

# IT'S NOT THE BEARS THAT WILL GET YOU: IT'S THE BUGS

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**ELIMINATE WHAT'S BUGGING YOU:  
FOCUS ON SUCCESS**

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**LAURA HESS AND PHILIP COHEN  
MASTER CERTIFIED COACHES**

## ***Eliminate What's Bugging You***

As human beings we tolerate a lot - burned out light bulbs, dirty windows, other people, etc. You make choices every day about what you're willing to tolerate.

Think, though, of the energy you lose when you make a choice to put up with anything. The "thing" occupies your mind, and you're distracted. You may experience physical discomfort or internal upset. Perhaps you react by yelling or, the opposite, by withdrawing. No matter what your reaction is, putting up with things - tolerating - is a costly choice. It means you're not focused on what's really important for your life and your business.

Instead, imagine your life with no tolerations. Imagine relationships that work and an environment of cleanliness and order. You'd have fewer distractions. You'd experience peace and calm in your life. Your focus would be on what's important, not little (or big) annoyances.

"Impossible!" you say? "Nobody can live like that! There's always something going on in your life you'll have to tolerate, something that's going to bug you."

In fact, it's not impossible. We know many people who live lives without tolerating anything. There's nothing bugging them to the point of distraction. Are they happier people? You bet. Was it easy to get to that point? Probably not. All those people, at some point in their life, realized they were stepping over an awful lot. Accepting and tolerating things that just weren't working for them. And they made a choice to stop. As you read on you'll see the concept of eliminating what you're putting up with is simple to understand. The process of doing it, though, may not be easy.

Before we go any further, we want to make a distinction between tolerating and being tolerant. Tolerating means you're putting up with something that makes you grind your teeth every time you think about it. Some examples are dirty dishes in the sink, your neighbor's uncut lawn, or the person in the next cubicle at work who pops gum. (Are your teeth grinding even now as you just think about those things in your life?)

Being tolerant means showing respect for the rights, opinions, and practices of others. Being broad minded and accepting of the differences in people.



The key difference is that when you tolerate something, you feel upset, frustration, anger, or distraction. When you're tolerant, you feel none of this.

The first step is to choose. Decide you're ready to look at what you put up with and that you're willing to do what's needed to eliminate those things once and for all. If you're not, stop reading now and find something more productive to do with your time.

Okay. You've taken the first step. Great! There are tools and techniques you'll need to learn and practice. That's what the rest of this report is all about. (If you have a coach, or are part of a mastermind group, the process can be easier. From experience, we know that working with somebody who understands tolerations will simplify the process for you.)

How do you go about creating this drama-free, idyllic life where nothing bugs you?

Start by making a list of all the things you're putting up with in your life. Include everything, big and small. It may be things you're tolerating, or it might be behaviors of yourself and other people. It could be at work or in your personal life. Include even those things you think you have no control over.

At the beginning of the process, everybody is tolerating something. We've had clients who've made lists four pages long (or more) and others who have only ten items on their list. The reality is, if you take the time to think about your life and you're honest, you'll probably come up with at least 40 items. Our suggestion is to carry your list around with you and add to it as you become aware of what you put up with in your daily life.

### **Laura's Story**

*When I made my first list (over 20 years ago) one of the things I had on my list was loose sunglasses. I'd sat on them and they needed repair. If I wasn't wearing them, they were out of mind. But as soon as I put them on, I could feel my irritation level rise, and that impacted everything. One day I was at a mall and happened to have my sunglasses with me. It took all of 5 minutes for me to walk into an optometry shop and get them fixed. Problem solved. Toleration and irritation eliminated. No more energy drain.*



This may sound silly, but as far as Laura was concerned, it was very real and distracting. That's why the title of this report says "It's not the bears that will get you." You may not want to sweat the small stuff, but you'd better get rid of it if it's distracting you.

It's the trash that doesn't get emptied in the office or the coffee cup that sits in the sink of the company kitchen. It's the gossip you overhear daily between two co-workers or the neighbor's loud music. So as you create your list, DON'T discount all those little things in your life. Whether it bothers someone else isn't important. The fact that it bothers you means it needs addressing.

Often, as people create their list, they find a pattern emerging about the kinds of things they put up with and that, in itself, can be enlightening.

