



Live REGRET- FREE forever!

Follow this guilt-ditching guide for a happier life today!

WORDS Jessica McGregor Johnson

Your life is not a rehearsal, so don't waste it trapped in regret. Seize every minute of it! This is IT, after all. And you can either choose to stay stuck in the past, or surge forward and create the future you want. Everything in your life is exactly as it should be; you are poised on the edge of the next step, so take it joyfully.

'Not possible!' I hear you shout. 'What about all the mistakes I've made? Of course I'm going to regret those!'. There are so many times when we look back on our lives, and only see the mistakes we think we've made. We then trap ourselves in a state of constant regret. But I'd like to offer you a different perspective: there ARE no mistakes in life. Everything that's happened to you has been for a reason. I'm not saying it was all right or even nice, but it definitely wasn't without purpose.

The journey

Life is a journey through which we learn about ourselves, and grow and become stronger. Each challenge stretches us to new heights from which we can never go back from. It's part of the fabric of life. I can now look back on the events of my past and see that, although I may have thought they were the worst things to have happened, they were, in fact, the best. I remember my meditation master once saying: 'you are never given a challenge too large for you. It might feel too hard, but you're always up to the task'. In other words, there are no mistakes.

Still unconvinced? Think about a break up that, at the time, you thought was a real mistake. A partnership with someone you genuinely believed you should be with forever. A person who you grieved over for ages, and were certain you'd never get over. Yet now, years later, you hardly ever give them a second thought, and can see why it's best you aren't together. You're able to

comprehend all the things you might not have experienced had you stayed with your ex-partner, and are now with someone who makes you so much happier. Or your life is full of new adventures you'd have missed out on in the old relationship. All in all, it was a good thing. Although, at the time, you felt it was the worst mistake ever.

Stretch your experience

You are the sum of your life experiences. Each thing that's happened in your life has shaped you, taught you about your strengths and weaknesses, and challenged you to be better, go further and see just how resilient and resourceful you are. Without these things

you wouldn't be the person you are today. And that's someone who is perfectly prepared by their life experiences to go forward and live the next bit of life to the full.

Banish negativity

Regret is always something to do with the past, and as it's already happened, it is not possible for us to change it. When we get stuck in a spiral of regret we become powerless; we continually beat ourselves up about it and end up feeling even worse. It's a vicious circle.

Think about how much more energy you'd have if you took all the time you spent regretting the past, and used it to go out and

“Regrets are a decision – there are no mistakes in life”



Mind/Positive thinking

"Everything is happening exactly as it's supposed to, and by changing your thoughts, you can transform your world"

often start feeling very empowered. You can't feel like you're a victim of the circumstances in your life when you can clearly recognise and appreciate the gift in each situation you encounter. If you do this enough, you'll soon begin to view your world in a new and healthier way.

When something seemingly wrong happens, you'll immediately begin looking for the good in it. By doing this, you'll become more resourceful, solution-orientated and, as a by-product (and an important one at that), much happier.

So remember, life is not a rehearsal. This is it. So seize every moment of it, and don't waste it regretting what you have or haven't done, or wish you could change. Everything is happening exactly as it's supposed to, and by changing your thoughts, you can transform your world.

Now get out there and start living regret-free!

EMERGENCY *regret-busters*

When you realise you're being battered by regret, stop and ask yourself what the gift in the situation is for you.

- The only person being hurt by you allowing yourself to stay stuck in regret is you – it helps no one. Instead learn by the experience and let it serve you for the future.
- Create a regret bowl, but instead of saving up for your favourite charity or cause, commit the money to something you hate! Every time you catch yourself wallowing in regret, put a pound in the bowl. That'll quickly show you just how much time you waste regretting the past and what you wish you had or hadn't done, and will help you choose your thoughts differently!
- Share what you learn about regret with your friends; encourage them to see things in a new way, and help each other stay positive.

do something for yourself. The first thing you need to do is change your perspective about the matter in question. You see, regret is simply a decision you've made, and therefore something you can alter by choosing to think about the issue differently. Regret never helps. It does not change the situation or make it better, or even resolve the issue. Of course, if there is a way to fix the problem, go ahead and do so. But generally speaking, it often relates to a situation in the past you can't do anything about. However, it IS a choice, and you CAN change it.

List of loveliness

So with this in mind, take the time to think about the things constantly haunting your mind – events you wished hadn't happened, or you'd not done. Anything you feel

regretful about in some form or another. Write them out in a list. Now, just for fun, look at them in a new light. Assume each situation wasn't a mistake, and ask yourself:

- What good has come from it?
- What have I learnt about myself?
- How has it helped me in the world?
- How have these experiences served me?
- How has this made me approach life in a good way?
- What strengths have I gained from this situation in my life?

Look at your answers, and notice how you feel? When I perceive life in this way, I



Jessica McGregor Johnson is author of *The Right T-Shirt; Write Your Own Rules and Live the Life you Want* (Uniiik Books). She started to find her right T-shirt when she lived in an ashram for four years and has worked internationally as a coach empowering women for nine years. Visit jessicamcgregorjohnson.com for details.