

COLLABORATIVE LIFE COACHING

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We All Get to Wait

Life coaches usually talk about taking charge of your life and making the most of today. I believe both of those are vital to thriving, not just surviving. However, this article acknowledges the reality that sometimes we all get to wait for change. Sometimes the situation is beyond our control.

This past year has been a time of uncertainty and has provided us ample practice in learning how to wait. We have waited to see if Obama would be elected, then waited to see if Congress can stabilize the economy. We are now waiting for the stock market to quit falling, so we can decide how long we will wait to change jobs or retire. We have waited with our neighbors to see if they will be laid off, and waited with friends and family as their health declined.

My family has been waiting also: to get “the job”, for the new baby, for new love to become secure, for a promotion, and for outside funds to create job security. Your family might be waiting for these same things, or instead for grades to come up at school, to be recognized for achievement, or for that part-time job to buy a car—after a wait for savings to grow.

Webster defines the word “wait” as “to be in expectation, to pause, stop briefly, be patient”. This suggests we could choose to become passive, and put life on hold. We could feel helpless and lost, or unhappy. I would like to suggest, however, that we can use waiting time more effectively. We may also have a moral obligation to model healthy waiting for our loved ones.

Let's look to nature for lessons. What is happening to a bulb underground as it waits for Spring to bloom? It is not just a lump, but an active organism gathering nutrition and size to prepare for rapid growth and a beautiful bloom once conditions are right.

We can imitate nature's wisdom. Even if we look fairly passive on the outside, we can use waiting time for internal growth. We can read and listen to experts and spiritual leaders. We can take an online class. We can choose to change our ideas, revise our plans, or even sharply modify our approach to some aspect of life.

These are silly, but sadly true human examples of how waiting can be a matter of choice:

1. Would your wait for a lay-off notice be less excruciating if you :
 - (a) watched re-runs and sipped a brew (or three) every night after work? or
 - (b) changed your resume, explored training for new skills, and learned to samba?
2. Would your wait for better investment returns seem shorter if you
 - (a) took several short camping or hiking vacations to cheap but beautiful locations? or

- (b) obsessed about the daily market rates and regularly harassed your financial planner?
- 3. Would your pregnancy be more comfortable if you
 - (a) ate chocolates and complained about getting fat? or
 - (b) learned pregnancy yoga and deep breathing techniques, and took your dog to obedience training?

You get the point. Waiting can be lost time, or time for new growth. I will leave you with these two very simple but important questions.

What are you waiting for in your life?

What are you doing while you wait?

warmly,

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