



Who's in Control Here?

Are our lives controlled by external forces or do we make the final decisions as to how to act? Is it a combination of both? Moving our locus of control from "out there" to "in here" can make all the difference in what we accomplish and how we feel.

At the very first session I had with my therapist oh so many years ago, the opening question out of my mouth was, "How long will this take?"

Being ever the smart aleck, he replied, "About 50 minutes."

"No," I responded. "How long will it take until I am fixed; you know, healed; normal?"

I am not alone when it comes to asking that question. One of the first items we want checked off our "to do list of change" is a date specific that we can mark on our calendar alerting us to the fact that — voila — goal achieved! Like a prisoner sentenced to hard labor, we want to know how long until we are free.

From a logical point of view, the process of getting from "here" to "there" is actually pretty exhilarating.

We find out about ourselves. We discover what we're capable of doing. Others compliment and admire us. Life is new; every sunrise provides the option for multiple new adventures, unwrapping more of whom we really are. It would seem that with so much to gain, we would rather linger luxuriously in the progression instead of charge hell-bent for leather to the other side.

So, what's with the big rush?

I'm not naïve, I am more than aware that it takes work and is, at times, prickly; yet most of our goal-driven society touts reflexively, "anything worth having is worth working for." If I want a good marriage, I will work for it. Raising healthy, happy children is certainly an effort at times. Advancing my career and maintaining

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my house require expending resources. Certainly the best ME possible is a worthy objective, and therefore stands to reason that it also is worth the elbow grease necessary to achieve it.

We might not always be keen on it, but we are not a people afraid of hard work.

So that cannot be the reason why the sprint to the finish line. I believe we are in such a hurry to "get there" because we are terrified of waking up with the realization that we have "lost our motivation."

Like the despondent lover, we plead, "Don't go; please stay. I'll be good. What will happen to me if you leave?" If we can arrive at the altar before being jilted by our fickle paramour, everything will be OK.

Being a student of change (aren't we all?), I am enthralled by our choice of words.

After all, words reflect our

thoughts. Thoughts determine actions. Watch what you say, it could become your life. Therefore, when we say, “I’ve lost my motivation,” it presupposes that motivation is some foreign entity residing in a distant land. Yet, we are the source of our motivation. We gin it up, and we turn it off. We control it; no one else does. Others can inspire us, coerce us, or force us — but motivate? Not so much. (Ever try and “motivate” a lazy teen? Get my point?)

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Sure, “stuff” happens, and luck (or fate) can be players. Yet, they are bit parts. I own my spotlight. Once I accept that, the only thing in my way is me.