

### ***Dealing with the Challenge of Negative People***

[Excerpt from the New York Times Best Seller “Your Destiny Switch: Master Your Key Emotions, And Attract the Life of Your Dreams” by Peggy McColl, Foreword by Neale Donald Walsch]

[http://www.amazon.com/Your-Destiny-Switch-Emotions-Attract/dp/1401912362/sr=1-1/qid=1160747694/ref=sr\\_1\\_1/102-9818291-5132117?ie=UTF8&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/Your-Destiny-Switch-Emotions-Attract/dp/1401912362/sr=1-1/qid=1160747694/ref=sr_1_1/102-9818291-5132117?ie=UTF8&s=books)

Turning up the volume on any positive emotion will empower you and make you feel good. However, one of the big challenges you’ll face again and again is dealing with negative people.

When you’re in a confrontation, observe the emotions you’ve chosen to feel and depersonalize what the other person is saying and doing. Remember that even if people directly accuse you or call you a name, they’re responsible for their own feelings, just as you’re responsible for yours. They’re making the choice to be angry and judgmental. If you unknowingly hurt someone, of course you want to become aware of it so that you can improve the situation, but getting into an altercation won’t help anyone feel better, nor will it allow you to solve problems or correct misunderstandings. Then, too, often you’ll be on the receiving end of other people’s behavior that has absolutely nothing to do with you—you just happen to be where their negative energy falls. When you’re blamed or treated with hostility, stay positive. Be calm, loving, and curious. This alone may help the other person switch into a more positive state.

In the martial art of aikido, if you throw a punch at me, I just duck and let it go by. I don’t respond to the negativity. This approach is very effective when it comes to other people’s challenging behavior. Don’t waste your energy engaging in a fight. Let others experience their emotions without letting yourself be drawn into them. If someone attacks you, try to send him or her love. Doing so can break down any negative emotion and open up possibilities and opportunities for you and the other person.

It may be very difficult for you to feel loving around a sibling, in-law, neighbor, co-worker, or person who cuts you off on the freeway. Turn up the volume on love and you’ll feel much better than if you indulged in anger or resentment. You’ll also find creative solutions to challenging situations and enable yourself and others to heal.

When your sister comes to a family gathering and says that you couldn’t possibly understand her problems at work because you’re “just” a stay-at-home mom, you can allow yourself to feel angry or hurt or choose to feel love for your sister. You can have curiosity about why she’s so angry, frustrated, or jealous, along with what’s beneath your own tendency toward defensiveness. You can listen to your sister vent, ask her questions, and help her get in touch with her own more positive feelings while you connect with yours. She might start to think, *If my sister can be so caring toward me when I’m feeling angry, jealous, and unlovable, maybe I’m not such an unlovable person after all.* She may begin to heal her own sense of insecurity.

Love gives you the strength to depersonalize other people’s behavior and let go of judgments about them. Filled with caring for yourself and others, you can express your needs in a compassionate way and inspire others to respect your boundaries and sensitivities. Your love will help *them* create love, and this will assist them in treating you considerately, which will make them feel good.

Choosing to feel and express your love toward a difficult person is always a much more productive and positive way to handle the situation than allowing yourself to switch into negativity. Think about how wonderful you feel when you’re deeply in love: The whole world seems brighter because you’re feeling expansive and caring. If your neighbor blocks your driveway, you’re so filled with love and joy that you don’t get upset; you simply ring his bell and ask him nicely to move his car.

Sometimes you’ll choose to deal with difficult, negative people, perhaps because they’re relatives, co-workers, or neighbors and you don’t want to (or can’t) avoid them completely. When

they say something discouraging, you can respond in a way that helps you connect with your own positive feelings, and that might make them more aware of how negative they're being. They may not be able or willing to shift out of their negativity, but you'll feel positive and empowered when you respond in one of the following ways:

— **Sympathize.** One of the most powerful sentences you can say to someone is “I can understand why you might feel that way” or “I’m sorry that’s how you feel.” In speaking these words, you’re expressing compassion and kindness toward someone who could use some positive energy, without having to be drawn into the person’s negativity.

— **Suggest a more positive emotion that they could be experiencing instead.** You can do this in a subtle way. If someone asks me, “Doesn’t it make you furious when drivers won’t move out of the passing lane?” I say, “No, actually, it makes me curious” or “No, it makes me wonder why they’re so oblivious to the traffic around them.” When a person asked me recently if I was upset that my house hadn’t sold yet, I said, “No, I’m not upset. I see it as an opportunity to experience faith. I’ve priced the house right, houses are selling all over the place, and I know that I only need one buyer and it will be sold.”

— **Offer a different, more positive way of describing matters.** If someone complains, “It’s so chaotic around here,” say “Never a dull moment. I’m glad that we’re all able to be flexible and go with the flow!”

— **Suggest less extreme ways of looking at the situation.** When someone uses extreme words such as *never*, *always*, *everyone*, and *no one*, you can gently correct the person’s negative distortions, saying, “I can see how you’d feel that way after what happened, but I have faith that not every contractor is a crook.”

— **Use humor.** When someone complains, “I can’t believe how impossible the traffic is on this road. I don’t know why I even bother getting into my car,” you could reply, “I know! Fred Flintstone could pedal faster! Where’s our private jet when we need it?” It’s hard to stay mad or unhappy when you’re giggling!

— **Point out the positive aspects of the situation.** If someone says, “I can’t believe how lousy this hockey coach is,” you might comment, “Well, he seems to be able to get the boys to do their best individually and support each other as a team, and I know my son is really having a great time playing with him.” If someone else complains about having aches and pains, say, “Well, I’m glad that if you’re not feeling well, at least I can be here to cheer you up!” and smile.

— **Gently and lovingly point out what others can do to rectify the situation.** When people are venting, they usually don’t want to hear advice, but after they calm down, often they’ll take in and seriously contemplate the words of wisdom they’ve just been given. When others complain about what’s happening politically, say, “I agree that that’s a very important issue,” and encourage them to write to the newspaper or their local representatives or even run for office. Remind people of their power over their lives. They may not take you up on your advice, but they may start connecting with more positive emotions.

— **Emphasize the present moment and the hope for the future.** If someone says, “It really stinks that my car had to go to the shop last week,” reply, “Isn’t it great that it’s in the past now?” Then you can switch the subject, saying something along the lines of: “So, what are you going to do now that your car is fixed? Are you going to drive somewhere this weekend just to get away and have some fun?”

— **Remind them of their gifts.** People who see the glass as half-empty can sometimes stop their string of complaints when you remind them of the positive things they have in their life.

Regularly dealing with a difficult person can be very draining because it takes a lot of energy to avoid getting sucked into negativity and keep the switches on your own positive emotions high. If you can, try to delegate the burden once in a while. For example, you can ask a sibling who's less sensitive to your parents' negativity to deal with their needs and give you a break so that you can reconnect with your own positivity.

If the negativity of others becomes so great that you're actually being abused—verbally or physically—and they're unwilling or unable to change their behavior, you must pull away. When you let someone mistreat you, you're being unkind and unloving toward yourself by giving the person permission to abuse you, and that's not okay.

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Each time you choose a positive emotion over a negative one, you contribute to a new, healthy habit of being empowered. In *YOUR DESTINY SWITCH*, you'll learn about tools you can use regularly to keep yourself in a positive emotional state so that when challenges do appear, you can face them with love, curiosity, and confidence.

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