Freedom

March 18, 2010 By Kate Ferguson

What is true freedom? Is it simply a having no limits on our time and being able to move from place to place without restrictions, go wherever our feet, mind, and desire will take us? Is it having enough latitude to do as we please, enough money to tell an employer to “take this job and shove it?” Is it commitments, responsibilities, and obligations tie us down?

Granted, all of the above represent some measure of being free, but are they really what true freedom is all about?

Slavery-a word which conjures up images of our ancestors in chains, taken from their homeland by force, trickery, and other people’s greed-is still alive and present today. A recent news story told the tale of a wealthy suburban couple who were, in effect, slavemasters. They “owned” workers brought from abroad. That human beings are still being bought and sold day and age is a sad and shocking reality. But, if you think about it, all of us are slaves to one degree or another.

Individually, we are all still slaves to our own personal addictions. Whether money, alcohol, drugs, a job, a relationship, or a lifestyle to which we have accustomed, we have allowed ourselves to become bound by the chains desires.

The fact is, we are all prisoners of life’s constraints-whatever they may be. But that isn’t to say that achieving true freedom is an impossible dream. Difficult as it may be to get there, I believe the goal is attainable. A journey to a place where you are totally liberated, attaining true freedom is an ongoing exercise. When you get there, you realize you need nothing or no one to make you feel worthy, complete or of value.

You can’t truly be free unless you can walk away from everything-that job, that man, that relationship, that lifestyle, that dress, car, shoes, or bag you simply must have to feel worthwhile.

The point is that we are of value because we are who we are. We exist, and our existence is what makes us of value in this world. Simply put, we need nothing else to validate us. What we choose to do with our lives is up to us.

The choices we make every day to do or not do this or that thing is the price we pay for the privilege of being free. How close we are to attaining true freedom, however, is always an individual moment. Each of us is brought closer or taken farther away from achieving that goal by the choices that we make and the behaviors that we allow to rule us.

A lofty ideal, being ready for true freedom takes preparation. For many of us, it is a goal that may not be

achieved until we reach the end of our lives. Without becoming morbid, I believe that the surrender to and acceptance of death’s embrace is, by far, the closest we can ever get to achieving true freedom.

Once again, how prepared we will be at that time is purely an individual moment. While we live, however, is the only time we will ever have to prepare.

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