

Stop Taking it Personally & Start Living Bodaciously

By Mary Foley
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We can all remember a time when we took it personally, right? We spent all this time, energy, and emotion on processing how we felt when someone slighted us, what we wished we'd said, and what, if anything, we were going to do about it. And most of the time when it was over and we were slumped in our chair feeling exhausted, needing to face a long list of things still to get done. We wish we'd spent our time on something else, something we cared more about, something more productive.

Amazingly, my own experience has shown me that throughout my day people aren't going around thinking about MY feelings! They're not saying, "Gee, when I call Mary on the phone, when I send her an e-mail, when I see her in later today, how is she going to feel about what I say or do?" Nooooo, they're just doing their thing! Still, how often have I reacted to someone or something has said or done when it was delivered in anything less than a positive tone? I mean, how rude, right?

At one point in my AOL career I decided to make big internal move from hard-earned position at the call center manager of 250 people to join the human resources team to head up the company's first ever corporate training group. I remember a few months after making the move the company held a big party where I ran into a customer service rep who used to work for me.

We started chatting and he remarked, "Mary, I don't understand why you took this new job. I mean you were doing so well in the call center and you could have gone up and up. It doesn't make sense."

At first I was shocked and started to take it personally. Was he right? Did I make a mistake to redirect my career? Were other people thinking that bad of me as well? How can he be so rude and mean to me, especially in front of all these people? My mind started racing with questions that just got worse and worse and worse.

Then, somehow I caught myself with a question that stopped the internal rampage. "How come this guy thinks he knows more about what's best for me than I do?" In that moment I decided that I didn't need to justify my career move to anyone but myself. I knew why I made the career move and knew in my heart of hearts it was the best thing for me.

To respond, I realized that I only needed to make a simple statement. So, I replied, "You know, I think it was the best move for me", exited myself from the conversation, and moved on. No explanation, no details, just a statement of my truth.

This is what Bodacious Women do. When someone says or does something that sparks an internal reaction, **when you start to take it personally, hesitate and create a few seconds of delay to ask yourself simple questions like "Is this something I ought to pay attention to? Does it really have merit?"**

It's amazing when we create a few seconds of delay and ask such questions we often answer ourselves with "No, not enough" and let it go.

Certainly, there are those times when we think, "Well, I may not take this personally, but I need to say something, I need to do something to speak my mind and set the record straight." Bodacious Women recognize this need and make the phone call, write the e-mail, go see the person, or do whatever they believe is appropriate. And, then, when that's done, they still let it go.

They don't let the situation take away their precious energy which they need for what they truly cherish.

Creating the habit of not taking it personally isn't easy, but it's so worth it. Because if you do, you will save yourself a lot of time, a lot of frustration, and maybe even a little heartache. So, right now, right this very minute decide to stop taking it personally and start taking it bodaciously. You'll be glad you did!

About Mary Foley

Mary Foley, author of *Bodacious! Woman: Outrageously in Charge of Your Life and Lovin' It!* and founder of the Live Like Your Nail Color Women's Club, inspires women to be bold, audacious – bodacious – while having a whole lotta fun! How bodacious are you? Find out by taking Mary's fun quiz today on www.GoBodacious.com.