

How to Successfully Live Today...TODAY! (i--mail article)

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By Doug C. Grant

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How to Successfully Live Today...TODAY!

(from the i-mail' files)

by Doug C. Grant

"Caught you, didn't I?"

Another intrusive i-mail had arrived. I was in the middle of doing what I considered to be an extraordinarily good job of relaxing on our balcony. But the i-mail message took care of that. Unlike e-mail, which can be ignored or deleted, my internal i-mail demands immediate attention.

"You didn't catch me doing anything but relaxing," I muttered in response to Other-Self's accusation. "And I don't appreciate the interruption."

"You weren't relaxing and you know it. You've got everyone upset down here. Stomach is really in a stew."

"Oh, come now, I was simply wool gathering."

"Perhaps. But all your wool was getting knotted up in angry thoughts about the money you lost last September."

"Okay. So I'm still a little ticked. I was lied to. I've got a right to nurse some hard feelings."

"Who gave you that right?"

Other-Self has a way of asking such questions. Of course I didn't have an answer so I decided on belligerence as my defense. "I've got every right. I was hurt."

"Oh, that's really smart. You were hurt so now you're going to hurt yourself again and again by dwelling on the same hurt. Not only that, but you've just wasted a half-hour composing all sorts of bitter accusations and put-downs for yelling at someone you'll probably never see again."

"Yeah...well, I like to be prepared. Just in case. Besides, making up a lot of nasty things to say makes me feel better."

"Maybe you're getting some mental lollipops out of the exercise but not us. The way I figure it, you've just needlessly aged your body 104 minutes during your half-hour of anger-stress. Send down a few more such thoughts and you can go for the full two hours."

"Hey, I don't need to listen to this. I'm the one up here having to wrestle with all the anger thoughts. And they aren't going away just because I tell them to."

"Of course they will. You just haven't tried."

"TRY! What's to try. Angry thoughts just come. So what am I supposed to do? Sit around in a coma?"

"Let me put it this way. What would you do if a dirty, unshaven sinister looking bum knocked on your front door and demanded to live with you?"

"I'd slam the door in his face."

"Very good. Now ask yourself this. Did you have any control over whether that bum knocked on your door or not? Don't bother to answer. Of course you didn't. The only real choice you had was whether to invite him in or slam the door."

"I see your point and maybe that might work...sometimes. But I'm still so angry about getting conned out of my money that I can't help thinking about it."

"Well isn't that interesting. You've just admitted that you're a spineless wimp controlled by a free-wheeling brain. That's too bad. I really thought we had something going between us."

"That's not fair. Can I help it if my anger is so strong that the thoughts keep returning?"

"No. But what would you do if the bum kept returning?"

"I suppose I'd keep slamming the door."

"Well, finally a smart answer. Now, let me ask this. If you keep slamming the door in that bum's face, what do you think he will eventually do?"

"Go away, I suppose."

"Are you beginning to get the picture?"

"Yeah...except you make this thought avoidance business sound like a cake walk."

"It is, actually. The only thing hard is persistence. Right now shut and lock the door of your mind to all

your yesterdays. Visualize the door actually closing but leave a small window for peeking back at warm memories and successful experiences.

"Next, close the door on all your tomorrows. But again, leave a small window for productive planning and goal setting.

"Your life is now enclosed in a single room. But it's the best room possible because it's the only real place you can live. It's called Today'."

"Okay, sounds neat and all that. But I've been across the hall enough to know that two minutes after locking away my past and future the angry thoughts will come roaring back."

"Of course they will. That's to be expected. But who says you have to live with them? Just stand on the other-side of your Today' door and shout, "Go away!" Five minutes later you may have to do the same thing again...and again. But with persistence, the thoughts will disappear forever.

"Well...I'll give it a try. But it won't be easy. It's so hard to keep from thinking about my money and that lying piece of crude. I can see him now stretched out beside a pool in some warm climate just..."

"Excuse me, but perhaps you didn't notice. Your Today' just snuck out an open door."

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Doug C. Grant retired from a successful career as a nationally recognized business writer & marketing consultant. He now helps members of the Over-50', crowd live healthier, happier and more productive lives through his Empowered Maturity Web Site (<http://www.douggrant.com>) and an on-line interactive seminar.

**Successfully Fail to Succeed (i--mail article)**

**By Doug C. Grant**

**Successfully Fail to Succeed (i--mail article) by Doug C. Grant**

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**SUCCESSFULLY FAIL TO SUCCEED!**

(from the i--mail' files)

by Doug C. Grant

"So why haven't you done it?"

The question arrived by i--mail shortly after I had settled down to read the paper. Unlike e--mail, which I can read whenever I feel like it, i--mail demands instant attention. It comes from my Other--Self and is all internal. It can, of course, be ignored. But this simply intensifies the nagging.

I put down the paper and irritably responded, "Done what?"

"That article you've been thinking about writing."

"Oh, that. Well, truth is, I didn't think I could do a good job of it. The article probably wouldn't be accepted and I would have wasted a lot of time."

"So you decided on instant failure. Is that it?"

Other--Self had tweaked a nerve. "I did not decide on any such thing. It's just practical wisdom. Like

somebody said, 'Anything worth doing is worth doing well.' I didn't think I could do it well so I didn't consider it worth doing. That to me is sensible logic."

"That's not logic. It's borderline stupidity."

"And I suspect, without any urging from me, you're about to guide me down what you consider a far superior road of reason."

"You're quite perceptive today. Consider this. Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly...in the beginning."

"Oh, come now! Talk about your stupid logic. Why would anyone start out to purposely do something poorly?"

"Excuse me. Did I say purposely'? I don't think I heard that word."

"Okay, so maybe you didn't say it. But obviously that's what you meant."

"Not at all. Perhaps an illustration will help illuminate your thinking. You don't remember but what happened the first time you tried to walk?"

"I probably fell flat on my kazoo. So what's your point?"

"Would you say you walked poorly?"

"All babies walk poorly in the beginning." I began to suspect where Other-Self was going with this but I refused to let on.

"Exactly! But according to your logic you should never have taken that first step because all you could do was walk poorly. Which would have left you flat on your kazoo for the rest of your life."

"Nonsense! You're trying to turn a two-step into a waltz. Taking baby steps and spending three days on a no-where article is not the same. Not even close."

"Are you certain?"

"You're triple A' right I'm certain. It's absolute foolishness to spend a ton of time and a bucket of sweat on a project that hasn't got a Hail Mary chance of succeeding."

"So, to your way of thinking the entire effort would be a waste."

"Wonderful! You're finally coming over to my side of the road."

"Before I make such a long journey, let me ask you one last question. If you write the article now, is it possible that an article you write next week will be better for today's effort? And, if so, what about the

next article? And the article after that? And then maybe one day you'll actually end up writing something magnificent."

"Okay...okay," I reluctantly muttered. "I see your point. I think what you are saying is that anything worth doing, no matter what it is, is worth doing poorly...at least in the beginning. Is that right?"

"Exactly! Now, about that article."

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new i--mail articles' by subscribing free to Doug C. Grant's bi--monthly e--zine, THE EMPOWERED MATURITY PAGE. It's for anyone wanting to boost their life up a notch or two. Subscribe at: <mailto:empoweredpage@smartautoresponder.com>

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