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Escaping a Toxic Environment

By Myrtis Smith

Escaping a Toxic Environment by Myrtis Smith

By definition, a toxin is a poisonous substance that kills, injures, or impairs an organism. A toxin can also inhibit the activity of another substance. Applying this definition to your day-to-day living, it may surprise you to realize how many things (and people) in your life are creating a toxic environment.

What are potential toxins in your daily living? Toxins can be people that make you feel bad, things that are holding you back from your goals, or situations that make you physically ill. A toxin can be a behavior, a person, or an object. But anything that "impairs" you or "inhibits activity" is toxic.

Let's look at an example. Suppose you wanted to get a better job. The current job you have doesn't pay enough, is very stressful, and is not a good fit for your personality. The career you would like to pursue requires a degree (which you don't have) and relies heavily on networking to secure a position. In this example there are several toxins at play. Two obvious ones are your current job environment (the stress is injuring you) and your lack of a degree (this is inhibiting your activity). Other toxins could be your current spending habits (maybe the problem isn't how much your job pays, but the fact that you are not living within your means), your relationships (are you getting the support from your family and friends to make this transition), and your own attitude.

So how do you eliminate toxins from your life?

1. Identify them. It is hard to fight an opponent that you can't see. Think of the areas in your life where things aren't quite how you would like for them to be. What is holding you back? These things are potential toxins.
2. Identify the impact the toxins are having on your life. For example, poor spending habits have far reaching impacts, what lessons are you teaching your kids, are you creating any strains on your friendships by borrowing money, is your health being impacted by the worry and stress of making ends meet.

3. For each toxin list 3–5 ways to eliminate it. Be practical, be outrageous, be creative; list any and everything that comes to mind.

4. Implement the easiest ideas first. No need to be overwhelmed or further stressed by overextending yourself. Set up quick hits. The momentum you create from the easy victories can carry you on to more difficult tasks.

5. Evaluate your progress often. Ships don't set their course once and then hope they make it to their destination. Instead they constantly check their location and make corrections as necessary. You can do the same.

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Myrtis Smith is the founder of Premeditated Life. At Premeditated Life we have one focus – Your Career. As a career coach I offer a variety of services designed to improve your professional skills, support you in your career goals and transitions, and empower your job search. For a FREE Career Assessment contact us at coaching@premeditatedlife.com

<http://www.premeditatedlife.com>because life doesn't just happen!

Myrtis Smith is a personal coach and founder of Premeditated Life, a Cincinnati–based coaching company specializing in helping individuals manage life's many transitions, especially career changes. Myrtis is known for her personable style. She has an action–oriented approach to coaching that uses light–hearted humor and practical information. She has an ability to help her clients see beyond their current situations and recognize the many possibilities available to them.

What Is Toxic Black Mold?

By Jerry Hall

Mold is a fungus growth, which starts with a microscopic spore. In a damp environment, it will spread on organic material, such as food or wood. It can be beneficial; for example, the antibiotic penicillin is a mold. Mold grows everywhere, but can become a problem when it grows in large areas inside a home, school, or workplace.

Toxic black molds can be found anywhere that dark and dank conditions permit them to grow. When you try to kill them, they take to the air, spreading themselves with no forethought to the damage they can cause. They are just trying to survive.

Spores can be inhaled, absorbed through the skin or ingested on our food. And, because some people are more susceptible than others, one person may become debilitated by exposure to mold in the

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home, another person sharing the same environment is essentially unaffected.

Infants, the elderly and anyone with immune system deficiencies due to disease, chemotherapy, etc. are particularly susceptible to serious illness following exposure to microbial contamination.

Many people are concerned about the potential health issues concerning mold in their homes. In particular, *stachybotrys chartarum*, which you may have heard about as "toxic black mold", has been blamed for causing health problems. It is greenish-black, slimy, and can grow in homes with water damage.

Many species of black mold and mildew (or the mycotoxins they produce) can cause or aggravate a number of ailments. Common effects from molds such as *stachybotrys atra*, *penicillium*, *cladosporium* and several strains of *aspergillus*, are asthma, pneumonitis, upper respiratory problems, sinusitis, dry cough, skin rashes, stomach upset, headaches, disorientation and bloody noses. Numerous other species of mold and mildew are also toxic, and many mycotoxins are known carcinogens. Severe exposures can lead to internal bleeding, kidney and liver failure and pulmonary emphysema. Such health risks due to the presence of mold in a dwelling are a serious concern to occupants, and can pose potential liability for owners of rental properties.

Contamination of residential properties by toxic mold and mildew is becoming more and more prevalent. Although mankind has been aware for thousands of years that mold thrives in damp conditions, only recently have we begun to understand how dramatically its presence can impact us. Toxic mold and mildew is not discerning, affecting both old and new buildings.

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Is Toxic Black Mold Really Toxic? Find out at



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