

Stop renting it, instead...

Own your life!



Own your life! What does that mean? When I think about the difference between owning and renting, the key word that comes to my mind is 'control'. When you own something you are in control, when you don't own it you are not. Have you ever hired a car? I'm sure you have, as we all have. You only have that car on a temporary basis and then it has to be returned, right? It costs as much per day as the owner wants to charge for it. If it is returned in any less than the condition you borrowed it in, you potentially are up for large sums of money. Laura and I found this out the hard way. After driving through a hail storm in a hire car we found out, on return, we owed a \$1500 excess for the insurance to fix the damage. There was nothing we could do, we had no control over the situation and so we just had to pay the money. Why? We hired the car, we didn't own it.

The same applies when you rent your home, again, as we have recently discovered. We live in a rental because we are planning on moving to and living in Italy in the very near future. Yes, it is very exciting! For the last few years we have lived in a place we have really enjoyed, except for the structural issues that have plagued the house. It's one of those building jobs that was done 'on the cheap' and is now starting to prove the old axiom, *you get what you pay for*. In fact, I'm glad in this situation, we didn't pay for and own it!

We are good tenants. We pay rent on time, Laura looks after the garden beautifully and we always report any structural concerns as soon as they arise, to minimise the cost to the owner. The most recent issue was brought to our attention as I was in the kitchen and saw water leaking from the ceiling, through the cupboards and into the oven. Directly above the kitchen is the main bathroom with a huge bath that Laura loves. Oh no, this is not good! We quickly contacted the agents to let them know that the bathroom was leaking into the kitchen, and that it should be attended to asap to avoid any more cost. See how thoughtful and dependable we are? Well, I thought so.

They sent several tradesmen to look at it and give quotes to fix the job. We were under the impression that they were to renovate the bathroom and then all would be good. We thought we may need to move out of a few weeks while it was happening, which we were okay with. Well, a week or so ago we received certified mail from the agent. This could mean only one of two things; a rent increase or eviction. I opened the letter and was relieved it was titled *Possession of Premises*. 'That's ok,' I thought, 'they just need possession whilst they are doing the renovations.' What they didn't include in the letter was; how long they needed possession for

and what accommodation they were going to provide for us for while it was happening. So, I called the agent to get my questions answered. I was not expecting what I heard next.

I said, *'Could you please give me some more details about the letter you sent? Such as; how long will we need to be out of the house for, and what alternate accommodation will the owner be providing while we are out? There was a pregnant pause, as the agent prepared herself to deliver the news. 'I think you misunderstood the letter. We need to take possession of the property.'* *'Yes, I understand that,'* I said. *'I just need to know for how long?'* I heard her take a deep breath as she then just said it, *'It's not just a temporary thing. We need the house for extensive renovations. You are out... for good! We need you out of the house within sixty days.'*

Okay, there's some news I wasn't expecting. So much for doing the right thing and letting them know about the work that needed to be done! We are out... no thanks, no allowances for bad timing or inconvenience and no other correspondence shall be entered into! It is a situation that is totally out of our hands and one we have no control over. Why? Because we are renters... not owners! All we can now do is; own the decision that was made, own our attitude towards it and own the next steps we take.

You can't always control the situation, but you can control your response to it!

In this situation, Laura and I may seem as if have we suffered because we are not owners of that property... however, we are owning what we do about it! In this case, I'm actually very grateful, for many reasons. Firstly, because I wouldn't want to own this house... it's going to cost the owners a fortune to get it back to a reasonable state. Secondly, because it's forced us to do something we knew we should have done a while ago, but didn't get around to. It's given us a fresh start and a renewed excitement about the next step in our lives together... one in which we own. We get to choose where we live, we get to choose the home we live in and we have the freedom to come and go as we please. We are not tied to a mortgage and can get up and go to Italy any time we like. We couldn't control the decision about being evicted, but we could absolutely own how we react and the things we do as a result.

Most people rent their life and don't own it. What about you?

Many people work permanently for a part-time income. Their job is temporary and can be taken away at any time by the owner of the business. Their financial position is often hanging in the balance and depends upon having a job. Their retirement plan is based up some unfounded assumptions, such as; there will be enough in their superannuation and that they will be able to access it when they are at retirement age. The people who are financially strong, own that position. They take control of savings, they develop multiple income streams, and they are smart with their spending.

There are many people who are suffering from ill-health and blaming circumstances out of their control and then handing responsibility to be fixed over to other people. The people who are optimally healthy, own their condition, own their decisions, own the consequences of their decisions and own their actions. They do the things unhealthy people are unwilling to do.

Whatever area of your life is not as you would love it to be right now, is possibly because you have not taken full responsibility for it, and, not made the decision to own success in that space. Are you ready to be successful? Are you ready have take control of how you respond to any situation? Excellent, just decide to own your life instead of renting it!

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