Education Support

Be Willing to Take Advice

Generally speaking, people don't take advice, even good advice. This is true even when the advice is free and when it's offered with love. Think about yourself. How often do you really, honestly take someone else's advice? How often do you say to yourself, or out loud, "That's a great idea. That's a much better way of doing it than the way I have been doing it." This type of humility is almost unheard of in our culture, yet think about the wisdom here. In order to grow, we need to see things differently. We don't want to do the same things over and over if they're not working well. Instead, we want to open our eyes to new and improved ways of doing things. But how can we see things differently if we refuse to take to heart the suggestions from others? It seems so obvious.

Sometimes, the reason we don't take advice is pure stubbornness. We want to do things our own way-even if it's not working! Other times, we avoid advice of fear. We might be frightened that we're going to look bad in the eyes of someone else, or that we're going to seem incompetent. Or we might be fearful that the advice we get isn't going to help-that if we can't figure it out, then no one else can either. Sometimes we've received bad advice or too much advice, and we vow to not repeat that same mistake.

My suggestion in this area is simple and straightforward: Take the advice. Life is so much simpler when you involve the strengths and expertise of others. After all, if you absolutely knew what to do to make your life better or more successful, you'd be doing it already. But if you're struggling in any aspect of your life (and we all do), you need advice. I'm certain that one of the primary reasons I've had some degree of success in my life is my absolute willingness to seek out, listen to, and often take advice. This makes life so easy that, occasionally, it doesn't seem fair. I love to get advice, especially from competent people. I believe that if someone has worked hard, achieved some measure of success, and is willing to help, I'd be a fool not to listen! Plus, as you probably already know, almost everyone loves to give advice. By listening to someone and actually taking their advice, you not only get good results but you also get to contribute to the joy of another person.

Unfortunately, many people miss out on one of the surest shortcuts to success: taking advice. So often, when a person struggles, he or she is very close to a major breakthrough. They are literally "an inch away" from achieving their goals and dreams. If they would just open their eyes to a blind spot, see something they are doing in a slightly different or new way, their success would be phenomenal and certain. I have

friends and family members who fall into this category. I believe they are incredibly talented people, on the verge of possible greatness, or on the verge of improving their life in a meaningful way. Don't let this minor obstacle get in your way. The advice is out there. People want to help you. Allow yourself to receive help and the quality of your life will soar

Make Peace with Imperfection

by Richard Carlson, Ph. D.
from "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff...and it's all small stuff"

I've yet to meet an absolute perfectionist whose life was filled with inner peace. The need for perfection and the desire for inner tranquility conflict with each other. Whenever we are attached to having something a certain way, better than it already is, we are, almost by definition, engaged in a losing battle. Rather than being content and grateful for what we have, we are focused on what's wrong with something and our need to fix it. When we are zeroed in on what's wrong, it implies that we are dissatisfied, discontent.

Whether it's related to ourselves–a disorganized closet, a scratch on the car, an imperfect accomplishment, a few pound we would like to lose–or someone else's "imperfections–the way someone looks, behaves, or lives their life–the very act of focusing on imperfection pulls us away from our goal of being kind and gentle. This strategy has nothing to do with ceasing to do your very best but with being overly attached and focused on what's wrong with life. It's about realizing that while there's always a better way to do something, this doesn't mean that you can't enjoy and appreciate the way things already are.

The solution here is to catch yourself when you fall into your habit of insisting that things should be other than they are. Gently remind yourself that life is okay the way it is, right now. In the absence of your judgement, everything would be fine. As you begin to eliminate your need for perfection in all areas of your life, you'll begin to discover the perfection in life itself.