

Transforming Type A Personality

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Does anyone really need to hear again about the dangers of living a Type A lifestyle? About the medical and relationship problems that are by now all too well known? No way. Everyone has been told quite thoroughly that they should eliminate this disposition if they recognize themselves in its symptom lineup. But why? And replace it with what? Becoming one with laid back, new age, relaxed zombie, couch potato behavior?

For many, the thought of achieving this 'success' fills them with sheer terror. What would become of my leading edge, then, you might wonder? A truism for most Type A personalities is that it is much better to burn out than fade away. Which brings up the worthy point that Type A behavior, for all its adverse effects, has some point, exists for some good reason. And those who use it are loath to give it up unless otherwise convinced that they can still get their leading edge needs met. That is, they (wisely) don't want to give up an existing choice until a better (or at least as good) choice comes along.

Transforming Type A Personality

I like to assume that behind most every behavior is a positive intention. This is true even when the behavior is considered by most everyone to be undesirable or problematic. For example, anxiety, 'bad' habits, criticism, procrastination, domination, overeating, substance abuse, etc. The basic premise is that we learn, often with limited information, about the world and our place in it and we seek to make the best possible adjustments we can think of at the time to get our needs met without alienating those upon whom we are dependent for survival and well being.

Often our choices turn out to be quite bad, meaning that they don't really meet our needs very well and in fact may alienate the ones we most want to impress. Nonetheless, the positive intention behind them is still, in essence pure, noble, decent, and good. And people will cling with some tenacity to that best choice they have put together even in the face of mounting evidence that it isn't working and is even causing additional problems. This doesn't mean people are basically self destructive and stupid but that we are both goal oriented and creatures of habit. And the best way to get rid of a bad habit is to replace it with an incompatible preferred habit (that still accomplishes the positive intention).

Identifying the Positive Purpose

So what are people with the Type A habit trying to accomplish exactly? Why

everything, of course, and quickly, and better than anyone else ever has, and perfectly! And why? Because they can, and it's important, and they need to before someone else does, and because it will finally prove to their parents that they are worthwhile, etc, etc. Lawrence Olivier, for example, once stated that if he ever approached a stage and discovered that he did not have 'butterflies' in his stomach, that he would simply quit acting right that minute because it would be clear that acting had lost its meaning or importance to him. Those butterflies were his indicator that he was on to something of worth and value.

Worth and value are very subjective, of course, and no one can say for anyone else just what worth or value a particular accomplishment will hold. And each person must weigh this value against the costs of engaging the particular behavior aimed at the positive intention. And are there better ways of accomplishing the intention that don't come with the baggage of side effects and excessive cost - mentally, physically, and financially?

No one really wants to give up anything that they enjoy, gain gratification from, or see as benefiting them in some way. National figures on dieting failures testify to this. Confessionals are packed with people who feel guilty that they have indulged again in some forbidden thing they should not do. But impulses are difficult to control. Even thought is difficult to just stop. But if we think in terms of what we need in order to not just get rid of the bad behavior but replace it with something that will work even better for us, then we are on to something with a lot greater potential for success.

So this transformation is a three step procedure. First you have to identify what you are trying to accomplish with this behavior or mind set and it may be different for every Type A out there so you have to do some real focused introspection to ask the inner expert who holds this understanding of the intention. Once you have a pretty good idea what you are 'up to' with this constellation of characteristics, you need to 'go inside' again and brainstorm, free associate, or otherwise determine what you would need to do or have in order to accomplish this intention even better, or at least in a way that all parts of you agree is adequate.

Then, it is simply a matter of retrieving and organizing these characteristics and resource experiences so as to implement the new arrangement - much like upgrading an old favorite software program. The new arrangement will automatically click in whenever access impulses are received to run the old program. And it will be an upgrade of your own doing and thoughtful consideration. And you won't have to give up anything. An old habit will simply have become obsolete as the new, improved habit satisfies your positive intentions and accomplishes your goals. As simple and easy as 1, 2, 3!

Changing Habits

Yeah, right you say. But, wait, even a 'habit' as complex and pervasive as an entire personality/lifestyle can, in fact, be transformed by its 'owner' on the basis of a decision to do so. Wanting to do it is a good enough reason. And you can begin to want to the more you can assure yourself that you are not operating on a scarcity model and that changing the habit does not mean losing something you were pretty desperately clinging to for control.

