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—STEPHEN R. COVEY, AUTHOR *THE 7TH HABIT*



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Set a Present Agenda

Think positive and take five steps.



by Charlene M. Proctor

YOU CAN LEARN FROM YOUR past to better navigate through your current choices to evolve your soul. You're in soul school from the minute you're born. It's coursework made possible by the enriching but challenging conditions you have chosen. You chart a learning program well before you get here—including your parents, gender, and circumstances—that will provide you with great opportunities for growth.

Where you get into trouble is in giving up your freedom to make new choices based upon the *present*. Every day is new, and you are meant to move forward. Getting stuck in the past holds you behind, a prisoner within a universe of opportunity. You are empowered when you are living *now*, not reacting to now from a mindset of the past or living with worry about what might happen tomorrow, or next month.

Five Steps

What can you do daily to paint a positive life on a fresh, new canvas? I suggest taking these five steps:

1. Classify the past. The past is a collection of your emotions, experiences, and thought patterns. When you feel an emotion, it's often based upon past experience. Life events trigger your emotional collection, and you interpret your experiences through this lens. When you allow the good to shine through, you can live in the present. When you worry about the future or agonize over the past, you are not fully engaged in life. The trick is to focus your capabilities on addressing the present. Stop agonizing over your mistakes or what someone said.

2. Examine emotional carryover. Changing a negative outlook takes a bit of discipline because you need to resonate with the idea of what you want in the present moment, and accept it as already happening. When you attune to an idea, goal, or state of mind, you want to attract it now, not in the future. It takes a lot of self-reflection. Do some simple mental housecleaning to discover if what you are feeling now is being

embroidered upon by the past. If you are discouraged, shift your thinking to the "today" setting and stop dredging up feelings from the last 20 years—about your parents, jobs, or people who let you down. Release those people, burdens, and circumstances and be free. The past is over. Do yourself a favor and lighten your load!

3. Be inspired by everyone. Life, as an exchange with others, isn't all about taking it in. It's mostly about what you give out. I've met many people who are critically ill and yet have fantastic attitudes. For example, if you visit a pediatric cancer ward, you will see children who are physically challenged but still inspire everyone around them. Their light shines bright with hope



because they are living one day at a time. They make us all think, "If life can be good, despite these circumstances, why am I holding myself back?" They give us a wake-up call to change our outlook and enjoy the present.

4. Release fear and self-doubt. We are often fear believing we can have anything we want. When we see many people immersed in conditions of lack, unhappiness, war, starvation, pain, struggle, and limitation, we begin to lose faith that the normal human experience can be one of abundance, joy, peace, fulfillment, health, and ease. We've been told that "nothing's perfect." Nothing is worse than this programming, because we can't realize our full potential until we release our former ideas of what is possible. Life is a beautiful, perfect, glorious miracle. We choose our situa-

tions, our families, and our painful experiences in order to evolve. Great opportunity exists to make change. Despair and self-doubt diminish our perception of what can be. In the big picture, life is perfect because it gives us room to grow. No matter what happens, we will grow, and we should never fear growth. We should be proud of overcoming, beating the odds—and proud of not dragging ourselves down, together with those around us, with emotions like fear and self-doubt that keep us in the dark.

5. Consciously create your day. I experiment with ways to release the past and move forward, living in the present moment. When I start my day with clear direction of how I choose to think, I get the results I want. I make an effort to move feelings of disappointments and loss farther from my mind each day.

Now, before I get up in the morning, I take a few minutes to create my day by using a series of affirmative statements designed to do three things: they are positive, present-moment statements about what is, not what will be; they address some element of my life that needs improvement; and they get me to identify with the power within to manifest my circumstances—to make what is created by the mind into a tangible or observable reality. This power is derived from spirit, or the Divine, which pervades the universe. To achieve my goals, I say my affirmative statements with love, grateful to be alive. Then I focus on being open to positive change. I visualize life being unfolded to me in creative ways and ask the universe to show me its perfection in ways I would not expect.

We can better understand the co-creative relationship we have with spirit when we let the power of our own thoughts return to us in ways that give us feedback on our desires. By mentally creating my day each morning, I've seen miracles occur: abundance arrives in the form of revenue streams I do not expect. When I see myself as a co-creator each day, I attract great results.

When you release the past, create your day, and cultivate the mental discipline to think positive, you'll see results. When you align with powerful and positive ideas, you'll begin to see a difference. A big part of living in the present moment is about being open to feedback. Be perceptive and positive! **PE**

Charlene M. Proctor, Ph.D., is the best-selling author of Let Your Goddess Grow! and The Women's Book of Empowerment. She is the founder of The Goddess Network, Inc. www.thegoddessnetwork.net

Action: Love life and be open to positive change.