



# Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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## The Power of Focus

It was yet another exciting episode of Star Trek. The starship Enterprise had encountered an alien spacecraft with seemingly hostile intentions. Somehow, the two vessels began firing at each other, but with surprising results. Each time the alien craft was struck by a blast from the Enterprise, it grew in size and power. The more focused the attack, the stronger the target became. Finally, in a desperate attempt to survive, the Enterprise halted its attack. Surprisingly, the alien craft did the same. Eventually, each disregarded the other and continued on their respective journeys.

In its own way, this science fiction thriller conveyed one of life's basic truths - what we focus on, we empower. This truth highlights the ability of our mind to impact our attitudes, our actions, and our emotions. What we focus on, we make personally important. What we make important, we make powerful.

Most of us are familiar with how this truth works. Mothers who have experienced natural childbirth assisted by the LaMaze Method know the benefit of focusing away from the "discomfort" of labor. Parents with children who experience a bump or a scrape know the benefits of drawing a

child's attention away from the injury.

Given the power of our focus, let's consider a few areas where it can clearly impact the quality of our life.

### 1. Have or Have Not -

In a society where much is available, we have the choice to focus on how much we have, or on what we want but don't have. We can experience contentment wrapped in thankfulness for how we have been blessed, or disappointment and bitterness because we have certain desires that have not been met. The choice is ours.

### 2. Love or Hurt -

In all relationships, there is the high likelihood that we will experience both love and hurt. The closer the relationship, the richer the love and the more painful the hurt. The question is, "What do we choose to focus on?" Sadly, in an abusive or dangerous relationship, we may need to keep the hurt (or at least its strong potential) in mind in order to stay safe. But in our "normal" relationships, we are free to focus on forgiveness and love, and in doing so, strengthen the heart of the relationship. Otherwise, we can choose to hold grudges, build up walls, and effectively strangle the life out of the relationship. The choice is ours.

### 3. Growth or Goals -

Goal setting is a valuable tool for success. However, the way we work toward our goals makes a big difference is how we experience them. If we focus on gradual gains, identifying and celebrating each step toward our identified goal, we not only make progress, but also grow in self confidence and in our motivation to keep moving forward. If we focus solely on the ultimate goal, we rob ourselves of the joy of progress. The label of "failure" awaits us if we fall short, and success brings with it more relief than joy. The choice is ours.

### 4. Worry or Trust -

Given the limited range of our actual control, we can choose either to focus on and worry about what we cannot control, or to live in confident expectation by focusing on and trusting the One who controls the future. The choice is ours.

All in all, we can choose to be an optimist or a pessimist, to focus on the good or focus on the bad. We can direct our energy toward what is uplifting, or what brings us down. We can allow our values to direct our focus, or we can get lost in the chaos of distraction. The choice is ours.

Let's choose wisely.



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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 Focus

For many, living an honorable and moral life means trying to limit the amount of personal sin we engage in. We work to stay aware of our weakness and vigilant of temptations around us.

Isn't it interesting how hard we focus on the very thing we seek to reduce in our life? We focus on it, and thereby we empower it. What a nasty trick!

For a moment, consider what we would do if there was no longer any sin. How would we act if the fear of sin was removed? What would direct our behavior and attitudes?

In the Bible, the author of Hebrews states that Jesus appeared "... once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26). Now sin still exists. We're all living proof of that. But what if Christ came to do away with the power of sin and the role it has played in the lives of His people? What if He came to do away with sin as the primary focus that defines a moral life? How would we know what to do?

Suggestion - Let's take God at His word and remove the avoidance of sin as the primary compass for our life. Let's replace it with something positive we can passionately focus on - praising, pleasing, thanking and glorifying our God!

This sounds like a lot more fun, and we might just discover the love relationship behind moral living.



"... whatever is true,  
whatever is noble,  
whatever is right,  
whatever is pure,  
whatever is lovely,  
whatever is admirable  
- if anything is  
excellent or  
praiseworthy - think  
about such things."  
- The Bible,  
Phillipians 4:8