

OUR DESTRUCTIVE SELF



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How do I fit in?

*A special thank you to all that participated
in the creation of this book.*

Our Destructive Self

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Contents

Introduction	8
Starting with me	10
In what way am I destructive?	12
Do we harm ourselves by choice?	14
Do other people have an effect on me?	16
Do I have an effect on other people?	18
Do I cause real harm to myself?	20
Emotions and their impact	22
Feelings and their impact	23
Expectations and their effects	25
Experiences and their effects	26
Effort	27
Obstacles	29
Letting go of the past	31
Limitations	33
Another day	35
What lies ahead	36

Introduction

It is very easy to blame another person or events for the current life we are living. However, it is possible, that we ourselves are the very reason for the events that have brought us to where we are today.

The individual events surrounding our lives continue to alter our life, just as it alters the life of every individual connected with us. The result on each person, is determined by the amount of contact between people and the strength of friendships and relationships. When a person has a difficult experience, its effects do not always have an immediate impact, as some people are slower to react and of course may also be slower to recover from an event.

As we grow up, we are not taught how to look at ourselves and instead tend to look for an opinion from someone else, a doctor perhaps, or an older person in which we have some degree of respect.

That might very well work in some situations, provided you are in a position to clarify precisely, what it is you want to know and are asking an individual who has sufficient knowledge to provide you with an answer.

It is not in our nature to seek assistance when all is going well in our lives but instead when life issues have become noticeable or when they have been pointed out to us. Regardless of where you are in your life at present, it is best not to attempt to self-diagnose yourself and place some label which is most likely to be incorrect. Taking this course, is a waste of valuable time, which can destroy any further attempts you might make in the future to alter your life.

Change is not easy, change takes time and requires effort and flexibility. No start is better than a bad start, when it comes to life.

Starting with me

Change has to begin some place, and for the individual, change begins with that person. It is easy to waste time searching for answers to questions that are not important or looking for solutions to problems that do not exist. Therefore, it is good practice, to begin with the issues that are causing the most difficulty and then tidying up the remaining issues over time. To become obsessed with change would only add to your current difficulties and should be avoided. Neither is it a good idea to target yourself for change, as that may only create a tunnel vision of yourself, which greatly limits opportunities that are necessary for change.

The way in which we view ourselves is dependent on our circumstances, and should be approached with as much honesty as possible. Being too honest is counterproductive, as it often leads a person to destroy any effort or progress they are making.

Even though the issues in your life may be created by external factors such as family, friends, work etc. - the place to begin, is with you. It takes courage to make a decision to look at your life and to find a solution that is best suited to your circumstances. Very often people look for an easy solution or come to the conclusion that they have no other choice but to accept their position in life.

It is not easy to accept, that we ourselves are the cause of the difficulties that we are having. We may have built an impenetrable wall around ourselves; as a form of protection or as a place to hide. That may have taken place over a long period of time and even we ourselves may not be aware of its existence.

Should this be the case, then it will take time to remove that wall, to stop rebuilding or reinforcing it and allow yourself to reconnect with life.

In what way am I destructive?

That will depend on what is taking place in your life and the number of issues that are currently in place. Consider your thoughts and the way they evolve as you interact with people -

What emotions come to the surface and what effect does it have on your physical body?

Do you become tense, angry, defensive?

Or do you withdraw further into yourself?

Our feelings, thoughts, emotions and reactions are a physical movement in the body and are not easily forgotten when we have had an unpleasant experience.

When you hold on to those feelings etc., they remain within you and they will continue to affect every part of your life; whether those experiences are unpleasant or not.

That is a heavy burden on your body, and will, over time, create other problems for you. This series of events can be avoided, provided you take the necessary steps, as they are needed.

You can begin by making small adjustments in your approach to life and allowing yourself to become comfortable with yourself, as your life begins to change. Even the smallest change will alter the future.

It is worth remembering, that a very small change is an enormous change, for a person who has been constantly going in the wrong direction.

Do we harm ourselves by choice?

In life, we are faced with many choices, some of which are of benefit, while other choices are often very harmful. The choice to continue drinking beyond the point where we are unable to remember what has taken place, what we have done, or what has happened to us or others, is one example of not making a good choice. The choice being, not to continue drinking when such events are likely to take place.

As in this example, there is also the question of responsibility, when continuing to drink alcohol. It is easy to say that we are not responsible for what takes place and it is very likely that a person may be beyond being responsible due to the amount of alcohol consumed. However, the individual is responsible for the events that take place due to their actions.

Putting ourselves in danger, is not a responsible decision.

Taking chances with your life or the lives of others, is not a responsible decision.

Not taking reasonable care with your life, is not a responsible decision.

Taking part in an activity that is dangerous, is not a responsible decision.

We do have the choice to make responsible decisions, just as we have the choice to ignore them.

Do other people have an effect on me?

It is usual to have some type of contact with people and it is rare to find a person that has cut themselves off completely from society. There is a general expectation in society, that wanting to be alone is not correct, even though every person will have that same want or feeling on many occasions during their life.