Give yourself a good talking to, informing yourself that you are a flexible and capable, intelligent, cognizant being who can elect to use your storehouse of potential to put together a superior choice for meeting your needs abundantly without having to suffer the consequences that were connected to operating on unexamined and limited choices.

Sure it may involve significantly altering long held, pet beliefs and attitudes. And it will most definitely involve cultivating some novel behaviors and affect states. But isn't that what you've been doing all along in your learning history? Aren't there lots of things you used to enjoy or need that you have outgrown physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually? So you know how to change beliefs, modify behaviors, and feel differently in many arenas of your life. Now may be the time to turn this personal power of active intention to preferred alternatives to the negative aspects of your Type A traits. So let's look at what some of the possible alternatives might be in these three basic areas.

You Can Change Your Mind

Examining beliefs that support the limiting Type A lifestyle can point to somewhat opposite ideas that, once adopted, become the foundation on which you build the preferred behaviors and emotions of your transformed lifestyle. The first belief to tackle is the one that the attitudes we hold most near and dear don't appear to be arbitrary beliefs at all. They are simply truths - the way things are - end of discussion. We wouldn't behave as we do if we didn't deeply believe it to be the true and right way. People are usually quite uncomfortable if anyone suggests that these alleged truths are in fact arbitrary - that there is no external rule book, no absolute way we 'should' be.

Though it is an exciting thrill in one way to realize that we get to make up the unique rules by which we will live, it can also be a bit of a terrifying responsibility. As a therapist, I frequently interview clients who come in to my office almost demanding that I tell them what they 'should' do. One woman sat in great dismay one day loudly lamenting that she just didn't know what she was supposed to do. When I suggested that she should do whatever it was that she wanted to do, she looked at me like I was crazy. As if everyone could just go around doing what they want to do!

The basic beliefs that support the Type A lifestyle are generally linked to the reasons and purposes that have motivated people to adopt it in the first place. So, whatever you've identified or guessed is the positive intention at the foundation of your developing the behaviors, tension, attitudes, and transactions characteristic of Type A, will provide you a direct link to your beliefs about hanging in this holding pattern. It is also almost always some version of self protection, self actualization, or avoidance of disapproval. Punching some doubt holes in the absoluteness of this belief will then be necessary. And then, perhaps in some of that beneficial confusion about what is true, seeds of the alternative solution supporting belief can be planted.

You don't have to (and it probably isn't possible to) go all the way from one extreme to the other. You may always have a fondness (or even favorite miserable feelings) for certain aspects of the lifestyle you will have changed. I've heard manic depressive types lament that once they went on a stabilizing medication, they really missed the highs of their manic phase though they would be the first to praise the newfound sanity of their modified (and improved) quality of life. The goal is just to move a bit on the continuum of belief, away from rigidly held absolutes to a freeing sense of choice and option.

Punching Holes in Limiting Beliefs

So how do you punch doubt holes in your rigid limiting beliefs? Let's say you've always believed that if you want something done right, you have to do it yourself. How do you move toward at least considering the possibility that a you, exhausted from trying to do everything yourself, may, in fact, not be nearly as efficient as someone else who is admittedly quite inferior to you. Or maybe you think that perfection is the ultimate mark that you must meet and anything less than that is failure?

Can you conceive of considering that such an impossible standard may actually blind you to worthy and valid treasure? That perfection is in the eye of the beholder anyway and not an external absolute? Or maybe you think you are supposed to know everything without having to learn it and therefore, any mistakes you are guilty of making prove your essential weakness and inadequacy?

Can you just imagine upgrading to the idea of giving yourself permission to learn what you learn when you learn it and to celebrate the good mistakes you make along the way? The good mistakes, by the way, are the ones that you learn something from, and you get to keep the learnings. And what about this fear that if you relax your tension, you will simply fade away and be lost in the riff raff? Have you ever considered that you just might make even more profound and meaningful contributions if your base state was one of relaxed presence?

If you answered yes to any of these questions about your ability to consider a little movement or if it even sounds like something you wish you could consider, then consider yourself on the way. Why not? Everyone knows that those thousand mile journeys begin with just one step. As I said before, just wanting to is enough. Victor Frankl, in his writing on the human quest for meaning, suggested that there has to be meaning to life simply because we yearn for one. Just as the experience of thirst proves the existence of something called water.

Everyone knows the experience of having committed to a new or unknown path and then you just keep on taking steps even though you can't exactly see what you're accomplishing. You can, in fact, repeat to yourself, much like a mantra or something you chant, the essence of the new attitude or belief you wish to hold even while you know quite clearly in your conscious mind that you are far from actually believing it. You repeat it in the present tense as though you have already come to believe it congruently and eventually all parts of you will catch up to your self fulfilling prophecy.

