



I WANT TO LOOK AND FEEL THIS WAY FOREVER

The other day, I was listening to a TV ad concerning breast implants for women. I found the ad to be very interesting since it wasn't selling any products. Instead, it was a warning and recommendation to physicians who recommend breast implants that they should be very careful previous to prescribing such a procedure because of the possibility of suicidal tendencies in those patients because of pre-existing depression. Unfortunately, many physicians that are in the practice of helping people to look younger and correct their "imperfections" aren't trained or just don't feel that this is an important criterion. The same holds true for physicians who prescribe medications such as anti anxiety or anti-depressive pills without realizing that they are simply masking symptoms while the root causes of the anxiety or depression continues.

In our society, there is a great deal of emphasis placed on staying...or at least looking...young FOREVER! There is nothing essentially wrong with wanting to look one's best EXCEPT if the motive behind those efforts is based in a very poor self concept. It is then that many problems can arise and, at the extreme, that suicide can become a real factor in the mix. Probably the most concrete and drastic example of this is the risk of suicide contained in patients who suffer from anorexic or bulimic syndromes. It is my belief that suicide doesn't need to take the form of taking one's life by a single act but it can take place over time...a slow death if you will. The deterioration of the mind and emotions can definitely lead to the deterioration of the body.

As a former psychotherapist and now as a life and stress management consultant or coach, the premise for my services is to help people resolve one, single, basic issue. That issue is to change their perception of themselves with respect to their being able to love and be loved for who they are...not for how they look. A fundamental problem that affects most people in our society is the fear that they aren't good enough to love and be loved. Usually those seeds are planted early in life and although they tend to become a disproportionate belief system into adulthood, it can become a rampant problem that affects a person's thoughts, feelings and concept of themselves. For many people who suffer from this problem, they possess a very strong need to be PERFECT in many other areas in their lives apart from the way they might appear to others. I know that I treated many youngsters in grade school for the problem of perfection. These were youngsters

who could not tolerate making a mistake and would tear up their papers rather than correcting one.

Feeling good about yourself isn't just a topical process that might make you look good but it must also become an internalized one that allows us to BELIEVE that who we are is someone about whom we can feel good. Doubts and fears that we don't "make the grade" will continue to "eat at us" and create an artificial lifestyle and relationships that become shallow and problematic. And so, the value must be placed not on WHAT but on WHO we are in order to successfully gain that REAL SELF CONCEPT that enables us to find a sense of peace within ourselves.

So, how is this achieved? Many times, people need to go back to the origins of such destructive beliefs in order to change the patterns that have evolved into their adulthoods. For others...and this can best occur in a younger age bracket...just being made aware of the dangers of the pattern of perfection and the constant struggle they might be going through with regard to the toll that their perfectionistic tendencies might take is enough for them to work on developing a more positive and healthy attitude and self-perception. Learning how to meditate or use relaxation techniques with the use of positive affirmations can help people as well.

It must be noted, however, that the longer the pattern of not feeling good enough persists, the more difficult it is to change. Unfortunately, in some instances the pattern cannot be reversed but perhaps only minimized somewhat in order to bring at least partial relief to a client. Learning how to change our belief systems is a difficult and can be a long process. It occurs in the main by practicing behavioral techniques that tend to change existing belief patterns over and over until the new patterns are established. Certainly, it takes one's wanting to change the patterns very strong act of willpower to make those changes

It isn't impossible, however. I have worked with many clients who will question their progress in attaining their goal only to find at a certain point that everything seems much clearer and that their progress has been greater than they may have believed. There is always hope. All one needs to do is ask about what it is that might tend to embarrass them and they might find that the answers are much more simple and attainable than they realized.

A Brief Biographical Sketch

After an over 40 year career as a professional psychotherapist and Director of The Sports Stress Clinic in Amherst, NY, Charles Bonasera came to Florida and decided to use the benefits of his previous professional experiences in his new roles of Consultant in Life Management and Business Coaching as well as his expertise as a Motivational Speaker. He once again became involved with athletes in different sports training them with his techniques to help them develop and maintain focus as well as staying in their zone. Much of his training methods are derived from the CD collection he developed under the heading of WIN-WIN SECRETS as the President of Personal Identity Controls. This collection consists of thirty-six programs dealing with vital issues in the management of stress.

Another role that he adopted to add to his professional career was that of Author. Early in the 1980's he wrote Guide to a Life Management Process which he has re-written as a workbook to successfully help people manage their stress which includes his own Working Model. As a result in his interest in golf and realizing that it was essentially a "mind game", he wrote The Mental Side of Golf which can benefit the beginner as well as professionals playing the game of golf.

He then compiled over five-hundred sayings that he had developed in the course of his professional career as stimuli to help people change patterns in their lives entitled How to Stay Well and Live Life to the Fullest. This was followed by a book documenting case studies around disruptive life patterns including ways to change them under the name of How in the Hell Did This Happen to Me? Both his personal involvement in sports as a participant, coach, manager and in his role in officiating, inspired him to write a primer for parents and coaches entitled The Legend of Little League.

Charles invites you to view his website at www.charlesmbonasera.com as well as to write with your comments and questions to his e-mail address (charles@charlesmbonasera.com). He would also be very happy to communicate with his readers by telephone should they desire. His professional motto is "seeking alternative methods to happiness" and wishes those touched by his words to practice the three secrets to a happy life: "enjoy life and enjoy it thoroughly ... develop and maintain a sense of humor ... bring as much love into your life as possible.