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## Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/07 03:54

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greeting all,

I have constantly been truggling with an issue in my life and any comments or advice is much appreciated. Some background for the issue is as follow: I live with my father who has multiple scherolosis and is in a wheelchair full-time. He cannot live by himself as he is also partially blind and totally incapable of looking after himself. He is of native american heritage and follow typical Christian beliefs. I am the only family member that will have anything to do with him. Now the issue comes in that I am by no means a Christian although I have studied their teachings and strive to learn from them as well. It has come to a point where I cannot do any meditations,practice,etc. in any form that would be recognizable from someone looking at me such as prayers,sufism dhikr,etc. This also includes any type of lectures or music that I may want to listen to unless I use headphones which is often a problem since I like to listen to these things alot while I am taking care of housework etc and need to be free to move around. There is also no space for me to make a personal temple area as we live in a one bedroom apartment and I sleep on the couch. It i often a burden for me because i feel like i'm not free to learn or practice how I see fit.

And I also feel alot of the time that my father doesn't understand me since he chooses not to even attempt to understand my beliefs and practice and why I chose to use them. Currently my practices fall to studying by reading the forums here and contemplating on them as I reply snd listening to the lectures and what little music I have only when I am going to be at my computer for an extended period of time. Very occasionally, I leave the house to go to the woods or imilar places to try to connect to the Force which always seems to help but when I do I find myself worrying about my father and his health if I am gone for any extended period of time.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Daniel L. - 2010/02/07 04:51

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Hmm...well you sure are in a bit of situation there are ways to fix your problem but some how I feel that time is the best one. In time things will change on their own. Be patient and a solution will present itself.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Kana Seiko Haruki - 2010/02/07 05:29

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OK - im not one for softening blows and I say it how I see it so im sorry of this offends in anyway but sometimes - you gotta grasp the nettles.

Now what Im wondering is this - are you afraid of offending/hurting your father in some way by listening to the materials you talked about? or specifically - are you afraid of his reaction?

The next thing is whilst not an excuse - I do know that MS can and does alter folks personalities (depending on severity) so this may be a small consideration but the facts remain this.

If YOU cant 'fall in' with his chrisatianity - or if he feel you are 'wrong' for not being a christian - who is at fault?

Why should you 'fall in' just to keep him happy? BUT whilst difficult - why should you bomb him with your beliefs?

I dont have a 'meditation' space as such - I prefer to do this outdoors - but alot of folk meditate before going to bed - now given you sleep on the couch - perhaps that is one place you could adopt for this purpose. As for a 'personal' place or personal temple - isnt the whole world our temple?

I live my parents - they are my primary carers as im 'disabled' - they are both catholic (I still love em tho :D) yet I dont push my faith on them (in fact they probably are unaware of it fully) and they havent pushed theirs on me since I was 14 or so.

In some ways - and this may be hard - i think if you have not done so already - you need to have a sit down talk with your dad - keep it calm and polite and talk about your feelings and wishes. Just cos he has MS doesnt not mean he has a right to use it as a tool for his own ends or to guilt trip you etc. You both need to give and take. You also need to realise your own needs are as important as your dads - cos if you become 'ill' - what happens to dad?

He is lucky he has you to care for him - you obviously sacrifice alot for him and he needs to understand that you have

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needs as much as he does. What would he do if you werent there?

As silly as this may sound - even your front door (outside the apartment) or the main entrance could be your little 'quiet' spot - somewhere to go for 5 mins etc - but I have to say that I dont why your dad MUST understand your faith etc. Some folk find the idea of other faiths somewhat intimidating or even fearful. We all know there are many reactions to fear and your dads 'blanking' you on is one of them - if I cant hear it - it will go away.

Dont push the issue - just do what you do and as said - in time - he'll probably ask questions or whatever - just dont thrust it down his throat. It is early days and there is no hurry - its not like your sacrificing lambs on his lap or anything offensive ;)

Situations are often not as bad as we believe when looked at from another point of view - I feel because its on your mind - it feels worse than it is or should be. Try to relax a bit - maybe even 'cool' off for a week then perhaps (if you can) talk to your dad about it for a few minutes - the instant things feel they are headed towards hostile - walk away - dont turn it into a fight - it takes two to argue and fight.

The Jo Campbell lectures are great and educational for anyone - if he chooses not to listen etc - then its your dads loss.

Out of interest - was your dad raised a christian or did he convert to christianity later on in life?

Hope this helps MTFBWY - A

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Jasper\_Ward - 2010/02/07 05:41

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I was in a similar situation up until recently, my grandmother had alzheimers and cancer, so she needed quite a touch of attention, I found that sometimes I had to do what it takes, lay a guilt trip or even pay a family member to take care of her for one day a month so I could get some peace and be alone in my own mind. A lot like the airliners where you need to get air to yourself before you can help others. My grandmother was more of a second mom to me and I think that she understood that I wasn't trying to get away from her for any reason other than keeping my own health and sanity at an okay level.

