



Live Your Perfect Weight

Monthly Newsletter

August 2009

WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK?

"People become attached to the burdens sometimes more than the burdens are attached to them." –George Bernard Shaw

This seems to be the time of year when a lot of people go camping, so this month I would like to share some camping stories with you.

A bunch of young ladies were at a Summer Camp for Girls and were going on a hike. One of the girls was used to hiking and was leading way out in front of the rest of the girls. They finally stopped to rest on the trail and several of the girls decided that to keep the "strong" girl from leading out so far ahead of them, that they would put rocks in her backpack. The "strong" girl didn't notice and picked up her backpack and started walking. She got slower and slower and was easily tired. First she thought it was the altitude that was making her so out of breath and tired. She was falling behind the other girls, and wondering what was wrong.

When they reached the summit, she sat down, winded and hot and tired. Only then did the other girls tell her what they had done. Luckily she wasn't upset, and they all had a good laugh over the situation.

A bunch of boy Scouts were going on a hike and campout. A young boy decided he was going to take lots of food because he heard about how hungry you could be after hiking all day. So, he filled his backpack with lots of easy to fix meals, in cans, and felt proud of himself because he knew he would have the best meals to eat in the group.

As the boys were climbing up the side of the mountain, his pack became heavier and heavier and he was becoming exhausted just trying to keep up. Finally, he sat down and with tears in his eyes he said he could go no further. His camp leader tried to encourage him and then he demanded he get up and get going, because he couldn't just leave him on the side of the mountain. All to no avail as the boy simply could not walk another foot.

The camp leader agreed if the boy would walk, that he would carry his backpack. The boy wiped the tears from his eyes and the sweat from his brow and got to his feet.

The leader picked up the backpack and with astonishment asked, "What in the world are you carrying in this pack?" Discovering all the canned goods, the leader and the boy decided which cans would be left behind and which ones were essential for his meal that evening.

Whether someone else does it, or you do it to yourselves you have to ask: What burdens am I choosing to carry in my backpack?

Do you feel burdened? Fearful? Frustrated? Guilty? Tired? Unappreciated and overworked? Do you feel unaccepted by others? Do you feel like you try hard to do the right thing but things just don't turn out like you planned?

These are all burdens that you are carrying in your backpack that are holding you back. Let's explore how you can get rid of the weight of the world that you are carrying and give you the freedom to be your authentic self – the real you – the you that you were meant to be.

**"All inner fear is founded on trying to believe that an illusion is a reality."
Vernon Howard**

I had a young lady tell me that she spent so much time and effort worrying about "what the neighbors thought of her" that she was afraid to do anything, just in case they were judging her. The truth or the "reality" of life is that most of the time your "neighbors" are so busy with their own life that they don't have time to worry about what you are doing. So I had her write an affirmation and put it on her mirror in the bathroom where she would see it when she first arose in the morning; "The neighbors are not interested in what I am doing".

But wait, you say, what if they really are? You don't know my neighbors, they are really nosy. Well then, you will just have to let them have their fun and you become their entertainment, since you cannot stop your life because of someone else.

I understand where this fear may be coming from because I grew up with a sister that was always worried what others thought of our family. Many times when I would be my childish self, - hey I was just a kid, - she would say, "Stop that, what will the neighbors think!"

Well, I was in the house, so I didn't think they saw me and I thought that was a silly statement anyways since I was just having a crazy, fun time acting like a kid.

So the "reality" was that "they" weren't watching – in fact there was a vacant lot on one side of our house and an elderly lady on the other side, so I would give my sister some perplexed looks.

Now looking back I can see that my sister had issues with being accepted and with reality being different than what she imagined.

Unless they don't have a life and have time to sit around and be nosy neighbors, people are too self-absorbed and too busy to worry about what you are doing or not doing. They may be concerned for you and care about you but not what you are doing or not

doing. The young lady that I had encouraged to write the affirmation was not doing anything bad or illegal; in fact she was a very Christian woman with high values. But she was carrying unnecessary "burdens" in her backpack.

The problem she was experiencing was one of thinking that she should be doing something differently, being more like someone else and trying to live up to this "imagined" person and therefore was in conflict with her "true" identity. She was a very attractive lady and loved makeup and clothes, and for some reason got the idea that she was being judged as not a good mom or not a good Christian. The reality is you can be fun, sexy and still be a great mom and a good Christian. But in her mind she thought that it was not acceptable and so she was in conflict with her true self. So her beautiful, attractive, fun personality became a "burden" for her. She tried to hide it from the world, so they wouldn't "see" her true self. And because she wanted to please herself and her husband by being in fashion, and taking care of herself, it caused her undue worrying about the "neighbors".

Here is a great thought: There is another way to live. First we need to become aware that we are carrying around all these burdens. Once we recognize that, we can face them as "imagined" or "real". Sometimes we need to have someone else help us, or to point out what we are carrying around unnecessarily. Then like the boy scout, we can lighten our burden by re-assessing the situation, or having someone help us with a different viewpoint.

Like my beautiful friend, we often carry negative thoughts, sometimes blaming and accusing others. We feel self-pity, guilt and have self-defeating thoughts that things will never change or that we could never change. These thoughts rob vitality and energy, and can actually make you or keep you very unhealthy. So it is time for some mental housekeeping and some sorting and tossing, so that you can lighten your load.

Someone has said that you will be the same in five years as we are today except for the books you read and the people you meet. So by reading great books and meeting great people you can get over those negative behaviors and thoughts; - you can change. All you need is to have "a change of heart". Usually this comes through intervention from others, by their thoughts and words and actions.

As in any great thought or great words, it is not enough for the value to be there; you must recognize the value. You must "see" with different eyes your value and that you are the treasure. When you are "seeing" your true self you will know what to do and what not to do. You can unburden your load and begin the process of becoming your true self.

So here is what you need to remember this month:

- Celebrate you – you are amazing, one of a kind.
- Cast off the burden of guilt and fear
- Remember your worth
- Catch yourself and listen to what you are thinking and saying
- Be charitable with yourself and others
- Remember to do your positive affirmations every day
- Remember you were born to succeed.

“Human beings, by changing the inner attitude of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives.” –William James-

Till next time.

Rosemary Evans
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