When the want to be alone becomes very strong and is becoming a focal point, or in some cases an obsession, then we should pay more attention, as to why this is taking place.

The instinct to run away, or hide from what we do not like or are unwilling to accept, may well cause even more harm and push a person beyond a point where there is no way back. This, in turn, adds more pressure to the current situation.

There will be occasions, where the personal safety of the individual is important and then there may be no choice but to find a safe place to be. That is not running away.

Bad relationships are a very unpleasant experience, as they are closely related to everything we do. Living in the same house or locality, where regular contact cannot be avoided, can become very stressful. Being unable to find a solution, a person may have little option but to withdraw into themselves. A sense of despair, desolation or abandonment, can easily develop which can become all-consuming. This is an important time to have patience and to wait for the best time, to make a change.

Do I have an effect on other people?

It would be impossible not to have an effect on other people, unless we lived in a location where we have no connection with people. From the moment we are conceived, we have begun to have an impact and that continues throughout our life. The amount of impact will vary of course, depending on the interaction we have with people and the results of those interactions.

The way in which we interact with people, can have a very positive impact on the people we meet during the course of our life. When we treat people with respect, even though they may not deserve it, they have the opportunity to learn from the experience.

It takes time to find a good balance in life and to accept what we cannot change. Knowing that we do have an impact on people, should remind us of our responsibility and guide us through our life, without being destructive - or interfering in the lives of others.

People get tired, many have problems in their life, and it is likely that you will meet many different types of people. Some are pleasant, some are not. Some are genuine, some are not. Some are arrogant, greedy, selfish and abusive - you have the choice not to become one of them.

Do I cause real harm to myself?

That will depend entirely on what it is you do and the frequency and impact that it has on you and the people that are connected to you.

There is a simple question that you can look at here.

Is this the way I want to live my life?

You do have the choice to stop creating harm to yourself and the decision to stop must come from you. There are occasions, when we do harm to ourselves, by not realising what we are doing, until it is done. That is not a time to give up or lose interest. Instead, it is best to accept what has taken place and make the effort to continue.

Not everyone has someone close to them, to give assistance when life becomes difficult, and in some cases, it is better that way.

Having too many people around creates confusion and noise; too many opinions and distractions. In this situation, set time aside for yourself. Find a quiet place and do your best to relax and release the stresses that you are feeling.

Some people have developed the need to be in constant contact with other people, therefore, how they deal with their own issues, will need to be approached differently.

Emotions and their impact

The emotions we have are often very similar to other people in life.

For example, a group of people that follow a particular football team. Each can be passionate about their team and have little disagreement on how they feel about the team's performance. As a result, their emotions would be very similar, provided there are no major issues in their life. When a new member joins the group and has a similar interest in the team, then there is little change. On the other hand, when the new member does not fit in with the group, the original balance is disturbed and may not regain its previous state.

It is important, not to allow our emotions to get out of control or to make decisions which are based on emotions.

When we have decisions to make, they should be based on the best knowledge available.

Feelings and their impact

Feelings are much more a personal item than emotions, but are closely related. What we feel is dependent on our sensitivity, fears, experiences and expectations etc. The impact of our feelings is directly related to our physical body and alters how our body works. Feelings change the natural flow within the body and are often the cause of illness and ill-health. As the body is going through natural life changes, our feelings will also change and often create conflict.

An example of this is when a man begins to lose his hair, that he was very particular about. The man begins to worry about what he will look like or that he may feel less attractive or indeed that he will look much older than he actually is.

An obsession is easily created in relation to his hair, as he tries different treatments etc. When the hair loss becomes a little more visible, it will be noticed by other people, which in turn is likely to create even more stress in the man.

While these events are taking place, there is a wide range of feelings being generated, which also have a physical effect on the man. It will alter his mood, his concentration, alter the balance in his body, create health issues and can also be the cause of him altering the direction of his life, as he is no longer paying attention to what he should be doing.

To be able to feel, is a natural ability and should be treated with the respect it deserves.

Expectations and their effects

When you have many unpleasant experiences in life, it would be difficult to accept that life might be different in the future. Creating expectations that the future will remain the same, will get worse or get better, is not a good approach, as the future is not set and is dependent on the choices and decisions that you make.

The future is a time that has not come yet, therefore, it will not be the same as any expectations we are likely to create. To avoid disappointments, do not create expectations, as they are not real events.

Should you have difficulties in your life, and have made many unsuccessful attempts to alter or overcome those issues, the creation of expectations, will only lead to further disappointment and may prevent you from making another attempt.

Expectations are nothing more than a possibility and or are created by your own past experiences/ fears or the impact of other people in society.

Experiences and their effects

Not every experience, that we have in life, can be considered as being pleasant. Some experiences are dreadful and there is no point in calling them otherwise. How we react to them is within our own capability and even the most unpleasant experience, can be approached and dealt with, in a manner that will limit the effect that it has on you. To ignore, or pretend that such an event took place, is not a positive approach; as the resulting impact and follow-on will at some point become a problem.

