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FOURTH QUARTER ISSUE

Frank Stallone Talks About Overcoming Adversity

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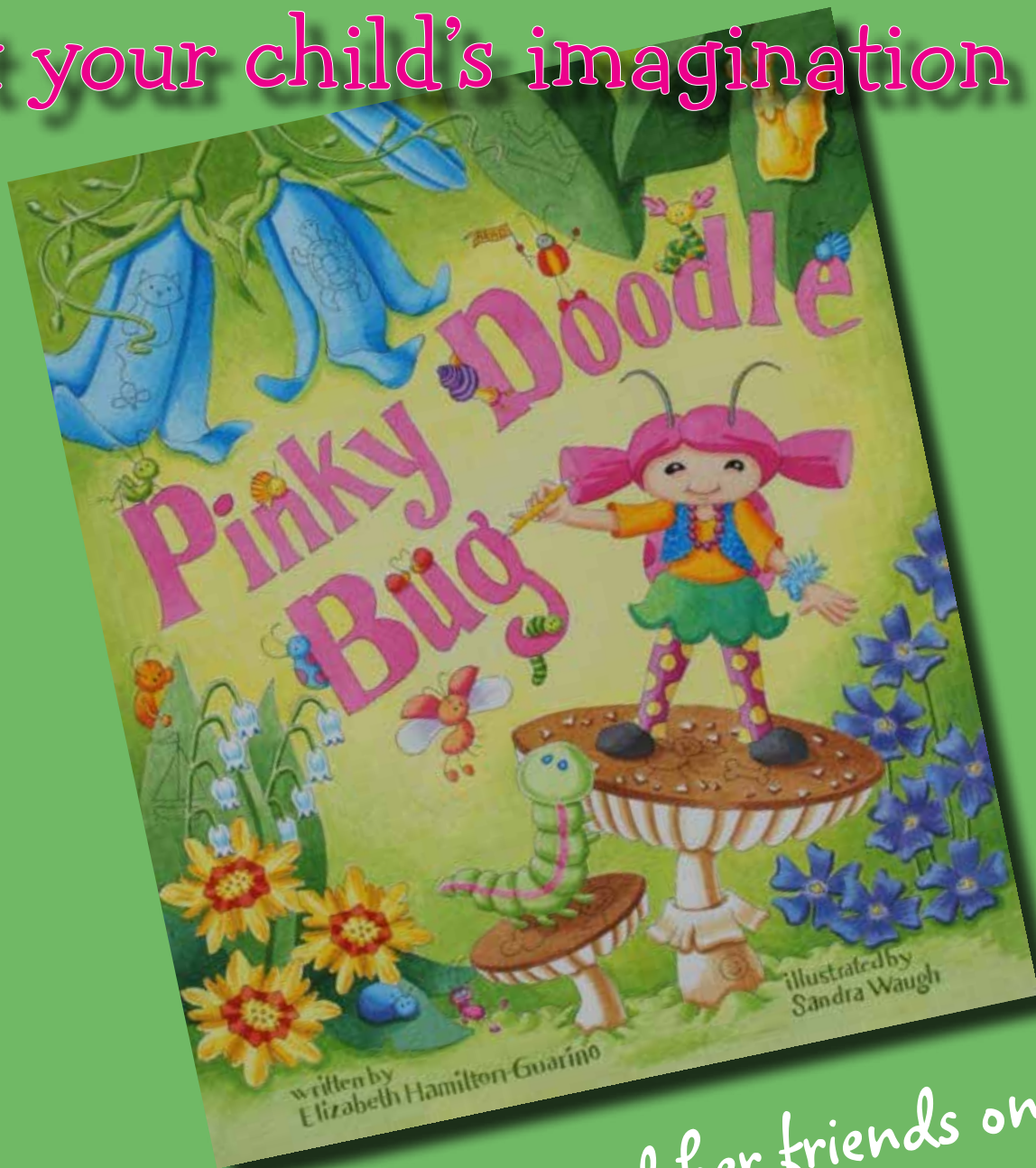
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There's stress, *Stress*, STRESS and **STRESS!!!!!!**

Stress means different things to different people, and everyone deals with it differently. For the most part, it is spelled the same way, but it is the impact of the words or actions that require solid, bold, uppercased and exclamation point-like attention or your health and quality of life will be affected.

Stress can also, believe it or not, have a POSITIVE influence on your life as well. According to a study published in the journal, "Brain, Behavior, and Immunity," stress can actually boost our immune system. It's the *fight or flight* response that engages our hormones and pumps up our blood and gets us going! The hormone Cortisol is released when we experience that fight or flight response, and that can motivate us and actually improve our immunity. Too much Cortisol lowers our immunity and impacts our overall health. That's the good stress we experience when we are motivated to take action. "Evolutionarily, it makes sense," said study author, Firdaus Dhabhar, a member of Stanford's Cancer Center. "In nature, stress and immune activity are typically coupled. It's like a lion chasing and wounding a gazelle. Nature taps into this stress response to give a boost to the immune system in the face of danger.

And so, it just depends on the type of stress and the person involved.

People react to a stressor in a different way. For example, I am a mom of four boys: ages 11, 13, 15 and 17. Over the years, people have said all sorts of things

to me that you couldn't possibly imagine. Here are a few comments from just this past week:

"How do you do it?"

"OMG four boys!!!!!! I've got 2 and I can barely function - wow, aren't you tired?"

"How do you run Best Ever You, write books, do this and that and that, too, and have four boys?"

I could go on and on.

But you see, in my world, four boys do not stress me out, not to mention they are great kids and I have an amazingly supportive husband of 14 years. Do you know what seriously stresses me out? It is something more along the lines of flying in turbulence or bad weather. I also can get a little stressed out dining out since I have such life-threatening food allergies. The kids tease me, because I am also not the biggest fan of wind and thunderstorms.

But four boys? Sign me up for playing GI Joes, Xbox, baseball and much easier hair cuts than a girl's haircut any day!!! I have a different perspective from those people always asking how I do it all. You see, I grew up in the middle of 10-12 kids (or more like 25 if you throw in everyone's friends!). We shuttled around to the movies and out to eat in vans!! Imagine Christmas, with the flu wave that went through when one person got sick and then the whole family. Ahh, the memories!! What was stressful in a house of that

When I write the word stress, watch what happens when I write it this way: STRESS; or this way: S-T-R-E-S-S; or STRESS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!; or this way: stress; and lastly, for those with a laughter approach to it I will spell it backwards – sserts. We read it differently when written differently; just as we react or respond according to what is happening in life.

many kids? Well, to me, it was the seven girls fighting for phone and bathroom time!

Dr. Katie Eastman of Recreate Counseling in Anacortes, Washington offers this acronym to help you change your relationship and manage stress.

RECREATE STRESS TIPS

Rest: Get enough sleep.

Exercise: Move every day.

Compassion: Help others.

Relax: Make time for quiet.

Explore: Try new things.

Affirm: Be a positive thinker.

Teach: Share your skills.

Enjoy: Schedule fun activities.

"By practicing these principles, you can ease the impact of stress. Like everything, stress is complex. There are good aspects of stress that inspire us to make positive changes in our lives. Stress becomes unhealthy when the activities we engage in daily challenge our ability to self care. If we are not able to eat well, exercise, or sleep well because of what our mind considers stressful, we need to reevaluate our stressors and their level of negative effect on our overall well-being," says Dr. Katie Eastman.

One thing we are finding out about stress is that in excess, it damages your health. More and more research points to stress = inflammation = disease = shorter life. Throw in bad eating habits and not-so-great exercise habits, and it is a recipe for a bad health.

Now on Best Ever You, I'd like to think we've got a command on stress, a one up if you will, but the truth is, while I teach about stress and managing it, none of us is without stress ourselves. There are practices that we can put in place to help us ease our stress or deal with it so that we come back to a balancing, peaceful place instead of living in constant stress or becoming easily stressed.

I've developed a very simple method of dealing with stress that I affectionately call WWBWD. Better known as What Would Betty White Do? My baseline is, yes, Betty White. Why? Because much like my grandmother, she is 90 and FULL OF LAUGHTER.

I really do think laughter is the best stress crusher. So, the next time you are faced with stress, try to see if you can find any glimmer of humor in it. Ask yourself, "WWBWD?" I promise you if you just stop and ask yourself this question, 9 times out of 10 you will laugh, or will have somewhat distracted yourself. This doesn't mean you shouldn't take what is happening seriously. It really means to try to put it in perspective and keep the stress in check. If finding the right dress for an event puts you straight into heart palpation mode, go find the most crazy ugly dress you can find at the store, try it on and have a laugh at yourself. If you get crazed every time you try to put on false eyelashes, like I do, find a few stuck to your hair during an important event once or twice in your lifetime and have a crazy good chuckle.

Los Angeles based talent manager and comedy producer, Randi Siegel adds, "Laughter is universally understood. The contagious, ripple effect that happens when one person starts to just chuckle is an extraordinary example of our human, basic need for humor. It can calm you, cross language barriers, smooth out awkward dinner moments, and soften some of the toughest personalities. Show me someone who doesn't like to laugh and I'll show you a Kardashian without plastic surgery. Exactly...they don't exist."

But seriously, in addition to laughter, much can be said for Gratitude. The sheer art of Gratitude can make stress vanish. It's a not-so-simple method of developing positive thankful language in your life. My dad, who is a stroke survivor since 2004 and a kidney cancer survivor since 2011, is the master of gratitude, along with my mom who has taken care of my dad and while having health troubles of her own.

I can remember sitting with my dad in Sister Kenny, a stroke rehab facility in Minneapolis, for a speech test after his stroke and coma. The gal was just simply testing him to see if he could even speak after the trauma. She did this test on him to speak a word that came to mind after each letter. She began with "A" to which he responded, "Aardvark." She was expecting something more along the lines of "and," "at," or even

"a." Instead, he threw her a whole alphabet of words, which I have come to call my "Alphabet of Life." "B" was Benevolence, "C" was Courage, "D" was Determination, "E" was excellence, "F" was a choice word that we won't repeat, and it went on through the entire alphabet. The rehab specialist was stunned and it became the basis for my book *PERCOLATE – Let Your Best Self Filter Through* (Aug 2013, Hay House).

Find the positive in the negative. In every situation there is usually some opportunity that comes from the pain or stress. My dad just had a bout of kidney cancer in late 2011. He was in the ICU in Burnsville, MN for over 40 days. There were some really scary and awful moments. The dread of potentially losing a parent or loved one is just sheer pain. Yet, a moment of laughter and gratitude presented itself. Out of the dark, came such brilliant light. When my dad was back in surgery, the entire family was gathered round in the waiting room. Now this group also included two ex-husbands. My mom said, "Dad just does this every few years to get us all back together." Keep in mind this is a HUGE family. The waiting room was filled with grandkids, kids, husbands, friends, etc...We all simultaneously erupted in laughter. It eased everyone's pain and it is truly what my dad would want us all to do.

He is alive and doing so much better now as I write this. His room during those 40+ days was completely decorated with photos and the doctors and nurses there swear that our positive energy helped will him to live.

So the next time you think your life has really got you down, or something is completely stressing you out; stop, pause, be grateful for your life in its entirety and wash away the stress if possible with some laughter. When you think of stress try to think of balance. It's not good or bad, it's how we behave when we experience stress. Find the answers and solutions that work for you to help you be your best self in the face of the stress monsters. Stress is a part of life, make choices to be your best ever you.

Elizabeth Hamilton-Guarino, Hay House Author and the Founder and CEO of Best Ever You, understands first-hand the challenges life can bring and has worked with thousands across the globe to illuminate their light within and help them live their best life. Elizabeth and her husband and four boys live in Maine. She has a degree in Communications and Broadcasting, is a Life Coach, food allergy expert and survivor and is the host of The Best Ever You Show. Visit her websites at www.ElizabethHamiltonGuarino.com and www.BestEverYou.com for more information.

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It's the Best Move You'll Ever Make!



Being Right

I'm right, you're right, we're all right...

The political climate as of right this moment is tense. I am writing this on Election Day, and tempers and opinions are running rampant. I am watching people being unkind to each other, and am wondering: what about tomorrow?

Here we are, waiting for the results of the election that will determine the next four years. And I am watching people polarizing in their beliefs, and watching them “unfriend” each other based on sometimes presumed stances of their friends and family. It comes as no surprise, seeing the hurtful comments bandied around in the media and Facebook.

So, tomorrow, no matter who wins, we all have to face each other. Are you going to be re-

membered for being tolerant, kind, and respectful? Or is the person you unfriended based on their political viewpoint – the person you’ve known half your lifetime – now going to remember your comments and negative actions?

Facebook has certainly taken politics to a new level. It’s pretty easy to be unkind to someone when they live on the other coast. It’s pretty easy to hurt someone when the nuances of your face and tone are missing. It’s pretty easy to be daring when all you have to do is click a button and “unfriend” them.

Here’s the thing – no matter whether it be politics, holidays, relationships, a weird sense of humor – we need to remember

that the words we choose can impact people. And sometimes, the impact of those words can last long beyond the time it takes to elect a new president. You don’t have to be right all the time – who determines “right” for any given person at any given time, anyway? I love a good steak dinner. My brother has turned vegetarian. Does he think any less of me because I eat meat – I don’t think less of him when he doesn’t! Of course not.

I say it again – be kind, be caring, and even if you think your stance is the “right” one, please be tolerant. We have enough drama these days.

Respectfully yours - Liz

Liz Foley, Editor-in-Chief

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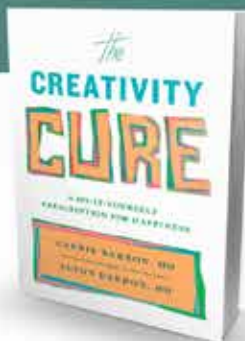
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Meeting Lisa Tener at Harvard Medical School's publishing course changed my life. I was struck by Lisa's ability to bring out our creativity and at the same time how well she understood the business end of book writing and publishing.

