



BE the CHANGE

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WHINING

We all whine in different ways.

From outright negative drooling, to diatribes and delusional rants, through living under the dark clouds of isolation and “but you don’t understand, I’m unique, life just doesn’t work for me” to simply be unwilling to accept current circumstances in our life. That’s a favorite form of negativity for me. I get frightened and I start to think I’m special, unique, different and I allow my mind’s fantasies to take over, and go for a romp through the fields of *the grass is always greener*, when life does not give me what I want when I want it.

Of course, there’s simply whyning. Always asking myself why, why why... why this, why that, you know, whyning. I absolutely encourage asking why, to determine personal motivation behind our choices and actions, but endless questioning about why things happened in the past or why they are happening now, well, whyning seems to be a bottomless pit. Abort the dive!

I recently had the privilege of being hosted at a coaching client’s home and leading a weekend workshop called “Living Life on Purpose” in her lovely city. When we weren’t in the workshop my client and her partner and I enjoyed many fine home-cooked meals and stimulating conversation. The client’s partner was a brilliant and talented individual, who seemed incapable of stringing together two sentences without sarcasm or negative comment.

I decided to challenge the man over tea and dessert on our last evening together. “Would you be open to an observation I have made about you, sir?”

“Yes. But please be gentle!”

“I am curious, have you ever noticed that almost everything you say is negative?”

“What?”

“Almost everything you say is negative.”

“Well! Wit and sarcasm... a sign of intelligence.” He adjusted his glasses.

“Would you be open to trying something,” I asked.

“Why not?”

“I wonder if you could attempt to make no more than seven negative or sarcastic comments a day. For one month, just seven a day. No more.” I challenged the man.

“I’d be mute by breakfast.”

“Just try it, notice what you observe about yourself. What can you lose? Try it!” He smiled and reluctantly agreed after more conversation and a few well-placed sarcastic jabs. We shook hands. My hostess thanked me profusely as she drove me to the airport after dinner.

I can tell you that the man kept his commitment to the life-affirming practice I challenged him with, and because of his new awareness he has changed for the positive.

In launching *Be the Change* I had challenged myself to undertake any pertinent challenge that I gave to my clients (or their spouses). I’m a somewhat brooding, heart-scorched, drama-loving, dark-night, triple-scorpio-moon artistic type, so negativity is pertinent to me.

The life-affirming practice... Speak seven or less negative/sarcastic comments a day for one month.

According to my clients, I’m a useful coach but after observing and engaging myself in the challenge that I gave to my client’s husband, Wow! I need to cultivate a lighter perspective. So, I know two guys who are reducing their particular form of whyning.

Where you at?