

A New Life Starting Again

Ever feel dead? I mean the kind of dead where life's lost its vitality, its meaning and every bit of its luster? The kind of dead that leaves you feeling entirely numb and completely hopeless all at the same time; being stranded in this limp kind of limbo where you're alive but you don't feel like it at all? Ever feel like there's absolutely no purpose, no direction from here to someplace other than here, no value whatsoever, no redeeming quality anywhere, and no ladder to get you out of the bottomless hole you're in? Ever feel dead?

Here's a curious bit of information that's quite striking. Archeological excavations unearthed wheat seeds in pyramids dating back to 2500 B.C. That makes these ancient seeds somewhere around 4500 years old, give or take a century. In order to determine the types of grains used in the ancient world, archeologists planted them to see what would happen. They grew! Somehow, the spark of life hung in there for four and a half millennia. What should have been long dead was very much alive. What should have been snuffed out was not. What should have been entirely hopeless wasn't. Think about it.

It's that time of year when things become new. Spring and Easter are reminders of that which was terribly dead being made impossibly alive. There's something of a restorative quality about this time of year, where something whispers wild rumors of new beginnings arising from the seemingly dead seeds in our lives. There's something almost cruel about it all, as if there might be some sort of truth about a new life actually being possible. Maybe it is true.

Starting Over

How many times have we wished that we could just start over? Would it be better to be dead and start over all new and fresh? Sometimes it seems that it would be a whole lot easier to simply wipe the slate clean of whatever life has been. There's nothing like a fresh start, a clean break, a new day, a mulligan or a do over.

However, life doesn't grant us those options. History is history. It's carved in granite in some sort of indelible script on the pavers that mark the road of our lives. We can heal from it, learn from it, grow because of it, forgive what we did to others and forgive what was done to us. We can let it haunt us, dog us, diminish us and destroy us if we let it, but we can't change it. It's resource or demon. It's something that can be an asset or liability; a gift that blesses us or ghost that haunts us depending on how we use it, but it's there for good.

So, we're stuck with our pasts. Is life then about starting again, or is it about taking the resources of our past and using them to start over again? Do we really want a fresh start, beginning with nothing in an attempt to build something? Or would we be wiser to take whatever we have, whether it's perfect or painful and start from there? Would it be wiser, possibly much wiser to plant that which seems dead and see what happens?

Starting Over is Not Starting Fresh

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Starting over is an acceptance of a past we can't change, an unrelenting conviction that the future can be different, and the stubborn wisdom to use the past to make the future what the past was not. New starts are best built on the difficulties, failures and pain of the past. It's not about wiping the slate clean. It's about diligently studying what's written there, learning from it, discerning its messages, drawing from it and applying what's there. Life from death in a resurrecting cycle where what kills us is turned in on itself to build us.

Starting over is taking what life has dealt us and learning to see it as a resource when all we see is ruin. In the oddity or maybe the miracle of life, the roots of something new frequently lie in the decaying husks of something old. We just don't see it that way. We discard the old because we assume old equates with dead and useless. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Starting Over by Believing that You Can

The seed in you is not dead. Sometimes we don't start over because all seems dead anyway. There's no life left so what's the sense. It's all lain barren for so long that nothing could possibly hold any spark of life. Whatever's in us seems parched, dusty and long ago abandoned to the sands of time and hands of fate. Life however is teeming with vitality and is likewise terribly tenacious; holding on against impossible odds in impossible situations over impossible lengths of time. There are seeds within us that seem long dead that are in reality very much alive. New beginnings lay in dead husks.

Starting Over by Looking Back

So what are the lessons back there that lay strewn among the ashes and carnage? We would rather not pick through that stuff if we had our druthers. It's ugly. It's often painful. And sometimes there's a stench back there that reeks of abuse, abandonment, betrayal and loss. So we've buried it . . . a long time ago. Why unearth it? We unearth it because seeds for growth are sown in fields of pain. What seems dead is very often alive.

Start Over by Reinvesting Your Life

Try again. Give life another shot. Do it differently maybe, but go at it again. Believe that things in life spend infinitely more energy trying to live than working to die. Life is about living. Look around you as spring moves across the landscape. Life fights back. It's designed to overcome. It's intentional about living with intention. It takes seeds that seem dead and from them, life brings forth life. How about you? Ever feel dead? How about believing in a new day, giving life another shot and watching what happens. The seeds are ready.