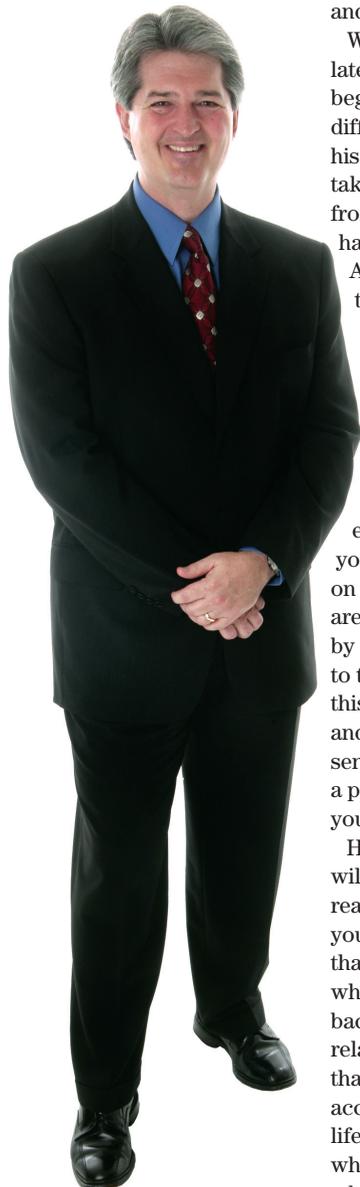


What stops you?

THREE COMPELLING QUESTIONS THAT WILL GET YOU MOVING FORWARD IN LIFE



“Jim, I’m completely stuck,” said Kyle over the phone that morning. “Every time I try to move forward, something stops me, and I’m close to giving up.”

As both a coaching client and a good friend, I knew that Kyle had been going through a number of changes in the past year — changes that had taken a toll on his confidence and his health.

When we met in my office later that afternoon, Kyle began to tell me about the difficulties he was facing in his new job — one he had taken after being laid off from a company where he had worked for many years.

As he listed the challenges that frustrated him, he compared each of them back to his old company, and never favorably.

Where is your focus?

Are you frustrated or even angry over changes in your job that are being forced on you? If so, it’s likely you are viewing them as Kyle did, by constantly comparing them to the past. Every time you do this, you take all the energy and capacity you possess and send it backward in time to a place where it cannot help you.

How long would you be willing to stare into the rearview mirror while driving your car? Hopefully, less than a second. And yet, whenever you’re looking back on a previous job, an old relationship or the balance that once showed in your bank account, you are driving your life with your eyes locked on what’s behind you, instead of where you’re headed.

The next time you start longing for the past, know that it probably wasn’t as perfect as you remember. Your memory will trick you by recalling only the best moments, leaving out the ups and downs of real life, making the comparison to your current circumstances fall short and leaving you depressed and immobile.

Instead, keep your focus on today, on where you are rather than where you’ve been, and you will regain the energy you’ve been losing to yesterday.

What’s right about your current situation?

When Kyle finished explaining his current challenges, I asked if he would then tell me everything that was right about his new job. He was startled by the question, but when he saw that I was serious, he began to think about the answer.

First, he listed the obvious — it was good to have a job in a difficult economy, good to have a paycheck each week and the things it provided his family. But as he continued, a change began to happen that was as clear in his answers as it was in the expression on his face. Kyle said that he liked his new manager and felt that he appreciated Kyle’s work. He had also been able to learn some new skills and looked forward to the increased opportunity they would one

day bring. He continued on for several minutes, with each new answer leading to another.

When he finished, both Kyle and I knew that the list of all that was right about his new job exceeded those things that were not. Kyle’s circumstances had not changed. What had changed was the quality of the question he was asking.

Each time you find yourself focused on all that is wrong in a situation, begin to ask yourself what is right about it and watch your perspective shift. While the challenges may remain, the way you see them will be different, and that difference will enable you to move forward.

What do you really want?

At the end of our time together, I asked Kyle if he would go back to his old job if he were given the choice.

After a moment’s reflection, he smiled at me and said, “No. All things considered, I’d rather go forward from where I am today than go back to where I was.”

Sometimes in the wind of change you find your true direction and you realize all that’s stopping you from seeing it is *you*.

Keep your eyes forward and your perspective balanced. The only thing standing between you and the next great chapter of your life is the faith to believe it’s possible and the will to try. <<

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