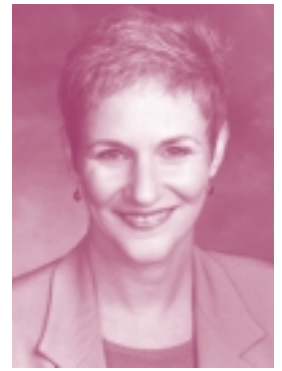


THOUGHTS FOR THE

good life

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Well, it finally feels like we have turned the corner and are going make it to spring! Are you ready to bloom? Are you making headway on the goals you defined as important this year? Sometimes we all feel like it's two steps forward and one back. The key is to have a vision of where we are going and make some progress in that direction each day.



Be well and Enjoy!

COACHING IS WORTH THE INVESTMENT

Recent studies confirm the value of coaching and have even quantified its return on investment. According to a Manchester Inc. study, executive coaching delivered an average return of 5.7 times the initial investment in a typical coaching assignment, through improved productivity, quality, executive turnover, customer service and shareholder value. A study by the International Personnel Management Association showed that training alone increased productivity by 22.4%, while *training plus coaching* increased productivity by 88%.*

* Findings from the studies about the impact of coaching are available at TheCoaches.com.

A COACHING TALE

Being a People Pleaser

"A Coaching Tale" is a regular feature of Thoughts for the Good Life, which draws on clients' actual experiences. The names are changed to protect client privacy.

The longer I work as a professional coach, the more intrigued I am with the concept of "people pleasing" – the conscious management of one's words and actions to avoid making others feel uncomfortable – and how this plays out in the workplace. People pleasing seems to be prevalent in our society and an underlying issue for many of us. Most often this behavior is driven by the need for approval from others.

People pleasing can be a huge energy drain and significantly slow down success. Many professionals are completely clear about the tasks required to build their businesses and manage their busy lives, yet are unwilling to speak honestly and openly when they might upset someone. They avoid interpersonal conflict at almost all costs. For example, a business owner or team leader displaying these characteristics can influence the entire team to operate with similarly limiting interpersonal patterns. These patterns can allow unspoken

issues to exist for years, leading to dissatisfied team members and poor results.

At times people pleasing is a good strategy, especially when it can protect us from harm. At other times, it can get in the way of achieving our goals.

Both aspects can be at play in the workplace. The question is, are you aware when people pleasing serves you and when it might be an issue?

Steve, a successful CPA, truly cares about his clients and staff, which is the cornerstone of his business philosophy, but realizes that being a people pleaser is affecting fulfillment on the job and his ability to grow his business to the next level. Steve also resists delegating, which is a combination of the people pleasing issue and his need for perfection. All this has coalesced into a huge issue for Steve. Resistance to delegating, combined with trying too hard to make clients feel good, leaves him little time for activities he really loves – seeking new business and taking a more strategic planning role with clients.

Through coaching, Steve has increased his awareness of the impact of people pleasing and its cost to his business. The next challenge is to modify his behavior on a consistent basis, in order to expand the business and impact his overall health and life enjoyment.

NEW! INTRODUCING GROUP COACHING

Group coaching is now available for professionals who want to market with greater ease. Groups of 6-8 participants meet on a telephone bridge for an hour twice a month for 3 months. Coaching will include exercises from the "Selling from Your Comfort Zone Workshop" and challenge you to take your business to the next level. The introductory offer is \$175 per participant per month.

Groups are forming now for the second quarter. To reserve your spot today, call or email me to enroll. To learn more, listen and ask questions at an upcoming free teleforum.

Email me at coach@susanspritzmyers.com and I'll send you the date, time and phone number to call.

Right Words, Right Time

Recently I read *The Right Words at the Right Time*, by Marlo Thomas, a collection of short essays by famous and accomplished people recounting advice that influenced their life choices. I thought about what life altering words had been imparted to me. As a child, when I complained about something, my mother would say, "It isn't what happens to you, but how you handle it that counts." I realized I have incorporated her words into how I operate and was pleased that the book reminded me of the wisdom of my mother's words. What about you? Can you recall advice that influenced your life choices or how you handle challenges?

People generally think that it is the world, the environment, external relationships, which stand in one's way ...And at bottom it is always we ourselves that stand in our way. **SOREN KIERKEGAARD**

Kolbe

COMPARE BELIEFS TO INNATE ABILITIES

Recently, I met with Joe (a pseudonym), the president of a large manufacturing business, to discuss the results of his Kolbe assessments. He took both the Kolbe A Index, which measures one's natural strengths – how one innately problem solves – and the Kolbe B Index, which defines one's self-expectations for problem solving on the job.

In Kolbe terms, Joe's natural way of operating is a Strategic Planner. He has a knack for designing complex systems and thoroughly researching methodologies, with an innate ability to sort through complexities and handle logistics. The interesting part of the conversation was the comparison of Index B results to his natural instincts. Index B showed he expects himself to be an Innovator, i.e. intuitive, visionary, and highly original, with a knack for finding alternatives and discovering unique ways to get things done. So each day when Joe goes to work he comes in as a Strategic Planner, with the expectation that he perform as an Innovator. Kolbe calls this "internal strain" and it is causing him tremendous mental exhaustion. Joe held his head in his hands as he talked, physical evidence of the weight of the instinctive challenge he faces daily.

As we talked, Joe revealed that he believes a president's role is one of innovative visionary. The challenge for Joe is to accept and embrace his own leadership style, providing a comprehensive overview of the objectives, complete with the pros and cons of specific tactics. An employee or consultant can be hired to provide the innovative leadership talent he desires for the business. This strategy will help Joe provide solid direction and management for the business, without depleting his mental energy and undermining his confidence.

Kolbe™ is the assessment that measures an individual's innate problem solving ability. If you are interested in an individual assessment or in learning how Kolbe can support a business team striving to be more successful, call me at 847.242.0351 for more information.

a client's experience

“ Susan's coaching has helped me clarify certain of my business issues and see them through a different prism than I had been using. She has challenged me to think more globally about possible solutions to my business problems. As a result, I have been able to adjust my perspectives and act with more seasoned judgment leading to effective outcomes. ”

Tom Graham
Vice President Marketing
Mutual of Omaha

Are your Eyes on the Target?

Can you honestly say you are on track to deliver a great year? Do you have a strategy to help make your goals a reality?

I find that many clients are more successful if they reduce their annual goals to a simple three-month action plan. This is especially effective for folks who are put off by creating and monitoring more elaborate plans. A three-month plan helps keep you on track and focused, without requiring much time for managing the process. It helps manage the distractions that get many of us off track.

If you don't have a plan, try the three-month action plan and see if your goals are achieved more easily.

HOW LONG DOES COACHING LAST?

Often I am asked how long a coaching commitment will be. Usually I suggest 3-6 months, followed by commitments in 3-month increments. Some clients do not coach beyond the initial commitment, others coach for several years. I coached a sales executive on and off for 5 years. Throughout the course of the coaching, he moved from a new sales person to becoming a partner in his firm with a broad, strategic approach to the business. We continue to meet quarterly to ensure he is on track and continuing to challenge himself. Bottom-line, the duration of the coaching relationship depends on each client and how the coaching is supporting his or her overall success and fulfillment.

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Please share this newsletter with folks who would enjoy it, or let me know and we'll send them a copy. If you don't want to receive future issues, let us know that as well. Be well and enjoy!

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