

**How Lack of Poor Time Perspective and Unwillingness to Initiate or Perform Responsibly Keeps Us Back
and Replacement with Good Can Help Us.**

If you have made it this far in reading the articles for Healing problem thinking, I really want to commend you for sticking with some difficult topics. Seeing how can replace lies we believe that bring destruction to our lives with the truth of God's Love that brings life to us and to others is well worth pursuing.

In the interest of time, this article will cover three areas that are often lacking in our lives that keep us feeling stuck. Lack of time perspective, Failure to assume responsible initiative's, and Lack of interest in responsible performance all have distinct implications, yet are all similar. In order to achieve and receive good results, some of the more mundane responsibilities in life need to be initiated and followed through with. When something takes time to accomplish, problem thinking can get us to not begin at all, not begin in a timely manner, or to quit before we achieve the desired results. We sometimes think that we deserve to have the best or are better than others, without realizing it. If we think we are slicker, stronger or more skillful than a friend family member or coworker we do not realize how that can keep us from working together to accomplish what cannot be accomplished alone. When we see the problems that seem insurmountable or do not have the resources readily available to us, instead of seeing obstacles, which everyone in life face, as something to overcome, they feel like putdowns to us.

We learn what we take an interest in and spend time studying, doing, talking about. Our past choices and learning have laid a foundation. We choose relationships and conversations that we are comfortable with. If in the past, if our time has been spent on activities that seem good exciting at the time but have led to hurt, confusion and death of our spirits, our focus now needs to be on different things. This requires a shift. Now we need to seek out, work through and stay with conversations and activities that will bring life. Although it is not as exciting at first, we need to develop enough interest to get tasks done and to learn new skills. As we do new opportunities will develop.

New brainwaves need to be and can be created and with them new rewards will come. Start with something small. Take the time to think it through to the intended result. Take the time to rejoice when you make a right choice and stick to something that takes time. Ecclesiastes 7:8 says, "The end or conclusion of a matter is better than its beginning; likewise, patience (in spirit) is better than pride. Pride is deceptive. When I first saw this verse, it surprised and startled me. I did not realize that not following through with things and seeing a matter to the end could be a result of pride. Learning to rest and to trust God was a part of my progress. That allowed me to be able to start something and then when I needed rest, take a break and then return to the task or project until it was completed. Working in my own strength and not asking God for and His strength and then finding ways to receive it and use it kept me from achieving what I wanted and left me isolated. Learning to ask Him, to receive and understanding He is faithful allows me to become more faithful.

Recognize that change is possible and brings life. The goals we have talked about previously of reading God's Word, prayer, worship, fellowship, and service are building blocks to our spiritual life. They also provide motivation energy and help in the areas of the physical world.

Many people use cards to write verses that inspire them and place them in places that are visible such as mirrors, doors, windows, or the car steering wheel. One person put their inspirational book in the refrigerator as that was the place, they had kept their stash of drugs. Healthy food deters overeating or junk food consumption which also impacts our motivation. Seeing it there reminds one to overcome the temptation. Reading one of the inspirational messages would further help change thinking and the beliefs that help bring victory.

Ezekiel 18:5-9 & 21 says "...if a man is righteous and practices justice and righteousness, ... does not eat ...or lift up his eyes to the idols ...defile his neighbor's wife ... not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, does not rob ...gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing, does not lend money on interest or ...increase, ...keeps his hand from iniquity and executes true justice between man and man, if he walks in My statutes and My ordinances so as to deal faithfully—he is righteous and will surely

live,” declares the Lord GOD. “But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die.”

Here is a list of helpful steps and the rationale for them.

- Writing out goals and breaking them down into smaller achievable steps that can be accomplished and checked off feels good.
- Finding ways to rejoice in the small steps brings joy, can give us a sense of connection to God and if we share it, with others. It also increases our motivation and can help us stay interested and lift depressive thinking.
- Talking goals and progress over with another person who can encourage you provides feedback and motivation. We are more likely to stick with it if we know someone is going to ask us about it.
- Recalling potential negative consequences that could happen with the irresponsible actions and paying attention to them. Replace that fear with hope by visualizing the positive consequences for the responsible choices, behaviors and actions.
- Clarifying Good and Evil. See below for more on this.
- Ask for help, learn to take direction and learn to learn thus developing areas that are lacking.
- Find understanding instead of reacting.
- Develop a better understanding of adversity. Not just that it helps you to grow, but how it does so.

We sometimes call what is good, evil or wrong and what is wrong, good. Isaiah 5:20 NASB says, “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” This woe can be the crux of many difficulties which we do not even realize we are doing. Learning God’s precepts, laws, principles, commandments and guidance brings far more blessing than physical wealth. “The fear of the LORD – Jehovah, Yahweh, Adonai - is pure, clean, holy, enduring forever; the ordinances, judgments, decisions, law, judgments, rulings, decrees, of the LORD are true, reliable, firm, the same all the time; they are righteous altogether (all of them are), true, just. They are more desirable, more precious than gold, yes, than much, an abundance of fine, pure gold. They sweeten my life more, are sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. The commandments, precepts, laws, judgements of the Lord are of greater value than gold, than even a great amount of pure gold; they bring greater delight than honey, than even the sweetest honey from a honeycomb. Moreover, in addition, by them Your servant is warned; in keeping them, obeying them there is great reward.” (Ps. 19- 9-11 Combined versions)

Often times the terms we use can determine how we view something. Here are two examples. If we use the term, “the good life” to mean having a lot of wealth, using women or others to meet impure desires, taking substances that are really destroying us, we are calling evil good. The term justify can be used to explain something negative away. But if we use it as a proper balance, Jesus justifies us with God – He makes us right with Him, then it is being used properly as it was meant to be used. Can you can come up with other terms which help you to believe the truth better?

