

Embracing Change



Companion Notebook
with Steven Howard

Chapter 1 – Some of the Blocks and Obstacles to Change

A Rigidity in Thinking

1. What are some of the rules that frame how I live my life? As I consider each one, does it operate as a restriction to how I'd like to live my life? If so, how?
2. If I were to decide to make a shift in my thinking, how might I, and perhaps others, benefit from that decision?
3. What next steps or actions would I need to act on my decision?
4. As I imagine myself taking those steps and then realizing the change as already having happened (in my mind's eye), how would I feel and be acting?
5. Now, taking each limiting thought or belief you've uncovered, journal here about each one as you consider and respond to the previous questions.

The first limiting thought or belief I've uncovered is this: _____

Here's how it has restricted my life _____

If I were to decide to make a shift in my thinking and *NOT* allow this belief to control how I feel and act, how might that decision benefit me and perhaps others?

What next steps would I need to take to support my shift in thinking?

Companion Notebook for “Embracing Change”

As I use my inner power of imagination to transport myself into the future, into a time when I now am living free of this restriction, how am I feeling and what is measurably different in how I am BEing?

The *next* limiting thought or belief I’ve uncovered is this:

Here’s how it has restricted my life

If I were to decide to make a shift in my thinking and *NOT* allow this belief to control how I feel and act, how might that decision benefit me and perhaps others?

What next steps would I need to take to support my shift in thinking?

As I use my inner power of imagination to transport myself into the future, into a time when I now am living free of this restriction, how am I feeling and what is measurably different in how I am BEing?

The Need to Be Right

- 1. As I take a gentler, kinder look at my need to be right, I ask myself, does it bring me closer to others or does it seem to result in separation or distancing?**

- 2. What does it say about me as a person? When I see this trait in someone else, what are my thoughts about *them* and what feelings do I experience?**

- 3. When I consider the idea of “giving up” being right, what goes through my mind and what feelings does this bring up?**

4. How might my life and my relationships with others change if I were to decide to alter my thinking from "needing to be right" to "letting go and letting God" guide my way?

Am I ready? YES _____ NO _____

Fear of the Unknown

1. Can you describe what it feels like when you recognize you're being gripped by this fear of the unknown? Close your eyes and take a deep breath and then let it out as you relax into the question. Now write down what comes to mind as to what the feeling is.

2. As you allow yourself to rest in that feeling, ask your intuitive power of discernment to surface what the thought is that makes the "unknown" so scary? Use the space below to write down what comes to you.

3. As you review what you’ve just written, can you recall an earlier time in your life when you perhaps first became fearful of the unknown? If you can and holding the memory in your conscious mind right now doesn’t bring on a stress level higher than a 5 or 6 on a scale of 0 – 10, then briefly describe that earlier time in the space that follows.

4. Being who you are today, do you think there’s reason enough to hold onto this fear of the unknown, or are you perhaps ready to let it go? Consider the question and then write down what comes to mind below.

Anger

1. What is the source for my anger? Does it rise up in reaction to something I see or hear being expressed by someone or something around me (an external source) *or* does it seem to be an internal voice, something I’m saying to myself? Write down what comes to mind below.

2. How do I express the anger and how do I feel after I’ve expressed it in the way I have?

NOTE: Sometimes it is necessary that we speak up and express our anger, but how we do that is very much dependent upon whether or not we’ve been able to center ourselves in our heart space and respond, using the qualities within.

Other Blocks that are in My Life

This is your opportunity to jot down blocks or obstructions that may be operating in your life and preventing you from seeing what is hidden in plain sight: within your heart space, the doorway into your greater True self.

As you list each block, give some thought to how each one operates in your life and how your life might be different if you should decide to release the blockage and, in so doing, disempower it; write those thoughts down as well.

My experiences (if any) with BEing in the “Present Moment”?

How and under what conditions have I experienced “Joy” in my life?

How and under what conditions have I experienced “Gratitude” in my life?

How and under what conditions have I experienced “Appreciation” in my life? And how does it differ (if it does) from my experiences of Gratitude?

Chapter 3 – Taking the First Steps

These are questions for you to consider:

- 1. Does the reality of my life measure up to how I would like it to be? If not, what are the aspects of it I wish could be different?
- 2. What might be contributing reasons for why I’ve been settling for less?
- 3. As I now recall any hopes and dreams that never came to fruition, am I feeling some sense of failure—like it’s somehow my fault? Or am I sensing some level of anger—like I’m a victim of circumstances and it’s someone else’s fault?
- 4. How would I say I’m dealing with it?
- 5. Is there perhaps something I could do to alter the situation and, if so, what might that be?

