



Feeling Trapped in Life? Free Yourself Now.

By Cindy Silbert

We truly have all the freedom in the world to do, be and have anything we want. However, without realizing it, we subconsciously confine ourselves to live within limits. Our subconscious thoughts and ingrained behaviors become somewhat of a straight jacket keeping us from fully engaging in life.

We worry what other people think of us, what we think of us. We do what's right or settle for what's reasonable. And perhaps the biggest way we confine ourselves is giving up on our dreams because we think we don't have enough time. Restricting ourselves in this way shrinks us rather than expands us. Knowing who we are and being fully expressed and fulfilled gets put on the back burner or high upon a dusty shelf.

Having freedom and not fully embracing it is like having an e-ticket at Disneyland and not using it. Back in the day, when there was such a thing as e-tickets, getting one was so exciting because it allowed you to go on rides like the "Matterhorn" – the coolest, the wildest and yes - most liberating and exhilarating of rides. Without e-tickets you were left with rides like "Dumbo" or worse yet "It's a Small World After All".

Buddha teaches us that we can be the source of our own liberation or the source of our own imprisonment:

"Our life is shaped by our mind; what we think. Suffering follows an evil thought as the wheels of a cart follow the oxen that draw it. Our life is shaped by our mind; we become what we think. Joy follows pure thought like a shadow that never leaves." - Buddha

The meaning of Buddha is "the enlightened one". To be enlightened is to be free of the imprisonment of the mind and transcend to a truly spiritual or enlightened existence. Despite the fact that we are free to (thing) think whatever we want and therefore do, choose and express what we want - we continue to hold ourselves back in one area or another of our lives or in some cases become trapped in or victimized by our lives.

In history, great leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Ghandi first liberated themselves by creating a vision for freedom beyond what was physically confining them. By powerfully sharing their vision, they went on to free nations. Perhaps we're not inspired to break free of our own self induced confinement because there is nothing physical that we can see, feel or touch to break free from.

Let's see if we can get you on the path to personal freedom by first having you think of something in your life that truly is physically confining. The first thing that comes to my mind is pantyhose - control top - extra support. Having to wear pantyhose to work was not only confining but borderline cruel and unusual punishment. There was nothing more liberating than coming home from work and ripping them off.

Next think of something that is not necessarily physically confining but seems to be holding you back in some way. This could be anything from a controlling mother or mate, unsatisfying career or small-minded boss, to the fact that there are only 24 hours in the day. Choose your poison.

Now that you're warmed up let's have you look inward to where your own thoughts might be holding you back. As you read these questions, notice your physical response and the sense of the space around you. Which questions give you the feeling of confinement or energy closing in and which questions give you the feeling of freedom or energy expanding?

1. What stops you from having what you really want?
2. Knowing you can create anything you want, what do you want to create?
3. How much time would it realistically take to make your dreams come true?
4. If time and money were unlimited, what would you do?

Are you ready to free yourself from the areas of your life that are confining your freedom?

Expand your sense of personal freedom with a baby step like doing something that "you know you really shouldn't do" - like not wearing a bra or panties, eating a whole candy bar or favorite dessert, letting the dishes sit in the sink or leaving the house without telling anyone where you're going. Have fun with this and I know you can come up with a much better list!

When you're ready, take an honest inventory of the things you've used as an excuse for not living your life freely and fully. Make a list. Now across from each item, write an action step that would move you at least one small step closer to more freedom or a giant step – it's up to you.

Actions are things like:

- Saying something to someone you've been holding in for far too long
- Setting a boundary with someone you've let run a muck on your life
- Taking a risk in business or an investment
- Requesting something you really need from a relationship
- Making a commitment to do something you've always wanted to do
- Put a star next to the items on your list you don't think you have time for and do those things before you do anything else

Take a stand for your freedom and break free from your limits. Become inspired and inspire others around you. Your life will seamlessly become free flowing and certainly more fulfilling than ever before.

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