



THE POWER OF ACCEPTANCE

By Julie Fuimano-Donley, Success Coach & Author

In our coaching sessions, clients often discuss struggles or frustrations they're experiencing. Struggling is characterized by that feeling of trying to place a round peg in a square hole. It's a stressful place to be. It's also energy draining, time consuming, and it distracts you from the goals you're working on.

From Struggle to Acceptance

Struggle is your response to whatever is occurring. You want so badly for things to be different you're unwilling to surrender to what is. Whatever your situation be it difficulties with your kids or spouse or a job where no one listens to your ideas, there's something you're not accepting and you're pushing up against it, *willing* it to be the way *you think it should be* that's causing your distress.

Stop. Be still. And breathe. Take some time to simply be with yourself and ask yourself how things would be different if you were to just accept that this is the way it is. You don't have to like it; it just is. Stop fighting reality. Once you accept the event, person, or situation as being exactly the way it is – like it or not – you can make better decisions as to how to respond and where you want to go from here.

The Choice is Yours

Often people think that they have no choices; that's not true – there's always a choice. You may not *like* your choices but that's something else entirely.

Whether you like something or not, whether you think something is good or bad, is judgment. Judgment can interfere with your ability to accept reality. Judgment isn't necessarily bad. It can be very helpful. You judge whether someone will be a good friend, boss, employee, patient, or client. You judge whether you want to shop at a particular store, eat at a particular restaurant, or share a story with someone you just met.

It's when you lead with judgment that you get into trouble. When you judge before accepting, you label it before truly understanding it. Judgment keeps you from learning and from moving forward. Most things that happen aren't inherently bad. You think of them as being so because that's what society has taught you. Things aren't bad; they just are. They're considered 'bad' when you don't like it, when you don't agree with it and when you don't wish it to be the way it is or you want it to be another way. When this is the case, you're not in acceptance; you're living a falsehood. And when you refuse to accept, you don't see the choices that are available to you.

You accept the situation when you realize that it's exactly the way it's meant to be. Mary is a client who's spent twenty years wanting and willing her husband to be different. She's tried everything to change him. Now, she simply avoids him. Her home is not her sanctuary. It's just this place where she sleeps. Now that she realizes that her husband will never change, he is who he is and he's happy with the person he is, she can make decisions about her future with him. She doesn't have to like those choices but that doesn't make the situation go away or be different. It is what it is.

Joan, a nurse manager, is unhappy with the performance of one of her staff members. She has confronted him, counseled him, trained him, and disciplined him and his performance has not improved. What if, instead of hoping for him to be different, she just accepted that this is the way he is? Then she can decide whether his performance meets the standards of the department. And even though she's not happy with the idea of having to replace him (a fear that contributed to her unwillingness to accept this staff member's abysmal performance), she's empowered to do something about it.

Recognizing when you're not happy with the way things are is liberating; it frees you from putting up with stress and clears the way for you to eliminate what doesn't work for you so you can add what you want. It allows you to learn something new and to grow in ways that perhaps you would not have done.



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Life choices aren't always easy but who said that life was meant to be easy? We're spiritual beings here to have a rich human experience. That means that we take it all in and learn to make the best of whatever is presented to us. We learn from all of our experiences – 'good' and 'bad'. Ask a millionaire who's experienced bankruptcy and they'll tell you they learned the most from that experience. Or the cancer survivor who'll tell you that cancer was a life-altering and enriching experience. The 'bad' things are often our greatest teachers. Joan will learn what's most important to her when hiring employees. She'll also learn that when an employee doesn't meet her standards, she can act sooner to prevent problems and negativity from getting out of control. It doesn't do anyone any good to keep an employee when clearly he's not working out.

Mary will also learn from the acceptance of her husband. She'll find a way to love him as he is and let go of her desire to change him, or she'll decide that she'd rather start a new life on her own. The choice is hers. But whatever her choice, just having the choice is very powerful.

What are you not accepting as it is? What are you wishing were different in your life, your career, your relationships, or finances? I'd love to hear from you at Julie@NurturingYourSuccess.com.

Are you getting the respect you want? Are you totally overwhelmed and wish there was a better way? Well, there is! Contact Julie@NurturingYourSuccess.com to arrange a free 30-minute coaching session to learn how coaching can benefit you. Self-help Guru Julie Fuimano-Donley, MBA, BSN, RN is a Masterful Coach, Author and Motivational Speaker whose passion is coaching and educating people on the strategies needed to be more assertive so you gain respect, increase work/life balance, and improve your relationships. An expert in her field, Julie is named one of the top 100 thought leaders in personal leadership development. She has published hundreds of articles and is author of the book [The Journey Called YOU: A Roadmap to Self-Discovery and Acceptance](#). Visit www.NurturingYourSuccess.com to learn more about coaching, sign up for her newsletter, or to have her speak at your next meeting or conference.



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