

"The Importance of Being Honest with Yourself" Part II

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A friend of mine often said “If I’m the only one I’m talking to, then I’m always right!” He was talking about what happens when we become a closed system with no outside feedback or perspective. This can make it difficult to be truly honest with ourselves and make us vulnerable to deceiving ourselves. But are outside views always helpful? Often they come with other people’s baggage and skewed perspective of the world. We have a tendency to gravitate toward people who reinforce our view of the world, who prove us right. So how do we find perspectives that are helpful and may encourage us to think critically and analytically? This is important because doing that will help us function more effectively in the circumstances we find ourselves at any particular moment. The reality is while we may not be able to change those circumstances, we can change the way we respond to them.

So, finding objective, honest input can come from many different sources. You might decide to read different books and/or articles about the particular subject or issue you are concerned about. For instance, if you are considering a job change, you might look for books or articles about career changes, self assessment, how to interview, what are employers seeking? Or maybe you are exploring relationship issues. Those writer’s will probably use language in many different ways to communicate their ideas, helping you to become clearer. They also have no personal agenda to take you in a particular direction that might be advantageous to them.

You might (and probably would) seek counsel from your friends. We would assume that they have our best interests at heart. But they have their own biases, issues, and their own definition of who they think you are. They will also be more likely to view the world the same way you do and to simply reinforce whatever it is you are already saying. Look for those people you feel will be honest with you, who are often able to see several sides of each issue. This could be a friend, acquaintance, mentor, therapist, or counselor. In fact, this is where your EAP can be an excellent resource. An EAP counselor’s role is to listen to you, rephrase and clarify what they hear you saying, then offer feedback and a variety of options and resource on how to approach you issue.

Call Solutions EAP at 1-800-526-3485 for assistance for all of life’s challenges. It’s free, confidential and open to family members. Check us out on-line www.solutions-eap.com