

How can you change your world?

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Introduction

I am sure that you have seen some strange claims from those trying to persuade you to do something but this one really must rank in amongst the truly impossible. But hold on a minute do you realise that if the world around you is going to change it is only necessary to change one person. If we are honest there is only one person that we can change and that is ourselves.

We stand around and say that “they” (whoever “they” are) need to do something to change the situation. We blame others for the things that are happening to us. If there is a problem we find someone to complain to and expect them to do something about the problem. I used to be like that if there was a problem in my life it was caused by "him". He would not change and the way that he wanted to do things made my life difficult. One day I took responsibility to change the situation. Only then could things change. Things did not change in the way that I expected but they still changed for the better. My world changed simply because I decided that it could be changed.

Of course if it was quite that simple why did it take me so long to decide to move on? Why did I not do anything to change the situation years before? I suppose that I had to get to the point of sheer desperation. People had been trying to encourage me to do something for a long time but I had stopped listening. I had to be ready to take the first step.

How did I become a world changer?

I was dying inside. I wanted to be able to blossom into a very different person. Someone who feels that she is thriving and flourishing. Someone who is succeeding and prospering. Someone who is working at leaving an inheritance for those who follow her. Someone who is doing all that she can to change the world around her.

I looked around and saw that I was not the only one who was struggling because they were stuck and wanted to change their situation. I had learnt a lot and wanted to share what I had learned. When you have been there and done that you know what works. Writing is my way of sharing what I know to change the world and to help other people change the world.

We can change one person and that one person can change the world. That one person we can change is ourselves. Our ebook “What IS stopping you from blossoming?” is about working out a strategy to help us blossom. We even have a membership web site www.blossomwithlily.com that includes this and other material.

If you have read our blog (www.lilythepinkonline.com) you will know that blossoming is about thriving and flourishing i.e. being successful and prosperous. This means different things to different people but whatever this means to you this 12 stage strategy can be used to help you blossom.

Stage 1 Recognise that we need to do something

The classic first step of a twelve step programme is to accept that if a situation is to change it is YOU that needs to change. It is not "they" (whoever "they" are) that has to accept you as you are but you have to do something to change.

It is easy to blame people for the problems around about us. For example there are no _____ (fill in the blank for yourself) in our community because they are not doing anything about it. That is passing on the blame to someone else. If there is no _____ what are you doing to change the situation. The questions is if you don't do something who will!

The classic example is the alcoholic who says that everyone else needs to change to accept them as they are. Once they accept that they are the one who has to stop drinking people's attitude towards them changes. It is not just major issues like alcoholism but also other minor changes like tapping a pen or other habits that other people find annoying. We can change their reaction to us simply by changing our own attitudes and behaviour to more positive and helpful ones.

If we want to improve our lives then we have to do something about it. It is our choice whether or not we take advantage of the opportunities around us. Chapter 2 of "What IS stopping you from blossoming?" is called "Dealing with some of the common reasons why we fail to blossom". It is very easy to make excuses why we are not moving forwards. Yet once we say we cannot do something then we are admitting defeat and a blockage is created in our life. Remember though that there are some very good reasons why we should not do certain things such as those listed in chapter 3 "Some legitimate reasons to limit ourselves". There is a saying that where there is a will there is a way. If we stop making excuses and start looking for a way around the barriers that make it harder for us to make progress then we will be able to change the situation.

One example of this is that I wanted to attend a series of classes in London. It takes about four hours to travel from my home to that particular venue. I thought that I would not be able to afford to go by the time I paid the course fees, the cost of traveling there plus staying in London over night. At one time I would not have tried to go but by the time this opportunity arose my attitude had changed. I did some research on how to reduce the costs. I found that by ordering train tickets well in advance they were about 30% of the cost of those bought at the last minute. I found that I could use the vouchers I received after shopping in a particular supermarket to help me pay for overnight accommodation. I found out how to reduce the costs of traveling from where I was staying to the venue. In other words once I had decided to go I found a variety of ways to overcome the obstacles that made it hard to go. If I had said that I could not go then I would not have even have looked for ways to overcome these obstacles.