For an idea for listening material, I might suggest Bluetooth Headphones so you are not tied down to an appliance or such, I use them while at work and it is nice to be able to move 30 feet away without wires or worry. They work with cell phones, ipod touches, and theres little \$20 dongles that plug into normal earplug slots if you order online.

may the force be with you and your father

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by RyuJin - 2010/02/07 08:22

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when it starts to feel overwhelming take heart in the fact that you are there for him when nobody else is. it can be frustrating, i know, my mom has had 7 heart stints, she has partial paralysis(due to several strokes) and she's an alcoholic...at first i wouldn't leave her unattended, however i gradually increased the amount of time i separate allowing her to be on her own, but never being too far away that i can't help. as was suggested earlier the best time to meditate is before going to sleep,or after you dad goes to sleep,whichever comes first. in time you'll be able to meditate anywhere with any background noise. to listen to the lectures the bluetooth is a great idea, or an mp3 player and you can leave one earpiece out in order to hear if your dad needs you...as to getting him to understand your philosophical views, that's tricky...the best bet would be to wait till he gets curious, let him make the first move to understand.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/07 08:59

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thanks for all the insight on this...i do try hard not to push my beliefs on him but it is often really hard not to say something about them when he asks why i do certain things such a going into ilence for a weekend,going for a hike in the wood

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without any way for him to contact me,etc. Most of it seems too stem from his need to have things his way without any room for anything the slightest bit different. I will contemplate some more on the responses given and will post an update for this thread in a day or two as I still haven't been able to get to sleep today or even relisten to the second piece of Campbell's lecture so that I can journal my thoughts on it yet.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Julianna - 2010/02/07 16:06

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An MP3 player, such as an iPod may be handy for listening to lectures and the like. As I am in a similar situation, I realize that one's parents do not always agree with them, and this may or may not be the fault of the individual. I have found that meditating at bedtime or in the morning is usually possible, as well as meditating a few seconds (or minutes) at a time during the day.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/07 22:00

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All of these insights are very good ideas it jut irritates me alot due to different thing like if I buy a non-christian book I have to put it into a storage unit where accessing it is hard otherwise my father will take it and either give it away or destroy it. If I had the resource I would rent an apartment of my own just to keep my stuff in it and have a space of my own. Until then I adapt what I can such as doing my posts when he is asleep or deeply involved in his video games,etc. I do find alot of time for contemplation since no one can tell what one is thinking unless they tell him. As for meditation,i do get some when I can not near as much as I would like or for the lengths of time I wish but we all do the best we can within the limitations of our life.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Kana Seiko Haruki - 2010/02/08 05:44

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I have to ask you this - how old are you?

If (as Im sure you are) your over 18 years of age - he may be your father but he needs to realise you have a right to privacy etc.

If he has the 'energy' to seek n destroy your property - then maybe he should look after himself.

If he wants you to be there for him - he also has to realise he has to live by some of your rules.

Sorry but thats the way it is - Dictators become so because they are allowed too.

MTFBWY - A

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/08 06:09

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In reply to your question i am 34...and i agree that i am entitled to some privacy,etc...i gues what lays at the heart of the struggle is his lack of understanding this...he seem to feel that because he pays the living expenses that give him the right to do as he pleases with anything or anyone that enters the apartment regardles of who bought it or actually owns it. I have tried to get him to look after himelf as much as possible but he refuses to do so..there' times when i wish he would just pass on...i often feel guilty for this as I do love him and want what is best for both of us...but sometime it just get to the point where i don't want to deal with him or his closemindedness. I have tried to set some minor rules regarding my property or things like times when I'm not to be disturbed...he just ignore my wishes or refuses to take into account anything I have planned...and then complains consistently till I often give in just to shut him up so I can focus on what I want to do after I finish with whatever he wants...

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Kana Seiko Haruki - 2010/02/08 06:32

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Trust me on this - ALL carers feel like that for a moment or two - its just frustration and tiredness.

Youve hit the nails on the heads - he is SELFISH and DICTATORIAL

Now your a similar age to me - and I would guess your dad is somewhere between late 50's and early 70's - either way he is stuck in the victorian era - now in most regards - im lucky my folks are not that way - they respect my privacy etc (99% of the time) etc - Im not saying however we live in perfect harmony like little house on the prairie or the waltons.

Your dad needs to learn the hardway - and you need to learn to not play into his gsmes

You need to learn that he shouldnt have his own way all the time and that your needs etc are as important as his.

He also needs to learn exactly the same thing.