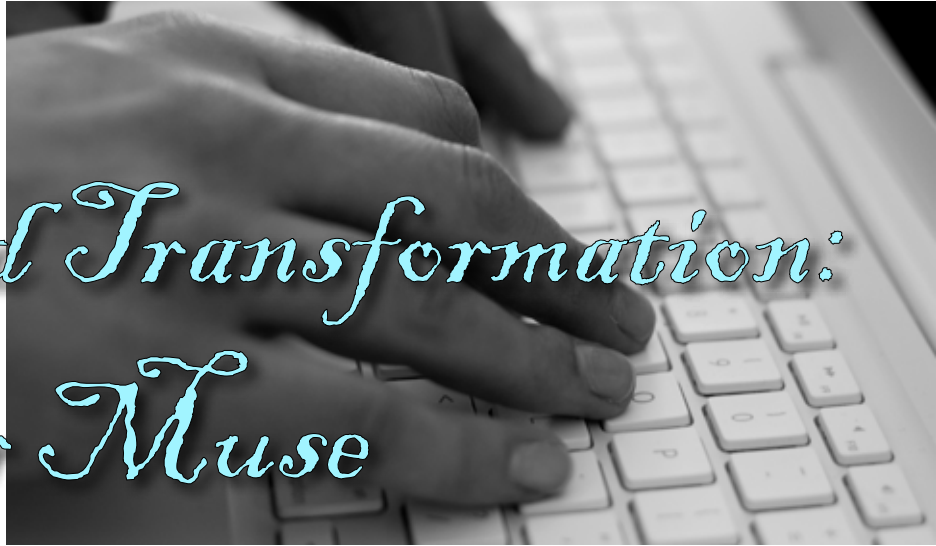
When I met Lisa I had an amorphous idea. Lisa helped me clarify my book idea into something much more marketable than my initial concept by suggesting the perfect niche audience for my book and a spot-on title. [We landed] a 6-figure book deal with Charles Scribner's Sons. The clarity and advice Lisa provided contributed greatly to that outcome. Lisa's astute pick ups and sharp thinking made all the difference.

Carrie Barron, MD
co-author with Alton Barron, MD
of *The Creativity Cure*



with
Lisa Tener

Writing and Transformation: Meet Your Muse



Good writing takes the writer through a transformative process. When you write and it takes you somewhere you didn't expect to go, or brings a new insight, that, for me, is transformative writing—and a delight for both reader and writer.

But can you create transformation on demand? Maybe not on demand, but fairly consistently, in my experience. For years I've led my clients and students in my book writing classes in a process where they discover what they do not know consciously but know in a deeper way. I call this the journey to “meet your muse.”

“What's a muse?” you may ask. I think of it as that creative part of you. It may seem to emanate from deep within you or, on the contrary, from an external source. Everyone has their own experience—all valid.

For some people, the muse shows up as a symbol, power animal or wise being. For others, it's more of a felt-sense of connection or a color or just light. People in my book writing classes are often surprised at how their muse shows up. They have experienced their muses as:

- A hawk
- A mouse
- Jesus
- An angel
- A deer
- A desk
- Light
- A man they knew in childhood—and not all that well
- A grandmother
- A bell
- A famous choreographer
- Olympia Dukakis

When someone asks me advice about their book ideas, I often have a professional opinion about which of several concepts is most marketable or whether self-publishing or traditionally publishing will best meet their needs. I may have an intuitive sense as well. But their muse often provides the deepest level of knowing.

More and more, I combine sharing my expertise and hunches with an inner journey where I take writers to meet their muse. The clarity they receive often astounds me. For example:

- Vicki felt stuck, her chapter notes strewn all over the kitchen. She tried writing the chapter several ways, none of which was working. She went back to the muse exercise we'd done in class and got clarity. Vicki said, “I focused on my muse being much larger and wiser than me, and that it would guide me. Then I fell asleep for a little while, and when I sat back down to write my chapter, the writing flowed and the organization made sense.”

- Anna struggled with how her story fit together until her muse appeared in her dream bringing clarity. Still, she wondered whether she should start with fiction or nonfiction. I led her through a journey with her muse and the answer became clear. When you feel unsure about your creative direction, your muse can provide answers.

- Beth felt a strong passion to write her book, but had equally strong doubts about her ability. The book remained foggy—both whom she was writing for (her audience) and how to best connect with them through the book. I guided her in a visualization, asking her muse to make clear who her reader was and how develop an authentic writing voice that would resonate for her readers. Her muse provided some clarity, along with a sense that more would be revealed. Later that day, a young woman sat next to her and their conversation naturally flowed into Beth sharing about her book's topic. It became clear to Beth that this was how to write her book—as a conversation.

Would you like guidance from your muse? Close your eyes and imagine yourself on a path in a meadow. Use all your senses to experience this path. Now see the woods in front of you and notice what changes as you enter the woods—the temperature, the smells, the light? In a clearing, you'll find a small structure—perhaps a little building where your muse awaits you. Enter the building and connect with your muse. Use your senses to experience the space and connect with your muse. Then:

- * **Thank** your muse for this time together.

- * **Share** any challenges you're facing and ask your muse for help—confidence, guidance, support.

- * **Ask** your muse a question, if you wish—something you've been struggling with or wondering about.

- * **Listen** for answers. Trust what you get, even if it doesn't make complete sense to you at first. You may actually hear something (most likely in your own inner voice). Or your muse may communicate through images or a felt sense within you. Everyone has their own way of experiencing their muse. You may get clarity right away or it may be somewhat challenging at first. The more often you connect, the stronger this connection will become and the easier it will be to get answers.

The more you use this process, the more you will experience transformation—transformation into a confident writer, growth in your intuition and even spiritual evolution. Enjoy the journey.

Looking to connect with your muse? Get your free audio recording of Lisa's “Meet Your Muse” exercise at www.LisaTener.com/meet-your-muse.

Build *Friendships* to Build Business

Sometimes even the seasoned sales professionals need to change their ways of thinking to keep up with modern times. In the old days, salespeople were advised to collect 100 business cards on a weekly basis from “prospects” (prospective clients.) Now consider today’s world where we make “friends” online and “like” them sight unseen.

This gives pause to the question in today’s world: Are you building a database and business of prospects or friends?

By saying “friends,” I am referring to how you connect with the people you meet. Most experienced salespeople perceive the people they meet simply as those from whom they will make a hearty profit. The new and improved approach is one of friendship whereby you offer your help to solve problems.

The older sales version of problem solving has several names and the most common are: “Solution Selling” and “Consultative Selling.” While these approaches are important, I am suggesting you take them a step further. Treat potential clients as you do when meeting new acquaintances at a party. Most often, you seek out those who appear interesting and work the conversation to find more about why that might be. Should the match be a good one, you then take the conversation to the next level. The same process works extremely well for building business. It is the

friendly, relationship building approach that works best.

Success comes from understanding why others are asking to connect. This is part of the qualifying process of the sales cycle. The best case is where the relationships prove to be mutually beneficial. Your ultimate reward is receiving a monetary exchange for the much needed help. Added bonuses may come in the way of referrals and testimonials along with the increased likelihood of finding enjoyment in working with one another.

But the question lingers, “How do you make friends online?” The best way is by reading the posts of others. See which ones inspire you and which people continually offer posts or Tweets that stand out. When one person appears to be a great match with your interests, go to their website or profile pages to learn more. Upon liking what you read, ask if they care to have a live conversation. In this manner, your relationship will deepen as you explore opportunities for becoming better connected and possibly doing business.

Likewise, the same is true for you. By posting excellent content without links but samples of what you believe and provide clients, others will be attracted to you and will also research your information.

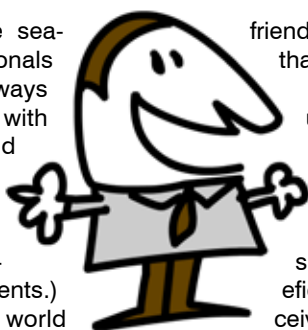
Another attraction mechanism is to retweet, like, and share posts of others. This becomes a form of collaboration. When responsive others see you promoting on their behalf, most often they will reciprocate. This

transfers into a personal dialogue and a budding friendship. The side benefit is making lifetime friends.

By following these instructions you are likely to find significant results. It becomes possible to attract opportunity that would otherwise be unlikely to come your way. Social media done properly is networking made easy and incurs very little expense but does require a focus on time well spent.

By arranging regular 1:1 calls with new acquaintances found online, and with whom you feel a synergy, you just may find new avenues for creating services together thereby reaching larger audiences. And as you become comfortable with one another, voluntarily promote each other’s unique events. The back and forth collaboration produces a much heartier business model. The bigger picture is developing a group of like-minded individuals dedicated to helping one another.

Interestingly, as people see you active within a group, they perceive you as a leader in your field. This is the client attraction machine at work that presents unlimited opportunity. It all comes about by developing friendships first. By shifting your perspective of others from “prospects” to ‘potential friends’ will make business development far easier and seemingly a Smooth Sale!



Elinor Stutz, CEO of Smooth Sale, LLC, (800) 704-1499, was honored by Open View Labs with inclusion in their international list of “Top 25 Sales Influencers for 2012.” Elinor authored the International Best-Selling book, “Nice Girls DO Get the Sale: Relationship Building That Gets Results”, Sourcebooks and the best selling career book, “HIRED! How to Use Sales Techniques to Sell Yourself On Interviews”, Career Press. She provides team sales training, private coaching and highly acclaimed inspirational keynotes for conferences and is available for consultation.

Why Don't We Just Say It?



Sitting with a senior manager, he told me how he had a serious problem with one of his Account Executives. The Account Executive had great results, but was really horrible at social functions, often standing alone and off to the side. I asked him (knowing that this was a skill that could easily be taught) if there had been a conversation between him and that valued Account Executive.

"Oh no, I would never want to hurt his feelings," the manager told me. A few months later, the AE was passed over for a promotion because of this shortcoming. A few months after that, the Account Executive left the company for greener pastures. It was a great loss for the company he left.

Two managers at a different organization were not cooperating with each other. The major bone of contention was access to resources—people and budgets. They resorted to going behind each other's backs and jockeying for position and favor with people in the power structure. People who worked for each manager were sometimes directed not to cooperate with members of the opposing team. This tension and competition went on for months. Decisions were made: resources

were allocated by senior management. The rift continued, and grew deeper, as each manager carried a grudge for the other. As a result, the organization suffered from a lack of cooperation, communication, and efficient sharing of resources between the two teams.

I could go on with many more examples. It seems that today, in this highly divided world we live in, conflicts at work are not getting resolved as management hopes. Instead, conflicts continue, wearing disputants down and eroding productivity. Additionally, this creates stress for anyone involved in or near the ongoing conflict. So I sit in my consultant's chair, and wonder: Why can't we acknowledge and resolve our differences? I have come to a few conclusions:

1) Management often does not know how to handle, let alone resolve conflicts at work. The most frequent method is what many parents do with their kids – "Now, now, go back to your room, make up, and play nice."

2) Professionals are not comfortable with their conflict resolution skills, so they don't venture into scary territory.

3) People are frightened that if they attempt to resolve the conflict at work, they might come up with the short end of the stick; that is, they are afraid they will "lose," especially if the other person is a more senior employee.

4) Bullying doesn't just take place in the school yard – it is happening with greater frequency in the office. We don't wake up in the morning wanting to deal with a bully, especially if that bully is more senior! Bullies get their way far too often because no one will stand up to them. What I have found is that once you do, you are less likely to be bothered by that obnoxious person ever again.

What can you do? Here are a few things you can do to build courage and skills:

1) Learn communication skills that enable you to speak assertively, clearly, and with compassion. Being direct and having an understanding of the other person's point of view goes a long way – even if you don't like the other person and you vehemently disagree!

2) Take a class on conflict resolution; read a book ("Win at Work! The Everybody Wins Approach to Conflict Resolution" by yours truly is a good suggestion!) And practice at home before you use the suggested method at work.

3) Allow others to disagree with you without making them wrong. Listen well and reflect your opinion back without blaming or accusing. They are more likely to reciprocate.

4) Know that you are in charge of your reactions – your stress levels, your behavior. Make sure that you are a problem *solver* and not a problem *maker*. Don't lose your cool, and remember to focus on issues, not people. And don't participate in time-wasting gossip.

5) Develop allies at work who can be both helpful and sounding boards.

6) Speak to appropriate parties to get help in resolving the conflict – HR, your manager, a peer, etc.

7) The more you get used to dealing with conflict, the more comfortable you will be; and the more skillful you will become in resolving the stickiest of issues.

We need to remember that we are all in this together. Your ideas and my ideas combined are actually better than each of our ideas alone. Remember – just say what you need to say in a way that you would like to hear it! Good luck!



Dr. Diane Katz has worked with organizations and professionals for over 40 years. She holds a Masters Degree in Organizational Psychology from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in Conflict Resolution from Union Institute. Her consulting company, The Working Circle, provides organizational development, human resources, teambuilding, training and coaching to organizations of all sizes. Her newest book, "Win at Work! The Everybody Wins Approach to Conflict Resolution" is now available. www.TheWorkingCircle.com

By Danielle Miller

Teachable Moments

When I taught in the classroom, I was always on the lookout for 'teachable moments' (I call them Light Bulb Moments) – those times when learning became especially powerful because of connections, relevance, and opportunity.

For example I could teach about math (money, budgeting, measuring) until those proverbial cows came home, but when I had an opportunity to create a Christmas Cookie Sale as a community project, every aspect of teaching math became a teachable moment. Students were involved, invested, and eager to learn.

Teachable Moments: spontaneous, serendipitous opportunities to use an experience at hand to demonstrate a skill, concept, or principle when the learner is motivated and engaged in the process.

Teachable moments are not only for the classroom; they are and can be generalized across settings. They are not only for concrete skills, 'soft skills' can be deeply embedded as well.

Coaches and consultants use teachable moments (whether they recognize them or not!) to help client breakthroughs and transformations; in fact, I believe that knowing and using those Light bulb Moments separate a good coach/consultant from a great one.

So how can you facilitate more teachable moments in your business and life?

Make Connections. Teachable moments are holistic and build upon prior knowledge and experience. We learn much more deeply when our emotions are involved. Find out what your clients are excited about, upset about, worried about, happy about...

Interests. When you can relate content to interests (and strengths rather than weaknesses) learning becomes more motivating and engaging. Know that your client loves to cook or is a fitness buff? Relate your expertise in those terms.

Take the Road Less Traveled. Often teachable moments occur when a tangent happens. You may be discussing one thing and you or your client happens to say something that sparks an idea...go with it!

