

BE YOUR OWN HERO

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In understanding what it means to be your own hero, we need to first understand what a hero is.

The Macquarie Dictionary provides the meaning - someone who has great courage, admired for his/her noble deeds, is greatly admired for any quality, one being of godlike strength and ability and is honoured.

Heroes are worshiped and revered. Heroes and heroic deeds are represented in movies, plays, advertisements, comic books, novels, news headlines and television shows. Heroes are known to be capable of great feats of strength or skill. Ultimately heroes must confront an increasingly difficult path of obstacles, confront the survival fears that would compromise his/her journey or task, and conquer the forces of people/events seemingly against them in order to achieve his/her status.

With this understanding, and faced with our own fears, obstacles, challenges and possibly limited self esteem, how can we be our own hero? We may already feel overwhelmed, undervalued, limited in resources and/or time, unsupported, alone or a number of other limiting beliefs currently supported by our environment.

What benefit is it to me to be my own hero?

Being your own hero, allows you permission to rise above situations you feel are restricting and create an atmosphere where you are no longer a 'victim' of random events but rather the 'rescuer' of your situation and yourself. You then become more empowered and not reliant on others opinions, approvals and/or actions to 'save' you. It can be a powerful position to be in which can bring about a feeling of more fulfilment and satisfaction in our day to day activities and more confidence in our own abilities.

With this in mind it is interesting to reflect on a quote from Nelson Mandela:

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate,
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you NOT to be???

As we let our own light shine,

We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our fear,

Our presence automatically liberates others.”

Does this awaken a part of you that is a hero, to shine your light rather than play down our own power?

Allowing yourself to be your own hero, and shine in your world, will bring about change. These changes could be feeling happier, in control, rewarded, and acknowledged, a sense of independence, a feeling of strength, importance, revitalized, purposeful and generally more committed and active within your life.

As with any heroic act, it does take courage on your part, to step out of the mindset of unworthy into the mindset of validating yourself fully and knowing you have everything you need right now to make a difference for you.

Coaching Exercises for your Further Consideration

Here are some suggestions that you may find helpful to unlocking and releasing your hero within.

If you have a paper/journal and pen handy to brainstorm what comes to mind is quite revealing to assist you in developing helpful new habits and eliminating power hiding actions/habits.

Consider these questions:

- How do you feel about the word Hero? How do you feel about being able to be a hero to yourself and ultimately others? What does this bring to mind for you? What can you ‘hear’ in your thoughts that is supporting or damaging to your progress? Do you feel apprehension, fear, unworthiness, doubtful or another negative emotion? Do you feel empowered, curious, willing or another positive emotion? Do you ‘hear’ the voice of someone in your present or past telling you that you can do anything you set your mind to, or do you hear that you couldn’t possibly do that?
- When was the last time you felt you did something heroic? Keep in mind heroic actions are not limited to saving the world or saving a

life. Heroic actions are something that takes great courage on your part, relevant to you, your life experience and your situations.

- Do you pat yourself on the back and gain self satisfaction from your courageous deeds, or do you look for approval and appreciation from others for the deed to mean something? This question is about realizing that we are not always going to get others to be what we want them to be or react the way we want them to. The most important person to gain approval of us is...us.
- How can you demonstrate courage and heroic actions, that feel right to you, in a less than desirable situation you find yourself in? How could you 'save' yourself and what is important to you in this situation? How could you create a better environment for you? Whilst thinking about these questions, keep in mind that you may want to think of things that you could do that usually you would find too hard, or ask someone else for help, or wish there was someone else to take care of it for you.
- What would your ideal lifestyle / career / personal and / or professional life / home environment / relationship / family look like? Having an idea of what is ideal for you may bring about thoughts that support actions you can take to get you closer to your preferred options. This is where you can take control, demonstrate heroic, purposeful actions and move forward with a great feeling of satisfaction and not leave yourself open to relying on others who may let you down. Often when we can be our own hero in these changing situations we look back with a lot more wisdom, clarity and satisfaction due to the fact it was our efforts that got us there, and therefore have a lot more strength to easily tackle obstacles that present themselves in the future. It's about creating a list of wins instead of losses and/or disappointments.

The answers to the above questions will begin to put a plan together for you as to how you can feel more heroic, and take action to allow you more options as to how to deal with your life in a more meaningful way.

To put a plan in place you could set small achievable goals to start, small changes you wish to make. You could also set yourself small challenges to exercise your courage muscles, for example do something you wouldn't usually do like going to the movie theatre on your own, write a letter to the editor, get your hair done differently, wear an outrageous item of clothing for a day, or like what you have done now – seek professional advice on an issue that is concerning you. There is a multitude of tasks that are outside of your comfort

zone, the choice of what way to stretch yourself is up to you. As you achieve your set goals/actions, reflect on how well you have done, tell yourself how heroic that was for you and reward yourself in whatever way feels right for you. Then you can confidently raise the bar and go on to the next task you set for yourself.

In summary we have looked at:

- the meaning of hero,
- our relationship to who and what we think heroes are based on their representations in different types of medias,
- benefits to being our own hero,
- exploratory questions to discover how to be our own hero, and
- Suggestions on how to plan and step out of your comfort zone.

In closing a quote from Helen Keller, to tie it all together for you:

“I long to accomplish a great and noble tasks, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the might shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.”



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