Dr. Christine Northrup, a holistic physician, writes out a prescription for her patients to look themselves deeply in the eye (in a mirror reflection) and tell that self in the mirror: "I accept you unconditionally right now." And when you do this the first time, you are almost guaranteed to access an entire chorus of dissenters and critics demanding to know just who you think you are!

Dr. Northrup advises patients to simply turn the unconditional acceptance onto these objecting parts of the self as well. And, gradually, as you come to believe that such a thing is even possible and that you deserve it just as you are, by virtue of being alive, there may be a distinct mixture of feelings and fears - namely the stirrings of something like joy and relief right alongside a terror that if you really let this belief take hold that a total atrophy and complete lack of motivation will ensue. And then you can reassure yourself that an unconditionally accepted self is much more capable of and likely to make significant accomplishments the driven self could never even imagine.

You are what you tell yourself. What you believe becomes true. And you get to believe what you decide to believe. Getting on an elevator one morning (in a state of agitated obsession) in a hotel where I was about to make a keynote panel address to a large conference, I encountered a colleague who was on his way to address the same panel. He was holding his plastic nametag clinched between his teeth and repeating the sentence out loud: "I do this because I like it." I immediately saw the wisdom in this tactic and let a shift in my own thinking occur. Ultimately, people do the things they want to do.

So let's not deceive ourselves that we are victims of a forced choice and feel oppressed and anxious. Let's admit that we are doing what we do purposefully and with some good reason.

Take the Leap to a New Attitude

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to taking the plunge is the fear that change will cost you something you need. Despite notions to the contrary, feeling safe, worthwhile, and appreciated is not dangerous or incompatible with task oriented, responsible behavior. This seems so obvious at one level and yet if the opposite belief is firmly in tact, significant anxiety will result at the thought of risking such a bold departure from conditioning.

I am working with one young (Type A) man who has presented his bruised and battered psyche for therapy, firmly placing all blame for his woes on his Type A father with whom he currently works in a business the two of them run. He hates his father and yet feels bound by duty to parent his own 4 year old son in the identical unforgiving, demanding manner in which he was raised because 'that's how a person becomes responsible.' All the while he clings to this tough persona on one level, he sadly cries silent tears he quickly wipes away. His fear is that if discipline and motivation doesn't feel bad, appropriate responsibility will be fortified. His proof of this 'truth' is that his father trained him in such a way that he felt very bad but developed responsibility.

He is having trouble believing that this desired outcome could have developed any other way. It's as if he has stumbled and clawed his way through brambles to the top of a mountain and since the view is nice from the top, he concludes his climb was worth it and would even direct another to follow his route. He is oblivious of the fact that on the other side of the mountain there is a smooth, comfortable, gently inclined path with a lovely view all the way that leads to the exact same reward he is enjoying (but which he has suffered for so much more painfully).

But your view of everything can change in a single moment when perspective shifts or when you see the terrain in which you have been entangled from the top of a high place, when you somehow get above it all and get a glimpse of the big picture. Usually you can't pinpoint the exact moment when the shift occurs because it is a process that is often subtle and largely unconscious. But you know it when you have changed your mind and minds can change, especially when you set out to do so with active intention. And when the mind changes to allow it, so does the body and its behaviors and feelings.

Which brings us to another important belief to punch some holes in: That's just the way I am. I've always been that way and therefore couldn't possibly change. The first step here is as simple as switching verb tense: I used to be a tense, rigid, Type A perfectionist, but now I am becoming calm, focused, forgiving, and free to

do what I want to do. In fact, the more I was driven by tension and fear, the more I am able to recognize and embrace the inverse of that lifestyle.

It's kind of like the experience reported by the truth seeker who finally won an audience with the wisest seer and blurted out the question he had been trying his whole life to answer: What is the key to the universe? The wise man responded that, as with many such questions, there was good news and bad news. The bad news, he sadly informed the seeker, is that there is no key. The good news, however, is that it has been left unlocked.

Perhaps the key to changing attitudes is to know that they were never really locked in truths in the first place. They were just inadvertent learnings, considered to be the best deal available at the time and in the context in which they were learned. And such learnings can become obsolete and in a sense, be unlearned or replaced with new, upgraded beliefs that support new options that were available all the time - left unlocked as it were, but just now discovered.