Listen...Really *listen* to What is Being Said *and* Unsaid. This goes with the above strategy. Don't be afraid to deviate from 'the plan'... carpe diem baby!

Think of yourself as not only a teacher, but a guide open to exploring new paths and trails (both for yourself and your clients).

When One Teaches, Two Learn

Danielle M Miller works with women solo professionals to help them craft a distinctive and memorable brand using a blend of creativity and strategy to create a holistic brand solution that allows them to authentically own who they are and attract those they are meant to serve.



5 Life Lessons I Learned from Having Cancer

1 **It is what it is.** Whether the Doctor tells you that you have 6 months to live or they tell you that with surgeries, radiation, chemotherapy, you have a chance to survive. It is ultimately your choice how you deal with it. You can make it the most miserable time of your life or you can embrace the awareness of how precious life really is. I personally chose the high road. My statistics were not great with stage 3 breast cancer. I had a nine month old daughter and I made the decision to fight this in the most positive way I could. I took time for me, to learn how my body dealt with stress, and worked really hard to teach my body and mind to connect in a positive way. Two mastectomies, chemotherapy, radiation, and lots of inner therapy work, fourteen years later I am cancer free today. Hard works pays off.

2 **People have different reactions to illness.** Some of the most loving friends I have were not really present during my treatments, while others were there with me through it all. I learned that for some people it is too painful for them to see someone they care about struggling through illness. It is not because they do not care, I think sometimes they distance themselves to protect themselves in case something happens, the pain won't be so bad. They really don't know what to do. Just being there for the person is what you need to do...just let them know that you are there.

3 **When you are a survivor, from anything, your life is never the same again.** It changes you as a person. There are people that will go back to their old life and act like nothing happened...but it is always there. I felt renewed, reborn, blessed. I felt as though I was here for a purpose. I found that purpose opening my own hair salon and specializing in selling wigs to cancer patients. I opened my salon one year to the date of my diagnosis. I meet people in their first stages of their journey. I encourage them to be positive and to stay strong and to take charge of their illness. I share my story. No matter how bad your situation, I believe everyone has a purpose. Sometimes you don't even know your purpose. I have a good friend who has been chasing her own purpose, and recently I reminded her that she has written a book of her life experiences; she has a talk blog radio station connecting great people; I believe she is present in her purpose. She just didn't know it.

4 **Society is so hung up on body image.** I had reconstruction with my mastectomies, but I never added anything to the breast tissue, so I just have scars. I never realized how much our society focuses on breasts until I didn't have them. I have had moments where I have really felt the loss. I tried to explain to my husband when we were on vacation and the resort allowed women to go topless that I felt like it was like bringing someone without legs to a road race. I know that sounds shallow but I really felt the emotional pain. A body part is a body part. I do not dwell on it and I admire women that choose no reconstruction at all.

5 **Society does not like to talk about death.** Let's face it, we are all going to die sometime. But none one wants to mention it. I have lost a few friends from cancer and when they found out that there was not much more the medical world could do, they wanted to talk about it. A few of them came to me. They said they could not discuss it with their families because they didn't want to talk about it saying "you will be fine" when in reality they weren't going to be fine. Or they thought they were giving up. One of my friends was concerned about his funeral...where to have it...what would the music be and so on. To this day I think he had the nicest funeral I have ever been to. He planned the whole thing out. Dedicated songs to certain people, invited people to share stories...a real celebration of his life. Sometimes just having everything planned also takes a lot of stress off of the family.

We as a society should really be able to handle this much better. After all we are always taught we are going to a better place...right? Well, that's a few of my thoughts... I am working on a book... from diagnosis through treatment. The book is called *Sunshine Survivor*.

The name of my salon is Positive Energy Salon & Boutique ... I do believe cancer has led me to my calling!

Stop Negative Thinking:

You VS. Your Thoughts



Deb Scott, Certified Professional Coach, specializes in working with individuals, businesses, and corporate environments, transforming ineffective group and personal dynamics into high-powered, successful, dynamic individuals and teams. With 20 years of background in cardiac surgery sales, she now applies her sales and business background to motivational speaking and consulting. "The Sky is Green and the Grass is Blue – Turning Your Upside-Down World Right-Side-Up!" is her debut book. Visit www.greenskyandbluegrass.com for more information.

How to get rid of feeling negative, stressed out, or emotionally charged is a desirable result for most of us, but not necessarily easily achieved by any of us.

Here is a simple "Ah Ha" moment to help shift your perception of how easily it really can be to accomplish.

You are NOT your thoughts.

Why is accepting this knowledge a critical first step towards freedom and success?

Once you know that your thoughts, which create the feeling, are separate from the truth of who you are; you are able to make a choice whether that thought will be permitted to create a feeling inside you – negative or positive. Why?

Consider the following image and analogy:

When you are at home, people often come and knock on your door. You pause, look at who it is, and decide if you are going to let them into your home. Your home is your safe and sacred sanctuary, and you don't just let anyone in. You may speak to them at the door if they are a stranger, or immediately invite them in if you recognize them as loving family or friends.

Now, replace yourself as the house itself. Thoughts are the strangers or friends knocking at your door, and your decision to open or close the door is the power of choice you possess as a result of pausing to assess the quality of thoughts knocking at your door. The thoughts knocking *outside* your front door are not part of you *in* the house, but separate entities outside your home. They are thoughts knocking for your permission to come inside and be part of your home require your approval and permission to enter.

How does that scenario feel to you?

Your thoughts are what create your feelings – negative or positive. Without the thought first, the feeling cannot exist. This knowledge gives you power to understand by pausing and analyzing what the thought is, or what is knocking at your door, before accepting it. This is the real key to controlling how you feel.

Have you ever found yourself saying, "Why am I thinking about that?" The fact you separate yourself "why am I" from the thought "thinking *that*" clearly demonstrates the distinction between you and your thoughts.

You must think about what you are going to think about! It's your choice, and easier to do, even really fun, once you are aware you can do it.

Fill Your World with Sunshine

Every day we have a new opportunity to share our shine out to the world. There are days we all find more challenging than other days. I can wake up one morning groggy and not as perky as I would like. The next day I am so full of energy that I feel on top of the world. No matter how the morning feels I sit quietly and guide my whole being into a state of gratitude. This way the day starts out bright! It's hard to be a ray of sunshine every day, but it just feels better that way. The world needs our shine, our smile, our love and gratitude.

I am grateful to Elizabeth Hamilton-Guarino and Deb Scott for sharing their shine here at Best Ever You. I have met so many amazing people that have enriched my life through both of them. They walk their talk and are living examples that fill their world with sunshine. In fact their light is so bright it envelopes us all. I know they take the time each day to be their "Best Ever You" and we can follow their lead.

Smiling at a stranger may change the course of their day in ways we can't imagine. Sharing a hug with people can only enhance life. We are energy, so sharing our energy in a positive way is a great way to pay joy forward. Service in your community is another way. Being more tolerant, patient and kind improves the quality of life. Giving of ourselves from the heart is a gift we have been given, and it's free! The definition of happiness is different for each of us. Elizabeth Barrett Browning said "God gave us two hands, one to receive joy and happiness; the other to give it away."

I have found it feels wonderful to give, and it also feels great to be open to receiving. I just had an experience with a friend who was visiting from Texas. On her way to an appointment she tripped and fell over some uneven concrete and shattered her scapula. I was not close by, but my husband Cody cancelled his clients and went to the emergency room to pick her up. At our house, resting on ice and in great pain, our friend cried out of frustration because she did not want to be a burden. We assured her she was not, that we were happy to care for her for as long as it took.

Long story short, we felt our friend would rest better at my mother's home in a private room with air conditioning (the heat has been off the charts for our area) and a quiet place to begin healing. Our friend stayed three days and moved on to Minnesota to be with family members. I have never seen anyone so resistant to help, so frustrated with having to be taken care of. My mother told her this happened for a reason and maybe it was time to allow others to be of assistance. I am not sure, but I think something in her shifted a tiny bit and that is all we can hope for. I would love to see her happy, filled with the joy of life, but we all have to find our own way in our own time.

Live to be happy because it is a choice. When you say YES to happiness, it says YES to YOU! Let go of the what if's and say "why not." Why not you? If other people can be happy, you can too. Remember Mark Twain said "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade-winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." Think about what makes your happiness expand instead of worrying about what the world wants from you, or who it wants you to be. Believe in yourself; be happier, more appreciative of all the good qualities in people and in life. Fill your world with sunshine and share it with gusto.



Debra Oakland is a Courage Advocate, Writer & Joyful Experienter. Visit her at Living in Courage Online - A Spiritual Oasis for Overcoming Life's Biggest Challenges at www.livingincourageonline.com. You find links to her FREE e-book, monthly newsletter and articles on Living in Courage.



By Deb Oakland

Eliminate These Five Habits & Live a Joy-Full Life

I don't know about you, but I have been guilty of abusing every one of these habits. Not fun to admit, but true. I don't really know many people who have not, if truth be told. We have become a society that engages in five very negative habits – criticism, condemnation, judgment, blame and gossip. How great would it be if we all took responsibility to work on eliminating this family of five from our lives and urged our family and friends to do the same? It can be challenging to live in the present moment while entertaining these five notorious bandits. Every moment gives us another chance to change our behavior and rise above. Higher ground is easy to reach with a little perseverance!

Make a date to have a heart to heart chat with yourself. Just because many people use this family of five to communicate, does not mean you need to. Spend some quality time looking at how you go about your day. What adds value to your life? Certainly not by hanging out with these five troublemakers! If you have any value in holding onto frustration, anger, jealousy, resentment, loneliness or the desire to strike back, it's hard to find joy-makers to hang out with. Joy-full people tend to avoid Debbie Downers!

Know that love is the true nature of your being. Fear is the counterfeit. As we bring the family of fear to zero, we are taking a big step in powering up with full intention. As negative thoughts or feelings come up, it is good to say, "No, I choose peace, I say YES to life and life says YES to me." Little mantra's through the day work wonders. Just find a statement that empowers you. Here are a few you may resonate with. Repetition is important as well as feeling the power in the words.

- I project joy and love to everyone I interact with.
- My life is a joy filled with love, fun and friendship - all I need do is stop all criticism, forgive, relax and be open.
- I joyfully honor the flow of life. It washes over me in waves and delivers me to blissful places.
- I give out love, peace and joy. It is returned to me multiplied many times over.
- I feel my unlimited power to create a joyful life and to share it with others.
- I am ready and willing to release the past.
- I bring my full attention to whatever I am doing or saying.

By Amy Ohm

"We want people to make authentic, quality, lifelong, and if they wish, anonymous connections, and inspire others to live life to the fullest, no matter what their condition."

– Amy Ohm, CEO & Founder of
TreatmentDiaries.com



A Different Kind of "Social" – Anonymous connections to those who can relate and provide support!

TreatmentDiaries.com is a unique online resource, because it provides real information exchange between actual people coping with or caring for anyone with a chronic illness mental health condition, rare disease or life changing experience. It fills the everyday needs of those learning to cope with a condition that never goes away. It's a community of people who understand exactly what you are going through and who become inspired by helping others get through the day, even when they don't feel well.

This virtual support group is free and always available; offering a safe place to anonymously keep multiple diaries of your daily journey, across more than one condition - either privately or shared out with others, allowing for shared coping strategies, support for others and the exchange of information.

Living with illness and providing care for loved ones can be incredibly isolating. People feel better when they share and especially when they share with those who

can relate. Family and friends have good intentions, but they lack understanding and experience for those on a journey with illness. Too often this physical circle wears thin and sometimes even vanishes. Social connections with anonymity have long lasting qualities. You don't have to "know" someone physically to understand and relate to what you share by way of an intimate experience with illness. *Treatment Diaries* is truly a different kind of social. One user shared this in their diary,

*"Being non-judgmental
and anonymous is very healing.
So many people are here
to uplift you and maybe give some
advice, but definitely lots of love
and caring. In my own life, my
family is always trying to FIX things,
when all I (we) want sometimes is
just someone to listen....."*

I took a personal experience with a cancer diagnosis and the energy it consumed. I redirected that cycle and connected that energy to those trapped in the diagnosis. We give them great friends on *Treatment Diaries* who are always listening, caring, and full of information and who never grow tired of loving those affected by illness. My life is full, cancer free and committed to making a difference. Without cancer, life would not have rewarded me with such a rich and valuable experience! I am thankful for my cancer and the goodness it continues to bring to so many!

TreatmentDiaries.com is dedicated to the needs of all types of users including: individual patients, caregivers, family members and advocates. We promote the importance of keeping a diary of life changing experiences and the significance of engaging in behaviors and activities which promote health, mental wellness and the self-management of all medical conditions.

Zombie Marketing

You might have noticed, zombies have become a popular part of our cultural landscape. The continuing interest in zombie-themed movies, TV shows and even events seems to keep growing with no end in sight. As a marketer, it got me thinking about places where “Walking Dead” might be appropriate for certain marketing tactics.

Telemarketing, junk mail and mail-box-stuffing paper campaigns all meet my definition of what I call “Zombie Marketing.” These tactics are dead but they don’t know it. They may work in terms of enough people responding to make them worth doing, but that doesn’t mean they are a good strategy for a savvy business interested in building goodwill.

“The average American worker has fifty interruptions a day, of which seventy percent have nothing to do with work.”

– W. Edwards Deming

Please don’t misunderstand; I am not saying all phone calls, emails or mail campaigns are bad. Just the ones that are spammy, junky or clearly bogus, and a waste of time.

See, as a culture, we are moving away from interruption-based communication. We’re moving toward information on demand. You don’t want a furnace repair company to call you on a random Tuesday when your furnace is working fine. You do want to find a reliable furnace repair company quickly when yours breaks down. That requires a completely different approach to getting the word out.

As a business owner who has had the same phone number for over a decade, you can imagine how many zombie marketing lists I am on. Each week I receive phone calls from solicitors saying they are “Checking on the copier,” when I don’t have a copier. Or they want to give me special offers on my phone account, when I have no such account with their company. When I inform them of this, they hang up and dial the next number on their list.

Zombies only think about their own immediate needs. They have zero empathy for anyone else. They’re mindless. They add little of value and their numbers can quickly get out of hand. Kind of like all the junk email in your spam folder, or the print solicitations that you dump in the recycling bin each day.

