

Let it go

February 2015 Newsletter



Moving on in life takes more than making plans for the future. You also need to let go of old “stuff” that’s been hanging on to you for who knows how long.

Old injuries and painful memories are emotional quicksand. They can pull you down and prevent you from progressing to new life experiences.

Dealing with the aches and pains of life

No one goes through life without pain. Perhaps you carry the anger and sadness of a messy divorce, disappointing or toxic relatives or other emotional events or experiences.

And who doesn’t want to “right old wrongs”? Yet many wrongs simply can’t be undone. You’ve learned to survive in spite of them. But are you letting “old baggage” keep you from moving ahead to happy new experiences and relationships?

Letting go creates new opportunities

Letting go is not the same as forgetting. It’s not the same as deciding you weren’t hurt that badly after all. It doesn’t cancel out your feelings.

Instead, letting go gives you power. It allows you to change how you view your past and how it impacts your life now. It allows you to take control so history can’t keep you in limbo anymore.

Ways of letting go

Easier said than done, you’re thinking? That may be true. But it’s still possible.

One way to let go is to write a letter about an old hurt. Write down your anger, sadness, regret and grief. Make it long and detailed. Fill it with all your feelings.

When you’re done, re-read your letter to be sure it says everything you feel. When you’re ready, take your writing and destroy it. Make it a real ceremony. If you have a safe fireplace,

toss your letter into the fire and watch it burn up. Have a “funeral” for your letter and bury it in the ground. Put it through a shredder. Take whatever steps you need to say goodbye to “it” once and for all.

Setting new goals

Another way to let go is to start working toward new goals. This is not as simple as setting up general objectives.

Creating goals includes writing down specific things you want to achieve. Want to lose weight? Make new friendships? Advance your career? For each goal, plan action steps. For example:

- **If you want to lose weight**, write down how much and by when. Look into signing up for local weight loss groups or online support.
- **To make new friends**, research community websites where you can find activities to join. Take a class at a local community college or volunteer.
- **If you want to move ahead in your career**, specify the skills you want to use or improve. Set up a meeting with your manager about new responsibilities you might take on.

Finally, you’ll need a way to measure so you’ll know when you’re “there.” Whatever your goal, set up mileposts along the way so you can see your progress.

Going easier on yourself

Try not to focus on your mistakes. No one is perfect or mistake-free. Instead, focus on your achievements. Look how far you’ve come. Write it all down if you need to see it to remember or believe it. If you need more help, ask a good friend or family member to help you identify all your successes.

Think of what you’ve learned, done and overcome. Be proud of who you are and who you’re on your way to becoming.