Some examples of things we put up with without even thinking about it or being aware of it are:

- Being or feeling rushed.
- Co-workers who don't treat you well.
- The buying and shopping experience: Clerks, lines, quality, value, price.
- Errands.
- Being expected to do things, just because.
- Poor quality food and restaurant service.
- Not having the right equipment to do your work.
- Clutter at home or work.
- People who talk too loudly or distract you constantly.
- An empty paper tray in the printer.
- Silly rules that accomplish nothing.



- Never-ending meetings.

You've been putting up with and going along for so long it's become a habit. The problem is, even if you're not aware of it, the things you put up with still cost you energy and become distractions. There's absolutely no reason for you to continue to allow any of those things in your life.

As you create your list, don't censor. You want as complete a list as you can make. No judgment. Your goal, at the end of it all, is to clear up all the things that bug you in your life so you can be free from the anger, irritation, and resentment those things generate in you.

Next, separate your list into four categories:

- People – The things you put up with that involve other people. How they act, what they do, how they treat you.
- Things – What you put up with that's about things. Those broken sunglasses. A burned out light bulb. Piles of clothes on the floor.
- Events and Activities – What are the things you resent every time you do them? Cleaning the house? Carpooling? Doing taxes for your business when you have partners who could do them?
- Yourself – What is it about your attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors that make you nuts?

Chances are you'll find there's one category with more items than the others. That's your heads up about where you allow more things bug you, where you put up with more. Just notice the patterns in your life.

Now comes the fun part – start handling the items on your list. That means doing something about them; take action to eliminate them from your life forever. Go down your list(s) and decide what you want to handle first and take each item one at a time. It's unrealistic (and sets you up to fail) if you expect to handle everything at once. It took you years to get where you are now, and you've become a master at stepping over things. It's going to take time to learn a different way. Give yourself plenty of time and space as you begin this process.

You will find that some things will be easier to eliminate than others, like the sunglasses example. Other things, especially those involving people and



relationships, will take a bit more thought and practice. If you're working with a coach, this is a good place to ask for coaching, especially regarding the things you put up with people.

Let's be realistic here. Some of the things you're tolerating aren't as easy to fix as a pair of glasses. You may have to make some tough decisions. You have to decide how much you're willing to put up with, and what you're willing to do to make it go away. We're talking about the quality of your life. What are you willing to do? If you decide to do nothing, are you willing to pay the price that may ensue?

### **Philip's Story**

*I was attending a conference in another state. An old friend suggested I stay at his place. I got to save money and have time to catch up with him. Unfortunately, I didn't know how bad a housekeeper he was. There was dust everywhere. I'd also forgotten how much he smoked. Add to that the smoke from a poorly ventilated stove. I was uncomfortable and unhappy. He didn't see anything wrong. Thinking about sleeping in that environment made me sick. It was decision time. If I stayed, I would be suffering. If I left, I would hurt my friend's feelings. (Besides, I had no plan B and hadn't budgeted for a hotel room.) Which price would be higher: stay, knowing I probably wouldn't sleep and would feel crummy the next day, or possibly lose a friend. I chose the hotel.*

As you get rid of things that have been bothering you, you'll also become more aware of things that bug you as they happen. You'll be less likely to "step over" anything. Instead, you'll handle what bothers you as soon as you become aware of it. You'll get the car washed when it looks dirty to you. You'll change the light bulb as soon as it blows out. You'll speak up for yourself with other people when they do something you don't like.

Over and over we hear stories from clients. Some were excited to take this on; others were hesitant. But they all say they now feel freer and more in control of their lives and what goes on around them.

You have what you need to unlearn tolerating behaviors - just do it and begin it NOW. It's not written anywhere you have to put up with things you



don't like. In fact, according to our coaching "bible," you have an absolute right (even an obligation) to create a life that is wholly supportive of who you are as a person, and to create a business that is reflective of you - without tolerations, without upset, without problems, without suffering.

## **Some Strategies to Use to Eliminate Forever Things that Bug You**

Implement these strategies as you begin eliminating the items on your list and use them to help you keep new ones from appearing. Adapt any of these for your needs and add any new strategies you develop to your "Step Over Nothing Tool Box."

### **Outsource Problems**

Outsourcing personal or business problems, dilemmas, or confusion can often be a useful strategy. That means you can hire someone who understands the nature of the problem and help you fix it far more quickly than you could yourself.

Besides, many items on your list of tolerations may be there because you're too busy or tired to handle them properly when they happen. If a clean house is an issue, hire a cleaning service. If disorganization is causing upset, hire an organizer. If you're a caregiver and never have time for yourself, look to social services for help. Hire a neighborhood kid for gardening.

