

Live Like There's No Yesterday – John F. Westfall

Choosing to let go is not the same as denying what may have happened, nor does it suggest it won't take time and effort to let it go in a healthy way. (19)

Ultimate conclusions set us up to wrap ourselves in defeat and block our ability to move on (e.g. I'll never find someone to love me.) (25)

Two parts of freedom: Freedom FROM and Freedom FOR (32) What we move from is what entangles us and what we strive for is what brings us to our higher self.

Myths of positive thinking: 1. Positive thinking is easy; 2. Positive thinking means you are happy all the time. 3. Positive thinking protects you from bad things happening. 4. Positive thinking means you won't have negative thoughts. 4. Positive thinking is a cure-all that forever changes your life for the good. (53)

The premeditation of evils actually diminishes their power to hurt or hold us back – “defensive pessimism”. Disingenuous positive thinking involves trying to convince ourselves that everything will work out fine, which subtly reinforces the belief that it would be horrible if things didn't turn out the way we hoped. By setting low expectations, defensive pessimists actually optimize their performance on a variety of tasks. (55) They are committed realists who introduce good planning skills and innovation.

Distortions occur when faced with uncertainty that our minds can't tolerate, so speculation is used to fill the gaps. (69)

Misery requires effort, practice, and hard work. Blaming others will initially makes us feel better about ourselves at the time, but then leaves us feeling powerless because we hold others responsible for our misfortunes. (75)

Blaming: 1. Way to explain why something happened; 2. It's easy; 3. Creates an illusion that we are in control. Not blaming someone else means we have to accept the notion that we didn't do everything right, which implies we were out of control. By blaming someone we get to control the story; 4. Way to attack someone; 5. Defense mechanism. (78)

Admitting mistakes shows strength and courage. Opens the possibility of addressing problems. When we don't have to be right, we no longer need to stand our ground.

What we lose when we blame: 1. Personal growth; 2. Our power; 3. Healthy relationships; 4. Positive influence on others. (85)

High functioning anxiety often energizes us to accomplish our goals, so it is often praised by the outside. The undercurrent, however, is a lot of stress for the individual. (93) Those with high-functioning anxiety often find it difficult to back away or give up on circumstances or people, which can cause us to remain in toxic relationships and poisoned environments way past normal limits. (94). They often experience: 1. Pays close attention to details. Structure reduces anxiety, because they often feel out of control. 2. Can't sleep. 3. Focuses on control. 4. Unable to relax. 5. Pushes to the limits. 6. Plans everything. (103)

Procrastination: Another common characteristic of people with high functioning anxiety is procrastination. (95) Most attempts to fix a procrastinator start with the premise that the root of the

problem is lack of organization. However, it is actually rooted in avoidance of unpleasant feelings. (98) The very things we avoid are the important things, because if they were insignificant, we wouldn't procrastinate- there would be no worry about how we'll do. Most procrastinators with high functioning anxiety will accomplish more things than anyone thought humanly possible, except the big, looming job that matters most. When we feel bad about an impending task, we avoid to feel better – which only helps in the short run. Those with high functioning anxiety set very high standards which can lead to procrastination.

Success: It is only seen in the rearview mirror, so don't focus on it in the moment because it is rarely seen in the moment.

Benefits of anxiety: Helps us unleash our strengths. Improves mental and emotional intelligence if problem-solved adeptly. Directs us to things too important to ignore.

Anxiety can fuel overachievement and incessant action on one end, and on the other end it can leave people paralyzed and helpless to move forward. (105)

Coping with trauma: The purpose of the false self is to hide from unacknowledged pain. (113) Trauma can come from many forms, and it can be a singular incident or ongoing. The brain doesn't distinguish between physical threats and emotional threats – the response in the body is the same. This is why so many physical symptoms are connected to past trauma. (118)

Negative bias – we pay more attention to criticism than praise. (123) Recognize that there is also a difference between genuine praise and flattery. (129) When we overcomplicate things, it gives us an excuse, so we don't have to deal with them. (133)

Love: It's easy to get caught up in the marvelous concept of love and miss the tangible expression of it in our everyday lives. 1. Love moves toward; 2. Love isn't safe; 3. Love avoids bartering (there is no freedom when love is reduced to negotiation). (146). We can only love someone to the extent that we know them. (148)

Change: There are two parts to every change we attempt – Inner thoughts and intentions; Overt actions. Change happens when we take our inner goals and intentions, then look outward and start acting as if the change has already occurred. (157) ALL change is experienced by people as loss. If we don't recognize this, we'll forever wonder why we get close to the change we want but then it all falls apart. (160)

Self-Thoughts: Self-image isn't based on how we see ourselves, nor is it based on how others see us. Our self-image is formed by how we think others see us. (168) Talk back to your unhealthy inner statements. Just because we might think something, doesn't mean that thought gets the final word. Not everything we tell ourselves is true. Challenge the lie. (188)

Hope and Fear: The renewing of our minds involves two important issues: Hope and fear. Unmet longings haunt us with hopes unfilled. When one longing is met, more rise up to take its place, causing us to experience emptiness in the midst of abundance. Fear prevents intimacy by holding us back, pretending, and concealing our true selves so that we don't live with transparency, vulnerability, and authenticity. (192) Fear causes defensiveness, wary, and disengagement. Anger, fear, and bitterness all grow where there is an absence of gratitude. (194) We don't have to be thankful for everything, but we can be thankful in every circumstance. When we choose to be grateful and let go of our fears, it opens

the door for forgiveness, reconciliation, contentment, courage, and authenticity. This is where hope is found. (195)