

Create an INTERNAL LOCUS OF EVALUATION for a more contented life



I don't know about you but I am thoroughly fed up with this pandemic situation. Everything you hear is about COVID-19. Yet ultimately, save following guidelines which are ever-changing, we can do nothing about it. Therefore I'm not going to talk about it . . .

MAYBE IT'S AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT to go inwards instead and have a look at what we can control. Ourselves and our inner selves. So what is going on in you?

Carl Rogers was the psychologist and psychotherapist who founded the Person-Centred Approach to Counselling and Psychotherapy within which one discovery was the Locus of Evaluation.

If you have an Internal Locus of Evaluation, you are likely to be someone who:

(Respectfully) cares little about what others think of them;

Be able to confidently hold your own, even when someone is disagreeing with you;

Will wear what you like and you make your own decisions based on what you feel is good for you;

And you can openly admit when you are wrong about something.

If you have an External Locus of Evaluation:

Your happiness very much depends on whether or not other people are happy with you;

You may agonise over what to say or do in any given situation;

It matters what people think;

You may rarely say what you really feel in case you upset someone;

You find it difficult to make decisions as your decisions have to be based on what impresses others:

You constantly seek reassurance and advice, rather than know yourself enough to know what is good for you, and be confident enough to employ it.

Having an External Locus of Evaluation is common and a moody inhibitor of contentment. You can



live a reasonably happy life but full contentment is pretty impossible until you learn how to shift your Locus of Evaluation to an Internal one. Therapy is one way to make this happen, or practicing mindfulness helps you get in touch with your physical cues.

Meanwhile, however, while we are all in the state of flux, we can save ourselves from the frustration of the pandemic, and can turn our attention inwards to things we can improve. For life.

Ask yourself

How many times do you do things because you think it's what you should do?

Do you stop to even think about whether or not it's what you want or if it's something that makes you feel good or bad?

This is nothing to do with being selfish; it is to do with self-care. If we all practiced more self-care, then we would be freer, happier, more content and therefore much more pleasant to be around! People who are not content tend to be hard work.

Try this

The next time someone asks you

to do something with them or for them, notice how quick you are to say yes. If you say yes without thinking, try to practice pausing long enough to turn your attention inwards to focus on your reaction. You can always give yourself more time by asking: 'Can I let you know later?'

Imagine doing the thing you have been asked to do:

Ignore what the head is saying!

If there is a sinking feeling, any tightness or discomfort, then usually the answer should be no.

If there is a lightness and ease or simply nothing, then the answer is likely to be yes.

Sometimes the answers are as clear as that and easy to identify. To act upon a no, however, is another difficulty if your Locus of Evaluation is External. However, the more you identify and become familiar with your emotional and physical responses, the more you will know what you really really want or need.

Then you can practice saying 'no' in a respectful and kind way. Then you will see that it does not create catastrophe or lose you friends.

Then you are on your way to feeling the freedom and euphoria of possessing an Internal Locus of Evaluation and a more contented life.

Ask Amanda Jayne

I would love to hear from you and will reply to letters which, if we print them, will remain anonymous.

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