Inventory Your Behaviors

So what do you do now? I mean actually do differently now that you have this new belief superstructure in place? Well, let's do an inventory of what you have been doing and assess which behaviors are working out well for you that you want to keep. There will probably be lots of these. The question to ask is a little like the one Ann Landers suggests people ask themselves when considering the continuation of a relationship: Am I better off with or without this person?

Or, in other words, does this behavior accomplish more for me than it costs me to utilize it? If you were doing an analysis of the use of space in your vegetable garden, you would assess regarding how easily each item grows, whether you actually like and consume the produce, its nutritional value, its compatibility with the other plants, and whether it grows there by accident or intention. Even in the garden review, you're probably going to realize you could use your space differently in order to better meet your unique needs and wishes, keeping some plants exactly how they are, expanding others, eliminating some altogether and replacing them with things you've never grown before.

When I planted my first garden in sandy Florida soil, it was a complete waste of time except for the learnings about what not to do. But across the street (the grass is always greener...) my neighbors, in the very same soil, produced the most bountiful garden imaginable. It didn't take me long to select my gardening mentors and to do everything exactly as they were doing - with similar results, of course!

When you examine your behavior repertoire, you're similarly going to discover behaviors that aren't working so well for you and will need to be replaced. And

since the behaviors you will need to replace them with may be somewhat novel or virtually unknown to you, research may be required. It's the kind of research every two year old child knows how to do automatically when they model via deep trance identification with the human representative of any behavior they are acquiring. So, you find someone who models the behaviors you want to acquire and you study them, interview them, observe them, match their breathing, movements, speed of speech, selection of words, facial expression, etc. It will feel very awkward when you first do these behaviors.

Don't let that stop you.

Any thing you learn or do differently is awkward in the beginning. You can prove that easily by clasping your hands together with fingers interlaced. Notice which thumb is on top. Now uncross and reclamp your hands with the other thumb on top. The neural pathways responsible for recognizing this sensation will have been very rarely used in your lifetime and you can appreciate the weirdness you feel as the means by which you are able to notice this experience potential sort of coming to life.

Changing Behaviors

It's the same with the more complex internal and interpersonal behaviors. Take breathing for another example. Most people habitually breathe very poorly. They take rapid, shallow breaths, do not exchange enough oxygen, and do not hold the breath for optimal use. When you take the initiative and time to thoughtfully breathe in from the diaphragm to the count of four, hold it in for the count of four, release slowly to the count of four, and then hold as empty as you can get, exhaling even more to the count of four, you will be eligible to experience a very different state of being alive than the one to which you had been accustomed. It is a choice to breathe regularly in this more efficient manner, but the other way is a familiar habit that, by definition, feels "normal."

We can probably generalize a bit and predict that many of the behaviors targeted to change may sound like Type A symptoms: worrying, cut-throat competition, criticism, blaming self and/or others, extreme control, jolting the body artificially in order to deny basic physical needs for sleep, nutrition, down time, etc. Then we can just turn them inside out and figure out some likely replacements. Worrying, for example, can be replaced with relaxed and paying attention behaviors. You can continue to anticipate the future when you need to, but you don't need to do it in the same old way where you imagine everything going badly while you feel anxious. You can imagine yourself in the future, handling the situation in the preferred manner of your choosing while you feel relaxed and capable. That should satisfy the part that needed to worry.

And then when you are finished with your worry replacement, it might be nice to rest from anticipating the future altogether by really being present in the moment, attending to aspects and details of it that had probably escaped your notice altogether. It's the old 'stop to smell the roses' but there is a lot more sensory data in each moment than simply roses to smell. A 'stay in the moment' exercise I like to do (especially when I'm physically exercising and starting to wish that I was finished because I'm tired, hot, hurting, or don't have time for this) is to systematically identify current data from each sensory modality. So, what do you see, hear, feel, and smell? And then go deeper into the moment by doing it again and noticing more data in each channel.

Resting itself may be a behavior many X Type A's need to learn how to do. First, it may be helpful to realize that 'rest' doesn't have to mean sitting idle on a couch all day. I prefer the definition of rest which focuses on varying behavior in order to rest from what you were doing before. You rest from one thing by doing something different.

So, theoretically, it would be possible to dynamically rest all day long by honoring your natural need for variety. For example, you could rest from sleeping by putting on your walking shoes and walking three miles at sunrise. Then you could rest from walking by eating breakfast. Maybe you then rest from eating by showering, rest from that by dressing, rest from dressing by driving to work, rest from driving by climbing the stairs, rest from that with some focused mental activity, rest from that by explaining it to someone else, rest from that by asking for input from another source, rest from all that with a fifteen minute quiet the mind break, and rest from that with accomplishing some physical chore, etc., etc.!

