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What Do You Tolerate?

Most of us tolerate much more than we realize. We put up with, accept, take on, and are dragged down by a variety of things including people's behavior, situations, unmet needs, crossed boundaries, frustrations, problems, and unfinished projects. We weave these tolerations into our lives and do our best to ignore them, but, just because we have successfully pushed them into the background, are they harmless?

What you tolerate can keep you from being the person you want to be. It can stifle your evolution by siphoning off energy you need to do the things you want to do and be the person you want to be. This constant drain on your energy acts as a leak on your resources. It steals your time and creativity. It robs you of the focus needed for more goals and dreams.

This capacity to tolerate is learned early. Most of us are taught patience, sharing and "playing nice" by our parents and teachers to condition us to get along with others. Later, we learn to be 'flexible' and to compromise to build and sustain personal and business relationships. Before you know it, you have stopped listening to your own needs and started to fill your time with demands and expectations of others. You begin to feel overwhelmed. You often say "I don't have time" or "I never seem to get anything done". You feel less satisfied, unfulfilled, and as if that were enough, you feel guilty for what you might view as selfish intentions.

Before they can be eliminated, tolerations must be identified. The best way to do that, search your mind for 1) **Things that drain your energy**. What relationships, issues or activities leave you feeling "spent". An example might be a friendship that takes more from you than it gives back, a family relationship that is disrespectful or a co-worker that takes advantage of your time. 2). **Projects or activities you should have said "no" to**, such as a volunteer project that requires more than your share of effort or something you were pressured into doing. 3) **Mistakes, events, or experiences you can not let go of**, a bad decision, an accident, anything you cannot change or control. 4) **Little things that get to you**. These can be simple – a cluttered closet, a broken lamp. Make a list of all of them.

Making a list brings the things you tolerate raises your awareness and is the first step to redirecting your time and energy to things that move you closer to the life you

want. Now, choose 10 that you will eliminate in the next 30 days. You will be surprised at the feeling of relief and since of reward you will feel when you have accomplished this goal. Keep working away at the list until it has fewer than 10 things on it. Don't forget to update it along the way. New demands on our time and energy present themselves everyday.

Limiting or eliminating your tolerations should not be confused with responsibility. We all have responsibilities. There are people, projects and organizations we commit to. The question is not whether you should be responsible, but whether you should be responsible for those things that either are not your concern or that are outside of your realm of control. As the future rises to meet you, be sure you are responsible when you should be and tolerate only that which you choose.

Sherry B. Jordan, MA. a Management Coach and Senior Consultant with Coaching.ppr can assist you in identifying your career or business goals and set strategies to meet them. For more information, visit www.coachingppr.com or call at 904-616-9237.