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Psychotherapist, Writer, Founder of The Eavesdropping Project

## My Parents Put a Hex on Me!

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Dear Eva:

Waves of feelings in my life. I never feel steady on course. Sometimes it feels like I can achieve anything, do anything, make it "big." Then I feel like I am lost, a loser, confused how to "make it" let alone make it "big."

I am in a creative field business-wise, work for myself. I work hard, however I think the doubts I have slow me down often and prevent me from seeing it bright and clear in the end. I am happy when there is work. I am unhappy when there is no work. I feel tired, often "hunting" for work rather than working on what I am good at. I have connected with people who advise me on marketing, media, technology to get it all going, but I think in the end I sabotage myself with my own disbelief in me. As I mentioned, it comes and goes but it must have a tremendous impact on the way my business-life goes. And yes, my parents never told me I could do "anything" or be "anything". They put me on a life path that I refused, rejected. I chose my own path and sometimes I think there is a "family curse" over me, called: not to succeed. Question: how do I break away from linking myself to them and what they wanted and thought of me? Feels so simple when I write it, but in practice it has the connectivity I feel almost daily. I know I do not need it or want it. Thank you in advance!

Signed,

Slowpoke

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Dear Slowpoke:

You are not as slow as you imagine. It takes some individuals a very long time to make the connection between the way they struggle and mistaken beliefs about themselves, something of which you seem well aware. You also might not know it, but you hit the nail square on the head when you said "waves of feelings in my life," but perhaps not in the way you imagined.

While living the life of feeling is almost a necessity for most artists, the domain of feelings is a tricky one to live well. One of the keys is knowing that emotions are really an informational stream; they tell us something, but not always the truth. Using our awareness to filter out emotions that reflect what is real, vs. those that reflect mistaken beliefs is important. It keeps us from being tossed to-and-fro with each shift in the emotional current. This is Step One, discernment.

Step Two has to do with understanding that the messages one received from parents or deduced from influential experiences in life have a significant impact on brain development. That stuff is actually reflected in the wiring of the brain's neurons! What this means for you is that **you can expect to feel like a loser whenever you reach for your dreams. The feeling has nothing to do with reality, and everything to do with what you were exposed to.** This is where Step One is helpful. Knowing this, you can feel that all-to-familiar "loser feeling" and let your awareness filter this emotion into the "mistaken belief" camp.

But our work is not yet done. You may know the barrage of negative feelings you have about yourself is mistaken, but you still feel lousy and your work is still being sabotaged. Here is the next big step, Step Three. **Learn to keep moving toward your goals no matter how you feel.** You have advice for technological, marketing and media improvements? Break them down into small steps and do them. One at a time. It often happens when we are struggling with negative emotions that small, concrete steps are still doable. And when you come out of your slump, which the changeable nature of emotions guarantees you will, you won't feel that same feeling of failure that feeds the meta-story of you being a loser.

And lastly, there is hope here. The more you continue taking steps forward no matter how you feel, the more you will have concrete evidence of achievement. The more achievement you realize, the more you create and activate neurons that trigger feelings of accomplishment and self-valuing. And the thing about neurons, the ones that get activated are the ones that grow. Which means over time you can strengthen the brain connections related to self-valuing, and diminish those of self-devaluing. And that family hex? It can be undone, one concrete step at a time.

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