Now is a good time to capture your thoughts in the space provided below and on the following page.

Chapter 4 – The Role Judgment Plays in Our Lives

Judgment #1 – “You’ve got to be careful who you trust.”

What are my thoughts and reaction when I read about this judgment? Does it resonate as one that I sometimes think or tell myself? If so, does any particular example of a situation or a person come to mind? What or who is it?

Use this space to write down your thoughts.

Other Judgments that apply to myself

After reading the many judgments/rules shared with you in this chapter, do any of them resonate for *you*? If so, name them in the space below and add any others that come to mind for you, along with any specific examples from the past and the outcome of your acting on the judgment. If you think you might be ready to let go of any of them, then place an asterisk next to them (so you can easily find them later on when you get to the next chapter).

Chapter 5 – Making Room for the Changes I Want in My Life

Step 1: Committing one’s self to a recognized program to achieve change

Have I already begun to work on making changes in my life and, if so, what program or approach have I chosen? If not yet, does one of those mentioned in this book (or in “*Curiosity: the Gateway into Knowing*”) speak to me? If I am still uncertain, why is that and what do I need to do to clear up my uncertainty?

Step 2: Setting a daily intention to be “open to the present moment”

Have I begun the practice of being open to the present moment? If I have, what’s that been like so far? What’s the experience been like and how has it altered how I spend my days? And if I haven’t experienced much of a change, what may be the reason for that? Am I getting impatient with myself or the process? If so, am I perhaps getting ahead of myself and expecting a result I’m wanting to see now when all that’s needed is a little more patience? Have I perhaps slipped back into old thinking (that it should happen according to *my* schedule...have I taken over the controls again, forgetting I’m the co-pilot and my part is to follow my inner guidance by listening and then taking whatever action my intuition is telling me needs to be taken?)

Step 3: Establishing a daily practice of expressing my gratitude

Am I expressing my gratitude for all the good that is in my life, for all those who are serving as a source for that good? How am I doing that and if I'm not, why not? NOTE: I can continue to revisit this page as I practice and add in dated notations about what I'm finding to be grateful about.

Step 4: Becoming aware of the changes in my thinking as I practice these steps

In what ways have I experienced or noticed a shift in my focus from about “acquisition of things” to appreciation for what is already in my life?

Step 5: Becoming aware of how I spend my time

Have I noticed any changes in how I spend my time each day? If so, describe those changes here. Here are some questions to ask myself as I consider this topic:

- 1. Does this activity support the direction I am wanting to take with my life? If so, how? And if it doesn’t, then why am I still continuing to spend time doing it?**

- 2. If I’m feeling like I “should” for some reason, then what’s behind that belief? Is it really true or am I continuing to spend precious time this way because I feel obligated or I’m afraid I’ll disappoint someone? How might I feel if I no longer held to that belief?**

- 3. Is it possible I’m just not sufficiently prepared or ready to take the action I’m trying to take, that I need to stop and shift, setting the item aside until I feel some inner guidance and direction?**

4. Is it possible I could re-prioritize the things I’m doing and give this one a lower priority and if so, would that decision remove a bit of stress from my daily life? Sometimes we get into believing everything has to be done *now* because having something undone on our “to do” list is just too stressful.

5. If I decide it’s time to release this activity from my life right now—to step away for a while—does my decision impact others and do I need to communicate my decision to them? Am I ready to do that now or do I need to “practice” what I’m going to say, to make sure I don’t have any other related, hidden fears that I also need to look at?

NOTE: When making up the list of how you spend time, be sure to look at the way you fill time when you’re not really spending it doing what your heart is in, what’s serving your passion. Things like texting, being on the phone with family and friends, aimlessly searching the internet or playing internet games, making too many trips out to the stores, or watching television. You’ll be surprised by how much time you can free up by going through this exercise, and, once you’ve completed it, making up a revised priority list is a great way of re-orienting your mind, putting it up somewhere where you’ll see it every day. It is also a concrete reminder of the change you’ve decided to embrace!

Chapter 6 – The Importance of Daily Prayer and Meditation Time

There are no exercises in support of this final chapter but space is provided for writing down any notes that capture thoughts which came to you while reading Chapter 6.
