

Health

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Learn to beat your gremlins and get out of your own way

Do you find that you often get in your own way and keep yourself from getting what you truly want? Do you find that you repeat old patterns of behavior more often than you'd like and wonder why you aren't happier? Would you like to enjoy yourself more and more each day?

If you can answer "yes" to one or more of these questions, you may be dealing with your gremlins. What are gremlins? They are a metaphor for the negative thoughts in our heads, our "internal critics," that have influenced us since we came into this world and keep us from achieving what we desire. When we wake up in the morning and go to sleep at night, they are there telling us not to risk change. They tell us who and how we are, and define and interpret our every experience. A gremlin's goal is to squelch the natural, vibrant "us" that is within, and to convince us to waste time reliving the past, worrying about the future and analyzing all our relationships. They want us to believe that the motive behind all the self-criticism, worrying, doubts, fears, time-wasting and lack of self-trust is purely to serve and protect. Unfortunately, in the end, we feel only stuck and miserable.

What are some common gremlin messages that keep us stuck and "in line?"

1. **The "you can't" strategy:** You are convinced that you are not capable of obtaining certain results by your actions.
2. **The "you should," "you ought to" and "you must" strategy:** You believe you must follow certain rules and regulations, like a programmed computer, in order to do life "right."
3. **The "you don't deserve" strategy:** You are convinced that you are not worthy of something you want.
4. **The "fantasy is reality" strategy:** Your actions are based on assumptions and fantasies rather than reality.
5. **The "tensing in anticipation of pain helps" strategy:** You tense against emotional pain before it occurs in the hope of minimizing the discomfort, but end up stressed and sick.
6. **The "my fear is scaring me to death" strategy:** Your anxiety about life and death scares you.
7. **The "they have to change in order for me to feel better" strategy:** You're always trying to control and change other people so you can feel better.

If you want to get unstuck and learn how to tame your gremlins, read the book "Taming Your Gremlins" by Rick Carson. It is a powerful, yet funny, book that can help you learn how to tame your gremlins so that you can choose light over darkness and true love that sustains over fear that can destroy. By learning how to control your gremlins, you will be able to fully experience, appreciate and enjoy your gift of life. You will begin to live a life that is yours, with freedom, excitement and authenticity. Is it easy? It is never easy to change old habits, but the rewards of being able to have a life that is truly authentic, happy and real are worth the effort.

Learning how to tame your gremlins involves one major, first step: **simply noticing**. Don't try to change what is happening, don't try to figure out why you are the way you are, don't argue with yourself. Simply notice:

- your habits for responding to emotions, people, circumstances,
- your self concept,
- each part of your body, and
- your gremlin's chatter.

As you practice simply noticing what is happening within and around you, you will begin to detach from your gremlins and they will lose power over you. As the author states, "You free yourself not by trying to be free, but by simply noticing how you are imprisoning yourself in the very moment that you are imprisoning yourself." Each time you simply notice the negative talk inside yourself, you can choose your response. You learn how to bring the self-limiting thoughts and traits out of the shadows and you can then choose and play with options. You will learn how to be in the "here and now," not the fearful past or the unknown future. But, understand that learning how to tame your gremlins is a lifelong process with no finish line. Appreciate the reality that your life will be forever unfolding and your future will always be unknown. See the process as exciting, and an adventure that you are now directing - not your past, not someone else or their beliefs. If you want to tame your gremlins to get the life that you deserve, this book will help you start your journey.