

Minding our Mental and Emotional Health

Step 1: Acceptance

Sometimes the hardest thing about dealing with the difficulties life throws at us is not so much the happening itself but the mental torture we inflict on ourselves. We repeat 'If only I had ...or 'Why me'? ...or 'How could they do that to me'? Such self-inflicted torture may be eased by cultivating a sense of acceptance, firstly about ourselves and secondly about the things that happen to us – even the awful things.

David Rich, a psychotherapist, called his most recent book:

The Five Things We Cannot Change (Shambala 2005).

He names these five givens as: *'Things change and end;*

Things don't always go according to plan; Things are not always fair; Pain is part of life; People are not loving and loyal all the time'.

Richo challenges us to say Yes to these five givens and face each as a mental, emotional, even spiritual challenge.

Acceptance of these givens, of things essentially outside our control, enables us to ease out of some of the unnecessary suffering that our thinking about them sometimes causes. Acceptance encourages us to let go of self-blame or guilt and even unfairness and instead say: 'This situation just is...now how do I get on with it?' Sometimes people confuse acceptance with passivity or laziness– but in truth the opposite is the case. When we learn to accept and not resist what we cannot change or influence, we release that energy and invest it in tackling the hundreds of things we can change, things within our control and influence. To arrive at that sense of acceptance takes a while and sometimes we need a bit of company and a little inspiration.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your mental and emotional health why not come and meet one of the Team of 6 Counselling Therapists at The Novara Centre.

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