At work, hiring a bookkeeping service, a CPA, or a Virtual Assistant might make all the difference.

It's not usually free to outsource the things you're eliminating, but the opportunity, energetic, and emotional cost to you of keeping your tolerations all to yourself is high.

If money is an issue, try barter where you trade services for what you need. Be creative. Anything is possible, and the ultimate result is you get to be more relaxed and at ease by eliminating the things causing you upset.

### **Involve Your Partner, Friends, and Family**

The process of eliminating the things you're putting up with in your life can be tough, lonely, and unrewarding if the people close to you don't understand what you're doing. Tell the people you're closest to exactly



what you're doing and why. Invite them to do the same for themselves. The process can be far more fun and rewarding when you aren't doing it alone. Having another person(s) on the same path with you means you can support, encourage, help, and brainstorm with each other, keeping you focused on what you're doing, why you're doing it, and the end results you're after.

## **Adopt a “Step Over Nothing” Mindset**

Just committing to eliminating what's already there, then not allowing more into your life, you'll find yourself easily choosing to say “no” to the things you used to put up with. Fewer and fewer things will enter your life that drain your energy. You'll find you have more energy to do the things you really want to do. And chances are good you'll feel lighter and happier as well. Your productivity will increase. Just imagine the difference between walking around with a 1-ton weight tied to your leg compared to moving forward on a hover board. That's how dramatic the difference can be.

## **Simplify Your Life**

One of the best ways to reduce tolerations is to simplify your life. Our lives have become more complex which means there's more that can go wrong and more demands coming at us from all directions. Simplicity reduces the chaos pulling at us and creates far fewer things that have the potential for becoming something we tolerate.

One way to start simplifying is by getting rid of all the stuff you don't use that just takes up space. Ask yourself, “Am I every really going to need this?” Use it or get rid of it. Give it to a friend, charity, or the trash. And once you've emptied that drawer or closet, don't rush to refill it with more useless stuff.

## **Reality Check: There's Stuff You Just Can't Make Go Away**

The reality is that there are some things that are beyond your ability to influence or change. It could be something that falls into any of the four categories. It may be that you don't have the resources, or now isn't the right time, or it's just plain impossible. (Like changing the weather.)

When you can't make it go away, or you CHOOSE not to make it go away, the option left is to learn to accept it. Acceptance means you have no negative feelings and aren't distracted by whatever it is – it ceases to



become an energy drain for you. If you find yourself feeling upset or gritting your teeth, you've not yet accepted it as being part of your life for now.

While this is all easy to say, sometimes it's not easy to achieve. You might need lots of practice, effort, or support. But remember, if you don't finally come to accept what's so, this "thing" will continue to have control over you.

### ***Tolerating Anything is a Choice***

Putting up with anything is a choice.

The reason you made a list of things you put up with is to get very clear on the truth of what's draining your energy and causing the most upset, irritation, frustration, and distraction in your life. Having made your list, if you do nothing to change it, you're choosing to live that way.

If you want to change, you will. You may (probably will) need help, but you'll change.

When you focus on the many choices available to you, you no longer feel bound to accept tolerations as an inevitable part of your life. You just choose not to tolerate.

If there's something in your life you think you have no control over, use your support network for a reality check first. If in fact, you don't have control, you can "tolerate without stress."

Make choices for yourself that eliminate what doesn't work. Eliminate the things draining your life energy. Make choices that don't create baggage. Begin zapping your tolerations one at a time and experience the difference in your life. Make your choices, stop stepping over things and imagine your possibilities.

Watch a free webinar, [The 3 Steps to Eliminate Distractions and Stress Forever](#) or join the [30-Days to a Bug-Free Zone](#).





### **Laura Hess and Philip Cohen Master Certified Coaches**

Laura and Philip have been coaching since 1994 and have worked with thousands of people one-on-one, in groups, in seminars and workshops, and as speakers. They are passionate about working with people to achieve success in both their personal and professional lives. They bring all their training and experience from over 40 years as self-employed business owners, CPA's, Coaches, and Mastermind Facilitators, to provide their clients with the best possible experience.

Want to get out of the Tolerations Cycle? Join a PUSH the Envelope™ Mastermind Group and eliminate what's bugging you with a team of people ready and willing to support you every step of the way. [Learn more about how a PUSH the Envelope™ Mastermind Group can make a difference.](#)

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