

“Be Better at Being,” One Road to Happiness

Every morning when you wake up, you probably think about what it is you intend to do that day. Your “doing” intentions might make a long “to do” list.

Do you ever create any “being” intentions for the day? Even one? Do you ever choose some quality of “being” to focus on that day? Most people don’t.

Most people think this way: first I must “do,” so I can “have,” and then I’ll “be.” Example: first I’ll work hard to “do” what I must to “have” success, then I’ll “be” happy. But life operates much better this way: First I’ll “be,” then I’ll “do,” and then I’ll “have.” That’s because “being” enables “doing” which affects “having.” Yes, “being” comes first. It influences what you **will** do and, consequently, the results you’ll have.

Here’s a way to reach a higher level of “being.” Every morning write on a piece of paper one “being” intention for that day – just one – and carry the paper with you all day. (example: To-day I intend to be thankful.) Make this a daily habit.

Why is this effective? First, the act of writing it down each morning requires more neural involvement than just thinking about it, and helps cement it in your mind. So even if you select the same being intention as the previous day, write it on a new slip of paper.

Second, you’ve got it on your person all day – in a pocket, a purse or wallet, whatever. Because you’re conscious it’s there, you’ll find yourself – almost unconsciously – planning to implement it.

Third, what if you deviate from your intention? Suppose you choose the intention to be kind and then, later in the day, you realize you’re being hurtful to someone. That will create internal tension resulting from dissonance – the disparity, the disconnect, the discrepancy – between your intention that day and the way you’re acting. To relieve the tension (and the

unhappy realization you're being less in the moment than you truly are), you can recover your "better self," and apologize both to your victim and yourself. Then the dissonance will dissipate and so will the tension it caused.

Choosing "being" intentions is like channel surfing on TV. There's a happy channel, a sad one; a loving channel, a hating one; a peaceful channel, a stressful one; a responsible channel, an irresponsible one; a friendly channel, a rejecting one; a cheerful channel, a gloomy one; a channel for optimists, another for pessimists; a forgiveness channel, a vengeful one, etc. Lots of different channels. And you hold the remote control. The name of your remote is **Power of Choice**. That's what enables you to achieve victory over yourself – a victory we all need.

And sometimes, when our own personal Power of Choice is inadequate for the task at hand, we will need to ask God to help us boost it. Isn't it great to know we can call on God when our own strength is insufficient?