

King Baby

Sometimes I wonder where I have been! For over a half-century I have lived without hearing one of the greatest expressions ever articulated. This is the second really great saying I have heard – both are excellent because when you hear them, almost immediately you understand them and they speak volumes about the reality of life – thoughts lingering somewhere in the subconscious just ready to be released. They are tremendously useful and totally practical and are valuable for both personal and child training.

The first really great term is “self-talk.” The first time I heard self-talk was about 20 years ago, it was a revelation and an eye-opener to life – I knew immediately its importance and potential, how (by not understanding it) I had acted poorly to myself and others and how, by beginning to consider it, I could improve – accurate self-talk (rather than listening to the irrational and destructive irrational “voices”) is the key to any meaningful progress.

Yes, self-talk can be misused (as has been the case when hijacked by the Positive Mental Attitude crowd), but it need not be. “Good” self-talk does not mean always telling ourselves we are good – this is a lie, we aren’t! Good self-talk is being realistic, so when we are bad, we recognize it and seek to change. And when we are on the right path (not there yet, but on the way) we are not discouraged by the damaging groundless inner voices that suck all hope out of us when we are not perfectly completing a task or effort. Poor self-talk is a bad habit only overcome through cultivating good self-talk disciplines. Poor self-talk is typically exhibited in being 180° off-target most of the time – when we do wrong, it is usually the first to defend, justify and make excuses. And when we are attempting to do right, it the first to cry: “Stupid! . . . You can’t do anything right! . . . There is no hope!”

Chalk it up to the devil or to genes, either way, the religious or secular should recognize these foolish and detrimental inner voices. Considering, thinking about, honing . . . good self-talk skills is vital to any type of self-improvement – either personally or (and especially) for children.

The second great term I heard a short time ago resulted from a conversation with a couple of recovering alcoholics. We were talking about *Alcoholics Anonymous* and (whether they suggested or I just thought it was a good idea) I decided to read-up on *12-Step Programs*. So I got *The Universal 12-Step Program (How to Overcome any Addiction and Win!)* and I did not have to read very long until they used, and briefly explained, the term *King Baby* – it is a totally obvious reality (why I had not invented this great term, myself, I don’t know!) explaining much about myself and others. King Baby!

The way the authors explain King Baby, in various places in the book, is:

An attitude that promotes low frustration tolerance, such as, “I want what I want when I want it.”

Discomfort anxiety is the inability or unwillingness to tolerate negative feelings, even if it is in one's best interest to do so . . . A closely related attitude is called "low frustration tolerance." This is referred to in twelve-step meetings as the "King Baby" attitude.

King Baby attitudes involve grandiose ideas of superiority, such as "I am better than they are," "I can do things no one else can do," "I deserve everything I want," and so forth. Such attitudes obviously lead easily to frustration, since the rest of the world is not likely to believe in my superiority . . .

The "King Baby" attitude that allows us to act as if we *are* God is the antithesis of spirituality, in the traditional twelve-step program, and rationality in this program. *Not* thinking that we are God is what we, and the traditional Anonymous programs, mean by humility.

(As an aside, while the book has been worth almost its weight in gold for revealing the term King Baby it otherwise doesn't {I have not finished it yet so I may change my mind} seem to be very good – but finding one pearl has made it a great "investment" I do not regret).

Thus the title: *The Benefits of Alcoholism*: I had rather be a recovering Alcoholic (who has been taught and is trying to perfect the disciplining and controlling of their King Baby attitudes) than to be one who does not see their own King Baby(s) that ALL of us have!

King Baby is the one who . . .

At 5 rebels against brushing his teeth . . . and at 35, flosses only when he is not too tired . . .

When 2 refuses to take a nap . . . and at 20 skips classes so he can sleep . . .

While 5, 6, or 7 resists taking a bath . . . and at 50, 60 or 70 opposes exercise . . .

"I don't feel like it . . . You aren't the boss of me . . . I can do what I want and I don't feel like . . ."

King Baby, King Baby, King Baby!

And all the while life laughs and says: "I am the boss of you . . . No, you won't do what you want just because you do, or do not, feel like it . . . There are life-controlling 'laws' and principles that control everyone – we do and will, indeed, 'reap what we sow.'"

The Good News, though, is that it is NEVER too late (even if not properly trained and disciplined as a child) to confront, challenge and quell the King Baby voices – some cases and situations are obviously harder than others, but when we finally realize he is a baby that can be triumphed over (he is a baby after all, not a giant!) we have a greater and easier chance to win and win decisively.

Everyone has self-talk – good or bad. Everyone has King Baby self-talk. The difference is whether we recognize this truth and are disciplining King Baby so that his childishness no longer controls and masters us.

The great Apostle Paul recognized the “natural” King Baby tendency and the importance of confronting and disciplining him for a greater good:

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. 1 Corinthians 9:24 - 27

There is an old saying: “When Mama is unhappy, everyone is unhappy!” A truer truth is that when King Baby is unhappy a person will be unhappy UNLESS and UNTIL they decide to grow up and control him! For King Baby can become King Brat real easy!

So, when all is said and done, the recovering alcoholic will quietly surpass the non-alcoholic, much like the story Jesus told the self-righteous religious of his time, unless the latter wakes up to his shortcomings:

“I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.” Mt 21:31 – 32

Recovering alcoholics have a lot to teach us – I, for one, want to look to and learn from them!

Thank you AA for revealing, to me, this great truth.