The rest never ends. Relaxation, while valuable, is not necessarily the only means to the goal of a balanced and centered lifestyle. At least, not unless we significantly expand our definition of relaxation and rest as state of mind and not absence of physical or mental activity. So, learning to be still refers to the process of neutralizing agitation, tension, anxiety, etc. and replacing them with calm and excited focused energy which can be applied to any activity, either physical or mental. But if being physically still and mentally blank isn't something you ever cycle through, then this too is a worthy behavior to learn as one of your options which will take its natural place in your balanced lifestyle.

Every great painting begins with a blank canvas. Being able to quiet your mind and simply observe your thoughts while you disengage your judgment is an excellent way to rest after times of highly engaged mental activity. You may not be able to make your mind go blank and maybe you don't even need to. Since the conscious mind can only process 5 to 7 bits of information at any time, it is a simple matter to overload these limited circuits with goal directed material of your own choosing.

What goal, you ask?

Well, the goal of becoming completely relaxed, both physically and mentally for a specified period of time. You can easily do this with one of those present tense self fulfilling prophecies you practiced earlier. For this goal, you simply tell yourself silently (repeatedly): I am completely relaxed, at this time, both physically, and mentally. You can enhance the effect by thinking each of the four parts of this sentence in rhythm with exhaling four different breaths. Associate any helpful imagery with each phrase.

When I say 'completely relaxed' I do a search through my body, willfully relaxing any obviously tense muscles, letting my jaw go slack, and maybe imagining something melting or my body becoming limp like a cooked noodle. Then as I say 'at this time' I imagine myself in a safe little envelope of time, temporarily free from doing anything other than being relaxed in this moment. When you focus on 'physically' again, let your already relaxed body surprise you with releasing further tension.

Then comes the real reason you are saying the sentence: 'and mentally.' This phrase raises the logical question of what mental relaxation even is. Since you could think of the flow of thoughts through your conscious mind as an indicator of an active brain and a healthy nervous system, you don't necessarily need to try and stop that. But you can stop your involvement with it. I like to imagine myself sitting beside a river, just passively observing the variety of thoughts that flow by me.

I concentrate on watching them come and letting them go, just like I am doing with each breath that comes and goes. Or sometimes I imagine standing in front of a blank chalkboard and writing the thought in a rainbow shaped arc. Then, upon exhaling, I imagine my hand coming back across that arc from the opposite direction, holding an eraser with which I let the thought go, knowing that it will be available to me when I need it. But at this moment in time, I am electing to let it go. There is nothing I need to do about that thought other than observe it, validate it, and let it go.

So, you are on the path to new behaviors with efficient worrying, breathing, resting, and quieting your mind. These are important in and of themselves and may well be key pieces in reconstructing some of those other disease prone, symptomatic behaviors like extreme competing, blaming, or controlling. Maybe it is a matter of backing off of the extreme, keeping the behavior as a choice, but also developing choice in what seems like polar opposites to these behaviors so they do not need to be relied upon so extensively.

I appreciate the yin/yang type interconnectedness of what at first seem to be polar opposites. For example, the more you have been driven to compete, the more you can recognize and develop your innate ability to cooperate. Or, the more you have been free to blame and criticize yourself or others, the more you are free to truly recognize and compliment significant components of progress. And the more you have carried the burden of controlling everything, the more you can expect to appreciate the relief that comes when you create a more satisfying balance.

The more you used to think you had to be the expert, the more you can let yourself ask for help expertly.

One client who wanted to use hypnosis to lower his hypertension explained to me that he had always had these characteristics and that he considered himself to be genetically, emotionally, and culturally predisposed to this symptom as his father, who had just died of a heart attack, had also been that way and thus passed it on to his son. Certainly the man identified with most of these disease prone behaviors just discussed.

He was a professor who believed he had to know all the answers (and criticized himself severely if he did not), a father and husband who thought he had to be the strong leader. He even tried to control his hypertension with obsessive running, biofeedback, and meditation until he could prove to his satisfaction on a monitor he used that he had forced his symptom into normal range. But his success was short lived because as soon as he would return to the (self inflicted) stresses of his life, the monitor would reflect the return of the hypertension.