When considering marketing techniques, don’t be part of the undead horde. Ask yourself, “Does this tactic interrupt people? Does it annoy them? Have I bothered to figure out if this person is even a prospect for what I offer? Am I just putting this out in mass quantities hoping anything will stick?” It is far better to focus on providing quality information of value and making that available in as many forms as possible to those who seek it.


One day the zombie techniques will truly die out. Until then, stick to tactics for the living.

By
Barbara
Wayman

YOU MAY
HAVE ALREADY
WON!

BUY OUR
PRODUCT
NOW!

SPECIAL
OFFER!

A black and white photograph of Frank Stallone. He is a middle-aged man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. He is holding a dark-colored electric guitar and looking towards the camera. A microphone is visible on the left side of the frame. The background is dark and out of focus.

By Randi Siegel

Frank Stallone – Overcoming Adversity

Celebrities are an interesting breed. They are created by society to be our trend setters, food gurus, life coaches, exercise and political leaders, and they're providers of some of the best water cooler, viral content and social media gossip ever. But what is it about celebrities? Why is George Clooney's girlfriend's dress a news headline? Why are there hours and hours of the Kardashians on my TV? Why does Miley getting caught smoking salvia cause it to sell out at smoke shops?

Celebrity behavior is emulated, criticized, scrutinized and glorified and we, as fans, eat it up. In every group of friends there's usually that one person who talks about a celebrity as if they're best friends with them: "Justin and Selena are really trying to make it work" or "Brad and Angie totally want to have more kids" and "Rihanna is really trying to forgive Chris. He's not a bad guy." Sound familiar? If your group of friends doesn't have one of those people... then you're it.

I'm a talent manager and producer. The more that people talk about my clients and projects, the better, because Hollywood lives on hype. To outsiders, it's glamour and glitz and perfectly coiffed people

what you do would you be able to put up with before you just ran, hid, and gave up?

In Hollywood, the perception of reality is far more important than reality, itself. But on the receiving end of gossip sites and blogs are real people with real feelings and real challenges. Overcoming misconceptions isn't easy, especially when it's publicly followed you around for most of your life. Frank Stallone knows that all too well.

When I first met him I didn't know I was talking to "Frank Stallone" as he only introduced himself as Frank and I didn't recognize him immediately. The conversation eventually came around to him being an actor, singer and musician....that he had a "few" hit songs... that happen to be from "Staying Alive"...and from "Rocky"...and "Rambo"....and he was "Eddie" in BAR FLY...and then it all came together that this was Frank Stallone. Of course I knew OF him... certainly from his music and some key film roles, and surely as Sly's brother. What surprised me, as it does most people, is how much of his work I didn't realize I knew, and how funny and smart he is. What also surprised and inspired me were his stories about the many ca-

I asked him, "What has bothered you the most about being in the Hollywood spotlight?" He said, "That people just judge me for my brother and have never really taken the time to get to know me."

with perfect bodies, tans and teeth. But to insiders, it can be a very dark, fierce, imperfect, ugly world that will break the weak minded and crush the strong willed. Showbiz becomes a world of Rocky Balboas and Apollo Creeds "The world ain't all sunshine and rainbows. It is a very mean and nasty place and it will beat you to your knees and keep you there permanently if you let it. You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't how hard you hit; it's about how hard you can get hit, and keep moving forward. How much you can take, and keep moving forward." (Rocky in Rocky Balboa 2006)

Every time a celebrity steps out the door, they're exposing themselves to take a hit. Whether it's about their last film or TV role, their hair, their weight, their clothes, their latte...you name it and it's become fair game. Imagine your own life for a moment: does your mother always pick on you and criticize you? You're not as good as your siblings? Did your wife call you lazy...again? Did you put on a pair of pants that were a little too tight today? Think about the criticism and negativity that you face on any given day from your immediate circle. Now, think about if you heard it from total strangers....if you read it on the internet, and heard it on the news and gossip shows. How hard would you be able to be hit and keep moving forward? How many false impressions of who you are and

reer highs and lows; how challenging it is to be related to one of the biggest action stars in the world; how friends, women and industry execs betrayed or used him over the years; how the press beat him up. And yet, he never gave up on himself.

The more I learned about Frank's talents, the more perplexed I was that he hadn't broken through in his own right. He's a terrific actor, a writer and a Grammy and Golden Globe nominated singer songwriter. He can do drama and comedy for both film and TV, he looks great, is wicked on guitar and has the ability to get on stage and perform a 90 minute show that brings people to their feet. He's writing a book, more music, and he's a public speaker. Surprisingly, no one has ever given him a chance to have all of that fully realized.

We decided to work together and I give him a lot of credit for being willing to take this leap, 40 years into his career. When I asked him, "What has bothered you the most about being in the Hollywood spotlight?" He said "That people just judge me for my brother and have never really taken the time to get to know me." The following Q&A is from a long conversation that I recently had with Frank. Some of it is straight Q&A, some of it is humorously how our conversations go sometimes. All of it is pure Frank...

If there was a snow globe with a tiny Frank Stallone world inside, what would we see?
Horses, dogs, music, an old fireplace, happy people.

I can't help but notice you didn't mention anything about family.

True. I think that's because I didn't have an ideal childhood. I come from a broken home and we moved a few times when I was young.

How old were you when you first started to play music and what inspires you to write?

Well, music chose me. I was born to play and sing and I had my first guitar when I was 8. Music is my life and my inspiration comes from stories and life experiences that I take into my subconscious. I don't write songs about people in particular. I'm not a teenager writing and singing about a girl with a tattoo. Which I hate, by the way.

You hate teenagers who sing about girls?

No, I hate tattoos on girls. It's unnecessary to ruin their bodies.

You wouldn't go out with a girl who has a tattoo?

Well, I didn't say that. I might just ask her to cover it up.

So you're a problem solver... If you weren't a musician, what would you be?

I really have no idea. Maybe I'd be working with animals because I love them so much, but I can't stand to see animals suffer. It breaks my heart. If they could invent a dog that never dies, I'd have one.

You tried boxing at one point. Something like 30 fights?

Yes, but not as a career. I got into it and I got my face busted up a few times. But I gave as good as I got.

I'm sure you did... Do you think that boxing has caused some memory loss? You always forget about audition times I give you.

No. That's just because I don't pay attention to you sometimes.

Good to know... When you were kids, did Sly know he'd be an actor and you know that you'd be a musician?

I did. Sly was into girls and working out and I was an awkward kid with long hair and a guitar. Here's what a lot of people don't realize: I was playing music long before Sly was ever an actor. He was my roadie at one time. When Rocky started shooting, he needed a band that would work cheap to be in one of the scenes. My band, Valentine, was playing at some local clubs and we were the only singers Sly knew. We were making about \$140 in total but the movie was going to pay us \$140 each! So we did the movie

and that was my first break with the song "Take You Back." Things started to happen for us and I thought my music career was about to take off. And then it all crashed.

You ended up with a deal that fell through?

Yes. I had a manager and we got a record deal and we cancelled all of our gigs, the local club threw us a huge going away party, we were headed to the airport to go to CA to make our record, and my manager called and said the deal fell through. That very same morning. It was so humiliating and completely heartbreaking and I never quite got over it. Years later I came out to LA to give the music scene a go.

People don't realize that their favorite songs from the Staying Alive soundtrack are yours. Who do you credit most for having that happen? The Bee Gees for quitting, or your brother for playing your music for John Travolta [Sly was directing]?

It's one of those things where a confluence of events all fell into place. The Bee Gees quit the project. If they hadn't have quit, the opportunity wouldn't have been there. I asked Sly if I wrote some songs, would he at least ask John to listen to them. If Sly didn't orchestrate it for John to hear my music, I'd have never been able to get it to him on my own. And John loved it without knowing it was me at first because Sly played it blind. But in the end, I wrote and performed the songs and if my talent didn't hold up, I wouldn't have ended up on that soundtrack with one song, no less 9...and award nominations.

So, having been able to prove your talent and riding on the success of "Staying Alive," especially the song "Far From Over," what happened?

Again, I didn't have the team to protect me and parlay it into something bigger and the window of opportunity passed and I was left with broken dreams again.

How do you bounce back from that?

Not easily. And now I was under more scrutiny because Sly was having huge success and I was wondering how I could keep getting passed over and taken advantage of. Agents would sign me and then never call me again. It's like they just wanted to have the name "Stallone" on their list. And then there were those who might have faced a little resistance getting me in for projects so they just gave up. A lot of people have just given up on me over the years. But I've had to keep believing in my own talent.

Having been through so much, what would you look back and tell your 15 year-old self?

I would tell myself to take music more seriously from an education standpoint. I was a terrible student and failed my music class. Ironical that I've made a career out of being a singer and musician, but I'd tell myself to go to school for music.

I guess there's hope for me as your manager. I failed management in school.

You went to school for this, and failed?

Um, No...Which brings me to something else – You're incredibly smart. I'd say an idiot savant when it comes to music, history, guitars, and the mafia. You're a major boxing historian. But when I try to talk to you about the internet and using Twitter and Facebook, you look like you want to punch me in the face.

No, when you try to talk to me about technology I want to stab my eyes out. I hate it. I don't get it, I and I hate computers. When we re-did my website, every time you wanted to talk to me about it I wanted to not talk about it. But I knew it had to get done and I'm glad we did it. Like you said, doing the same thing I've been doing for the last decade isn't going to help move things forward and I'm all about change, moving forward now and giving myself the best chance at opportunities that I can.

A lot of men in Hollywood try to hide their age. You don't look 62, so why not say you're younger?

Well, I take care of myself, I stay in shape and I'd rather have people be impressed at how old I am as opposed to them thinking I look old for my age.

How often do you go to the gym?

I try to go 5 days a week. I let myself down if I don't go. Plus, sometimes I let myself eat whatever I want and I need to work it off. Last night I had pizza and lasagna so I made sure to work out this morning. But you have to know what you're doing and work your body correctly... balance it out. You have to be symmetrical. You eventually have to drop trou in front of someone else. Besides, it's all about preparation meeting opportunity. If an endorsement deal came along, I can't be 15 pounds heavier than they thought I was. In life, you just have to be prepared.

Have you always been diligent with working out and being in shape?

No. I was a smoker at one time and when I quit I gained weight and wasn't doing much. It's so important not to smoke. It kills you. But, anything is fixable. You CAN change your life. You have to eat right, keep your cholesterol down, and be active. People at the turn of the century weren't out of shape like our society is now. They had to hunt and fish in order to eat. They had to farm and walk everywhere. Totally different lifestyle.

When your nephew, Sage, passed away, you retreated. You weren't going to the gym, you weren't really leaving your house, and you were in bed until 11am. How did you get motivated to get back on track? So many people struggle with this: you skip one day, then another, and then before you know it, it's 4 weeks later and you're 10 pounds

heavier and you give up. Especially at your age, how do you not give up?

No one is untouchable from being depressed or sad and I really haven't dealt with his or my sister's death yet. But again, you CAN change your life. You have to tell yourself "I can change this." In Rocky III Apollo Creed says "You gotta get back." It's so true. You would tell me that I just needed to get up and leave the house. But people have to be patient because time goes by quickly and they don't realize how long it took them to get out of shape. Getting back takes time too. But it's never too late. It'll be too late when you have a stroke.

What's the real reason you've never been married?

I guess I forgot to do it. But seriously, I like my money and my things. I've seen too many guys get destroyed by bad marriages and I came from a broken home and Sly has been divorced and it's not pretty. Sure, he's married to a wonderful woman now (Jennifer Flavin for 16 years) but I'd never want to go through what he went through to get there. I have a terrific 17 year old son but marrying his mother wasn't right for either of us.

Marriage is one thing, but you don't even really have long term girlfriends. Why?

Cheating on someone is wrong and I won't commit to a relationship unless I'm really blown away. Well, we'd both have to be blown away. I'm really picky about who I'll let into my life that much, and dealing with my lifestyle takes a very strong, secure woman. It should be that way for everybody – why settle down with someone unless you know for sure it's who you need and want to be with.

Isn't that a polite way to say you just can't be faithful? Have you always been this way?

Well, no, it's a real way to say that I enjoy dating different women. And I'm always honest about that with the women I meet. I was an awkward kid and didn't lose my virginity until I was 22. I was too shy to approach girls but I think I'm making up for it now. Although I'm still pretty shy. I'm really not that guy who goes up to a woman to say hi and ask her out. When I go out, I like to hang with my boys and we can just be guys hanging out. If we meet some girls, so be it.

What impresses you from a woman?

Transparency, kindness and wit. Plus I like broads who can take a dirty joke and not get offended.

What bothers you about women...or broads, as you say? Which might offend some women, by the way.

When they go to bars with their girlfriends, all dressed the same, skirts way too short, and they sit there on their phones texting all night. I hate that. And if they sit near the stage and text during my show, I want to take their phones and jam them into their drinks. ●————→

The magazine written by YOU!



Frank's Favorites:

Food: Italian / Pizza

Wine: Red / Cab

Jeans: Levis or Diesel

Books: Anything by
Raymond Chandler

Cooking Utensil, and why:
A meat cleaver,
because it's primitive

Workout: Lifting dumbbells

Comedian: Richard Pryor

Animal: Dogs and horses

Reality Shows: "Auction Kings"
(Discovery Channel) and "American
Restoration" (History Channel)

Recipe:
APPLE CIDER VINEGAR BOOST
(take every day)
8 oz. water
2 tsp. Raw Apple Cider Vinegar
Agave or honey to taste



Are you a romantic, candles kind of guy?
I'm not George Hamilton.

Hollywood is a land of smoke and mirrors.
What's your smoke?

I don't have any. I am who I am. I'm kind of a loner, I like to play my guitar, bury myself in a good book, hang out at joints with my boys and I say what I want. I don't like to hide behind "Hollywood." I like to interact with people on Facebook and Twitter and I forget sometimes that I'm somewhat of a public figure. You're the one who's had to remind me of that on occasion. I think it's funny when you call me at 1am and say "Frank, you should really take that Tweet down." What are you doing up then anyway? Sometimes I post things just to see if you'll notice and get mad at me.

You're so childish.

If you could live the life of any character in a film, which would it be?

That's tough. Probably John Wayne, James Bond, or Rhet Butler.

What is your perfect scenario in life now?

