



Live Your Perfect Weight

Monthly Newsletter

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## AUTOPILOT

***“My philosophy of life is that if we make up our mind what we are going to make of our lives, then work hard toward that goal; we never lose – somehow we win out,” -Ronald Reagan-***

I know of a retired pilot whom I admire greatly, and he loves to tell experiences of his days in the sky. With each story and experience that he shares he always has a wonderful message that is so profound with such deep meaning.

Maybe some of you may remember reading this story in the newspaper or seeing it on the news. I had forgotten all about it until he recalled this experience. He said:

“In 1979 a large passenger jet with 257 people on board left New Zealand for a sightseeing flight to Antarctica and back. Unknown to the pilots, however, someone had modified the flight coordinates by a mere two degrees. This error placed the aircraft 28 miles (45 km) to the east of where the pilots assumed they were. As they approached Antarctica, the pilots descended to a lower altitude to give the passengers a better look at the landscape. Although both were experienced pilots, neither had made this particular flight before, and they had no way of knowing that the incorrect coordinates had placed them directly in the path of Mount Erebus, an active volcano that rises from the frozen landscape to a height of more than 12,000 feet (3,700 m).

As the pilots flew onward, the white of the snow and ice covering the volcano blended with the white of the clouds above, making it appear as though they were flying over flat ground. By the time the instruments sounded the warning that the ground was rising fast toward them, it was too late. The airplane crashed into the side of the volcano, killing everyone on board.

It was a terrible tragedy brought on by a minor error—a matter of only a few degrees. The difference of a few degrees, as with the Antarctica flight may seem minor. But even small errors over time can make a dramatic difference in our lives.”

He went on to tell how he taught the same principle to young pilots:

“Suppose you were to take off from an airport at the equator, intending to circumnavigate the globe, but your course was off by just one degree. By the time you returned to the same longitude, how far off course would you be? A few miles? A hundred miles? The answer might surprise you. An error of only one degree would put you almost 500 miles (800 km) off course, or one hour of flight for a jet.”

When I thought of how most pilots have their planes on autopilot when they reach their desired altitude, I was reminded of how we also put our life on auto-pilot and often slip into unawareness, and forget about our deepest dreams and desires, as we fall into an automatic trance. We fail to recognize the consequences of our behaviors. We make choices based on the way we are feeling in the moment, or we put off “until tomorrow” what we want to accomplish, because we are too busy doing what we’ve always done (autopilot) to do what we really want.

It doesn’t matter if it is healthy eating, or the goals and dreams we want to accomplish, all good intentions can somehow slip into our unconsciousness if we do not become aware of the choices we make every day.

There are many things that can take us off course, and even if it is only a one degree deviation, it can have a detrimental effect on our goals and on our health. Here are a few to be aware of:

- Associating with critical and negative people
- Putting off your dreams and desires, because you are trying to please others
- Fear of not being accepted
- Thinking that your dreams and goals are not worth much, or that you are not ‘worthy’
- Believing that you are powerless to change anything
- Judging yourself (and others) harshly
- Overeating, wasting time, or exhausting your energy
- Ignoring your inner voice

On the positive side, some healthy, empowering choices would be:

- Resting
- Acknowledging things that you have done well
- Spending your time with people that love you and you love them
- Having compassion for others
- Exercising/playing
- Eating well
- Seeking the good and doing the right
- Being present for your children and your spouse
- Taking responsibility for your own life and actions
- Having an attitude of gratitude

So, why do we choose to go into autopilot and unconsciousness? Why would we operate on automatic pilot and follow a default map instead of taking control and going in the direction we want? Whether we act unconsciously or unknowingly, the result will be the same. Sometimes we even act knowingly; knowing that the choice is not good for us.

This is your life; it is not a dress rehearsal. The question is, are you going to go for it, or just go through the motions (autopilot)? Are you going to make a difference in your own life and in the lives of others or are you just going to act powerless? The choice is yours.

Maybe you are letting your emotions rule your life, and we all know that our emotions can fluctuate from week to week. How many times have you “not felt like it” and went into doing what you have always done, and not got what you really want. When it comes to having a plan and following the plan, do we get derailed by our emotions and feelings? Or do we stick to the goal and plan and become the conscious navigator of our own destiny?

Doing your daily affirmations will inspire you to make the best and highest choices for yourself. It will help you regain your power. It will affirm to you that you can and must make choices for your own good and make a difference in the world, because who you are does make a difference.

When you have a vision of what you want your life to look like, keeping that vision foremost in your mind will fortify you so you will be able to make life-enhancing choices, whether it is your health, your relationships, your career or being a better parent.

Ask yourself important questions: If I do this (put in what you are going to do, eat or say) will it help move me in the right direction or move me further away from my goals.

Don't go into autopilot waiting for things to get better before you start. Don't spend time waiting until you are the right weight; or more secure in your career; or when you have more time, etc. Do it now, because none of us knows how long we will have to accomplish our goals and desires.

Becoming aware of what you want for your life will help you so you are not confused and lost and you will rightfully arrive at the destination of your dreams and desires.

***“The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving.” –Oliver Wendell Holmes-***

Till Next Time

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