

"THE MASTER DECISION"
Part II of II
'Eliminating Negative Emotions'

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Last week, I spoke about making "The Master Decision," which is just accepting responsibility for your life and everything in it. Our attitudes toward self-responsibility is one of the most important statements you can make about yourself and the kind of person you are. Everyone can be located somewhere on a scale from high acceptance of responsibility, all the way down to low acceptance of responsibility, or "irresponsibility."

Negative emotions are the "robber" emotions of life, and virtually all of the problems of our lives are rooted in negative emotions of one kind or another. They are absolutely useless and unnatural in the lives of human beings. No one is born with negative emotions. Every negative emotion that we experience as adults, we had to LEARN as a child through a process of imitation, practice, and repetition. And since negative emotions are LEARNED, they can be UNLEARNED and you can be free of them.

There are more than 50 negative emotions: doubt, fear, guilt, resentment, undeservingness, etc. etc. But they all boil down to, and are expressed in the core negative emotion of, ANGER. Anger, once generated, is always expressed--either inwardly or outwardly. If nothing good ever comes from negative emotions, why do people experience so many of them? To answer that question, we first must identify the main causes of negative emotions.

There are 4 main causes of negative emotions. The first cause is JUSTIFICATION. Justification occurs when you attempt to justify and explain--to yourself and anybody else who will listen to you--why you are

entitled to feel angry or upset for some reason. Whenever you feel that you've been wronged in any situation, your first reaction is to flare up in anger. Your second reaction is usually to marshal all the reasons anger is a justifiable reaction. You need to be able to say: "I have every right to be angry," and you'll look for people who will agree with your reasoning and your feelings. You lay out the situation for them in great detail so they see clearly that you are obviously the wronged party in the situation. In fact, without being able to justify your anger, you can't keep your anger going.

You can begin the process of eliminating negative emotions by simply refusing to justify them. Refuse to allow yourself to create all types of reasons to feel as bad as you do. By refusing to justify your feelings, you practice mental control, and that's usually enough to stop the negative emotion in the first place.

The second main cause of negative emotions is IDENTIFICATION, or taking things personally. You can only become angry about something to the degree with which you can personally identify with it.

As soon as you stop taking things personally, you get your emotions back under control. And the way to do this is to practice detachment. Stand back from the situation and force yourself to look at it objectively. Try to see it from the other person's point of view, because your ability to "disidentify" with what has happened gives you greater calmness and clarity and makes you much more able to deal with the problem--whatever it is.

The third major cause of negative emotions is LACK OF CONSIDERATION. You become angry when you feel that people are not giving you your just due, or that you're not getting the respect you feel you deserve. If

someone is rude to you, or slights you, or does not acknowledge you in social situations, your ego becomes involved and you feel hurt, angry, and defensive.

You must starve your negative emotions by refusing to justify them, by refusing to identify with them, and by refusing to let the behavior of others toward you get under your skin. But the very fastest way to eliminate negative emotions--instantaneously--is to go right to the root of them and cut them off.

BLAMING is the fourth cause of negative emotions and lies at the root of almost all of them. 99% of our negative emotions depend on their existence by your ability to blame someone or something else for something that is contributing to your unhappiness. As soon as you stop blaming anyone or anything else for anything, your negative emotions cease, as if the power to them was suddenly cut off, as if the power switch was thrown.

How do we switch off the power to negative emotions? By understanding that our conscious minds can only hold one thought at a time. By identifying our negative emotions, we can interrupt the immediate thought and replace it with a different thought. I repeated it last week because its important, and I repeat it again here today because it is improtant: THE QUALITY OF OUR THINKING DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF OUR LIVES. Because we are always free to choose the content of our thought, we will always be responsible for the consequences of what we think.