

Transitional Friction – Change is a Comin’!

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It’s easy to list all the different ways you can better your life. I can send you link after link on how to eat better, exercise better, mindfulness tips, and understanding your chakras (what the heck is a chakra?) Truth is, most of us “*know*” what we need to do, but it’s that doing it part that hangs us up...am I right?

I’m not going to say you “*neeeeed*” to do this and that. That’s not my job nor is it in my scope. What I DO feel I can share is this...pick one habit, only one, and work on that one. Most of our unhealthy or undesirable habits are that...habits. We got into them somehow and now we are stuck. Picture the proverbial wagon wheel in a rut. It’s easy for the wheel to just follow that same path and just go without even thinking. If it gets to one side, it just veers back and continues on its predictable and repetitive journey. One day the driver wants to go a different route, but that means leaving the rut and going another direction. Hmmm, what happens? That wheel grinds and scrapes and crunches its way out of the dirty rut until it’s out and begins a new path. That’s a lot of hard work, lots of friction and vibration and shaking to the rest of the wagon, right? But then what? All of the sudden the wagon is on a new path and it’s all good again and new adventures begin.

Hopefully you see the analogy here that our body is a wagon riding along our ruts, and to change a habit, a path, a course of action, there is undoubtedly going to be friction. For example, on New Year’s Day, people rush out to the gym after their resolution to live better so they rush to the treadmill and kill themselves for two hours, but then fall right back into the predictable, safe, easy patterns....the rut. Or you may try to change your whole life overnight to better yourself, but it’s overwhelming and we’re back in the rut again. Sound familiar?

I say take yourself out to lunch one day and have a strategy meeting with yourself. Figure out what you want to change and why. Talk to your wellness team ahead of time and perhaps do some basic blood work and tests to see if there is anything medical that needs attention first (often times there is low grade physical issues that can cause ruts.) Get a good grip on your desires and try to be realistic about them and prioritize. Most times, one good habit will spur the next and the dominos fall more smoothly. Then, and this is where it gets simple; pick one habit or even one step of a first habit and begin there. Let yourself be human and just focus on that one habit and nothing else. It could be as simple as:

- Substitute water for that 4th cup of coffee, or alternate
- Park further back at work promoting more walking
- Pack one homemade lunch a week rather than going out
- Try a movement class once a month
- Do less TV before bed
- Turn off your mobile device during meals

See the pattern? These are really really small and you could even make them smaller. The key is to start small and work your way up. With EVERY change in your life, no matter which area, there will be friction. That wagon wheel will grind its way out of the rut, and dirt and rocks are going to fly. If you start small then that friction will be smaller and you’ll have a new habit built in no time without tipping your wagon or just falling back into the rut. Embrace the friction, know it’s there, and use it as incentives that change is happening and habits are reforming, and treat it positively, not negatively. Happy Trails!