

Rethinking Complaining

When we spend our time complaining, we are in essence in destroy mode rather than building mode.

We all know someone who has elevated the process of complaining to a high art. Sometimes funny, sometimes exhausting, these people have the ability to find a problem just about anywhere. In its more evolved form, complaining is simply the ability to see what's not working, in one's own life or in the external world, and it can be quite useful if followed to its natural conclusion--finding a solution and applying it.

However, many of us don't get that far, and we find that complaining has become an end in itself. In small doses, this is not a big problem, but if complaining has

destructive force in our own lives and in the lives of the people we love. Another issue with complaining is that we sometimes tend to focus on other people, whom we can't change, as a way of deflecting attention from the one person we can change--ourselves. So transforming complaining into something useful is a twofold process that begins with turning our critical eye to look at things we can actually do something about, and then taking positive action.

COMPLAINING IS DRAINING!



COMMIT TO TALKING 20% ABOUT THE PROBLEM AND 80% ABOUT THE SOLUTION! SOON YOU 100% WON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!

When we find ourselves complaining, the last thing we need to do is get down on ourselves. Instead, we can begin by noticing

become a huge part of our identities, it may be time to take a good look at how we are spending our energy.

Complaining is a person's way of acknowledging that they are not happy with the way things are. In a metaphorical way, when we complain or criticize, we are tearing down an undesirable structure in order to make room for something new. But if all we do is tear down, never bothering to summon the creative energy required to create something new, we are not fulfilling the process.

In fact, we are at risk for becoming a stagnant and

that we are in the mode of wanting to make some changes. But rather than lashing out at somebody or an organization, we can look for an appropriate place to channel this energy--not our neighbor's house, but possibly parts of our own.

Finally, we can ask ourselves the positive question of what we would like to create in the place of whatever it is we want to tear down. When we do this, we channel a negative habit into a creative process, thus using our energy to change the world around us in a positive way.

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Artist of the Month: Ash Meharg

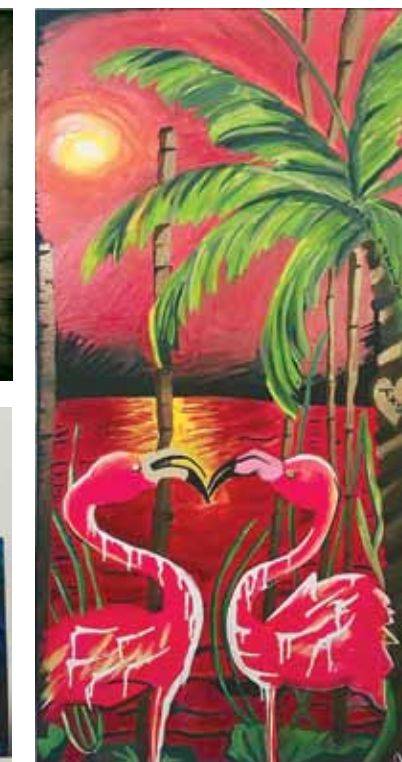
One year ago, 27-year-old Ashley Meharg did what she has done many times before... gathered her modest income to take a trip by herself somewhere new and exciting. Over the years, after finishing high school in Auburndale Wisconsin, Ashley traveled from coast to coast, visiting over 40 states. Independent and filled with love for life and colors, she found herself in the Florida Keys. As many of us locals understand her feelings and can share her experience, Ashley fell in love with the Keys.

Her first trip only allowed her to stay a few months, but she had made up her mind she would find a way to make the

Keys her permanent residence. Well that time is now.

Ashley, known as Ash, moved to Islamorada in the beginning of March and has begun pursuing her dream of being an artist. Ash's medium of choice is acrylic paint, and she insists the brighter the better. Her signature paintings are bright with neon that can be enhanced with black light, causing them to glow right off the canvas.

Ever since childhood, Ash's mother has been super supportive of her daughter, nurturing her artistic talents passed down from her father. It was 3 years ago that a cord was struck when a special friend bought her her



first canvasses, paints, and brushes, insisting that she bring her creativity to life. Now she's done over 150 paintings, left behind in her travels all over the country. Her self-taught fun abstracts with a vibrant color style are designed to make people happy. She says every painting she does can start out with different moods, from stressed to sad, but they all end up happy. Some of Ash's favorite sayings are, "Everything has a rainbow in it" and "I Love Color, I Love Life, I

Love Love!"

Ashley plans on having her art in galleries all over the country so that she can have a reason to travel and visit them all. She dreams of selling large pieces out of the country so that she can deliver them personally while experiencing the world. Some of Ash's work will be on display at The Art Box for the Month of April and she will be featured at The Morada Way Art District as the featured artist on the Third Thursday Art Walk. For more information contact



The Art Box 305-451-5461. "What I love is that I can express all my feelings through my art!" - Ash Meharg