I have to play my music. Ideally, I'd love to do a TV show – something like Boardwalk Empire, because that's an awesome show. Do a movie or two a year and the rest of the time go on the road and do that tour with my band that we've talked about. Perfect. But you know what show I love? There's this show I just started watching called "Family Guy" on Fox.

Is this seriously news to you? It's been on the air for almost 13 years. It's brilliant.

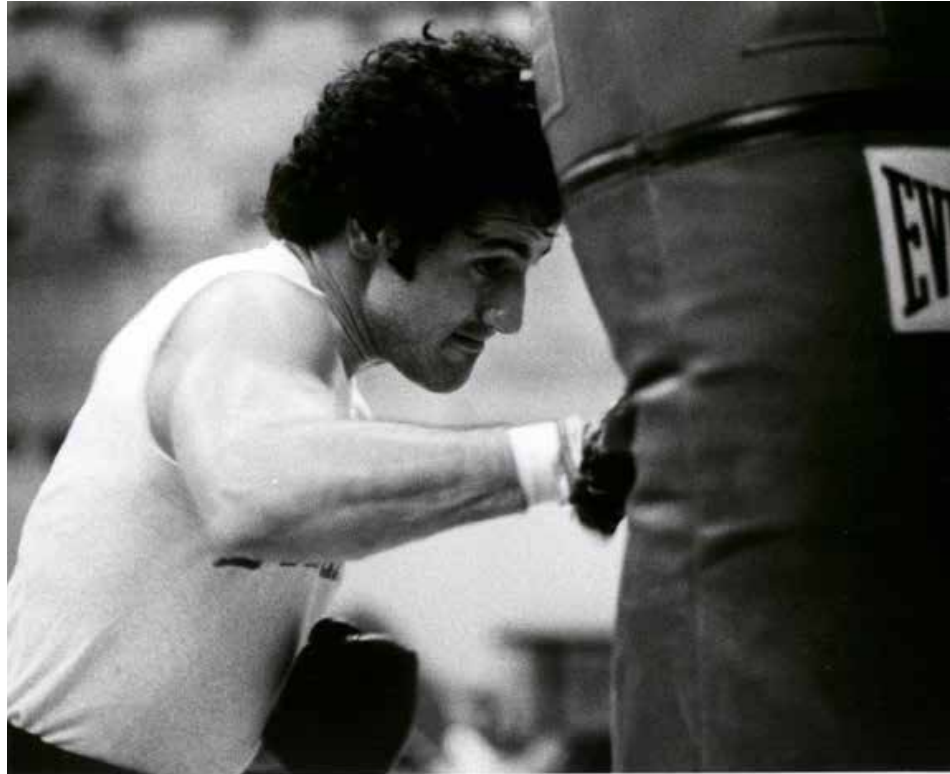
I can't believe what they get away with! It's so funny. I love how the dog talks and they can't hear the baby. That's really funny. I knew Seth McFarlane has a big band and he sings but I didn't know about Family Guy. I want to do the show with him.

He does a lot of the voices on Family Guy but they do have guest stars sometimes.

No, I meant I want to do his live music show. We should do a Sinatra song together.

I think this is why you've had no acting career for a while. [long pause] You're incredibly critical of yourself. Are you hard on yourself for your own set of standards, or because of what you think others think? Does Sly factor into this?

It's a little bit of both. I have a very strong work ethic and success isn't just handed to you. The



minute I do something new, I'm pre-judged and pre-scrutinized, simply because of the circumstances, and I'm well aware of that. I care what others think to a certain extent because I want people to like my work. But what gets me mad is when people scrutinize me and they've never even seen my work. A club booker who says I'm not the right act for the room, and he's never seen me perform, is a bad booker. And it's insulting to me. Sly does factor into it because he's my older brother and I respect his opinions. Now, in the end I have to do what feels right for me. I gave up a lot of years of success and potentially millions of dollars because I listened to the wrong people and didn't trust myself. I can't let that happen again. I'm not really bitter and try not to hold grudges but when someone I trusted or was a good friend hurts me, I can't let it go that easily. If I know I'm dealing with a scumbag, I should expect to get screwed over and that's that.

You recently had a brand new song in The Expendables 2 ["Don't Want to Fight With Me"] that's so different from your previous work. Were you nervous about what people would say, especially it being in Sly's film?

People are going to say what they want, but I was proud to get a song in that movie because I had to work for it. The misconception is that things just get handed to me if it involves Sly. But again, if it wasn't any good, it wouldn't make

it in. I love the song...I wrote it with Tom Marolda and I played all the lead guitar. We're hoping for a Grammy nomination, which would be my second one, 30 years later.

What's your unfinished business in life?

My music. I have so much more in me. I can't re-do my family life and I have good friends and I live how I want but I'm 62 years old and this is my shot. I have to believe that with the right team this time and people who are willing to give me a chance to show what I can do, things will start to happen.

Your dad lived to be 92, your mom is 91.

There's a good chance you'll live to be 90 as well. Any idea what you'll be doing then?

Well, my Aunt was 99, so I definitely could live to be 90. I plan to still be playing my guitar, even if I'm in a wheelchair on stage. And you'll still be yelling at me for not knowing that Family Guy has been on the air for 45 years.

So, you think I'll be managing you for the next 30 years?

There's no going back now.

Is that also a Rocky quote?

No. Frank Stallone 2012.

<http://frankstallone.com> • <https://www.facebook.com/FrankStalloneOfficial> • [Twitter@Stallone4Real](https://twitter.com/Stallone4Real)

Randi Siegel is the CEO of Randi Siegel Entertainment and is a manager, producer, consultant and speaker. She found and developed the career of Jimmy Fallon, was the Script Supervisor on Adam Sandler's albums, has served as the Head of Talent and Development at National Lampoon, Comic Relief and was the Dir. of Comedy at Myspace. Siegel, herself, is not very funny.

The Ultimate Human – The Power of Why: Lifting the Clouds of Constraint

What if it really is possible for each of us to get to be who we actually wish to be? To be able to wake up one brand new day, and step sure-footedly out into the world lifted by inner sunshine, suddenly knowing oneself to be fully formed, to have arrived at wherever it is that we each need to get to, to feel truly magnificent?

And not 'a bit magnificent', but actually magnificent . . . knowing that, with much growth and learning yet to come – for sure – you are, anyway, already at that place you have wished for, yearned for, aspired to and hoped for . . . a place where, when you are there (and, of course, you might be already), you might just describe yourself as being: your 'Ultimate Self' – or, in the words of my fabulous famous friend, your 'Best Ever You'!

And yet. And yet therein lays the conundrum of so many. Which 'many'? Well 'the many' who do realize that they are not where they wish they were... or, more correctly, are not yet where they wish themselves to be . . .

Now these 'Realizing People' are most definitely one massive step ahead of 'Those Others' who are just plodding through their lives like automatons, not even daring to ask these big questions . . . or worse, not even thinking to ask . . . or, still worse, not even thinking. But I'm not talking to them, or indeed for them, here, right now . . . and that is because: I know they're not YOU!

How?! Easy: YOU are here, reading this – you, even now, are looking for positive ways forward, for guidance, inspiration, may be even enlightenment, so that you can be your Best Ever Self.

So. YOU may be one of those rare, most-fortunate people who have arrived, before now, at that most-magical-magnificent place . . . and you're here, reading this to grow and learn – to further expand your life, your mind, your horizons. And if something strange is going on inside your being, or your head is tingling as you read, written as this is in a funny, funny way . . . just know that the expanding you seek is already happening.

YOU, on the other hand, may be one of those less-rare but also-fortunate people who feels like they haven't arrived yet . . . and for a fact I can say that YOU, unlike 'those others' who aren't even asking, thinking, or looking . . . well, YOU, my friend, have HOPE!!!

Really? Why? Because already I know two things about YOU, as an individual. Firstly, I know that somewhere in your heart; your mind; your soul; you KNOW you are not where you want to be, not where you feel you should be; and – secondly, you are already taking action!

Which brings me to the key point of all this:

- Everything can expand.
- Every dimension of your being can grow.
- Everything can shift.

Your life can shift, your soul can shift, and your mind can shift. We know now that with thinking, learning and practice, the very make up of your brain, and even the boundaries within it which were previously believed to be 'fixed', can shift. Mostly, even the chemicals that swim around your body can shift. In fact, all the dimensions of YOU can shift, to create added, new potential.

Now clearly you can recognize a shortfall – when you sense one – between 'where you are' and 'where you want to be.' You can formulate a distinct impression of 'who you are' and 'who you are not', and 'who you should be' that you aren't (yet). Your Inner Being has an imprint . . . a template of 'what should be' (which in itself is most magnificent!) which leads you to know what 'isn't'.

So the next question most people would ask is 'how'? How do I know what needs changing? How do I get from where I am to where I think I should be? How do I expand my Inner Core Being to be able to meet my Life's Purpose full on (or indeed work out what it is)? Etc., etc.

And here's the thing: many years ago I worked out that in most instances that is the wrong question. Well, that is not entirely correct – it is absolutely the right question ONCE you can specifically identify:

WHY you are not yet where you seek to be, WHY you are not yet who you feel you should be – in your entirety, fully empowered, enabled and ready for whatever it is that beckons you, calls you, inspires you, invites you . . .

WHY you are not yet beyond whatever constraints you sense you have now.

Now to be clear, I am not (at least not at this point) talking about you having something you don't yet have. Nor am I speaking of you doing something you can't yet do. WHY? Because what the Law of Attraction would have you believe – at least in my view – is based on an error, or at least an erroneous assumption.

And that error is: that, when seeking to 'attract' whatever it is that someone 'wants,' there is a wrongful presupposition of 'full capabilization.' Or, to put it differently, a mis-belief that anything is possible when . . . how can I put this . . . it isn't actually possible if you are not yet fully capable of it. How, for example, could you ever be a high-performance racing-car without a strong chassis? Or with a skewed chassis? Or if your tires aren't fully inflated? Or, indeed, they're leaking air?

No. I am (at this stage) talking about BEING. I am focusing on your 'Inner Core of Human Potential', on your 'Absolute Essence of Self' – WHO you are and what, ultimately, you would be capable of (being, and from that, after, having and doing) if all the clouds of constraint could be lifted from your Spirit and your Soul . . . if all the legions of limitations to 'Ultimate Human Growth and Development' could be 'magic-ed' away for you.

But really that is my point – there is no magic! Well – not quite. It is magic how quickly the Human Being can shift from the "can't" to "can," from the "I'm not" to "I am," from the "won't be able" to the "wow, look at ME!!" If, if, if and only if you know WHY you are not yet 'ultimatized' (OK, that is a new word, but you get my drift).

And the magic that it is not is: Wisdom, Knowledge and Science. And what that understanding and science hasn't been before now is: organized . . . by which I mean organized in a way that can yield INDIVIDUAL ANSWERS about 'The Why' that applies for any given person, who wants to be where they feel they should be, but hasn't yet managed to get there!

In other words, it is a Big Why Question about how it is possible for YOU not to be where you should be, in life, by now, in evolution terms, in respect of your growth and transcendence, as the Individual that you are . . . followed by Many Further Why Questions regarding the influence that shortfall has had on where you are, what you have, and what you do.

In fact, over the past two decades I have taken 'The Why Question' to a whole new level. The pursuit of these Crucial Human Answers has involved 25 years of nearly-continuous degree education! Beyond that, it has involved year-upon-year of reflection over two decades to crystallize New Wisdoms about how everything fits together – both at the level of 'Bigness' and at the level of 'Excruciating Specifics' . . .

Wisdoms to do with:

- *Being Human,*
- *Human Smarts,*
- *Human Prosperity . . .*
. . . and Human Hope.

These Wisdoms have emerged from the Concorde Blueprint of new understanding about 'The Ultimate Human' called CruXiom™ – involving Spirituality, The Mind, Brain, Neurobiology and Mind-Body Axis. Indeed it is all about YOU as a complete Individual – emphasis on *individual* – which celebrates your uniqueness and the gifts that you have to bring to the world, be that in a local way, or across the globe. And: your context.

Join my 'Group – CruX® Mind-Body Living' at www.besteveryou.ning.com/group/cruX-mind-body-wisdom over at the BEY Community Network to find out more! Sign up to get connected on the www.concorde-mind-body-medicine.com website!

And, if YOU have a thorny Life, Business, Health, Medical or Psychological challenge, contact Dr Alex Concorde via service@the-concorde-initiative.com (we're offering three one-hour 'Situational Coaching' Sessions with 50% discount for Best Ever You Readers until end December 2012, subject to availability!).

Transcend Transition

By Dr Jo Anne White



I've been thinking a lot about transition lately since several of my friends and clients are going through those changes with their children and themselves. Whether it's going off to college for the first time or entering a new grade or new school, children and parents alike are shifting and adjusting.

It's not always roses, and initially can feel scary, even depressing. On the other end of the spectrum, I have coaching clients just retired, and those embarking on a new career. Whatever the transitions faced, whatever the age, they come with their own unique set of challenges. Yet, there are universal principles that apply to any age, life stage or event.

Any life transition, planned or unexpected, alters us in some way. There are transitions that happen suddenly, without warning, that are alarming, like job loss, illness or death; and others that are cause for celebration, like marriage, the birth of a child, going away to college or the start-up of a new job or career. Whichever one strikes, life as we once knew it is changed. Now we have to adapt to a new, unfamiliar way of being that at first is strange and often uncomfortable.

How prepared we are is key to how well we not only cope, but emerge even stronger than before. I believe that Acceptance, Attitude and Aptitude can help us better navigate the transition roller coaster ride with more ease.

Acceptance:

After the shock and outburst of emotions, so unpredictable, they have us reeling in anger, sadness, elation, avoidance, denial, or excitement comes an awakening. This awakening is about squarely facing the situation. Acknowledging its presence and that we are in the middle of it eliminates the struggle. We surrender to it, and even though we don't feel in control, that act of acceptance brings us more peace. Acceptance is also about accepting our feelings and being gentle with ourselves during this tumultuous time. Step up the self care, because we're often energetically depleted and emotionally fragile in a transition. Make time for you to emote, rest and nurture yourself.

Attitude:

Attitude is a singular force that can shift what seems impossible to becoming attainable. In any change, the best approach is to exercise hope and belief in a desired outcome. What we believe is powerfully conveyed to our inner minds, hearts and bodies and to others, unconsciously and energetically. Know what you're feeling and recognize it, even wallow if you need to, but don't waver from the belief that you will come through this.

