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by: Pamela Bell

What's your nemesis? Come on, you know you have one. We all do so don't be shy. Go ahead, admit it!

What behavior or thought do you carry around whose absence would make your life more harmonious?

We all seem to have something -- a behavior, a judgment, a conditioned pattern of thinking -- that continues to show up and can create more trouble than good. Those of us who have been courageous enough to admit to our nemesis in the first place may try to let go of it, but often it remains.

Here are a few examples to get the juices flowing:

One theme so common it is almost prehistoric is that "another person is not providing you with what you want or need." So you spend every ounce of energy trying to change that person into who he or she is not, and into the person you want them to be. You may eagerly place your happiness in the hands of someone who: A) might not be worthy, B) might not be qualified, or C) might not

want to be responsible for your happiness because they are busily trying to create their own. The remedy for this is to develop your own happiness inside yourself, and not offer it as a commodity for others to control. Happiness is not a bartering tool -- "if this, then that" or "I'll see your \$20 and raise you my happiness." The beauty of discovering and owning your happiness is that it is yours to keep and nobody can take it away. Isn't that a comforting notion? Even though life events may be painful -- because loss is inevitable -- you don't have to surrender your joy and zest for life.

Another common theme is that your expectations of others -- and of life itself -- are so high that you are forever disappointed. We often project our own perfectionist standards onto others and feel that they are inadequate, lazy, or simply just don't care.

We are all familiar with the saying, "If you want something done right, you had better do it yourself." Right? What does this say of others? It diminishes the resourcefulness and creativity within others and sends out the message that -- whatever they do and

however they do it -- it will simply not be good enough.

This behavior actually says more about the person doing the judging than the one being judged. To the person doing the judging I say "Perfectionism is a tough racket. Do yourself a favor and get on the side of what is real and what is possible. Allow yourself to be in wonder of the many approaches to a task, an idea, or life itself for that matter. Embrace the imperfections in yourself." Hopefully, you'll find immediate relief, because the biggest hurdle for perfectionists is allowing themselves to make a mistake. Grant yourself permission to make mistakes and award yourself the right to be wrong. How can you possibly enjoy your life when you are so busy being critical of it? Isn't it our imperfections that allow us to embrace what it means to be human. Feeling better?

Another popular concept that trips many people up is the illusive promise of "One Day I will _____." Let's fill in the blank shall we? Be rich? Be important? Be happy? Have time to do all the things I enjoy? Have time to spend with the people I love? Have time to rest, to catch-up, to read, to know myself...? "One day I will retire and can stop all of this running around." "One day I will have a job I really love." "One day I will spend the whole day with my kids." "One day I will travel to exotic lands."

These promises are really tricks we play on ourselves to make our current madness more bearable. We are busy people, living busy lifestyles, doing busy things. But guess what? One day we will no longer be so busy because one day our lives will be over and all the busyness in the world will never make up for "the

time we didn't get to _____."

Your life is NOW. Your good health is NOW. Your mental sharpness is NOW. Your creativity is NOW. Your ability to choose is NOW, and don't think for a second that you can't lose your ability to make choices for yourself. You CAN!

So tell me, what "story" are you holding onto that's keeping you from doing the things you most want to do? Are you always tired? Sick? Broke? Indecisive? Too Busy? Unable to focus? Afraid of commitment? Afraid of getting too close? Afraid of change?

I've probably used all these excuses myself to justify my fear of becoming the person I wanted to be -- from becoming a person that believed in myself. I write my column today from a place of understanding and deep appreciation for the transformation I have personally undergone -- and for those transformations I have seen others achieve. We have learned to let go of how we "expected" life to be and learned instead to be open to the miracle that life actually is.

Whatever it is you are waiting for, do it NOW. Be NOW the person you want to be. Be NOW the person that believes in thee.

What if where you are right now is all there is? Would you be happy? Could you live with that?

In lieu of a quote this month I am sending a link to one of the best articles (and scientific studies) I've read on happiness. It's long but it's great! Settle in. Get yourself a cup of tea and go to: http://healthandenergy.com/pursuit_of_happiness.htm

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