So, rather than using hypnosis to force him more effectively somehow, I encouraged him to use his trance to make peace with his fear of emotional vulnerability as the means to accomplishing the true control that his healthy development required. Because the more you are free to allow your vulnerability, the more you can know your true confidence and power. In this paradoxical way that appealed to him intuitively, he told his father goodbye and, while thanking him for doing the best he could, informed him that he was going to go further than the father had been able to teach him.

Therefore, he released his father from any haunting guilt that his own limitations had permanently limited his son. Then my client proceeded to launch a whole set of uncharacteristic behaviors: Asking for help, letting people help him, saying 'I don't know' without anxiety, welcoming mistakes as learning opportunities, and a host of breathing and 'being' behaviors that were largely unknown by him.

He even exercised differently.

Instead of forcing himself on a treadmill track, he began to swim regularly, describing the act of letting himself enter the water and float out on its surface as a stimulus that reminded him to breathe, relax, and move accordingly. He forgot to worry about his hypertension. He was busy enjoying his life and his time.

Affect/Emotion/Feeling

There may not be much to actually say about feeling good. I have been making the point that what you think and what you do are crucial first steps to transforming Type A personality. Feeling different may, in fact, simply be the logical result of making different choices about beliefs and behaviors. And feeling good has enormous benefits in addition to the obvious one of, well feeling good.

There is an entire science devoted to the study of psychoneuroimmunology, which essentially describes the miracle of the mind-body connection with regard to disease and wellness. What you think effects your body, both physically and emotionally. Still need proof? Imagine cutting a juicy lemon in half and bringing it slowly up to your mouth and then biting into it. Your salivation response is immediate validation that what you think drives physiological processes. What you do similarly influences how you feel.

To test this, imagine yourself with a scowl on your face and then think about a project you are doing. Notice how you feel about it. Now, picture yourself smiling and return your thoughts to that same project.

How do you feel about it this time?

But what do we mean by feeling good anyway? There are lots of variations and one person's pleasure may be another's pain. And then there is the assumption that all of your feelings are part of health and balance. Carl Jung once said he would rather be 'whole' than 'healthy.' He was using 'healthy' to refer to society's current prejudice as to which feelings are approved. One way to look at this is that you deserve to have all of your feelings by virtue of being alive. Unnatural imbalance (which can lead to disease) can occur as easily when any feeling is blocked completely as when it is overused to an obsessive extreme. So, there are no purely bad or good feelings but rather how we balance, allow, and contain or release natural emotion that effects us to the bad or good.

So, emotions that generally enjoy a bad reputation include aggressive or vulnerable experiences like hostility, anger, impatience, fear, or sadness. Emotions of strength, confidence, pride, and capability are considered okay by almost everyone. Tender emotions such as joy, happiness, safe, calm, compassionate, relaxed, satisfied, hopeful, while generally considered desirable, still can be considered possibly dangerous or suspicious.

They might lead to messy, mushy, emotional displays in business settings or worse, to someone losing their drive to perform, keep up, and successfully compete. Obviously, there is unavoidable overlap when discussing matters of belief, behavior and emotion. And there are very good reasons why you have learned to have the feelings that are characteristic of you and to avoid the feelings you consider foreign, weird, or unattainable.

So, how about a decision to claim your human birthright to have all of your feelings available to you and you are the executor in control of the estate who decides how and when they will be dispersed? If you are up for that, you might want to start by shopping for those experiences most novel for you, kind of like how you identified models you know for behaviors you want to acquire.

Conclusion

If you are reading this because you have been a bit Type A, then you may be in the market for some of the tender, vulnerable emotions such as patience, compassion, calm, satisfied, safe, relaxed, hopeful, even sadness, and making an ally out of your fear. All of these feelings have value and you have known them all along at some level.

It's just a matter of encouraging them by focusing inward and retrieving them for your best interests in becoming healthy, happy, balanced, and free to be whole. And more good news is that you can simply pretend or imagine feeling that way and begin to reap the rewards even while part of your conscious mind is still analyzing and criticizing how this would never work. Go ahead and borrow this feeling from someone you know who has it abundantly.

Or for a real kick, borrow it from the older, wiser you from the future who has so much of it that sharing with you would be a pleasure.

Go ahead.

The time to be happy is now.

Really immerse yourself in a cocoon of feeling good, which turns out to be the happy balance of ability to freely feel the relevant emotion at the proper intensity in the moment of ever changing experience. Look forward to the days when you will be able to look back and review your ongoing transformation from that vantage point, remembering to accept yourself unconditionally right now.

Why not?

Now is a good time.