

Why It's Important To Believe In What You Are Doing

Someone told me this week that he disliked his job intensely. It set me wondering how this man's attitude towards his work might affect the quality of his actions and also his relationship with himself. He is competent at what he does and his employer well satisfied, but there has to be some difference in an action undertaken willingly with commitment, and one taken unwillingly. Even if you can conceal your reluctance from others, you know that you act reluctantly. Surely such reluctance eats away your spirit and corrodes your soul.

If we are to have those things that make our lives comfortable, the tasks of daily living must be performed. We have responsibilities not just to ourselves but also to our partners and families, and to the wider community. Inevitably there will be times when we find ourselves not wanting to do something that is required of us. Part of being an adult human being is accepting that sometimes we need to do things even when we don't want to. In so far as there is nobody standing over us forcing us to action, we make an active choice: to energise ourselves to do the boring tasks because our lives will be easier in the long run; we motivate ourselves to fulfil our commitments to others out of a sense of responsibility or because we accept the idea of fair play. In such circumstances we may not want to do things, but we do them willingly because we have decided that taking action is right, for whatever reason.

What's been exercising me this week is an awareness that some people take action because they believe they are compelled to by some external force – other people's expectations, the demands of their manager, legal requirements and so on – rather than taking action out of personal choice, after having taken external forces into consideration.

When people act from a sense of external compulsion without acknowledging their freedom of choice, they lose some of their human dignity. They become that bit more dogged, hopeless, cynical, depressed and anxious.

Over the next few days, try reminding yourself that every action you take is taken out of choice. Nobody can make you do anything. Of course you must live with the consequences of your actions, but you do have choice. Notice how actions taken where choice is unconscious or denied corrodes your soul, and how actions consciously chosen feed it. You may be surprised to find that by being more aware of the choices you make you raise your spirits and begin to perceive yourself in a more positive way..

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Responses to this article are warmly welcomed.

This article was printed in Network News