

PAIN
AVOIDANCE AND MAGNIFICATION

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Pain: Something the body does to warn us of something and it actually “hurts.”

Psychological pain – This is all self-created (notice I didn’t say avoidable).

But it is “pain” or “suffering” only because we label it so –
we could just look at it as just thoughts or stupid thoughts or
just *neutral signals* where we experience no pain (or further pain, anyway)...

People who don’t do well in life, other than being uninformed on how to do well, are typically very pain avoidant. We all, of course, go toward pleasure and happiness and away from pain.

There are three dimensions here:

1. A person needs to know (have a mature viewpoint) about how much pain (cost) to incur to get a greater benefit in terms of long term happiness.¹
2. Know that happiness accumulates and piles up, with an ongoing benefit to you.
3. Pain is mostly caused by one’s way of thinking. It is “made up” and need not exist to the degree it does!!!!

What’s the difference in pain felt between these two people who must spend the next hour organizing some things?

Person 1. Oh, geez, I hate this. I could be having more fun. I’m not good at this. This is not my “thing.” I’m going to be miserable.

Person 2. OK, my intention is to have a functioning space here and that will make life better and easier and get me better results. This is an investment I’m willing to make! I’m even going to enjoy the process, noting and having pleasure in the results I’m producing. I’ll do this for an hour and then I’ll do something to reward myself...

Or what is the difference in pain between the following two people:

Person 1. I can’t stand pain. I can’t stand being uncomfortable. I need relief. I need to avoid feeling anything about myself. I’m really not good enough or strong enough. I think I’ll go ahead and have a smoke.

¹ If we had the maturity and the insight to know that emotional pain is mostly just a “made up” thing or derived from one, what we call “pain” in a less aware mode would simply be called a “price” to pay and could be considered a “so what” (neutral, objective choice).

Person 2. I know that any painful feeling is a sign that I need to do (correct) something. I know that I've made up a story about this somewhere in my life and I know it is not the truth. What I tell myself about the pain and what it means is strictly made up. I do not need to get stuck in the story and I can let it go. Let's see now, what happened that made me feel that way? What was my thwarted intention, what do I really want as a result? If I want that how do I need to be to get that result? If I have myself be that, what kind of actions would I take?

Person 2 experienced much less pain (maybe a minor annoyance) and did not prolong it. Person 1 made up a story about how awful it was and made himself more miserable – no wonder the person wanted to run away! But not doing what is needed ultimately causes long term problems and, basically, a lower opinion of one's self – and what kind of happiness is that likely to produce!?!

Stinkin' thinkin' is the cause of most pain. So what needs to be done is to “unstink” the thinking, get it straight, get it “mature”.

To mature-thinking people, pain is a minus but the gain is such a plus that they feel ahead, being able to see that it is a net plus.

The classic: a spoiled kid, who thinks everything should be easy and just come his way without effort. The result, always, is someone with lower self-esteem. Basically, it costs him his “life” (what could have been a happy life becomes one that isn't).

As one gets older, one becomes older but not necessarily wiser. Sure wisdom does take some time, but it is worth every bit of the investment.

The way to avoid pain and discomfort is to get into a floating tank, close the top so there is no light, lie in the lukewarm water, block out any sounds – voila! No pain, no discomfort.

However, note that there is no stimulation and no life!

Avoiding pain too much cuts out really living life.

Except for physical pain, other pains (emotional ones) can be “unwound”. We recommend that you become knowledgeable enough to do this and to use systematic worksheets to walk you through the process.

See the sentence and rational thinking rework sheets.