

Motivating with the Past or the Future. (December 4, 2025)

“If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons,
for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?” (Hebrews 12:7)

Two common motivations for change are:

1. To change our undesirable past.
2. To attain our intended future.

In the coming weeks, we will focus on the second motivation.
But this week, let's look at the first motivation: our past.

Regarding the desire to change our past, this can be a good motivator to get us jump-started. It usually grows out of pain...and pain is a powerful motivator. However, there is one very important catch when using pain as a motivator: Wishing pain away doesn't work! Instead, we must change our natural assumptions, behaviors, and processes to get a different result.

Many times, people who say they don't want to repeat the past often don't change what needs to change to get different results. The reason for this is that the same pain that causes the desire to change often blinds us to the proper evaluation and clear thinking that will lead to the change we want. Pain motivates, but it also distorts reality and perception.

Allow pain to teach you, not condemn you, so your past doesn't become your future.