

Procrastination Class 101: Applications Due Yesterday

By Dave Markowitz

This column was due yesterday. Why the delay? And why did I just spend an hour on FaceBook? Likewise, what did you put off till today that could have been done a few days ago, or what are you putting aside altogether and why?

No matter how hard I try the answer is the same: it's just not that important.

Huh?!?! Not that important!?!?!? "How can he write such a thing?" you may ask, "We love reading his columns!"

Well, it's not that it's not important; it's just that whenever I try to move forward, something blocks my view. How many of you can relate to that? How many of you find yourself doing all the little things, only to find more little things, while the bigger things wait in the "stuff to get done" pile?

One way to reverse this procrastination mastery is to ask yourself who benefits and who doesn't as a result of you not doing what really needs to be done. Most of us prioritize putting ourselves first: "This is my time." "It's my party and I'll cry if I want to!" By living this way, it's a guarantee that complaining, judging, and unhappiness will be pervasive. It's practically guaranteed you won't have many friends, or if you do, they're not to be trusted with seeing you even slightly vulnerable. And it's almost a certainty that you'll be plagued with physical symptoms of pain and illness.

So when I remembered to ask myself "Who benefits from me writing and what should I write about?" it became much easier to start typing. When we see that others are being affected, we can release ego consciousness and truly see the bigger picture. And it's only in the bigger picture where happiness ever has a chance, much less getting through blocks toward accomplishing anything.

When we see with this wide-angle view, everything becomes clearer. We see that the person who is being angry isn't a bad person, only that they are in emotional pain and don't have a safe way of expressing it. We see that people only do they're best with the tools and knowledge they've been given. And most of the time, we see that many of us repeat patterns from our upbringing giving no relevance to if those behaviors are working for us. Clarity leads to better decisions, and conscious living begets wisdom, especially in matters of prioritizing what needs to be done now, later, and what can be put off until much later.

We know it feels good to do for others. Our first reaction to a homeless man is to reach into our pocket for some change, but then the ego/mind, kicks in, "He's only going to buy beer anyway" or some such nonsense, furthering the illusion that you're better than him and allowing you to walk by while fearing eye contact. In reality, you are but one bad decision away from being him. But if we give from the heart (as opposed to out of pity or obligation), we get the benefits of giving. Our health is increased, our blood pressure lowers and we have more vitality. When we can really know that what we do for others we are also doing for ourselves, giving begets more giving, and you begin to receive openly and lovingly everything you've always wanted. It's a law of grace that no matter how hard you try to disprove, will always work. That's why it's called a law.

So when the ego kicks in and tells you otherwise, ask it that now-famous question: "Who benefits and who doesn't as a result of me not doing what really needs to be done?" This column just flowed right out of me once I could answer that question truthfully. By quieting the ego--which loves to justify and blame by nature--the false sense of righteousness fades. It's then no longer ok to not write that letter, forget calling someone back, or even "forget" doing things that you know are beneficial like eating well, exercising, and meditating--or in my case, writing my column on time. Or you could join Procrastination Class 101; there's still time. Oh, wait, no--sorry, it's too late. Go figure...

Dave Markowitz is a best-selling author, intuitive health consultant and spiritual healer who's lectured with Deepak Chopra, Gary Null, and more. Sign up for his free newsletter at www.DaveMarkowitz.com!