Stage 2 Become more aware

Ok now we have worked out what needs to be done we need to find the right answers to the following questions. What is my role in changing that situation? What things can I do to change the situation?. Once you have done that you need to focus on the things that you can do to change the situation. The "What IS stopping you from blossoming?" ebook includes some tools that you can use to help you work out what things need to change to improve situation that you want to change. If you deal with these underlying issues changing the problem that you can see becomes so much easier.

We need to be aware of the things that stop us moving forwards. Recently I heard the story of a young man who was thinking about setting up a business. He had worked hard preparing his ideas

and developing his plans. Then he spoke to someone whose only experience was working for other people in a menial role. This person had settled for this role and had not moved on themselves and could not see that it was possible for this young man to achieve his dreams. He listened to that advice and abandoned his plans. He allowed their ideas to become a reason why he could not do what he wanted to do. His lack of awareness of the situation stopped him from seeing why this person had given him that advice.

Asking the questions “why” is a useful way of discovering the issues that lie behind an issue. It sounds simple but it is a very effective tool that not everyone uses wisely. Maybe if that young man had asked himself why the person he asked for advice had given him the answers that they did he would have responded differently and followed his dreams. As we see in chapter 2 “Dealing with some of the common reasons why we fail to blossom” people who have found doing something too hard to do themselves will not encourage others to do something simply because they believe it is not possible. This tool also works the other way around. Why do we want to change something? I want to change xyz in my life. Why? It will help my children. Why? It will make their future more secure. Asking why can also give us motivation to leave an unhappy situation behind us. How successful you are in using this tool depends on how honest and/or accurate your answers are. Remember you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear. In other words using rubbish materials will give you a rubbish product.

Stage 3 Prepare to move on

The stages in this strategy build up one upon another. First you decide to do something and then you need to work out what needs to be done. Here the emphasis is on planning how you are going to make the necessary changes. We look at the importance of planning and outline some ideas about planning. However we have some online training materials that look at planning in more detail. More information about our online resources including more eBooks and membership web sites from www.lilythepinkministries.com/products. These go into a variety of topics, including planning, in more detail than “What IS stopping you from blossoming?” does.

Preparing to move on is not just about working out how you are going to get where you want to go. It also looks at other ideas such as the importance of looking at the journey ahead and not being diverted by the cares of today.

Have you ever noticed that the most successful people are those who have done things in the past that have prepared them for the present? You go to see a doctor or a dentist and you know that they have spent many years studying in order to work in that profession. When they were at school they put the effort in to study and gain the qualifications they needed before they even started learning the practical skills that are necessary to work in such professions. They focused on a future goal and worked hard to achieve it.

Once you have a vision and you know where you are going to do you need to look at how you will do it i.e. develop plans. You also need to recognise the importance of giving up things in the present to achieve what you want to achieve in the future, and be able to handle deferred gratification. Sadly many young people want a certain lifestyle now and struggle to see the impact that what they do now has on their future. Thankfully there are often second chances for those adults who have wasted their time while at school. It is a question of doing the research and finding out what is available. We are developing more and more materials to support those who want to make changes in their lives such as online courses and online clubs. Check our blog to see what progress we are making.

Stage 4 Realise that feelings are not facts

One of the most obvious problems is fear. Fear is seen as False Evidence Appearing Real. There are an amazing variety of words in English that are related to fear. Here are just a few, scared, dread

unease, trepidation and uncertainty. Many people would think of themselves as having doubts or being uncertain rather than being afraid of going forwards.

Feelings are not always facts. Look at the children who are afraid of monsters in the dark. They see something and cannot interpret what they see and come to the wrong conclusion about it. The reasons for our fears have to be recognised for what they are so that we can deal with them. The idea that the way we think influences our behaviour is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 of “What IS stopping you from blossoming?”

The thing that we need to be aware of is that if we run away from fear does not go away. Fear is only controlled by facing it and dealing with it. In fact we do not take control of fear it can control us. It is possible to use fear to our advantage because if we are wary of failing we can use that fear to help us do what is necessary to succeed.

Stage 5 Get the power

Where does power come from? One source of power is knowing what we want to achieve and why. Think of the people are motivated to do things to help their loved ones and do things that appear impossible such as lift a heavy weight to set them free. They know what they want to achieve and make the most of what they have to overcome the obstacle that is stopping them.

Power also comes from knowing where we want to go. If we set ourselves goals and work towards achieving them we will find the way to reach them. Sometime goals can be expressed in words I want to... by such and such a time. Other times our goals can be expressed as images on a visualization board.

