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We all experience pain and sorrow in life. And although sadness is a normal, healthy emotion, dwelling on your sorrow and misfortune can be self-destructive. It's often easy and even comforting to indulge in a self-pity party, but you should end that party as soon as possible. If any of the following applies to you, you're wallowing in self-pity:

- 1) You tend to think your problems are worse than anyone else's.
- 2) If it weren't for bad luck, you're pretty sure you'd have none at all.
- 3) Problems seem to add up for you at a much faster rate than anyone else.
- 4) You're fairly certain that no one else truly understands how hard your life really is.
- 5) You often choose to skip leisure activities and social engagements so you can stay home and think about your problem(s).

## Don't waste time feeling sorry for yourself

6) You're more likely to tell people what went wrong during your day rather than what went well.

7) You often complain about things not being fair.

8) You struggle to find anything to be grateful for sometimes.

9) You think that other people are blessed with easier lives.

10) You sometimes wonder if the world is out to get you.

Self-pity can consume you until it eventually changes your thoughts and behaviors and ends up hindering your ability to live a full life. It can stir up other negative emotions like anger, resentment, and loneliness, and can adversely impact your relationships with others. And be careful with self-pity, it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy if you let it.

So if the self-pity bug has bitten you, start behaving in a manner that makes it hard to feel sorry for yourself. Maybe you can volunteer for a worthy cause

like serving hungry people in a soup kitchen or spending time with residents in a nursing home. Or maybe you can perform some random acts of kindness. Quite often doing a good deed brings more meaning to your day. Or just get up and do something active--the activity itself should be enough to refocus your attention on something other than your misfortune.

Having gratitude in life can prevent or override most feelings of self-pity. Feeling grateful for what you have on a daily basis is one of the greatest things you can do for your own well-being. A 2003 study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that people who feel gratitude on a daily basis don't get sick as often as others, enjoy many more positive emotions, and have healthy social lives.

So be grateful and use your energy on bigger and better things rather than for self-pity.

~ The End ~