

MOULDING MEMORIES

The reason most of us begin a journey of personal transformation, striving to emerge our potential and clarify our life-purpose, is as a result of the pain and trauma we have experienced. Rarely is the journey taken for the sake of self improvement alone. More often than not this is a journey conceived out of dissatisfaction, depression and despair. Why are we shackled to our pain, sadness and trauma? Why does it seem despite our best efforts that we are unable to set ourselves free? Why are we repeatedly tortured by thoughts, feelings and images that leave us feeling worse about ourselves every time? The answer is simple. We are held hostage by our memories. The moment in which the trauma was conceived has passed and yet our memories can make it feel like yesterday. In fact, our memories can make it feel as if it is happening right now. Such is the power of memory.

Because our memories maintain a precise record of every event and experience, they in fact hold the key to most of our problems. We cannot change the past, but we can change the way the past affects us in the present. Memories hold the key to our liberation. We need to understand that when something negative, painful and traumatic takes place, it is recorded in the memory (the sub-conscious mind). If the way that it has been recorded is left unquestioned or unchallenged, whenever the mind returns back to that memory it will replay the episode/event in the form that it was recorded. In other words, whether 5, 10 or 20 years have passed, we will experience it as if it were today. This is why so many of us, despite the improvements we've made in our lives, or how far we've moved on from particular events, find that if certain stimuli come in front of us today, they can take us back to a moment in time we'd rather forget. All the fears, emotions and feelings belonging to that moment, long gone, come flooding into the present; once again we're reminded that we're still a prisoner, such is the hold that memories have over us. This is why we need to transform the disabling power that some memories have by using the power of the conscious mind to question and review the past and where necessary reframe it. Remember, who you were yesterday is not an accurate reflection of who you would choose to be today.

The power of imagination is arguably our greatest gift when used constructively and creatively in our own best interests. If we leave a memory of the past unchallenged and do not seek in some way to rectify it, to make peace with it and so leave it behind, we will continue to be troubled by events that in fact really have no power over us at all but like parasites they sit absorbing our power. The only power unwanted memories have over you is the power that you continue to let them have. Through creative visualisation, reframing, positive affirmation etc., you can mould those memories in such a way that the negative influences dissolve and disappear. By travelling back down the corridor of time and facing what needs to be faced and also putting right the injustices of your past (see handouts Creative Visualisation and Reframing, Focusing with Faith and Personal Prayer) you are able to create inner peace by healing and resolving painful memories. Each time you return to these memories and reframe, realign and make peace with them, you reduce the influence of the past to such an extent that eventually whenever your mind does go back to that point in time you simply don't feel about it the way you once did. It isn't able to bully you into a prescriptive set of thoughts and feelings. Quite simply you've rewritten the script. You've realised that the people, the events and the reasons for your trauma may continue to live on in your mind but if you mould your memories, using the right methods and tools, then you no longer need to be imprisoned within your own life.