So what id like to suggest firstly is a set 'free time' for you - and I mean proper me free time - not to use if for shopping or chores but for self pleasure - fun or just chilling - just your own space n time. Im not sure where you live but im pretty sure there has to be somekind of medical service who could provide an hour or two - even for one day a week - of care for your dad - rest bite care for you really - you may need to talk with your dads doc on this but given MS is a 'chronic' condition - I dont see any problems getting it - ass I said before - you as the carer in many ways are more important than the patient - a bit like the airliner and oxygen mask analogy someone used - if you go down - you both go down.

Your dad also needs to realise this.

I had an elderly relative who got progressively more selfish as illness progressed - whilst the result wasnt intentional - they had to go into a care home for a week - whilst there - they realised how much the family did for them and how much they got things their own way - as a result - the behaviour radically improved ponce back home - the 'shock' or realisation did us all a world of good

Sounds cruel I know - but maybe this is the jolt your dad needs

That aside - and religions etc aside - YOU need YOUR space etc

MTFBWY - A

PS - Here is an idea for you - recover all your books to make em look like bibles - that ought to keep your dad sweet :D

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/08 08:24

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some very good suggestions...lol i like the one about making the books look like bibles...i will strive to ponder out a time I can take for me outside of my contemplations,"work duties" etc just for fun and to relax although I must say talking with my fellow Jedi is one of the most fun things I've done in a long time...perhaps that's why I pend alot of time reading posts on this site : )

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by RyuJin - 2010/02/08 11:17

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sometimes "tough love" is the best kind and most enlightening

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/08 17:39

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definitely...An update on the situation...I wrote my father a letter basically telling him that I was going to be taking some time each day for myself during which I was not to be disturbed for any reason and that my belongings were for my use and if he chose to destroy them or get rid of them he would have to reimburse me the cost of them. He's not real happy and I'm not sure if he'll go along with it but I told him if he wanted me to continue to help him that I needed these things for my own peace of mind. I also explained that I wished he would attempt to understand my beliefs as they make me who I am but that I didn't want him to "convert" or even abide by them other than to allow me to live how I see fit.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by ta2ooz - 2010/02/09 08:20

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just reading along with this thread I have become very invested in your success,my father passed away 2 years ago due to pneumonia,but before he became ill he was suffering from some pretty serious dementia. My mom had to look after him for 3 years with him in pretty rough shape before we put him in a home. the point I am trying to make is that there is only so much time and effort you can put into this. the more you give the more they take.not on purpose for the most part but after a while it becomes expected. everyone needs a break and a bit of time for themselves. your Father should realize and respect this. I am not one for ultimatums but they are a great motivator sometimes. just remember you have to follow through with it. also bear in mind this is one mans opinion and i am just trying to help you in making an informed decision.

MTFBWYA

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/09 20:44

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thank you...so far,it seems to be working pretty well...today,I got a couple of hours in the bedroom where my father sleeps while he was up on his computer...I was finally able to pend some much needed time in meditation instead of just contemplation.I also got a small selection of my favorite books that I got to put in the closet in my suitcase.Some of the book I chose are way of the peaceful warrior and sacred journey of the peaceful warrior by dan millman,Celestine prophecy by james redfield,my quran, a couple of various sufi books,etc...not the best selection but prolly the most useful to me at this time.Pretty much all my father aid on the books was he didn't want to see them or hear anything about them but at least it seems to be a start and much better then nothing at all.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Kana Seiko Haruki - 2010/02/09 23:14

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jarin wrote:

Pretty much all my father said on the books was he didn't want to see them or hear anything about them ...

With all due respect - this sounds like good old fashioned fear to me - fear of the unknown or things outside of his control and or understanding.

Whilst I hate using quotes from StarWars - yoda's little famous line on fear say it all - and your posts have proven them

Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering

Now shoving the books etc under his nose isnt going to help matters - it sounds like if this is done enough - he'll convert your books to carbon based fuel (burn em :D)

However - if you LIVE the words of the books and show him there is nothing to fear - the choppy waters will calm in time - it may take time and patience - but making waves wont help ...

Im glad you got some ME time though - sedatives are good apparently (I didnt tell you that :D)

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MTFBWY - A

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/10 00:38

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I definitely believe it is from fear that my father has been acting. And I am striving to learn from the books and live the positive lessons I glean from there and site such as this and my Sufi order's website. I hope that maybe one day it will open my father's eye and heart to the lessons I have learned. Lol, I try to avoid sedatives and other things where I can as I have a trend to get addicted to things rather fast and I chose to control those things in my life. Although the intention behind the comment was much appreciated and I found it rather amusing.

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by Kana Seiko Haruki - 2010/02/10 11:23

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i meant give your dad the sedative :D (joking of course)

MTFBWY - A

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## Re:Current Struggle

Posted by jarin - 2010/02/10 12:29

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lol...he takes enough pills now...but the joke was hilarious nonetheless

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