

Remove the Rocks

Written by Shelley Lowther

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In his book ***40 Days to Personal Revolution***, my teacher Baron Baptiste suggests that to achieve positive change in our lives on the path to happiness, we need to remove the rocks.

We all have walls. We put up these walls and barriers to protect ourselves, but we end up walling ourselves in. We create what we think are safe places, and end up stifling our creativity and growth. We protect ourselves by adding rocks and building the walls higher, and close ourselves off.

Without risk there is no reward. We have to remain open to find love and happiness, even if that means we become more vulnerable to harm. Consider the Zen aphorism: **Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional.**

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Try to put aside your thoughts and efforts and allow things to just be. Let the universe work on your behalf. Stop being a human doing and be a human being. If you try easy, instead of trying hard, you will be open to receive life's gifts. If you continue to struggle, to swim against the current, you will not find ease. Go with the flow. Save your strength to swim with the tide, and see where the universe takes you.

Set an intention to remove the rocks. You might start with your yoga practice. Remove any obstacles that keep you from your highest practice. If you leave your ego in the shoe cubbies, what can you accomplish? If you stop looking outside of your mat, and outside of yourself in your practice, what can you achieve? If you silence the harsh voice of the inner critic, what can you be?

Remove the rocks in your practice, then remove the rocks in your life. What can you let go of in order to break through? In **40 Days**, Baron asks, "What thoughts, feelings, worries or past situations am I clinging to that drain me?" Consider this.

Are you in a toxic relationship? A toxic business environment? Are you holding on to anger or something in your past? It is true that our past has helped shape us, but the past does not exist in the present. Let go of past resentments and anger and move into the here and now. "Be now here, or be nowhere," says Baron, and be here without the heavy baggage of a time that you can not change.

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Get out of your own way. Cast aside the barriers that you have created for yourself. You may be able to tear down the walls quickly, and you may need to remove the rocks one by one, but with diligence and determination, you can be the change that you wish to see in the world.

"From birth, we are taught to swim upstream, but in yoga practice the goal is to jump into the river of life." -- Baron Baptiste

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