

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

CHANGE



THE THINGS YOU CAN

MIKE MARTIN



Change the Things You Can is about finally dealing with the difficult people in your life, especially at work. This book contains proven strategies, techniques and inspirations that can help you stay calm, serene and sane even as the world around you is in chaos. Learn to deal with difficult people by improving your communication skills, accessing additional resources, and knowing when it's time to walk away. Find your own path to serenity.

CHANGE THE THINGS YOU CAN:

Dealing with Difficult People

by Mike Martin

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First Edition

To Joan:
My light in the darkness.

"If you can cultivate the right attitude, your enemies are your best spiritual teachers because their presence provides you with the opportunity to enhance and develop tolerance, patience and understanding."

The Dalai Lama

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Chapter 2: Use Love not Fear

*"Even as we move apart
We grow closer
Together
It is not distance that will separate us
Only fear"*

A truly difficult person fears no one. Try love instead. Love means small acts of kindness without any expectation of being rewarded. Love means a smile in the morning and a good bye at night. Love means asking how are you? and actually waiting to hear the answer.

It is not surprising that most of the world's religions have love, not fear as their base belief. That hasn't stopped religious fervents from adopting a fear-based approach to their teachings but it is not where the Buddha, Christ, or Mohammed started out from and it's certainly not the message they left us to live by.

Love and Religion

The Hindu spiritual tradition says that to live is to love and to fear is to cease to exist. Part of that means that in order to restore love into our world, we have to first eradicate fear. The Sufis extend this idea by saying that not only do we have to love, we have to become love. Yet this isn't something you can just decide to do, it is a journey that may never end.

The Buddha said "Hate never yet dispelled hate. Only love dispels hate." Islam also has a strong message of love of Allah and of one another at its core. The Prophet understood the impact of this strong, pure love in building societies and nations, and he never let any occasion pass without advocating this love and commanding Muslims to announce their love for one another, in order to open hearts and spread love and purity among the ranks of the faithful.

Christianity may claim ownership of the Golden Rule: “Love thy neighbor as thyself”, but it actually comes from Judaism long before Jesus. Jewish law commands them to love both Jews and strangers, to give aid to the poor and needy, and to do no wrong to anyone in words or in business.

There is a story in the Jewish holy book, the Talmud that tells a story of Rabbi Hillel who lived around the time of Jesus. A pagan came to him saying that he would convert to Judaism if Hillel could teach him the whole of the Torah in the time he could stand on one foot. Hillel replied, "What is hateful to yourself, do not do to your fellow man. That is the whole Torah; the rest is just commentary. Go and study it."

Love one another has not stood as a call to the faithful for so long because it is just a religious precept. It remains because it works, far better than fear, or anger, or revenge, in helping us get along. Even with difficult people.

Dealing with Vampires

Difficult people live in the deep end of the fear spectrum of emotions fearing they will lose what they have or not get what they want.

Caroline Myss in her book “*Sacred Contracts*” calls these people vampires. They feed on other's negative reactions like sharks to blood they are attracted to fear, anger, and distress. It is their prime energy source. And of course they have to get it from other people.

One of her colleagues Dr. Judith Orloff, the author of “*Positive Energy*” calls these difficult people energy vampires and to deal with them she suggests a four step process:

1. **Identify the Energy Vampires**, and begin to evaluate ones you'd like to limit contact with or eliminate. Then plan at least one complete afternoon with people who give off positive energy and avoid the drainers.
2. **Set Clear Boundaries**. It's crucial to limit the time you spend discussing a vampire's gripes. But how you do it is just as important.

Instead of saying, "You're selfish and self-obsessed, I can't take you anymore," which a part of you likely feels, take a breath and shift to your heart.

3. **Meditate.** Sitting in meditation will ground you when you've been struck by a vampire. Try and calm your mind. Close your eyes. Focus on your breath. Maybe they will be gone by the time you open your eyes. If not, you'll feel better anyway.

4. **Visualization.** When you're with vampires you can't get away from, visualize a protective shield of white light surrounding every inch of you. This lets positive energy in, but keeps negative energy out—particularly efficient for vampires at meetings or social events where you're trapped.

Letting Go of Fear

Doctor Gerald Jampolsky, the author of "*Love is Letting Go of Fear*," has worked extensively with a wide range of people in putting this principle into practice. Jampolsky says that love is the total absence of fear and the recognition of complete union with all life. We love another when we see that our interests are not separate.

He does a lot of work with children who are suffering from cancer and other terminable diseases. He incorporates his philosophy into his work by defining love as the total absence of fear and health as inner peace. In this way healing too is letting go of fear. This is quite different from the medical model where you are trying to change bodies.

Although many of these children are not certain of living they and their families are more at peace because they are getting rid of their fears. In a recent interview he told about one of his experiences with a child who was dying from cancer. This 12-year-old summed it all up for him when he said: "Live life to the fullest. This minute is this minute. The disease doesn't own you; you own the disease."

So how do you help people handle their fears? Jampolsky says that you look right at the fears and then you see them as not real, and you choose love instead of fear.

Change the Things You Can

He identifies five main principles to do that:

1. **Realize** there has to be another way
2. **Choose Peace** rather than conflict
3. **Choose Love** rather than fear
4. **Be a Love-finder** rather than a fault-finder
5. **Be a Love-giver** rather than a love-seeker

Powerful messages and lessons that we all can learn from.

Summary

Try love instead. It can overcome and overpower any difficult situation. Love is an essential principle of all positive philosophies and religious traditions. Beware of the vampires that lurk in the corners of your life. They are waiting to suck the positive energy out of you. Try replacing the fear that exists in your life with love. Love really can conquer all.

**** On Line Resources**

www.myss.com

Carolyn Myss's website that features a daily message and free newsletter to keep up on the work of one of the best transformational authors and teachers.

www.attitudinalhealing.org

This is the home website of the organization that was founded by Dr. Gerald Jampolsky, *The International Center for Attitudinal Healing*.

This organization helps people support one another to overcome the conflict, fear, and feelings of isolation that can accompany a life crisis, and encourages a choice for peace of mind.



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