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“Feeling Your Way Into Health and Happiness”

Emotions and Goal Setting:

Just a quick recap from the last newsletter for you!

Just to refresh your memories; the first newsletter in this series looked at how to set effective long and short term goals. I introduced you to the SMART principle of setting goals and hope you used this to set your goals for 2007 (if you want to review the material visit activemindandbody.com.au/news.html). As stated in that newsletter, when setting goals it is also important to look at how you will manage the emotions that can get in the way of you reaching your goals. This will be the topic of this newsletter.

Why do most people feel there emotions get in the way of them reaching there goals?

It is quite common for people to have this experience. However even though at times your emotions will need to be managed, most of the time they should enhance your potential and capacity to reach your goals! People often forget that the primary role of emotions are to enhance their life, and are not just there to be controlled or managed.

What emotions normally get in the way of you reaching your goals?

If you said anxiety you would not be alone, most people report some to major difficulties with fear and anxiety at some stage in their life, this could include;

- Fear of failure
- Fear of success
- Fear of public speaking
- Social anxiety
- Panic attacks
- Performance anxiety
- etc

Other emotions that can be hard to cope with include;

- Depression
- Guilt
- Shame
- Embarrassment
- Resentment
- Low motivation
- Anger
- etc



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For the purpose of discussion I will focus on fear and anxiety as these are probably the emotions most people have problems with, (however the principles I will discuss can be applied to any emotion). This has become such an issue in my practice with clients that I have recently developed a 12 week program specifically designed to foster the skills required to help people turn their emotions back into an asset in their life instead of a liability. You can find an overview of some of these concepts below and more extensive information on my new website emotionalcoaching.com.au.

Now you have set yourself a goal and if it is important to you it will probably be outside of your comfort zone, important and meaningful. So often when you are faced with taking some of the initial steps towards this goal you will ALWAYS feel some fear or anxiety and have setbacks.

This is the first mistake that people make they don't expect fear / anxiety or setback, when the reality is, if the goal is important to you and substantial they both will happen. Worse still people can use this as a sign to give up, that they are not ready to face this goal, hopeless, that it must be the wrong goal, and the list of negative interpretations could go on forever!

However the problem is not the fear / anxiety or the setbacks but how we respond to these things in our lives. Some common myths and some examples of a new more emotionally intelligent way of responding to fear / anxiety and setbacks are below

Fear Myth

- "it is best to forget past failure and move on"
- "brave people don't feel fear"
- "Fear is bad, a sign of weakness and should be avoided"
- "I hate feeling fear and want to avoid it"
- "there is no value in fear"
- "fear reduces performance"
- "sharing your fears is a weak"

Fear Fact

- fear is power, don't waist it learn from your past
- if you are not feeling fear or anxiety you are not ready to tackle your goal
- You would not be human if you did not feel fear or anxiety when facing an important challenge
- most people want their fear removed not improved, you need to get to know your fear intimately to improve it
- fear is good, knowing why you are feeling it is even better
- using your fears positively will enhance your life and make you more successful
- Sharing your fears will be a relief



Now I know what you are saying, “all this sounds good in theory but how do I do it?” Many of us are stuck in old fear behavior patterns and react in a negative way to setbacks and fear / anxiety. The first thing you must do is stay optimistic (I will explore this in the next newsletter), and the second thing you must do is use the emotion you are feeling intelligently. This requires a new set of skills that include the following;

1. Acknowledging your fear and anxiety when it is there (using the emotional alphabet)
2. Not seeing fear and anxiety as a bad thing, a weakness or fault
3. Staying with your fear (what I call emotional fitness) and not avoiding or running away from it
4. Getting to know your fears and anxieties intimately (mapping your emotions)
5. Using your intimate knowledge of fear and anxiety to address the causes of irrational fear and anxiety (using emotional logic)
6. using the energy in fear and anxiety to better your performance

(Note: more information on each of these skills can be found at emotionalcoaching.com.au)

When you have these skills your emotional world becomes transformed, as any emotion has the ability to enhance your life. As I said earlier, most people often forget that the primary role of emotions are to enhance their life, and are not just there to be controlled or managed.

I hope you can now start to look at your emotions differently as they this approach has an enormous capacity to improve your life.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter onto anyone who may be interested, email or call me with any questions you may have or better yet sent me stories about how you have used these ideas to make positive changes to your life.

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Coming Soon
In the next issue I will be exploring how to use emotions that promote success (eg optimism).

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