Power also comes from making the most of what we have. It is easy to devalue what we have. Those who feel incapable or insecure like to make themselves feel better by climbing on top of others. The problem is that those underneath can easily get crushed and stop valuing what they do have.

Power enables us to overcome obstacles. The journey to success is full of twists and detours. There are traps, pitfalls, hassles and headaches along the way. If our desire to reach journey's end is strong enough then we will get there. More about this in “What IS stopping you from blossoming?” the ebook available from www.lilythepinkministries.com/WhatStopU This book is also the basis of the Blossom with Lily membership web site (www.blossomwithlily.com)

Stage 6 Cultivate healthy behaviour

This is the first of three things that we need to cultivate if we are to blossom. Healthy behaviour includes developing good habits. Our poor habits can harm us in many ways. Problem can be that we do not always recognise what kind of bad habits we have collected over the years. Times have changed and what was standard practice when we were young may now be frowned upon.

We need to avoid unhealthy behaviour like procrastination. Procrastination is often a series of broken promises. I will do this tomorrow and tomorrow never comes. It is as if someone is lying to themselves that one day they will do whatever it is. Those around them struggle to believe that they will ever actually do it. If this type of behaviour gets out of hand then it is little better than lying to ourselves and others. The answer to procrastination is having the self-discipline to get on and do things that we do not really want to do. We need to get on and do things that we should be doing even if it means facing discomfort or inconvenience.

One of the reasons why people do not blossom is that they see obstacles and give up. If they saw them as opportunities to develop new skills, new experience etc then they would be able to cross the mountain. Once they had overcome that obstacle then would be stronger more capable as well as being better able to handle the next challenge that came their way.

Stage 7 Cultivate healthy thinking

Healthy thinking is essential if we are to succeed. Why use the word cultivate? Thinking is like a seed it starts small and it grows and grows until it takes over our life. We can start with a small negative thought and if it is allowed to grow then it can take over our lives. The same is true with a positive thought. If we are to succeed the positive thoughts need to grow and the negative ones need to shrink. Negative ideas like we cannot do enough to be able to achieve the target that we have set ourselves or even setting targets that are so unrealistic that we cannot reach them cannot be allowed to gain the upper hand if we are going to succeed.

One reason why we struggle is that we focus on what we do not have rather than what we don't have. Nick Vujicic, who was born without arms and legs found it hard as a child to see his disability in a positive way. In fact he says that as a child he thought about trying to drown himself in the bath because all he could see was what he did not have. As an adult he has discovered something that he does have i.e. an ability to talk to others and motivate them to achieve great things. Well if a man with such a physical disability can travel all over the world and speak to thousands of people at a time then why can't you go around the corner to speak to one person.

Unless we are prepared to change we cannot grow. We need to grow into new roles and new positions as we move towards new goals. Change provides opportunities for those who can see them and take advantage of them. The ebook "What IS stopping you from blossoming?" looks at some tactics we can use to help us change the way that we think. They can also be found on the Blossom with Lily membership web site (www.blossomwithlily.com)

One way of changing our thinking is to use declarations or proclamations. The idea being that we find a positive statement that we can declare or proclaim is true about ourselves. We can put them up on the mirror on our computer monitor anywhere where we can see them and be influenced by them.

Stage 8 Cultivate healthy relationships

This is the final thing "What IS stopping you from blossoming?" suggests that we need to cultivate. Relationships are very important to our success. They could be mentoring relationships. They could be other supportive relationships. We can only thrive and flourish (i.e. blossom) if we cultivate healthy (i.e. positive) relationships.

We have all seen people who have got into bad company and been led astray. On the other hand some people deliberately aim to associate with people who are going to have a positive effect upon them. When you are with positive people you will be revitalized. When we are with people with negative attitudes like doubt, disbelief and cynicism then these rub off onto us.

What do we mean by relationships? They could be electronic or face to face. They could be relationships that help us learn or help us spread good things around. They are the way that we break the isolation that can restrict the way that we blossom.

We don't just catch attitudes and learn how to behave from those that we associate with we also learn new skills and habits from them. It is important to have role models, people who have gone before and have shown a good example of what to do and how to do it. We can learn about the lives of others from books or from being around them. We can learn many useful skills such as how to create a web page from those we spend time with. Think of the children who learn to cook or garden by spending time with parents and grandparents.