Aptitude:

Aptitude is the conscious coping strategies we use to help us through the bumps and upheavals. These strategies may bring relief, confidence, and a feeling of anticipation and expectation. There are many effective strategies: talking it over, staying connected to people, engaging in activities that build self esteem, and plotting out a direction or plan. Identify what's important to you, and what can fulfill you while you're in flux. This can reduce your stress and give you more stamina and confidence.

It's not always easy to recognize the opportunities transition offers us, especially when we're in the heat of it. If you can, keep constant in your mind and heart an upbeat vision of your unfolding future with new possibilities and yes, even adventure.

Dr. Jo Anne White is an International Author and Speaker, Certified Professional Coach, and Energy Intuitive who specializes in Innovation, Transformation and Energy Medicine. Known globally as the "Success Doc," Doc White gets to the heart of what matters most to businesses, organizations and people. She's helped millions of individuals and organizations shape their own dreams, master their own success and triumph in business and life. Her newest book: *Mastering the Art of Success*, with Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Les Brown is a valuable resource filled with intimate interviews, tools and strategies to achieve success. Host of the popular "Power Your Life" Talk Radio Show, Dr. Jo Anne White has been featured online and in national and international publications such as CNN.com, Good Housekeeping, More, Match.com and WebMD. With 25 years in education, administration, business, leadership and energy medicine, she's made frequent guest appearances on Radio and Television Networks such as NBC, CBS, FOX, and Voice America sharing her diverse expertise.





Feel the Happy!

Honoring Joyful Moments with Awareness

By Randye Kaye

The very best thing you can do with a joyful moment is to notice it, feel it, and – whatever your style – share it. We honor happiness best by appreciating its presence and allowing it to spread its magic to those around us.

VOICE 2012 (a voice -over conference), held at the Disneyland resort. One morning I walked through Downtown Disney, and watched excited families head toward the entrance of the Magic Kingdom.

One of the families had to stop abruptly as they made their way towards the promise of Mickey Mouse and Cinderella. Why? Their little girl, dressed in her princess finery, simply had to stop and twirl – certainly to feel the thrill of the swishing of her beautiful princess dress, but also, I think, because her joy was just too large to remain inside.

She was just too happy and excited to merely keep walking. She had to stop and feel the joy. And, by doing so, she marked that moment of happiness not only for herself but for all (including me) who saw her pure expression of happiness.

We all need to do that, I thought. Honor the happy moments, cement them in our memory banks, by taking that simple second to just notice how happy we are. And to share it if we can.

One Jewish prayer begins with “Shema Yisrael,” often translated at “Hear, O Israel” – but, like many translations, there are other ways to transcribe the meaning. “Shema” can also mean listen, or hear and do, or even accept. To take a moment for any of these actions sets that moment apart from the rest of the day, and makes it special.

So, a “shema moment” means we step aside from moving constantly forward to the next moment, and just listen, hear, do, accept. Breathe. Notice our own happiness. Appreciate it. Let it warm our heart, and just possibly the hearts of those who are also part of that moment in time.

Be present. Be happy. Be happy to be happy, no matter what may come next. For whatever comes next, we will handle it then.

My son Ben, 30, has schizophrenia. That was not an easy change to accept, believe me. Our original hopes and dreams for his life have been altered considerably, yet once we got to a place of acceptance (through support, education, and hope), it has become an essential part of our family’s winding road to notice and accept the moments that are, in their simplicity, quite miraculous.

My final trip in June was to the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) National Convention in Seattle, where I presented a workshop about using personal stories to inspire and help create change. The five-day event was filled with opportunities to

hear others’ stories – of success, but also of heart-break, frustration, confusion and loss.

Ben has been hospitalized eight times, three of which were considered relapse episodes after treatment was finally established. Right now he is wonderfully stable, in college part-time and employed. A miracle. Every ordinary family moment that others might take for granted is a miracle to me now, especially when I stop to notice. As long as we remember how much worse things could be, instead of thinking of what we have lost.

What are those moments? Going to a movie as a family. Ben, remembering his sister’s birthday. Dinner out in a restaurant together. A hug. A good grade in school.

Sure, a year ago Ben was in the middle of a relapse. Sure, it could happen again despite all we are doing to walk by his side with love, discipline and hope. Still, right now, it’s a good day. Ben is in treatment, purposeful, clean and sober, and even employed. He is in the bosom of our family (though he pays rent for an apartment that is so lonely he hates to be there), and for today he is stable – and with us.

Yes, indeed, a good day. The “other shoe” isn’t falling today. So I am grateful.

And I’m going to stop and twirl.

I hope you will too.

Article first published as *Stop and Twirl: Honoring Joyful Moments with Happiness on Technorati*.

How to Step into Your Money Brilliance With Three Simple Steps

When we asked women what is holding them back from living their perfect life 269 women answered us with:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| • Money | 36% |
| • Confidence | 22% |
| • Clarity (don't know where to start) | 13% |

Confidence, clarity and money are big issues for most women. In fact, how we handle money affects every area of our lives: where we live, where our children go to school, who we associate with, where we vacation, and even the food and health care that we receive.

The good news is that it's never too late to start making smart money choices, **which is why I'm sharing these three simple steps for taking charge of your money.**

Step #1:

Clear Up Money Clutter

Money clutter can appear in many forms.

- The most common is of course in the form of unpaid or late bills, unfiled paperwork, lack of proper bookkeeping, stacks of paper, overstuffed wallets, and lack of clarity when it comes to money.
- The second issue comes from mental or emotional clutter which includes feeling overwhelmed, fuzzy thinking, procrastination and even fear when it relates to money.



So the first thing you want to do is to schedule the time to get organized, find your stuff, and create a system. I will be sharing my signature system in future articles, so be sure to visit my blog in the Best Ever You Network.

Step #2:

Track Every Penny In and Out

When it comes to money, ignorance is NOT bliss. Money loves to have attention paid to it, and it WILL get your attention, one way or another. By tracking what you make AND what you spend every day, you're giving money the attention it requires.

I use a simple tracking form where I jot down the total amount of revenue I've brought in each day. For expenses, I tuck all receipts into one handy folder and let my bookkeeper enter the expenses in a tracking program such as Quicken. You will be amazed at how fast you begin attracting greater income, spending less, feeling more confident and having more clarity!

Step #3:

Stop Spending Money You Don't Have

Only purchase consumable items like clothes, food, entertainment, gasoline, salon items, etc.

on credit if you have the discipline to pay off the balance in full each month. Otherwise, you have nothing to show for it, and it creates stress and sabotages your ability to create wealth.

The only time it makes sense to use your credit card for a purchase that may not be paid in full at the end of the month is if you're investing in training and education that will help you grow your business.

Every business needs to be invested in so it can grow. And leaning on credit cards to either get your business started or fuel your next level of growth can be one of the wisest decisions you'll ever make. That's because investing in yourself is always the best investment you can make. Just be sure you have a clear payoff plan written out so you stay in financial integrity and make your investment pay off.

It's Time to Become a Smart and Wealthy Woman Who Is Living Her Perfect Life.

Highly successful women understand their relationship with money is one of the most important, long lasting and revealing relationships they'll ever have. Just remember, by respecting your money you're respecting yourself in the smartest and most powerful way that is truly priceless!

Katana Abbott is a Certified Financial Planner, Prosperity Coach and radio show host who teaches soul-centered entrepreneurial women how to break through their limiting beliefs, step into their brilliance with money and create wealth through her online global community called Smart Women's Coaching®. For your FREE Membership and Money Brilliance Workbook and Video Training, visit www.KatanaAbbott.com.



Elizabeth's *Best*

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Designed to help beautify and moisturize the skin for those on-the-go. Using advanced Nano Technology, water from the reservoir is atomized into nano particles, which can be fully absorbed deep into the skin, leaving it feeling moisturized and more elastic. To experience the Novo, users simply press the Power button on the front and hold the atomizer 15 cm. from the skin, allowing the mist to be absorbed in the skin for a refreshed feeling. Cenoire's Novo is also equipped with a four-minute auto shut-off feature, providing users with instant moisture for personal space.



Cenoire's Novo Atomizer Facial Mist Spray features the following:

- Easy to use one-handed On/Off push button activation
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- Lightweight – only 2.5 oz.

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The World's Best Plastic Wrap Dispenser!

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With ChicWrap, you need only one hand to wrap your dish and a single finger to gently slide the button for a perfect cut every time. No mess, no waste! Even better, there's no risk of injury from the nasty hacksaw blade on your average cling wrap box. No more shredded knuckles, no more sliced fingertips.

When you hold ChicWrap, you'll immediately notice how sturdy it is. The dispenser is built to last through more replacement rolls than you would care to count. Its wipe-clean surface will keep it looking like new, but what will keep you coming back is the professional quality plastic wrap. If you're buying grocery store brands, you have no idea what you've been missing. ChicWrap plastic wrap sticks tighter, holds longer and clings more securely. Once you've tried it, you'll never use grocery store brands again.

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The Journey Back to ME

By Stephanie Jaurique



I've come to realize that I am a fighter. Always have been, always will be. Not in the sense that I'm argumentative or hard to get along with, in a way that is internal; determined; driven to be. This means taking the hard road sometimes, not giving up or giving in, and doing what you really want to do; or for doing what you believe in. I don't like being told "no", or that I can't do something. My answer to that is . . . watch me try!

I almost didn't make it into this world. When six months pregnant, my mom's car was rear ended on the Oakland Bay Bridge. Her water broke, sending her into full blown labor. The doctors knew that if I was born at that point, my chances for survival were slim; they did everything possible to prevent my premature birth. She delivered me two weeks later at 28 weeks, 2 lbs 6 oz and 12 inches long. I was a fighter and on minimal support until I contracted a staph infection at three weeks. I was one sick, tiny baby. I was finally released to go home at four months of age and four pounds. I was so tiny that I fit into the palm of my father's hand.

Growing up, I was always small and skinny. I wore glasses, and was clumsy. I had to work hard at being an "average" kid. I soon fell in love with gymnastics. Olga Korbut and Nadia Comaneci were my "heroes". I worked hard to learn my tricks and routines as they didn't come naturally to me. I ate, drank, and slept the gymnastics dream!

The summer of 1978 changed my world forever. My mother, my friend Telly, and I were returning home from a shopping trip about thirty minutes away. We were on the highway when suddenly a car came through the oleander bushes that divided the roadway. We were hit head-on by that drunk driver. He had been going in excess of 85MPH. My mom received neck injuries and massive facial lacerations, and lost most of her teeth. My best friend asphyxiated on the chips she was eating and ended up in a coma for over four months, sustaining permanent brain damage. I broke my back, dislocated my hip and injured my knee. Telly and I had been in the back seat with our feet up, which prevented us from flying through the windshield.

We were all lucky to be alive. It took a year of healing and frustration, but I walked back into the gym that following summer with new drive and spirit. I wanted my life back. I was determined to get it, and I did! I was never the superstar but I worked hard and loved my sport. I competed throughout high school and continued to coach gymnastics, sharing my passion and spirit, determined to impact those whom I coached in a positive way.

On my 19th birthday, after celebrating with family and the love of my life, David; I became violently ill. It required hospitalization for nearly a week. They thought it was a severe reaction to shellfish. As time passed, I continued to have more and more attacks of pain and illness, internal bleeding, weight loss and frustration. Little did I know that it was the start of Crohn's disease. I battled with these episodes on and off for almost twenty years, undiagnosed. They were never able to clearly diagnose me because CT Scans and x-ray series would show positive results but, the biopsy pathology wouldn't support it. I was even seen at the tertiary level, only to be sent away in tears of frustration and agony.

Finally around 2006, a local gastroenterologist ordered the magical test, a capsule endoscopy, which is a video camera hidden in a clear-looking "horse pill". That was the silver bullet that showed the inflammatory damage and got me on my way to UCSF, and further evaluation and treatment. Crohn's disease and chronic pancreatitis was the verdict. It's not fun to have these medical conditions, but it is sure nice to know that there is a name - something relatable, treatable. Now I could move forward and focus on the treatment and recovery. Giving this monster a name made it acceptable, and I wasn't going to let this condition stop me from achieving my dreams. It may slow me down here and there but, they are temporary stumbling blocks. They are gifts to make me slow my journey inward, and seek to renew that energy that dissipates over time through your everyday life. It pulls me closer to my faith, family and friends.

Crohn's disease doesn't allow you to absorb the nutrients correctly that your body needs to thrive, heal and maintain. Going undiagnosed for so many years along with being a gymnast, pounding my body and joints daily, caused my spine to degenerate. I had no idea that I was in such poor shape structurally. Yes, I received an unwanted gift that saved me from paralysis. While rushing out my front door to my son's soccer game (eating a banana!) I missed a step and went flying down the porch. I was unable to regain my stride or composure. I looked like one of those cartoon characters with legs spinning beneath them going nowhere, with the head and arms out front. I had to do something before I did a face plant on the concrete below. I

arched my back, and as I struck chest first, it felt like I bounced, but an intense shattering pain spread through my neck and shoulders. I ended up about ten feet away from where I started, spread eagle on the lawn. I laid there laughing and crying at the same time. My husband and daughter came to my rescue, also laughing but showing severe concern. I was determined that I was fine... I was in denial.

Nearly two weeks later, I decided I better see the doctor when the pain became intense and I was losing feeling down my arms. My thumbs were completely numb and I was getting worse each day. She ordered an MRI which showed that I had ruptured the discs in my neck from C-2 to C-7. At first, I was sent to an orthopedist who kind of chuckled when he was reading my films and said, "Well, you have pretty much broken your neck, without breaking your neck." I was immediately sent to a neurosurgeon and it was told that the fall was a blessing in disguise, a true gift from above. Not only had I ruptured the discs, I had cervical stenosis of the spine that was critically impinging the spinal cord. It looked like an hour glass on the films. The neurosurgeon stated that if it hadn't been discovered soon, I would have been paralyzed and in a wheelchair within a four year period due to spinal cord pressure. What a blessing falling down my front porch turned out to be! Surgery and recovery were in my near future.

