

Life Is Only a Test

One of my favorite posters says, “ Life is a test. It is only a test. Had this been a real life you would have been instructed where to go and what to do.” Whenever I think of this humorous bit of wisdom, it reminds me to not take my life so seriously.

When you look at life and its many challenges as a test, or series of tests, you begin to see each issue you face as an opportunity to grow, a chance to discover more about life. Whether you're being bombarded with problems, responsibilities, even insurmountable hurdles, when looked at as a test, you always have a chance to succeed, in the sense of rising above that which is challenging you. If, on the other hand, you see each new issue you face as a serious battle that must be won in order to survive, you're probably in for a very rocky journey. The only time you're likely to be happy is when everything is working out just right. And we all know how often that happens.

As an experiment, see if you can apply this idea to something you are forced to deal with. Perhaps you have much pressure from your parents or you have a demanding boss. See if you can redefine the issue you face from being a “ problem” to being a test. Rather than struggling with your issue, see if there is something you can learn from it. Ask yourself, “ Why is this an issue in my life? What would it mean and what would be involved to rise above it? Could I possibly look at this issue any differently? Can I see it as a test of some kind?”

If you give this strategy a try you may be surprised at your changed responses. For example, I used to struggle a great deal over the issue of my perception of not having enough time. I would rush around trying to get everything done. I blamed my schedule, my family, my circumstances, and anything else I could think of for my plight. Then it dawned on me. If I wanted to be happy, my goal didn't necessarily have to be to organize my life perfectly so that I had more time, but rather to see whether I could get to the point where I felt it was okay that I couldn't get everything done that I felt I must. In other words, my real challenge was to see my struggle as a test. Seeing this issue as a test ultimately helped me to cope with one of my biggest personal frustrations. I still struggle now and then about my perceived lack of time, but less than I used to. It has become far more acceptable to me to accept things as they are.

我喜欢的一幅招贴画上面写有，“生活是个测验。仅仅是个测验。你要是真能直面人生，你便早会被告知何去何从。”每当我想起这颇有点幽默的人生哲理，它便提醒我不要把我的生活看得那么严肃。

当你把生活及其中的诸多挑战看成是一个测验，或一系列测验，你便会将你面对的每一问题看作一次成长的机会，看作一次更深刻地发现生活的机会。不管你是否深陷种种问题、责任，甚至是不可逾越的障碍的围攻而不能自拔，当你将这一切视之为测验，你总有机会获胜——就是说你能超越挑战。但另一方面，如果你视你面临的每一新问题为一场严肃的、为了生存你必需赢得的战斗，那你恐怕就踏上了一个十分艰辛的旅程。你惟一的快乐时光便是一切都顺顺当当尽如人意。但我们都知道一切尽如人意的概率是多么得低。

作为试验，看看你能否把这一概念应用到你必须应付的某件事情中。也许你感觉有来自

学英语，练听力，上听力课堂！

父母的很大压力，或者你有一位要求甚高的老板。看看你能否将你面临的“问题”重新定义为“测验”。与其和你的问题搏斗，不如看看你能从中学到点什么。问问自己，“为什么这成了我生活中的一个问题？它意味着什么，超越它我需要做些什么？我能否换个角度看看这问题？我能否视之为某种测验？”

如果你试着用一用这一策略，你会惊奇地发现你对它的反应全变了。比如说，以前我总是感到时间不够用。我风风火火地干这干那，要把一切事情做完。我抱怨我的日程表、我的家庭、我的处境和一切可能抱怨的，认为是它们让我陷入困境。后来我突然明白，如果我要过得开心，我的目标不一定非得是把我的生活安排得井井有条以便我能有更多的时间，而是看我能否做得到不做完一切我认为我必须做的事情依然能够心安理得。换句话说，我的真正挑战是将我的战斗视为测验。将这一问题视为一个测验最终帮助我克服了我最大的一个困扰。现在我仍然偶尔会感到时间不够用，但比起以前频率少多了。我已渐渐学会按照事情的本来面目接受它们。