Stage 9 Use and develop other resources

What on earth could this mean? One resource that we have is our creativity. Everyone has some spark of creativity in some way. It is not just writing or drawing or taking photographs. They are expressions of creativity that some people excel in. Creativity is about solving problems not just expressing ideas. We need to use our creativity wisely and learn to record the flashes of creative insight that we have.

Another resource that we have is knowledge and our ability to learn. This is an important resource if we are to overcome obstacles. See a problem discover what the underlying issues are and then you can come up with a solution. One of the reasons why some people struggle is that they need to learn from their mistakes. It takes practice to develop skills and that only comes with time. Yet so many say that they have tried to do something once and failed. Failure is a sign that we need to learn what improvements that we need to make. If we are going to succeed we need to learn from our mistakes.

Words are another resource that we have at our disposal. Words reflect the way that we think . if we make a deliberate effort to change the words that we use then we will be able to take control of our own thought patterns for example if we say “I will” rather than “I should” then it will help us become more positive.

Stage 10 Importance of personal evaluation

The plan that was developed in stage 3 gives us a route to follow to achieve the things that we said that we wanted to achieve in stages 1 and 2. How do we know if we are on target with achieving the things that you want to achieve? This is where personal evaluation is so important. We need to honestly ask ourselves how well we are doing. In other words we should not be too critical or too lenient upon ourselves. This is why in “What IS stopping you from blossoming?” and on the Blossom with Lily web site we look at the importance of accountability.

We also need to consider the importance of remembering that we are all different. I may be able to write but I am not the world’s best photographer. I can manage but it is not one of my strengths. We can improve both our strengths and weaknesses but there will always be some things we are better at than others. This is why we work in teams so that your strength will compensate for my weakness. This is why some say that team stands for Together Everyone Achieves More.

Don't forget that as you will also have joined our email list so you will get further emails about ideas relating to blossoming as well as what projects Lily the Pink Ministries CIC is working on at the moment.

Stage 11 Get on with life

It takes time to blossom and all the time we are working towards our goals we need to continue plodding on and not lose heart. It is helpful if we can see that we are making progress. There are times when it is right and proper to celebrate what we have achieved so far. This could be gaining a qualification or reaching another tangible milestone. These are times when we can pause and recognize how far we have come.

We need to be kind to ourselves and pause occasionally but on the other hand we need to keep moving forwards. This also means that we do not waste time looking backwards at what might have been. If we do that we can cause ourselves a great deal of harm. Another way that we need to be kind to ourselves is that we can set such strict boundaries for our behaviour that we are effectively punishing ourselves. We can tighten our belt in terms of what we do so much that we struggle to breathe. This is why goals need to be realistic and achievable. If we expect too much from ourselves then we will not succeed.

On the other hand we need to keep moving as if we do not keep moving towards the success that we desire we will never achieve it. You can see some examples of what this means in practise in stage 11 of “What IS stopping you from blossoming?” and the Blossom with Lily web site.

Stage 12 Give it time

It takes time for our strategy to work. There are a number of reasons for this. It takes time to work out how to reach a goal. We can know what we want to achieve but it can take time how we are going to do it. We may have to spend time building up a series of different skill sets that will enable us to reach our goal.

It takes time to grow into the person (or possibly organisation) that is able to deal with the issues that are holding them back. In fact those who are catapulted into overnight success often find that they struggle to handle their success. Taking time to move from one situation to another enables us to develop the skills, abilities and experience that we need to make the best use of the changed circumstances ahead. Each time we master one set of skills and move onto the next set of skills we will be able to use the things that we learn from the previous set of skills to help us with the next step. We develop skills abilities and experience step by step layer upon layer and if we do not have the right foundation we will not be able to face the trials of the situation that we are aiming to reach

How can we help?

We hope that you have found these extracts from “What IS stopping you from blossoming?” This book is available from www.lilythepinkministries.com/WhatStopU

In addition to this ebook there is another one called “Sowing and Growing Information Products”. The aim of this book is to use the natural world as inspiration for setting up and running a business selling information products. Go to www.sowingandgrowinginformationproducts.com for more information.

You can also find out more about our other online learning materials from www.lilythepinkministries.com/products.