I continued to press onward, and work towards healing, along with my fitness and weight loss goals. I wasn't going to let my neck injury slow me down. Did I have to learn to do things a little differently and adapt? Yes... but it was worth it. The experience of going through therapy after neck surgery was incredible. I learned that I was strong and could do anything if I really tried. Initially when I started in the pool, all I could do was walk in the water because the pressure of the water alone upon my neck and chest was enough to stop me in my tracks. So I switched gears. Instead of using the water for fitness at that point, I used it to relax and allowed the stresses and pain to leave my body. I would don a snorkel and mask and literally float face down in the water like a jellyfish for an hour at a time. My arms and legs would dangle as I released the tension from my neck. It helped me to heal and gain perspective. Soon, I felt I could overcome the pressure feeling and walk, which, of course, led to swimming.

It was a challenge due to the range of motion it required to achieve the over arm rotation. So I did the elementary backstroke, and built strength and endurance there; and then rolled over to achieve the breast stroke. Before you knew it, I was swimming a full freestyle stroke again, giving me back my love of the water. When I returned back to work six months later I had back to back clients for water fitness and swim

lessons. Many had seen me go through my trials and succeed. It was so self empowering. Yet another gift...

About four years later, sudden low back pain radiated through my hips. I had never had pain there before. It hurt to sit; it hurt to stand; and even hurt to lie down. It was intense. I ended up at the urgent care numerous times getting Demerol shots and muscle relaxers that provided little improvement. They put me on bed rest for two weeks, planning a spinal injection to relieve the inflammation at the nerve root. The morning the procedure was planned, the insurance wouldn't authorize it. I was in agony, and frustrated over this intense low back pain. I decided to get out of bed for a bite to eat and to take my medicine. Rolling out of bed, swinging my leg over the side; my back snapped. You literally could hear it pop! I was in excruciating pain, trapped halfway on and off the bed, dangling. I could barely move. I couldn't stand or take a step... it was sheer agony!

I was able to reach my cell phone which was on the bed and hit redial to call my friend Janet, a Critical Care Nurse. She knew exactly what to do, including calling 911. I was admitted to the hospital for a week with a ruptured disc at L1. This injury was not located anywhere near the lower back pain. It was up where the ribs and spine meet towards the back, a rare place to randomly rupture. Crohn's absorption issues strike again. Awaiting my appointment with the neurosurgeon once again, walking was my slow mode of exercise. While out walking, my left leg went completely numb. I fell straight down, causing compression fractures of T-11 and T-12. Surgery could not come soon enough for me.

I thought back surgery would be a breeze after having had neck surgery. Five hours later, I discovered I was way wrong! L1 is a major movement-center in the body. Reaching, bending, and twisting... everything is related to L1. The pain was astronomical as I tried walking a few steps. I had never felt pain like that before. My teeth chattered uncontrollably as they signaled for me to stop and sit but, I wouldn't. I was determined to take those few steps and get to the doorway to show them I could do this. I had the willpower and control to conquer their every demand. I must admit, however, when the occupational therapy handed me a pair of rubber coated chicken tongs, I looked at them with utter confusion until they explained they were for assisting with personal hygiene care. To this day, I still laugh when I see anything resembling chicken tongs, but they were my best friend for months and months.

Again, water became my best companion. Walking laps and then venturing to a float belt system gave me more range of motion, followed by full out water fitness, using the water as resistance. This changed my world. I grew stronger each day and

Another gift through this tragedy of injury . . .

I began to write and draw again. I couldn't shut it off.

Inspirational poetry was filling my mind, and I would often stop in the middle of my training to type the thoughts onto my cell phone so I wouldn't forget them. It was crazy but, I was relishing every minute of my new journey.

loved what I was doing. After ten months of healing and therapy, I returned to work, got certified and started teaching water fitness to clients. I was getting paid to do something I loved, and working at the same time. At the neurology recheck, the doctor advised me to walk and swim, but not run anymore. They said that my back would no longer tolerate the pounding of the running, and I needed to seek other forms of exercise. I listened to their advice for a while but I quickly grew bored with my workouts. What they said was a challenge; I had to set my sites on something more.

I had always dreamt about doing a triathlon but never believed in myself enough to try. The training would be too difficult; what if I couldn't complete it; what if this; what if that...I finally talked myself into going for it. Why not? What did I have to lose? I was already walking and swimming. I could add to those, and adding the bike into my repertoire of exercise could be a good thing. It was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I set a goal; researched online. I found friends on Facebook who did triathlons and picked their brains. I probably drove them crazy with my new found obsession. I joined a triathlon club and a friend there told me about the Mission Bay Triathlon in San Diego. They said it was a fun beginner's tri with an ocean swim. That was it...sign me up, count me in... I wanted the ocean swim experience. In my eyes that was the pinnacle of a triathlon.

When I first started to jog it wasn't a fun experience at all, but I continued to walk and jog, gradually beginning building distance and endurance. The bike was fun, but my legs quickly tired. As I focused on a set training plan, my endurance grew; and my back pain reduced drastically. I became passionate about the bike and lived to ride with every free moment. I wasn't the best at it but I loved it. My mind would clear out the cobwebs and I felt a new sense of freedom and creativity.

Another gift through this tragedy of injury... I began to write and draw again. I couldn't shut it off. Inspirational poetry was filling my mind, and I would often stop in the middle of my training to type the thoughts onto my cell phone so I wouldn't forget them. It was crazy but, I was relishing every minute of my new journey.

I trained my heart out. My family was tremendously supportive and encouraged me to

put my time in to be ready for the race. Suddenly, my dream was threatened with acute abdominal pain and vomiting. I ended up in the hospital for a week with a blocked intestine from my Crohn's disease. I was going stir crazy. I wanted out; wanted to be on my bike or in the water. Upon my release, I bounced back quickly and avidly started training again within a few weeks. My husband and friends stepped up to train with me.

Before I knew it, I was biking 30+ miles every few days, swimming 2 miles every other day and running 7 to 15 miles weekly. It was amazing. I lost 47 pounds prior to my triathlon. It took me seven months to build my strength and courage to be at the point where I felt I was ready. Three weeks before the race, I strained my midback and couldn't take deep breaths, let alone run. I was heartbroken. I continued to swim as best I could, and rode my bike to keep my endurance level up. I was going to go for it, regardless. I had trained so hard, not to just walk away from my dream. I needed to do this for me, no one else... just me. My sweet friend Laura drove me down to San Diego (over eight hours) and we made a girl's weekend out of it, shopping, along with careful eating.

Before I knew it, the race day was upon me. Showtime was 5:30AM. Racing numbers written on my arm and leg became a momentous occasion. I was racked with a group of seven gals. All of us were newbies, except one. We put our wetsuits and caps on together, and even said a prayer together for a fun, safe race.

We all started in the ocean holding hands for good luck and stayed close together as we swam. What an experience! The adrenaline was flowing, and my mind was racing from the excitement. It was difficult to calm down and do the job I trained for. The current pulled me out of the swim lane. It was a definite battle with the ebb and flow of the tide. I swam to the finish of the beach, feeling triumphant. I was amazed that I was actually living my dream! I smoothly transitioned to the bike, and felt great. I got into the race, and the competitive side of me took over. I was going to rock the race for myself. Then I looked up and realized that I had a sharp left turn right in front of me. Suddenly turning would take out at least five cyclists. If I stayed straight, I would hit the curb and wall...

what should I do? I slowed and made as gradual a turn as I possibly could, avoiding the other riders. Inching alongside the curb, I struck a lip on it and ended up going head over heels over my handle bars. I bumped my head and got scraped up. All I remember is someone saying, "oh my god," as I went flying. I wanted to cry and throw in the towel at that moment. Quickly regaining my composure, I told myself to shake it off and get back on my bike. I could do this. I was hurting but I knew that if I didn't finish this race, I would be so disappointed in myself. Slowly pedaling, one of the better riders slowed down and encouraged me. He told me dig deep; he would ride with me for a while. He got me going and helped me work through the pain. We got to the top of the hill and he rode off after encouraging me: "you can do this...finish strong. So I did. I finished the ride and transitioned to the run. It was almost done.

The run was my nemesis. I hadn't run in three weeks, my back was tight, and I was hurting. It was a game of one foot in front of the other. Running isn't just physical - it's mental. Mind over matter. The more I ran, the more mentally I worked myself through it, playing games with myself to pass people and keep going. There were so many times I thought that I would just walk for a bit but I knew, if I walked, it would be hard to run again. I just kept telling myself "you can do this... you want it... go for it".

At the very last climb, it was breathtaking to see the ocean and the end of the race in sight. I was doing it; I was conquering my fear and achieving my enormous goal. An avid runner came up beside me and said, "you can do this...give it all you've got, kick ass." It got me going. My stride opened up, and I relaxed and enjoyed the glory of my finish. I did it! With arms held high and a smile on my face, I crossed the finish line. From two years of hell to triumph!

This past year has been an incredible journey for me. It has been one filled with medical challenges, with my Crohn's disease leading to multiple hospitalizations and surgeries. While running another triathlon, I was struggling during the swim. What was happening to my body? I had swum two miles the day before and felt great. The ride went okay, but the run was agony. I couldn't breathe in, and it felt like someone was squeezing my upper abdomen and twisting it.

Two days later, I ended up suffering my worst acute attack to date, and was admitted with a double intestinal blockage again along with pancreatitis for ten days. The pain was immeasurable; IV pain medication and a nasal gastric tube were my new best friends. I was unable to eat for over a week and when I did, more complications and infection arose. I lost nearly 15 pounds. Even though extremely weak with chronic pain, I was released. I did not want to live my life this way.

Surgery was planned to remove bowel adhesions that could be pulling the bowel out of position, along with a hysterectomy and bladder lift with mesh. This is my most recent nightmare. After surgery, I was sore for about a week and then started feeling pretty good, getting back into somewhat of a normal routine. By three weeks the pain was so intense; I could barely stand or move. Maybe I had been doing too much, so I rested more; bought an abdomen support band, and pushed through the pain. By six weeks the bladder sling mesh had ruptured through internal tissue and into the vaginal wall, leaving a gaping hole and a lot of pain and discomfort. The doctors were shocked. Surgery was scheduled to trim back the original mesh, implant a second sling and repair the rupture.

The second surgery seemed to go well. I tried to be the perfect patient, resting as much as possible. I didn't even get out of bed for five days except to use the restroom. After one week, I was doubled over in pain. It was an intense, burrowing type of pain. Imagine someone digging fingernails into your arm and never releasing pressure. It hurt to move; to sit; to do anything. The mesh was rupturing through again. Unbelievable! A personal check revealed the stitches and another hole in the vaginal tissue with the mesh protruding. Was this nightmare ever going to end? The local doctors had never seen anything like this - they said it was, "new territory to them."

At this point, I decided I needed to find a doctor with more experience to remove this mesh permanently and as non-invasively as possible. We found two of the top surgeons in the country who come to California once a month specifically to do these repairs laproscopically. At the end of March, surgery removed much of the mesh, though there are still four pieces left internally. A Burch procedure held the bladder back in a better position, and the vaginal hole was repaired. More complications after the procedure included bladder retention, and the catheter, leaving me with a continence issue and pain. The doctors hope that over time the problem will heal. They continue to monitor me monthly. Even though we paid our insurance copays up front for out of network care, the insurance company is saying they will only pay a contracted amount for their portion of the surgery, leaving us with over a thirty thousand dollar balance. We are disputing this, and pray that the insurance is going to do the right thing and pay their part. We may have to pursue litigation against the mesh manufacturer which will be a process requiring faith and patience to get my bill paid, one day at a time.

Being on this journey has been challenging. It has seemed as though each event caused a domino effect. My world as it was stopped in

a way, while tumbling out of control. I wasn't able to train or workout; no longer able to teach swimming or water fitness, which was my passion. In the midst of the repeated surgeries, I was fired by my employer while out on disability. This all left me feeling lost and alone, with no purpose. My wonderful family and friends supported me, but I began isolating myself; not being creative or connecting with others. When my husband's job was put in jeopardy and he was forced to take a major pay cut, I felt responsible. Maybe if I hadn't become sick, his career wouldn't have been impacted. It was difficult to stay positive and keep my head up. I was searching for ways to keep my focus on healing and not let the negative get to me.

Running across Gary Kobat's page on Facebook honestly helped me change my mindset about everything that had happened. This stranger soon became a friend and a blessing. His insight and encouragement through his postings helped me to accept where I was and that it was okay to be just me. So I now happily grasp my life and where it takes me, loving myself; enjoying the moments and the unexpected gifts they bring.

One more surgery is planned, but I am putting it off for as long as possible. The pain management doctors want to implant a permanent spine stimulator to change the pain signal to the brain. This is the best way to control organ pain without constant medication, and leaves the doctors an option for use later as my disease progresses. This is a big decision, but one that will give me better quality of life, allowing me to be active and function as normally as possible. For now, I am going to live in the moment and grasp each day with a positive spirit. I can do this, and I will get back to my triathlon training soon. My biking, swimming and running buddies are all lined up ready to start the quest with me. It will be a lot of hard work, and will take determination, but crossing that finish line once again will be so worth it!

It is now nine weeks post-surgery, and I am feeling more like myself every day. I still deal with pain on a daily basis, but try to positively affect my pain with exercise, eating right, and enjoying life and all that it brings. Will I return to triathlons? Absolutely YES! Each day brings me closer to getting back into the groove of training and racing again. Writing, cooking, painting, drawing all give me outlets to explore the emotions I face on my journey. That's one of the reasons I started my Facebook page "The Journey Back to Me." It allows me to share creatively through writing and cooking, and allows me to help others while keeping me accountable. Thank you for allowing me to share with you. This is my journey and I am loving it and living it; one day at a time.

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The Best Way to Get fit fast

In this fast-paced world we live in, very seldom does one take the time to get the proper form of rest. Even during our “resting” time, it seems to be filled and completely occupied with work, activities and events with family and friends. It’s great to hang with family and friends, but that doesn’t always lend itself to true rest. Well, at least not with my family and friends, as we’re the on-the-go kind of bunch.

The definition of rest is to cease work or movement in order to relax, refresh oneself, or recover strength. Even God demonstrates how important it is to rest. After creating for six days straight, He took the seventh day to rest. Not that God needs to be refreshed or to recover strength, but He deliberately took rest to observe His work of art and experience the beauty and peace that rest brings. He also did this to teach us to rest through His leading actions because He knows that rest is best for mankind. We operate better with a day devoted to God and a day to recover from the rips and tears that we put on our muscles, our minds, our emotions, and our relationships.

