

PLEASURE PRINCIPLES Transcript

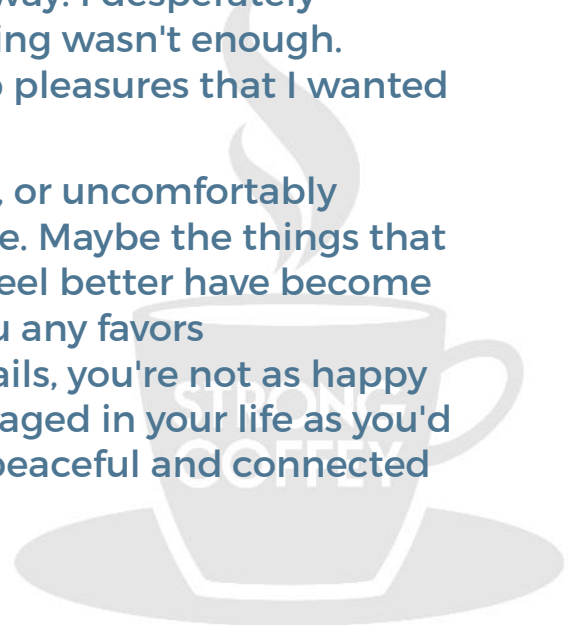
Principle One, Lesson Two *Self-Sabotage*

Why Get Well? Deep Pleasure.

Welcome back.

Back in the day I was uncomfortable and unhappy, and I was watching other people walk around at school and at work and they had energy and they seemed better. They seemed comfortable. I was hurting. Not just physically. I was also depressed, and I was anxious. Unless I was consuming I felt nervous and I felt trapped. My vices brought me some cheap pleasure - some brief relief, a quick buzz, a few seconds of yumminess - but every time I went there, the deep pleasure I wanted so desperately - a peaceful mind and comfortable body, and later, the sense I was living with purpose and making the most of my life - felt further and further away. I desperately wanted to do things differently, but wanting wasn't enough. Cheap pleasure ruled me, and those deep pleasures that I wanted so badly felt like a fairytale.

Monkey Brains take a toll. Maybe you're ill, or uncomfortably overweight. Maybe you're tired all the time. Maybe the things that you used to want that used to make you feel better have become things that you need that aren't doing you any favors anymore...that was me. Whatever the details, you're not as happy as you'd like to be or you're are not as engaged in your life as you'd like to be or maybe you just don't feel as peaceful and connected



as you would like to feel.

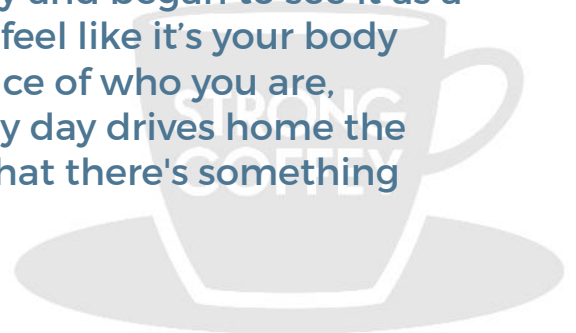
You've been given one precious life. You want to feel good in your one precious body. You want to feel connected to it, and you want to feel connected to the people that you love and to the life that you're living. You want to wake up feeling ok, not thinking 'Oh God, not again.? What started you on that path in the first place? And why do you stumble over and over and over and over again when you try to walk a healthier path? If you're are so desperate to do things differently, what is stopping you?

The answer to all 3 of these questions is SHAME. Shame started you on this path. Shame is what brings you down over and over again. And shame is what's stopping you from living the life you want to be living.

Shame

When you were a little kid, you were eager and open and excited and curious and creative and engaged with the world. You were not born judging yourself. You were not born with shame. You were born a perfect lump of trust and love. Shame (which I call the beast), got given to you long before you had the boundaries to say no. Fundamentally, shame is the idea that there's something wrong with you, and odds are you held on to that idea to help you make sense of why you got hurt or mistreated. If, like me, you're the product alcoholics or addicts or mentally ill parents, or were abused in any way when you were young. If you came up poor or you're part of a minority group, you're probably lugging around enough shame to block out the sun. Odds are, you've been carrying it around for so long, that you just think it's a part of you.