Taking initiatives in activities that are pleasing but not responsible can keep us from taking initiatives that are responsible. Learning to take direction from those that are in your life to help you, is part of this. It can be a pattern in our minds to hear a direction from someone and reject it almost immediately, finding some reason to dismiss it or to feel justified in reacting to it. Remember that a conscience ignored hardens one’s heart. God says, “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh.” (Ezek. 36:26 NASB)

If something is really irritating, consider the matter to determine, Am I irritated because this is a negative controlling thing, or am I just irritated because I do not want to do what is needed? Do I need to speak the truth in love to the other person and clear the air or do I need to receive what they are asking of me as good? Try to find reasons to understand what is being said by people, instead of reasons against it. One of my old communication patterns was when someone was teaching something, my mind would go to the opposing reasons or even on the other side of a paradox. (A paradox is when you have two truths that seem like they contradict each other when both of them are true, such as grace & mercy and good works or hot and cold which are both necessary).

A volunteer was ministering to the youth and one of them had a very hard look come over his face when he was reminded of a rule. At least four different volunteers have noted that many who have been given correction are almost all angry and have these resentments.

I don't know if the rule mentioned above was being explained by an officer or by the volunteer and it was probably one that was hard to accept because it did not promote bonding, but the staff had their reasons for it and abiding by it was meant to be a protection. In more than one very significant situation which provided countless opportunities for resentment, I could only let go and be free from my anger, bitterness or resentment when I understood that the person making those decisions had a reason to do so, and at least in their mind it was a good reason. Finding out what that reason is helps, and when we cannot know what the reason is, understanding that there is a reason, can relieve us of ill will. Our hard feelings can be caused from lack of support or understanding but as long as it does not go to the point of enabling, coming to understand the other person softens our hearts and improves our relationships. Empathy allows us to put ourself in another's position. It is said to be the most important in advancing relationships and opportunities in our lives. Research on criminal and addictive thinking and the 12seeds for Successful Relationships by Norm Anderson substantiate this. We have donated copies of the latter, ask the programs if the latter is available to you.

By pursuing improper interests, we can create a lack of skills or knowledge which results in feeling left behind or not capable. Sometimes learning difficulties or a lack of provision can contribute to this, but many people have overcome these things in creative positive ways. Help and instruction is available if we seek it and humble ourselves and cultivate interest to pursue it. The idea "If I am not interested at all, forget it" keeps us from growing and puts a huge damper on relationships. Developing positive interests and activities just enough to keep other people satisfied but still allowing continued negative activity is not enough. Confessing negative feelings and actions may be enough to get someone to agree with or let us off the hook, but it is necessary to take confessions to another level. Repentance means changing our minds, turning from selfish ways to God and His love.

In overcoming trauma, it is important to understanding the reason why the other person was hurtful, why it was so negative for, or why your actions were hurtful or negative to them. Then instead of dwelling on it and living in the hurt and pain, find the good in the situation. For example, if someone hurts us, we can see that that relationship is important to us. Celebrate that relationships are important. After doing that it is easier to decide if it is healthy to go back to that person or situation. Can there be resolution and if so, what is it? If the hurt will continue over and over again, we may need to separate, but have we done what we can to bring about change? Confessing, stating and practicing the positive actions and attitudes create new patterns in brains and in relationships. Our brain likes patterns. There are all kinds of materials along this line. Gratitude, not taking offense, overcoming temptations, and confessions are areas to read about, listen to speakers on, and to explore.

Questions

1. What has been important to you in the past and what has it led to?
2. What areas have you pursued that have led to negative patterns and consequences?
3. What ones do you see need to replace those? What are the positive pursuits that will bring reward?
4. What keeps you from going after the things you identified in question three?
5. There is pride that goes before a fall and pride in God's love and loving His people. Are you willing to admit and confess selfish pride, ask for and receive forgiveness and the new life Christ offers?
6. Look over this list from the verses in Ezekiel. Did it bring any new insights to you? – or ones you have agreed in your head but not believed enough to live?
7. Can you identify thing and then things you have called good that are not so much?
8. What is the good and what are the good things that will really bring your life?
9. Look over the list from Psalms 19 listed above. Did it bring any new insights to you? – or ones you have agreed in your head but not believed enough to live?
10. Of the nine suggestions for beginning and sustaining change, will you choose one and start with it?
11. Jesus said, "I am the Way the Truth and the Life, No man comes to the Father but by Me." And I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly (or to the full, a full life)" Go and learn what he meant. www.mecjailministry.com 651-408-1300 mec@usfamily.net