

FREE YOURSELF

What makes a person free? As we approach our country's independence celebration, I often think about what freedom actually means. America was founded based on the desire for individual freedom, and we live in a country that provides enormous liberty, limitless opportunities and advantageous privileges. Yet, as individuals, I observe many people who do not feel free within the lives they have created. Sometimes they feel locked into their circumstances, restricted by their choices, and are scared to even question their lives, much less begin making changes.

But, what if you could feel free to start living the life you are really meant to live? Have you ever thought about what it would be like to have complete and utter freedom? Do you know what freedom means to you? I have come to realize that "freedom" carries different meanings for different people. For some, it is the freedom to be who you are, or the freedom to express yourself fully without holding back and worrying about the consequences. For others, freedom can be defined as the ability to travel, to explore the world and to learn about and connect to others.

Another way to think about having freedom is by making choices within the life you have already created. For example, being able to have a job you love as opposed to the one that brings in the paycheck; being able to do something for yourself if the primary focus has always been on others; or being able to pursue other interests or hobbies, without always feeling like there is no time, money or opportunity to engage in what you want, much less enjoy it.

I believe freedom is about knowing that you have choices, no matter what the circumstances. No one can take away your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, attitudes, dreams or perspectives. You have the autonomy to believe what you do, think what you want, and feel what you feel without any restrictions. It is your free will and human right.

I hear people say, "I don't have a choice." It might be true that there are certain responsibilities, commitments or situations that might need to be honored, or something has been handed to you that you might not have preferred. Yet, I believe you can choose your attitudes and beliefs, dream of new possibilities and start making decisions to see things in a different light or do something in a new and different way. Here are some ideas:

WAYS TO FIND YOUR FREEDOM:

What holds you back? What are the thoughts, the stories we make up, the boxes we put ourselves into that hold us back and keep us from being our authentic selves? What do you want more of in your life?

The Let Go's

- Freedom to Let Go
- Freedom from Stress, Worry and Anxiety
- Freedom from "Should's"
- Freedom from Low Self-Esteem or Self-Deprecation
- Freedom from Negativity
- Freedom from Being Defensive
- Freedom to Make Mistakes and Begin Again
- Freedom from Fear
- Freedom from Doubt
- Freedom from Shame & Guilt
- Freedom to Cut Loose
- Freedom from Past Disappointments
- Freedom from Unrealized Dreams or Goals

The Move Towards

- Freedom of Choice
- Freedom to be Who You Are
- Freedom to Love
- Freedom of Expression
- Freedom of Self-Confidence
- Freedom to Explore
- Financial Freedom
- Freedom of Learning and Knowledge
- Freedom of Our Own Thoughts, Feelings and Emotions
- Freedom to Take Action
- Freedom of Acceptance and Peace
- Freedom of Human Rights
- Freedom to Speak Up
- Freedom of Connection
- Spiritual Freedom

It is within your power to become as free and happy as you make up your mind to be. You might not be able to make immediate changes in you life at this moment, but you can start dreaming and working towards something new. Better yet, you can free yourself by changing the viewpoint or perspective you currently hold. After all, you are as happy as you decide to be and that can start now.

A COACHING EXERCISE TO FREE YOURSELF:

Step 1- Using the list above, define what freedom means to you.

Step 2- What do you need to free yourself from, and in what areas of life do you need relief?

Step 3- How many ways do you know to free yourself? In other words, what will liberate you?

Step 4- Once you have discovered what you need to let go of, you will have the freedom to go towards something new. What do you choose in any given moment?

Jennifer is founder of Excavive Life Coaching in Louisville, KY. Her work focuses on personal and professional life coaching, creative and entrepreneurial consulting, inspirational speaking, writing, and occasionally teaching salsa dancing. Her website is excavive.com. Jennifer can be reached at jennifer@excavive.com or 502.893.9589.