

Eliminating Life's Dead Weight



Merle Jordan writes about standing on the edge of the ocean and watching a young man and an older man row a small boat out to a larger one that was anchored at some distance from the shore. The older man climbed aboard, went to the wheel of the large boat, and brought its engine to life.

It was the young sailor's job to hoist the anchor. Struggling with the heavy, dead weight was no easy thing for him. But it was clear the boat was not about to move forward on its charted course until the anchor had been hauled aboard.

Jordan uses that episode as a metaphor for his book [Reclaiming Your Story](#). He writes: "We are all anchored in the personal histories we inherit from a family of origin . . . Our maps of reality; images of God; values, beliefs, and meaning systems; patterns of relating, communicating, and interacting; sense of identity and self-worth; and emotional awareness and means of expression are largely determined by our relationships and experiences in our families of origin."

How on-target! Haven't you seen it play out in the life of someone you know? An abused child never learns to trust as an adult. Boys molested by men are often aggressive as an antidote to feeling weak or afraid. Traumatized kids frequently

overreact to upsetting things with rage and horror. People who grow up with alcohol, violence, or abandonment issues even tend to choose mates and business partners who have the same traits. After all, they can relate to them.

The Christian faith is about transformation. "If anyone is in Christ," said Paul, "he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (II Corinthians 5:17).

But some people never experience the new life Christ has made possible for them. And often it isn't their fault. They don't realize they are repeating history from their families of origin or from their early life experiences. No one has helped them fathom that those early experiences have them stuck in emotional cement.

If you have children, it is important that you look for and interrupt any unhealthy patterns in your family history. You don't want to pass them on to future generations. Your leadership in business, community, or church will be enhanced through an awareness of how these dynamics work. You can become the catalyst for helping others find emotional and spiritual health.

We sometimes need others' help to pull up our anchors to the past in order to move forward on the journey God has in mind for us. Be brave. Lose the dead weight!