

WORKING DIFFERENTLY

Where is my Cheese?

There was an experiment done years ago using rats. (I think this was the bases for the book "Who Moved My Cheese") What they did was put cheese at the end of a maze of tubes. What they discovered was the rats would go down different tunnels looking for the cheese. If the tunnel turned out to be a dead end they would turn around and go down another tunnel until they found the cheese. They discovered the rats would never repeat the same tunnel if it did not give them the cheese. However, if it were humans, I believe that we would get angry that the cheese was not there, turn around and go down the same maze and get angrier that it still was not there.

In the Twelve Step Programs they define INSANTY as doing the same think over again and expecting different results. In my life I have found myself doing a lot of this, even when the end result is a failure I tend to go back and repeat exactly what I did before and surprise, surprise I get the same results. I had a client that every week would say the same thing and I would repeat what I said the week before; I would get annoyed that they did not change. I would say hello to a person who was negative and every time they would say the same thing and I would get angry.

What I have learned after many tries (but not all of the time) is that I have to change the way I react to others. All of us get into a rut of saying the same thing to the same people, we react the same way all of the time. This week maybe we can work on changing what we say and change our reactions to people in our lives who normally react negatively. A woman in class told me she did it with her teenager about home work. She said that it was very difficult to get her son to do his homework. One day she said nothing and her son wanted to know if she was upset with him. She told him that she decided not to fight about it and if he wanted to fail that was his problem. Later she told me that he now does his homework and always shows it to her even though she does not ask. Sometimes we gain control by giving up control.

Let's call this week **THE WEEK OF RESPONDING DIFFERENTLY**. If this works or you have stories from your past experience let me know and we can share.