

Enjoy the journey

You have a problem. It's called Goals.

I had a hypnotherapy client recently who wanted to work on her patience. Or lack thereof... Now, I often include a little work about patience in my scripts, and allowing growth to take time. But the fact that patience was her main subject made me think a little deeper.

We live in a society of next day shipping, where we get everything yesterday. We are not accustomed to wait for anything anymore; restaurants are even rated by how quickly they get your food on the table!

When we want to change something in our life, we set a goal (hopefully a SMART goal), and we start working at it. It is usually easier in the beginning, when we are most motivated. "This time, it will be different, I have a plan!" Whether through big steps, or manageable ones, change is always traumatic at some point. And as we go through those steps, we usually focus on how hard it is, how miserable we are, how much willpower it takes. And if we happen to hit a plateau, everything becomes even harder, and we become more miserable... To the point that when we reach our goal, it might not feel as good as it ought to.

What if instead, we looked at it in a different way, what if we put on a different shade of glasses, and actually *enjoyed* making these changes, taking each step, one at a time? It is all a matter of perception, after all, right?

Think about going on a hike. You are setting the goal of getting to the top of the hill. The hike itself can go two different ways:

You can focus on how long it is going to take, focus on every step physically, how much each muscle has to work: you lift your legs with a set of muscles, bring it forward with a different set, bring it down, bring the heel to the ground, roll your foot all the way to your toes; all while balancing your whole upper body with your core and arm muscles, keeping your eyes on the path so you don't trip and fall; only to start this all over again for the next step. And your feet might hurt in the shoes. And maybe you'll get hungry, or thirsty, or tired, or too hot, or you'll get too cold... It's exhausting... You might get all the way up the hill, but the journey is miserable, and you cannot wait to get up there. Or worse, you'll turn around before you get there...

Or, you can think about how fortunate you are to have a body that allows you to walk, and hike, and move. While you walk, you focus your attention on the beauty around you, the colorful flowers, the blue of the sky contrasting with the green of the trees. You can hear the birds chirping; maybe you can try to recognize them by their songs... You might slow down, or even stop to enjoy the view. You realize how walking clears your head, makes you feel calmer, more focused... Before you know it, you are at the top, feeling great!

Dancers enjoy each step; painters take pleasure in each brush stroke... It's not always about the finished product.

I am inviting you to enjoy your hike today, each and every step. And when you reach the top, you will find a big smile on your face!