

Start with the Small Things: *where to aim?*

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The world you experience—your personal reality—is shaped by your perceptions, thoughts, and emotions. In many ways, your *external world* and your *internal experience* (or what we might call your "field of being") are deeply interconnected. As Carl Jung once noted, "There's no difference between you and what you experience," highlighting how our inner world influences how we interpret and respond to the outer world. When facing challenges, it can be helpful to ask: *Are these difficulties rooted in the external, objective world, or do they arise within my internal experience?* Reflecting on this distinction can offer valuable insight and support emotional self-awareness and growth.

Much of the psychological distress we experience is, in many cases, avoidable. While this may sound counterintuitive, many of us are aware—at least on some level—that certain patterns of thought or behaviour contribute to our suffering, yet we continue to engage in them. This isn't about blame or judgment, but rather about gently exploring the kinds of emotional pain we unintentionally create or maintain in our own lives.

You might think of this as *unnecessary* or *avoidable* psychological pain—frustration, stress, or low mood that arises not from the external world alone, but from how we relate to it. A helpful starting point for working with this kind of pain is to begin small, within your immediate environment. A significant part of the pain you're experiencing may be connected to a lack of meaningful purpose or engaging daily activities that provide relief and structure. When we look at individuals struggling deeply with depression or anxiety, a common theme often emerges they feel uncertain about how to use their time in a way that feels grounding or fulfilling. It can feel like being lost—both within themselves and in the world around them.

A gentle place to begin is by asking yourself: "What is one small thing I can do right now that might help me feel a little more present or in control?" Even a tiny step can begin to shift things.

For instance, take a look around your living space. Ask yourself:

"If I spent just 10 minutes improving this room, what small change would make it feel a little better?"

Approach this question with curiosity, not pressure. Often, something simple will come to mind—perhaps it's clearing a cluttered surface, organising papers, or wiping down a dusty

shelf. These small acts of order and care can provide a surprising sense of control, clarity, and emotional relief. It's not about perfection. It's about creating a shift—however small—that helps reduce internal tension and supports your overall sense of well-being.

When you give yourself the space to reflect on the full scope of your current experience—both your internal state and your immediate environment—you may start to notice small, manageable things that are within your power to change. These are often tasks or areas of life that need attention, and more importantly, that *you* have the autonomy to address. This is where meaningful change begins: start where you can start. If something in your environment or routine reveals itself as needing repair, and you have the capacity to address it, take that opportunity. These seemingly small changes, when done consistently, can have a powerful cumulative effect. Focus on the things you do every day—the repeated actions and patterns in your life. These daily habits often carry more psychological weight than we give them credit for. They shape your mood, your energy, and your overall sense of control. It's important not to dismiss them, even if your ego tells you they're too minor to matter.

By addressing a series of these small, repetitive stress points—what we might call "micro-adjustments"—you begin to create a more supportive and less chaotic internal and external environment. This reduces the number of emotional and mental “traps” you might otherwise fall into. In doing so, you begin to integrate your thoughts, emotions, and actions more cohesively. From this grounded place, you can gradually begin to engage with larger, more complex areas of your life with greater clarity and resilience. The more you take care of what's close and within reach, the more empowered you become to address the broader aspects of your being.

With all of this in mind, when addressing the things in your life that need attention or repair, it's important to approach them with a sense of humility. Start within your zone of confidence, the areas where you feel you can make a change, however small. The mind has a remarkable ability: when you set a genuine intention, it begins to reframe the world around you to align with that goal. This process requires sincerity. It's not just about intellectualising the task, but also about aligning your thoughts, emotions, and actions so that you're moving toward your goal consistently and with purpose. Once you set your aim, the world will start to rearrange itself to support that direction. A powerful illustration of this can be seen in the famous video of basketball players passing balls between teams, while a gorilla walks across the court. Despite the obvious presence of the gorilla, many viewers fail to notice it because

their attention is entirely focused on the basketballs. This video serves as a reminder that we see what we focus on. By setting a clear, genuine aim, your perception shifts, and you begin to notice what truly matters to you.