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What happens when we AVOID Difficult people?

Difficult people don't usually go away. Until you deal with the person or issue it will persist and actually feel like it is getting bigger. As it grows it will seep into other areas of your life and relationships. The bottom line is IT'S NOT WORTH IT!

When you notice that someone is difficult and you avoid it, you begin to add to your own personal tension. It's like holding your breath; you can only do it for so long without a negative consequence. As this tension builds, your behavior changes. The difficult person may notice a change in you or they may not.

The more you avoid the person or the issue the worse it becomes. The worse it becomes the more difficult you find it. The cycle continues with your emotions getting more and more out of control.

You begin to demonize the person, they become the villain and you begin to give them way too much power and control over your thought life. You assume the worst about them most of the time. You can completely lose perspective.

Your frustration can turn to stress and then in time to distress. Your health may suffer, your work may suffer and also your relationships may suffer. You go to sleep worried and wake up to the first awful thought in your mind, you have to deal with them again today! Worst thing is, they may not even know what the problem is....

I am not saying that this is not difficult for you, ABSOLUTELY NOT! I am saying that avoiding the issue and not dealing with it, will not help you and it will only make it worse.

So, what do you do?

- ✓ Awareness is the key, realise when this is happening. Notice when you catch yourself in avoidance mode. Then clarify with the person. Is the intention you have assumed the truth?

- ✓ De-personalise it, this will make it easier to remove your emotions and deal with the issue.
- ✓ Know what the issue is, is it their attitude, is it a behavior, is it the effect on you, what is it? It is really important to get clear on this.
- ✓ Your next step is addressing it early, before the vicious cycle begins. Before your emotions have become over involved and your perspective is completely skewed.
- ✓ Think about the outcome you want – it should be ideally a win-win for you both.
- ✓ Be positive, open and respectful. Be prepared for them to have a different view than you, that is their right too. You can have a different perspective but remain respectful.
- ✓ Look for common ground.

Work on what you can change. Take responsibility for your part, not theirs, just yours.

If this approach does not work then let them know that you will be escalating this to your manager for appropriate support.

Make sure you follow through.

Ultimately it is your control. You have the choice to avoid or to deal with it. In all of my experience a problem has never been solved through avoidance. So if you are sick, tired, worried, avoiding, and feeling powerless then REMEMBER you have a choice to make!