Effort

Making an effort to change our life requires courage and determination, as well as, a suitable solution to the issues and problems that have taken place or that are currently taking place.

We cannot avoid all the unpleasant situations in life, as they are necessary to give us a better understanding of life itself.

It is not easy to make an effort, when we are overtired from work or from the situation we are currently experiencing. When we feel exhausted, the idea of making an effort seems impossible. However, when we approach it in the correct manner and the want to change is there, the effort that is made will be of benefit.

The amount of effort required, in a particular event, will depend entirely on the circumstances. On occasion, a little effort will create good progress, while on other occasions a huge effort has to be made to overcome our difficulties and

little progress is made. Making progress is not always important and it is the making of effort that provides a valuable learning experience.

Obstacles

The first obstacle, to begin with, is making the decision to change your life. That is a decision that often requires an enormous amount of courage, as it may look as though, it is an impossible task. This is particularly difficult for the individual, that has made previous attempts and has made little or no progress.

It is also likely that the quality of the individual's life has deteriorated, as a result of the efforts that were previously made. There is certainly no benefit in making a bad situation worse but all too often we are influenced by events, that are outside of our control. We can, however, learn to control and limit the effect, that those events have on us.

The next item to consider are the obstacles that are placed on us as individuals, and then for us to find a suitable solution for each of them. Then we must look at the obstacles that we create and place on ourselves.

It is very important to remember that we are all different and do not all have the same opportunities and options in life.

At this point it is best to look at ‘the way it is,’ and in doing so, not to become dissatisfied or overwhelmed, by what we see.

Letting go of the past

The past is a complicated item, as it contains all the events that have brought us to where we are today. It also contains every experience, we have had with people, as well as, all the feelings and emotions that are connected with those events.

It contains all our thoughts, the choices we have made, as well as, the choices we should have made.

It contains all the decisions we have made, as well as, the decisions we should have made. It also contains the decisions that were made for us, that we had no control over.

The past shapes us into what we are today. It should not, however, become the basis of all the decisions, that we make for the future. Regardless of our past, these events are only one part of our life.

Currently, you should be living and learning in the present time and not distracted or misdirected by events that have taken place in the past.

Being free of the past, gives you the freedom to establish new relationships, both with yourself and the people that you have yet to meet.

Limitations

Limitations are a natural part of life, they either occur naturally or are imposed on us. The speed limits on our roads, are there to protect us and other road users and are a common sense approach to protect life. We may not always agree where the limits are placed and are unlikely to be too happy, when we are issued a speeding fine.

As human beings we have limits. Some of which are there to protect us. When we exceed our limits, we can lose control of our life, very quickly. For example, to be a natural musician requires a specific ability, but it also requires practice, study and discipline.

Some aspire to be famous and forget what they are and instead focus all their attention on becoming famous. There are only a few individuals that have survived such attention and have succeeded in maintaining a good balance in their life.

In order to be successful in a particular profession, it is normal to go beyond whatever limitations you have, in order to become the best at what you do.

This should be approached carefully and at a pace that is comfortable for you. Losing control of your life, or the direction of your life, will not bring you to where you want to be or should be.

Another day

Tomorrow is another day and is also the first day of the rest of your life. The day after, is also the first day of the rest of your life, this will continue until you come to the end of your life.

There is no point in wishing your life away or being in a hurry to reach the end. That should take place in its own time. When we reach that point, we can look back at what has taken place, our struggles, the good times, the bad times, the happy times, the sad times, the experience of having lived in this world.

In the meantime, tomorrow will be just another day and that is the way it should be. No special importance or significance should be placed on a particular day, as each day is important with no day being more or less important than the next. Each day is precious.

What lies ahead

The remainder of your life is what is ahead, whether it is pleasant or otherwise. As a person, all we can do is the best that we can, with what we have available to us. When given the opportunity to learn something new, we should do so, provided that it is of benefit to us.

To say we know everything, would not be correct, as it is not possible. When we continue to learn and have new experiences, our life will continue to alter. This will also change our relationships with the people we meet in life. Observe and learn.

We are all different and unique in some way. There are occasions when we appear to have a close bond with people but as we change, that bond will also alter. Therefore, it is better to allow that change to take place and enjoy the experience of growth, that should take place naturally.

To force change or to restrict it, will deny us the opportunity to have a better understanding of life and why life affects us differently.

Not everybody will have the option to change their life, as it may already be too late or they may not find a way that is better suited to their needs. Therefore, it is best to concentrate on your own life, when there are difficulties. That does not create selfishness but should instead be based on common sense.

The life we have is precious and there are no words available to adequately describe its existence. The term “precious” has little meaning of course to the individuals that have lost all “will to live” as a result of the self-destruction, that they, are actively involved in. Neither would it have any meaning to the individuals that are doing battle with themselves, to the point, that they are destroying every part of themselves.

It takes enormous courage to turn life around, particularly when a person has become so good at self-destruction. A decision must be made to stop doing what is harmful and instead of following a road of self-destruction, to rejoin life as an active participant in living.

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