Ph.D.
and Free to Be Life Coaching.
Reprint permitted with source information included.

Excess Baggage Surcharge

It's easy to fill our leftover bag. Avoid ... deny ... put off ... ignore ... and the next thing we know, we're hauling around a bag with noticeable weight. Not that it's not too heavy for us to carry. We're strong, and we even get used to carrying it. But it takes energy - energy we could otherwise use to learn and earn, to share and serve, to love and live.

There's always the hope that the leftovers will just dissolve and disappear forever. But, in truth, they are more likely to turn sour and create an odor that's hard to ignore. They quickly disrupt our thoughts, alter our emotions, and even influence our actions.

So what can we do about this? First, let's commit to addressing future issues, whether they be challenging goals or relationship concerns, as we encounter them. Second, let's open our bag, remove it's contents one by one, and take care of our unfinished business.

It takes courage, humility, and commitment to focus on what we would rather ignore, and to do the hard work of talking, forgiving, apologizing, and releasing. It is, however, worth the effort, because it allows us once again to experience what it's like to live each day free and unencumbered by "yesterday's stuff".

What's in your bag?



"Life is the acceptance of responsibilities or their evasion; it is a business of meeting obligations or avoiding them. To every man the choice is offered, and by the manner of his choosing you may fairly measure him."

-Ben Ames Williams