



Focus: Inner Redirection & Balance

3 Steps To Get Going When You Are Stuck

Are you stuck in one or the other area of your life, or have you experienced being stuck in the past? Most of us might have experienced this at a certain point. When you are stuck, you have the impression that you can't move forward or backward. You might even know sentences in your mind like "I don't know what to do" or "I don't know how to change it". Here are two examples:

Example 1: „I am stuck at work“

Imagine you have a boss, who puts a lot of pressure on you so that you feel very stressed at work. You get more and more tasks on your desk and you somehow try to manage these, because you actually don't want to lose your job. Yet, you ask yourself how to handle all this. You don't know how to get out of the rat race and thus keep going, probably until you are totally exhausted and become ill.

Example 2: „I am stuck in my relationship“

Probably you are in the situation of being stuck in your relationship, e. g. in the form that you keep fighting and arguing with your partner. By now you might be convinced that nothing else is possible. The opposite might also happen, i. e. that you don't talk that much with each other anymore, keep distance and you ask yourself what the common ground is. You say: "Well, I would love to live a different kind of intimacy and trust, but I don't know how. With him/her it is not possible. Each time I try it, we step back into old patterns and argue. He/she simply doesn't see me."

There are many more examples of being stuck. The interesting question however is, how you get going when you think you are stuck. To get there, it is necessary to take a look at how you get into a stuck situation.

When you are stuck then you think that nothing else is possible in that moment. You probably long for something different, but don't know how to get out of the current situation. You declare "It IS so!", "Nothing else is possible", "I am stuck!" This means that you are completely identified with your thoughts and stories about the situation and keep finding really good reasons why it is that way. The world is rich in evidence and whichever kind of story you want to fortify, you will definitely find evidence.

If you are stuck in the situation at work that your boss is an idiot, you will find evidence each day e. g. in him having a mean spin in his voice, not greeting you, etc.

If you have the stuck situation in your relationship that nearness and intimacy with your partner is not really possible the way you wish for, then you might find evidence e. g. in them laying tired on the couch each evening, not bringing you flowers, or realizing that they haven't said "I love you" in a long time, etc.



The moment you think you are stuck, you are in a victim position. You are victim of the circumstances, victim of the situation, and victim of being stuck. You might say now „Oh, great, and how can I get out of it? Here are 3 steps to get going when you are stuck:

STEP 1: Admit that you are stuck

To admit that you are stuck is the first step. To admit this might be painful, especially when you are the kind of person who normally have everything under control or like to have a solution for everything. In order to admit that you are stuck, I invite you to do the following experiment:

- Write down the situation in your life, where you think you are stuck. Who are the involved people? What is it about? In which way are you stuck? What happens exactly?
- Then write down all the evidence you have for this situation of being stuck. What is the specific evidence that fortify your story of being stuck? Be accurate. And be most of all radically honest, even though you might find evidence you feel ashamed about. Nobody else besides you will read it. This is about admitting it to yourself.

STEP 2: Your benefit of being stuck

Now that you have clarity about your situation and all the reasons, let's go to the next level. A part of you might not want to do this second step. When you really want to get going do it anyway!

In step 1 you just wrote down in which way you are a victim of being stuck. Not it is about writing down what your benefit of being stuck is. What is the benefit that you are stuck and keep finding evidence for this stuck situation? Maybe a voice in your head says “What? There is not benefit. Being stuck is awful and I want something else.” Still you have a benefit, because otherwise you would find something different in your life. It is about you starting to take responsibility for your being stuck. To do this, write down the answers to the following questions:

- How have you arranged this situation of being stuck? What is your part in it? How did you contribute?
- What have you been able to avoid so far by being stuck?
- What did you not have to do?
- What did you probably get?
- What was the benefit so far?

In this second step it is not about the other involved people. Instead it is about you. What is YOUR benefit of being stuck? To take responsibility for your being stuck doesn't seem fair at first. However, if you want to get going, you can't get around this step. In the following you find step 2 applied on the two examples described earlier.

Example 1: The benefit of being stuck at work

Let's take the example of being stuck at work with the boss putting pressure on you. You might have contributed to this situation in the way that you never clearly said NO and didn't make



boundaries when the amount of work increased considerably. You did not take a stand for yourself, but instead gave your authority away to your boss and behaved adaptive. Maybe it is a great benefit that you get attention and recognition from colleagues or your beloved ones when you come home being stressed of working so much. Getting attention is a great benefit. Being so stressed you probably don't have to acknowledge that you actually don't like your job anymore. Thus you don't have to face the fear of quitting and not knowing what's next...and so on. Be radically honest!

Example 2: The benefit of being stuck in relationship

When you find yourself quarreling with your partner over and over again or – the other way round – you don't speak with each other anymore and you are stuck in this situation, ask yourself how you contributed to this situation and what your benefit is. You probably contributed in the way that you stopped appreciating your partner, or you stopped sharing what moves you. A benefit you have could be that you don't have to show yourself vulnerably and risk being hurt. You can stay in the known. Another benefit could be that you get pity when you can complain about your relationship to your friends. In addition you don't have to face the fear that arises when deep intimacy takes place. As you can see there are a lot of interesting benefits when you are radically honest.

Write down what the benefit is when you take responsibility for your being stuck.

STEP 3: What's your decision?

Now that you have clarity about the situation, the evidence and your benefit of being stuck, step 3 is about answering a dangerous question from your body, not from your mind. To do this, breathe slowly, get into your body, consciously feel in your body the pain of being stuck and from there answer the following question:

Have you been stuck long enough?

Ask yourself this question seriously and really let your body answer. If your answer is YES then you can start changing your story about the situation. Then you are ready to give up the benefits you seemingly had so far and dare something completely new. Then it is clear to you that you created the situation of being stuck and can therefore also take responsibility to change it.

If your answer is NO then this is neither good nor bad. It simply means that there is a part in you that is not ready to take responsibility for the situation, because your benefit is still too high. You might invent stories like "Oh well, maybe he/she/the situation changes at a certain point and then everything will be different". In this case it is more comfortable for you to keep being stuck and let your life go past. Then you are not conscious about the full extent of the pain, because otherwise you would change something. Just be aware that it is your precious life time that you waste by being stuck. You never get it back.

To change something and get out of the being stuck mode can be frightening. You leave known territory and might try something new. It is totally appropriate to be afraid. However, instead of



letting the fear block you, you can simply use it as indicator that you break free from known territory without knowing what's going to happen next. This takes courage. It might help you at this point to consider the following:

Courage is not the lack of fear.

Courage is the decision that something else is more important than fear.

In addition, take into consideration that you do not yet have to know how the new thing works, neither do you have to do it on your own. Instead you can ask friends or experienced trainers for support, or whatever you need. The only question that counts right now is:

Was it long enough?

All the best,
Nicola Neumann-Mangoldt