

Jack Canfield is Wrong: “So What” Doesn’t Work

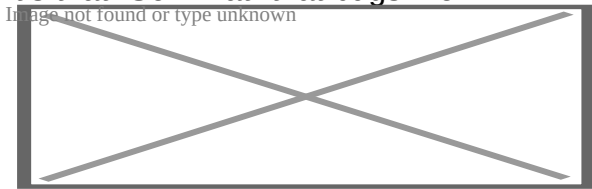
Description

There’s a lot that Jack Canfield does right. But there’s one thing he said in the movie The Secret that has been bugging me ever since I first saw it back in 2006.

Do you remember when he said this?

“... most psychologists believe that about 85% of families are dysfunctional, so it’s like, all of a sudden you’re not so unique. My parents were alcoholics. My dad abused me, my mother divorced him when I was six... I mean, that’s almost everybody’s story in some form or not. So that’s just called, ‘So what’.”

It’s that “So What” that bugs me.



Maybe so what worked for Jack... and maybe it works for

some people. It hasn’t worked for me... I tried getting “So What” to work for about 20-years: Never did.

Now maybe I was just too messed up... or maybe I just wasn’t ready to let go of my wounding... maybe I was one of those victims Jack was talking about when he said: “You know, a lot of people feel like they’re victims in life, and they’ll often point to past events, perhaps growing up with an abusive parent or in a dysfunctional family.”

Could be. I’m willing to accept that there may be some truth to that.

And... I’m also clear that “So What” was NOT an effective path to wholeness for me. And, from what I can tell, it’s not an effective path for a lot of people including most of the people I’ve coached and guided through courses and retreats.

It took me a long time to let go of “so what” and look for another path, another way out of the cycle of wounding that held me back and holds so many Modern Day Mystics back from creating lives of True Abundance.

A new path appeared for me when I started working with a Somatic Experiencing practitioner. The doorway to a new possibility opened when she saw and acknowledged and reflected back to me the depth of the pain I was holding in the cells of my body.

She could tell by the way my body moved when I entered the “trauma vortex” that my trauma was early, birth and even pre-birth. She was able to see and clearly and compassionately reflect what I had been holding in my body all my life.

My “story,” as Jack would call it, is about adoption . It’s a story that doesn’t lend itself to being a victim

because the trauma is pre-verbal, pre-cognition. There is no abuse involved and looking in from the outside there doesn't seem to be much trauma at all. In some ways you could call it a "silent trauma."

Try explaining to someone who has not been adopted that being separated from your mother at birth feels akin to death – your death and the death of the one person in your life that you need, in that moment, more than anything – and that the memory of that "death" is encoded in the cells of your body. Most people will nod their heads and say, "that's interesting."

So I tried, for most of my life, to get to that place of "So What" since that's what the world seemed to be reflecting back to me. So What, Edward. Get over it and get on with your life.

Well intentioned advice that completely missed the target.

"So What" wasn't what I needed. It didn't help me.

Working with the SE practitioner I finally understood what I needed and what would have helped me. And maybe hearing this – even though the specifics might not be the same – will help you!

If I could go back to my younger self, when I first began my journey of self-discovery, knowing what I know now, here is what I would say:

"Wow Edward, I can see how deeply the adoption experience impacted you. You hold a profound pain inside of you that most likely will never completely go away. It must have been so painful to have your mother let you go at the moment of your birth. I can sense the deep emotions, the grief, anger, terror and helplessness that you're holding in the cells of your body."

"You will always carry the memory of that experience in your body."

"But you know what else? You can learn to let go of the pain and release those deep emotions so that the experience doesn't control you. You can acknowledge it. You can learn to accept it as a part of who you are. In time you may even come to appreciate it for the role it has played in shaping you into who you are and who you are becoming."

"And when you do that, Edward, when you acknowledge, accept and even appreciate the experience it will no longer have power over you. It will no longer control your thoughts and actions from the shadows."

"This experience has defined you but it has done so on a subconscious level. Now you get to choose to bring this experience into your conscious exploration of who you want to become. How will you choose to interact with this trauma. How will you choose to let it activate you, open you, awaken you, catalyze you to create something and share the unique wisdom and insights that you carry because of it? That is your choice and that is the path you must walk."

Now I hope you can see that this is not meant to give any of us license to be a victim or to get stuck in our woundedness. Rather it is an invitation to be deeply witnessed in your wholeness... and your wholeness includes the wounds and past traumas that you carry.

When you are witnessed in those places, when you allow yourself to be seen and accepted in your wholeness you can begin to reclaim the power from the wounded places and bring that power into the

light, into your life... and into the world!

So consider this article my way of acknowledging you, of witnessing you in your wholeness, of honoring the pain you carry from whatever traumas you have experienced in the past and of inviting you to bring your power into the world!

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