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EVERYBODY DOES IT, LYING.

If everyone is doing it, what is the problem with lying? Parents, Bosses, Politicians do it all the time. “Read my lips. No new taxes!” “If you like your health care plan, you will be able to keep it.” “I never had sex with that woman.” Employees lie to their bosses, “I am sick, and I can’t come in today.” “You can have a pony if you are good.” Husbands and wives lie. “I will never look at another man/woman.” “No, I never slept with her (I had sex with her and left right after).” Even little children will lie. “The baby broke the lamp.”

Everyone knows that they should not lie. “A man is only as good as his word.” But that does not stop people from lying even when they know that telling the truth is better for them and for their relationships.

Every time you lie, you are giving yourself the message that you are weak and cannot stand the consequences of being honest. What kind of things do you have to protect? Strong things or weak things? Every time you lie, you give yourself the message is that you must be a weak person, or you would not have to protect yourself by lying.

What you protect, you make weak.

The more you protect yourself, the weaker you will feel. The weaker you feel, the more you will protect yourself. Now, you have got a vicious cycle going and soon you will find yourself lying about things you do not have to lie about.

Since we know that lying is not good for us emotionally nor for our relationships, what are some of the purposes of lying?

- ✓ Lying so that you do not get into trouble and get yelled at. This is ultimately the fear of rejection. In this case, ask yourself these questions. What is the worst that could happen to you if you told the truth? How likely is that to happen? If the worst happened, could you live through it and be okay?
- ✓ Lying so that you do not hurt someone’s feelings. If you deliberately hurt someone’s feelings, what would you feel? Guilty, bad, shame, or all the above? If this is true, then what you are telling me is that you are lying to protect yourself from feeling guilt. Again, what you protect you make weak. **“It is not what you say, it**

is how you say it.” Be sure to make the distinction between sharing your judgments versus sharing your feelings. Judgments are debatable, feelings are not. Try starting your feedback with, “I would be less than honest with you if I don’t share this with you. . .”

- ✓ Lying to impress others. “We were under attack as the plane came in.” “I was a lieutenant in the Navy.” The problem here is that sooner or later the truth will come out. Or, you must keep expanding the exaggeration until you lose credibility. The message that you give yourself in this case is that you are not enough, you are not okay the way you are.
- ✓ Lying so that you can do something you want to do or avoid something you do not want to do. This can include lying about being a doctor on a blind date. Or, “Honey, I have to work late tonight.” The purpose here is to avoid being yelled at. What would happen if you told the truth, “I am going to a bar tonight to be with some of the fellas.” **There can be no problem solving or resolutions in a conflict without there being full disclosure.** When you lie you are saying, “I do not want a harmonious and happy relationship!”

People in this category often end up as passive aggressive. “I should go to Bob’s retirement party, but I hate the creep. But if I don’t go, everyone’s going to ask why I was not there.” So, he ends up going to the retirement party feeling resentful, angry, depressed and acts out by getting drunk at the party.

- ✓ Lying as a way of avoiding talking. “I am fine.” “Nothing!” Sometimes you will lie because you do not know the answer. Either you think you should know, or you are feeling stupid and do not know what to say. What would happen if instead of lying you said, “I do not know what I am feeling at this moment. As soon as I figure it out, I will tell you.?”

And finally.

- ✓ Lying because you are used to doing it. Have you ever met a habitual liar? Lying can become a habit. The more you lie, the more you will find yourself lying. You may even find people calling you a “blowhard” behind your back.
- ✓ The biggest lie that people tell is when they say one thing, and then do a different thing. For something to be true, what is said and what is done must be the same. “Deeds speak louder than words.” When your words and behaviors do not match, you lose your credibility. “Sure honey, I will do that.” “I will pick you up at 7 o’clock.” And sooner or later, people will stop trusting you.

You can stop lying, totally and completely. You were not born a liar. In fact, when you were small, you could be embarrassingly honest until you were taught to lie!

Children are often “rewarded” for honesty with punishment. “Did you get into my makeup?” The child’s honesty is rewarded with a couple of hard swats. “That will teach you to get into my makeup.” No! What you just taught was that if you are honest, you get punished. Who is going to be honest next time?

“Who hit sister?” *Adults will often set children up to lie by asking them questions they already know the answer to.* Under this setting the child soon learns to say what the parents wants to hear, whether it is true or not.

With all the conditioning that we put our children through, it would be amazing to find a child who does not lie!

What have you learned?

“We lie loudest when we lie to ourselves.” Eric Hoffer

If you want to become an honest, trustworthy person that people can depend on, start by working on your lying. What are your purposes for lying? Are you trying to protect yourself from guilt? Are you so weak that you must protect yourself from rejection or abandonment?

This is the punishment of a liar: he is not believed, even when he speaks the truth.

Stop blaming others! You are absolutely, totally powerful to change yourself. In fact, the only person who can change you, is you. Where you go from here is up to you, and only you!

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