



We Are Never Disappointed Unless We Have Expectations

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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So often I deal with individuals who are hurt, upset or disappointed about something that has or hasn't happened as expected. A failed relationship, financial loss or wayward child can rock one's world!

When we are disappointed, it is usually because we had expectations that were not met.

Sometimes we risk our happiness on one or more situations that are totally out of our control. Perhaps we think that if someone else will change their behaviours, we will be happy. Or if we pass that exam. Or if we won the lottery!

Well, life doesn't work that way. People change their behaviours when we choose to do so - not when you wish it. We pass exams if we study and know the material well enough to communicate the answers to the questions. And the lottery...well, it's one person out of several million who win - and even then, research shows that within a year, most of them have little of the money left.

It's good to have goals and hopes and dreams but when you are expecting outside circumstances to fulfill them, you are vulnerable. Consider the people who put everything they had in the stock market which crashed in 1929. Those who invested more recently were taken on another roller coaster ride over the past few months!

Think about oil and gas workers who during good economic times purchased large homes, boats, cars and other "toys" only to find that they are now out of work and cannot make the payments. Think of parents who place all their hopes in the choices of their children who have totally different plans!

You have three choices when it comes to expectations:

1. Continue to try to get the world to line up to your expectations - The problem with this is that you cannot control other people or most circumstances so will likely end up feeling crazy and exhausted in your attempts to do so.
2. Not have any expectations - The advantage is that you will never be disappointed. The disadvantage is that life will likely be dull and boring.
3. Refine your expectations - Focus on things that you can do which are reasonable and achievable. Then break the tasks into steps that can be accomplished. And don't forget to forgive yourself if you miss a deadline or need to refine your expectations even further.

Expectations usually involve anticipating success or gain but this is not always realized. If you are wise when designing them you will be let down less often! (I don't just expect that - I know it!)