As you aged, you were surrounded by images of perfect people living seemingly perfect lives. You saw pictures of women everywhere whose bodies were so fabricated and so flawless that maybe you looked down at your own body and began to see it as a problem or a project. Today, whether you feel like it's your body that doesn't measure up or the very essence of who you are, getting pelted with idealized images every day drives home the message you got when you were small - that there's something



wrong with you - and left unexamined, that sense of wrongness, that shame, just grows. Whether the judgment comes from inside you or not, whether you feel less than or rejected or criticized, whether it's real or imagined, the beast inside you attacks, and it can show up as anything from nagging self consciousness to horrible self-talk to the visceral need to fold into yourself and disappear to feeling completely powerless and small and awful and unworthy and everything in between.

Responses to Shame

How you respond to these feelings and thoughts, when they pop up, determines the impact shame has on your body and your life. Believe it or not, some people naturally process shame in a healthy way - in fact, by the time you're done with this course you'll be able to use shame as a tool to help you get well. But until then, and certainly now, most of us live in unhealthy, knee-jerk reaction to the beast, to shame. Odds are you respond to shame in one of four ways?

- by withdrawing or hiding, like in work or in relationships or abstract busyness
- by attacking yourself or 'lashing in,'
- by avoiding, which includes both denying that anything is wrong and distracting yourself from the problem like with food
- attacking others or 'lashing out.?'

So when you bend over backwards to keep anyone from ever being able to see that you are, in fact, human - that's the withdrawal response. If you're a withdraw-er you might hide in obligations; you might not ask for help, you might not join groups, you might not ever let on that anything is anything but totally fine. Probably people think you've got it all together. If they do, but you know you don't, you respond to shame, at least in part, by withdrawing.

The attack-self response might mean you talk down to yourself as soon as you start to imagine or to keep healthier commitments: like eating well or exercising or meditating. Self-attackers feel self-conscious or like a joke or fraud or a fool or like they look stupid



going for a walk or ordering something healthy at a restaurant. Self attackers usually have a long history of self-sabotage. Are you self attacker? Do you ever hear a voice in your head ask "Who do you think you are kidding?" or "You'll just end up quitting so what's the use"? Yes? You hear that voice? Me too. Boy howdy are you in the right place.

Of the four shame responses, avoidance is my very favorite; that's the denial and distraction response. Denial means, you know, one day eating well feels like the most important thing in the world and then the next day, I'm all like "Whatever its not the big deal" and then I eat the first bowl of monkey brains that I see. That's denial, the first of two responses to shame that fall under the avoidance umbrella. The second response, distraction, is at the root of most addictions. Avoiders who reach for distractions reach for cheap pleasures and instant gratification to change the channel, to feel different, or better, or less, and to get there as quickly as possible.

If you're great at tearing other people down in fights, and cataloging other peoples' flaws with biting, cutting, relentless precision, especially when you feel embarrassed or humiliated or judged, that's the attack-other response to shame. The lashing out.

So how do you get from here, motivated by shame to ignore or short-change or abuse yourself, to where you want to be: in a stronger body with a quieter mind, building and living the life that you want?

The details - what exactly you eat, or whether you crossfit or zumba or swim or walk or do yoga - none of that stuff is actually what matters most. Of course, some choices are better than others, but the truth is lots of plans and lots of programs would help get you healthier and might even make you happier if you could just stay committed. But you don't. Because of how you respond to the beast. If you're ever going to make real, lasting progress, if you're ever going to keep your commitments to yourself and to your body, you first have to become conscious of shame, and then practice responding to it in healthier ways. **And I'm gonna teach you exactly how it's done.**