As you are creating your physique to be in its best health, rest is the key ingredient to be able to observe all your hard work and inhale the peace knowing that your body is mending and healing itself to become even stronger and more equipped. As you workout, your muscle fibers actually tear and rip. That may not sound very appealing, but it’s actually how you become stronger...that is if you allow your muscles the rest they require to heal and mend. Feeling sore the next day or two after a workout is normal, but that is why it’s best to do my basic Visibly Fit 7X11 daily with different tension levels and then focus on a different body part on various days. This will allow certain body parts to rest and become restored. If rest does not occur then the reshaping of your body can not fully take place. Here are 7 recovery tips that will reshape your body in no time.

1. **Take Breaks.** Allow at least 24 hours between working the same body part to its maximum and give yourself one day off from all workouts every week.

2. **Fuel your muscles.** Proper nutrition is key in offsetting muscle damage, and it improves your ability to consistently train. Eating the right ratio of carbs and proteins within 30 minutes of a workout is very important. It should be 4:1 ratio (four grams of carbs for every one gram of protein). A protein drink along with fruit is ideal.

3. **Sleep.** This is one of the biggest issues...most people are sleep deprived. When this happens, your hormones get out of whack which can cause cravings (usually for sugar) for quick energy. When you’re sleeping is when your body is hard at work to repair your muscles. Studies show that people that get less than eight hours of sleep tend to carry more body fat than those that got in their 8 hour quota.

4. **Shhhh....Listen.** Listen to your body!!! It will tell you what it requires for best health. Don’t get stubborn and think you know better than your body. Ignoring muscle soreness can lead to injury.

5. **Ache no more.** Use the proper tools to work out the aches, pains, and kinks. Use a foam roller, tennis ball, or get your butt into a masseuse. Chiropractic adjustments and acupuncture are great tools as well. They all work well together and will help to get your body fit fast and to perform at peak condition.

6. **Stretch.** I know, you hear it all the time, but stretching is important to lengthen the muscle that has been worked. If you don’t stretch you will lose your flexibility which will affect your ability to work your muscles to their fullest potential.

7. **Set your alarm.** Sometimes you forget to do any or all of the above tips. Set an alarm to remind yourself to eat, stretch, make an appointment for a massage, and even to go to bed. I’m a night owl, so I get it. I have to force myself into bed at times, but I know it’s exactly what my body craves. REST!!

As you take these recovery tips seriously and put them into action, you WILL see faster results for all your hard work.

WENDIE PETT is a nationally renowned fitness expert and coach, mother, speaker, author, TV host and creator of the Visibly Fit™ exercise program. Her many Visibly Fit™ instructional DVDs teach wellness maximization through the balance of mind, body, and spirit as well how to use your body as your gym. To learn more about Wendie and her program visit www.wendiepett.com and www.visiblyfitin84days.com.

Why You'll Never Lose Belly Flab by Counting Calories

Just Eat Healthy and Your Body Will Love You for It

If you're counting calories to lose belly flab, stop the madness! Calorie counting is time consuming, depressing and completely unnecessary. Don't get too excited though. Just because you don't need to count calories, doesn't give you a free pass to pig-out on pizza and french fries whenever you want. You still have to be mindful of what you eat.



Here's the thing: when you eat a bunch of processed junk, not only are you loading up on toxins, you're taking in way more calories than your body can use. What do you think happens to all of those extra calories? Bingo. They get stored in your body as fat.

Even if you exercise regularly, eating a bunch of nonsense foods will make it tough to create the kind of calorie deficit you need to get rid of the blubber around your midsection. If you really want to burn enough calories for killer abs, fill your diet with natural foods that contain protein, healthy fats and fiber.

When I say "natural foods," I mean foods that have not been processed or filled with unhealthy additives. Natural foods are low in calories; if you stick to reasonable portion sizes during your meals and snacks, you won't have to spend the rest of your existence keeping tabs on your caloric intake.

Healthy Sources of Dietary Fat

Dietary fat catches a lot of flack and is often accused of being the culprit of heart disease. This is absolutely not the case; fat is not the enemy. In fact, any good eating plan should include fat from quality sources like olive oil, fish oil, nuts, seeds, unrefined coconut oil, organic raw butter, avocados and natural grass-fed beef.

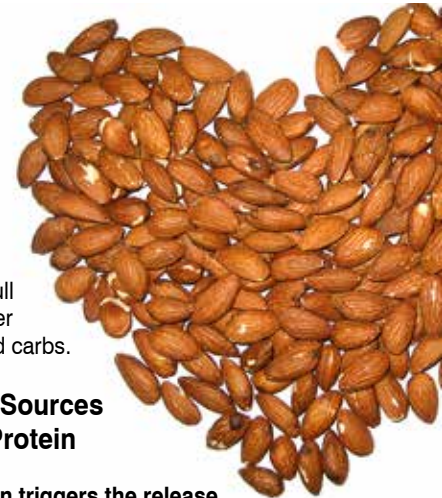
Healthy fats help with nutrient absorption and can improve the health of your heart. Also, fat helps you feel satiated. When you add it to your meals, you are less likely to overindulge.

Healthy Carbohydrate Sources

If most of the carbohydrates in your diet come from refined sources like white bread, pasta, baked goods, processed snacks and sugar, you can forget about losing stomach flab. These types of foods absorb quickly in the body and trigger the rapid release of insulin. When insulin is released too fast, it can give you the munchies shortly after you've already eaten.

The bulk of your carbohydrates should come from complex sources like vegetables, beans, legumes and fruits. These foods

are rich in fiber so they digest slowly and keep you full much longer than refined carbs.



Healthy Sources of Protein

Protein triggers the release of a hormone called glucagon, which acts as an appetite suppressant. In fact, studies suggest that diets rich in protein can enhance fat loss when it is combined with the proper amounts of exercise. Eat nuts, legumes, grass-fed beef, free range poultry and organic eggs to get enough protein in your diet.

You don't have to count calories to lose flab in your midsection. Simply dump the processed foods and replace them with natural foods that are rich in protein, healthy fat and complex carbohydrates. Of course, if you want consistent weight loss results, you have to exercise regularly.

Weight loss doesn't have to be a lifelong struggle.





The Right Way to Exercise

By Diane Hindman, Ph.D.

One of the things I strongly promote is the effect diet and exercise can have on creating the life of your dreams. I truly believe that you have to be healthy, and I don't mean just the absence of disease, in order for your mind and spirit to be in the right place to manifest your desires. All areas of your life are intertwined, and each one has an effect on the other both positively and negatively. Therefore, if you don't have a clean, healthy diet and you don't exercise regularly, then you may start to see other areas of your life deteriorating and you might not have made the connection as to the reasons why.

Of course all physical activity that you do on a daily basis for your job, household chores, running errands and taking care of the family accumulates toward burning calories, but nothing takes the place of a structured exercise routine designed to improve performance, health or fitness. Your exercise program will differ based on what you want to accomplish whether it be to decrease body fat, increase strength or train for an event. The average person typically engages in exercise to improve their health and lower their risk of disease.

So, if we know all the benefits of exercise and understand the relationship between health and manifestation, then why don't more of us exercise? There are many answers to that question, but the ones I hear the most often are: "I don't have time", "I hate going to the gym", "I never get results", "I got bored of my routine". What if I told you that you could accomplish phenomenal results with a style of exercise that didn't require you to go to a gym, was different every time, and could be done in 30 minutes or less. Is this starting to sound like an infomercial and too good to be true? That being said, there is a right way to exercise to increase your metabolism and burn fat more efficiently and effectively. It's called interval training and the concept has been around for a long time.

The standard recommendation of steady-state cardiovascular exercise is old news. The problem with this is that although it is wonderful for improving and maintaining cardiovascular health, after your body adapts to the exercise, you no longer make any gains metabolically. This is called the plateau effect and that's where most people get stuck. In order to continue to make gains, you must implement muscle confusion and that's where interval training is a necessity. You must continue to overload the muscles with new exercises that are harder, require you to move in different ways and stimulate the body to keep making improvements. Interval training seems to be the best kept secret as an exercise program because I rarely hear health professionals recommending it or trainers teaching it!

There are many different styles of interval training, from cardiovascular or aerobic programs to strength training programs to a combination of both. One style of this kind of training that I promote and even do myself is called the "Metabolic Effect". It's a combination of hybrid or compound movements designed to work both the cardiovascular and muscular physiology. A sample workout is listed below. Another program that I do on a treadmill is alternating the speed so that I am sprinting for 20-30 seconds and then walking for 90 seconds for a total of 30 minutes. It's all about mixing it up to continue to confuse the body and make it adapt.

The other reason interval training is so effective in fat loss is that during this type of program, the body produces certain hormones that signal fat mobilization and breakdown of fat stores. In addition, steady-state type workouts that last longer than 45 minutes elicit cortisol and insulin release which tell the body to store fat – another reason why these kinds of workouts begin to be ineffective over time.

Interval training can simulate our hunter/gatherer days when our physiology had to respond to fight or flight circumstances. We were exposed to high stress

situations for short periods of time where we burned off immense amounts of calories and then the body told us to refuel. In today's society, we are still exposed to high stress events, but we are not burning the calories because typically we are at a desk, behind the wheel of a car, or sitting down, however our physiology responds the same as it did in ancestral times. It thinks we burned off a ton of calories and we need to refuel. This is why so many people overeat when they're stressed out. Interval training is a great way to actually play out that fight or flight situation, reduce stress, burn fat and jump start our metabolism. The great thing about it is that if you are just starting an exercise program, you can modify the exercises and start out with a 15-20 minute routine and still see results quickly.

Of course diet plays a huge role (almost 90%) in fat loss as well, which we'll touch on in a later article. One important thing to remember is that you want to eat as clean as possible after your workout to maintain the increased metabolic rate that you'll get from doing this style of training. High fats and simple sugars will depress your metabolism, so try to avoid these foods for at least 12-15 hours after your workout.

Here's a sample Metabolic Effect workout:

Warm-Up - 5 min

Segment 1

Squat/Shoulder Press
Push-up
Lunge/Bicep Curl
Repeat 3x
High Knees for 30 sec.
Rest 1 min.

Segment 2

Bicycle
Crunch
Push-Up
Repeat 3x
Plank for 30 sec.
Rest 1 min.

Segment 3

Squat/Front Raise
Row/Tricep Extension
Lunge/Side Raise
Repeat 3x
Squat jumps for 30 sec.
Rest 1 min.

Segment 4 (30 sec. each w/ 30 sec. rest between)

High knees
Squat jumps
Plank
Cool Down 5 min.

Your challenge for today is to find a way to implement interval training into your exercise routine, even if only one day a week. To find out more about Metabolic Effect training, please visit www.metaboliiceffect.com.

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The Monster in Your Closet

She awoke with a start. What was that?! Uh-oh ~ is it the dreaded - ? . . . No wait, Mommy says monsters don't exist. But deep in her heart, she knew that was the most likely possibility . . .

I mean, what else could it be? She peered through the sheets at the shadows in her room & sunk further into her pillow as she pulled the covers up over her head. Sleep eluded her. How could she rest peacefully when she "knew" the moment she closed her eyes, that stupid monster was going to emerge from under the bed. Or was he in the closet? It didn't really matter. Wherever he was, it seemed he only stayed away if she stayed aware...& awake. So with a slight tremble, she forced her eyes open wider....alert to her surroundings & doing all she could to evade that terrible, awful, most horrendous monster.

As children, we shudder at the thought of something "getting us" in the middle of the night. We are frequently afraid of the dark as it represents uncertainty. We can't see as clearly in the dark & we just don't know what might be out there.

Now stop & think for a moment...does any of that sound familiar in your adult life, as well? What is the monster in your closet? We all have them—our fears; perceived limitations; worries about the future

& past grievances that are holding us down (and, in many cases, keeping us awake at night). Where is the darkness that is holding you hostage or disrupting your peace?

Our bodies are equipped with a fight or flight response. When you can't sleep because all of the noise going round & round in your head, that is the fight response taking over. Your sympathetic nervous system is simply priming your body to flee in the threat of an attack. Your pupils dilate, blood vessels constrict, your heartbeat accelerates, and tunnel vision kicks in for greater acuity...along with many other physiological responses. No wonder you can't sleep! But do you ever consider that maybe your adult monsters aren't quite as real as they seem to be either?

I know what it's like to feel like you are walking around aimlessly in the dark ~ bumping into obstacles, unable to see more than inches in front of you... feeling lost, confused, uncertain, fearful. Those are very natural states of the human existence. But you don't need to let them run you. You most certainly CAN emerge from the darkness.

Often times we're letting the unknown, the darkness, the fear of that terrible, awful, most horrendous monster keep us from living full out & experiencing the life we dream of when we ARE in that peaceful state.

You surely know that peaceful state I'm speaking of ~ the times when you are in alignment with your

higher self. The times when that light comes on. When your vision becomes clear & your heart is centered in love. Love for yourself, love for humanity... pure, unbound love on a soulful level. That's the state we surely wish to be in ~ as often as possible.

So how do we attain that more frequently? Begin with actually listening to the noise in your head. What is it telling you? Why does it want to be heard? When you stop pushing it away or trying to avoid it, you may actually learn something of value. Or you may simply realize there's not as much validity in all those thoughts as you once believed.

You've surely heard about facing your fears head on. Well that's not just about spiders & heights. It also applies to the fears inside your mind. Face them, question them, and listen to what they have to say. THEN you can work towards releasing them, reframing them & illuminating that path to a more harmonious existence.

I believe our society has taught us to push things aside for far too long. Thankfully, there is finally an awakening taking place...awareness that actually DEALING with our fears, our feelings & our perceived limitations is the only way to move through them. It's the only way to achieve that state of peace we all so deeply desire.

Wishing you Peace & Prosperity!



Elle Sompres is a Professional Speaker & Coach helping people work through their limiting beliefs and find self empowerment to authentically create the life they dream of.....& deserve. www.facebook.com/InspiredSuccess and www.inspired-success.com

Elle is a member of The New Hollywood Group, a woman's goal and philanthropic group based out of Los Angeles. For more information about our organization please visit www.thenewhollywood.org.

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