

3 Scary Signs Something Other Than God Is Controlling Your Life

As human beings, we all have our stories to tell. Some of you may be struggling with slothfulness, envy, identity issues, fear of intimacy, rage, sexual struggles and many others. You have your own story to tell.

Think back through your life; is there a nagging area of your life that seems to crop up again and again that you never seem to get control of? Really, if we were all honest, our story would probably have more than one area that we might struggle with.

Day after day, people walk into my office who are good people. They try to be responsible and try to get control, but they feel that something has control over them.

If you or someone you know is one of these individuals who feel something has control over them, you are in for a great trip. You don't need to be controlled by things in your life. You really can get control over what has control over you. I have seen people set free of many behaviors that were controlling them. You, too, can be a candidate to finally get control over what has been controlling you. Don't worry about how long you have been controlled by it; you can still get in control.

"So how do I know if I have something controlling me? That's a great question to ask! As a counselor, this is a question I am faced with regularly. Who among us doesn't have some quirk or particular issue that we deal with? Most of us have some issues but what takes it to the next level? What can make this question even more difficult is that actually two people could be doing the same behavior but for one it is okay and

the other has a need to get control over it.

Although there is not an absolute on all controlling behaviors, I will give you a grid for you to discover if you need to get control over anything that could be controlling your life.

1. **Promises**

When you have something controlling you, pinky promises get broken. You make light promises to yourself at first and then these promises get broken. Then you start getting more serious with your promises. You really mean it this time. You try harder and maybe even white-knuckle it a few days, weeks, or months, and then you break your promise again. The behavior creeps back, and once again, it has control of you.

2. **Entitlement**

Entitlement is not a thought process. Entitlement is an emotion. Entitlement is an emotional process in which a person can block out logic or even common sense. Entitlement is a tricky emotion because it often blinds those who are having it.

Most us have had experiences of being entitled to watch our television show; eat the last donut or piece of pizza; to stay longer at the office, gym or with our parents. Oh, and how about those new toys, gadgets and much-needed clothes, home repairs or other wonderful things we can feel entitled to?

Now this entitlement permeates the area of our life that has control over us. Just go over conversations or even arguments you have had over the area that might be out of control. You can assess whether they were logical or emotional.

The person who has an out-of-control behavior will often just flat-out say no. Now, this struggle is normal for anyone who is growing spiritually; as time passes, this entitlement can

move into unwillingness, disobedience and even rebellion against a loving father.

If you have an area that you consider out of control in your life, examine the entitlement you have with yourself, significant others in your life and God.

3. Losses

Losses come in many forms; some are more obvious, and some can go unnoticed but still be a significant loss.

For some, their out of control anger, resentment, gossip, lying, inability to be flexible, pornography or any other behaviors may have cost them a job. I've known several men who flirt, view pornography and are arrogant, lazy, entitled or ungrateful, and who have lost their job because of it. If the behavior you think might be controlling you has cost you a job, this would be an obvious sign that you need to get control over it.

Lost opportunities are another loss people experience due to out-of-control behavior.

I have heard someone tell the story of how a CEO of a large company wanted to fill a very lucrative vice president position. He watched the men he was considering for this position in the cafeteria. The one man who was a very strong candidate was walking through the food line. He placed his food and bread on his platter. He grabbed a piece of butter, which cost three cents, and placed it under his bread so the clerk at the checkout couldn't see the butter.

The CEO thought this man was dishonest and willing to take short cuts. That three cents cost this man many hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Losses or opportunities come in many forms like not going to college, not taking the risk to start a company, not asking to

get involved with an opportunity, not investing in real estate or the market or simply not getting that promotion. If you feel your behavior has cost you some opportunities, it may be controlling you and you need to get control over it.

Relationships are another key loss due to something that is controlling you. I remember watching a cute movie about a man who was obsessed with a baseball team. He made several mistakes in the relationship, preferring the team to his girlfriend, and almost lost the relationship.

If you have something controlling you, there are several relationships you could potentially lose. You could lose relationships at work. You could lose relationships with people you have known a long time. You could even damage, distance or lose family relationships. I have even known men and women who have lost a spouse or two due to out-of-control behavior. The loss of a relationship with your children could also be a result of something controlling you that you need to get control of.

Financial consequences are also a possible reality for those who have an out-of-control behavior. The person whose out-of-control behavior needs attention could spend endless money on clothes, cars and houses, creating a huge amount of debt. Someone whose out-of-control behavior is procrastination could have their credit impacted having caused financial consequences. Out-of-control behavior that has the consequence of divorce has a huge financial loss due to their out-of-control behavior.

The loss of ministry opportunities can also be a loss for out-of-control behavior. So many reading these pages are looking for God to use them in some manner. You have had a spiritual itch to get involved in some act of serving God. I'm not referring to full-time ministry; this could simply mean singing in the choir. Your out-of-control behavior may have stopped you because of "your reputation." This out-of-control

behavior could also have stopped you from seeking out your ministry due to feelings of guilt, shame or a sense of separateness that you feel from others.

I have seen so many people who, once they were able to get control over what was controlling them, felt instantly free to pursue service toward God of one kind or another. Some felt free to be able to lead a small group in their home or to go to the mission field.

Check over your life. Do you regret not pursuing service to God in some way? If you have lost ministry opportunities due to a behavior that has control of you, then this could be a sign of out-of-control behavior.

I find if someone is thoroughly convinced that they have an out-of-control behavior, they are much more likely to go through the process of getting control over what has been controlling them.

The road might get tough, but if you are committed to get to the other side, you go through the bumps to get there. There, by the way, is a great place, a life without being controlled by what has been controlling you. {eoa}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *Get A Grip*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.