

Busyness An Unhealthy Trauma Based Way To Cope

In today's society, keeping busy, even too busy, is seen as admirable. When people haven't seen you for a while, & ask how have you been or what have you been up to, "Been busy" is an answer that always seems to get approval. Saying, "Not much" on the other hand gets looks of disapproval.

I don't subscribe to the admiration of busyness. While I'm not advocating for being lazy & unproductive, I don't think being too busy is wise in many ways. The stress of it can cause physical & mental exhaustion. That stress also can cause health problems such as high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney disease & heart problems. Most people are aware that these things can happen.

What I don't think most people are aware of is that making yourself too busy also can be an unhealthy way to cope with trauma.

After experiencing trauma, some people cope with it however works for them. They do what they can to heal & they move on as best they can. On the other hand though are people who have been through so much pain, they feel they can't take anymore. They don't see that facing their pain is going to help them, or they're afraid of the pain. Maybe they think that it'll take over & or they can't recover from it, so they decide to hide from it. Many in this position turn to addictions such as drugs, alcohol, sex or even shopping. Making their lives too busy is a much lesser known addiction, but it is just as dangerous as the others.

A person who is too busy has no time or energy to devote to healing. This enables the person to avoid their pain very well by removing the opportunity even to think about it. Stuffing pain inside is unhealthy! Doing so can cause big physical & emotional problems. Emotions demand to be felt, & if they are ignored, they'll find other ways to manifest, & chances are that manifestation isn't going to be a healthy one.

It is much better to face your pain than to ignore it. Yes, it's painful, but it is much less painful than living with dysfunctional ways of trying so hard to ignore it. Think of it like draining an infected wound. Sure, the draining process is painful & well, pretty gross. Once it's done though, the wound heals much quickly & may not even leave a scar. Ignoring the wound means it'll take much longer to heal, if it does heal, & an ugly scar will be left behind.

Traumatic events are like the poison in an infected wound. You can drain your traumatic wound by dealing with that pain. Face the trauma, admit it happened, admit it was terrible, admit you never deserved it, admit you didn't make anyone abuse you & feel those feelings attached to it. Doing these things will help you so much to heal!

If you're too busy, however, you can't do this so easily. You're going to need to make some life changes first. To begin, I strongly recommend prayer. Ask God to guide & help you in this situation.

Also consider all of the things that are taking up your time. How necessary is each activity? What is your motivation for participating in each activity? Which activities bring you joy? Which ones do you dislike?

Once you know which activities you need to eliminate & which to continue, think about creating more efficient ways to do these things. Let your dirty dishes soak while you run the vacuum so you spend less time scrubbing dishes. Take turns with another parent of a child on your child's sports team driving your kids to practice. Common sense little time savers like these may not seem important, but they really can add up quickly, giving you more time to relax, enjoy your life do what you really need to do, including working on your emotional healing.