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Welcome to your DCP Newsletter

Welcome to the January edition of the Darwin Consultant Psychologist Newsletter. This month we are taking the time to look at how 2011 has been and gone and how to accomplish your new dreams in the new year, 2012.

Did you make all those New Year's resolutions on the 31st December? Did you promise yourself that you would lose weight, stop drinking so much, stay in touch with family and go to the gym more? But what about your dreams, did you make a New Year's resolution about living your dreams in 2012? Do you even know what your dreams are, or have they been lost in amongst the actions of day to day living?

So, if you want to reconnect with your dream and would like to start working towards them, but lack the confidence, don't know where to start, feel others are holding you back, or because of fear and anxiety, come and talk to one of the experienced Psychologists at DCP who can provide you with strategies to help you reach your dreams.

Did You Know?

No-one needs to know you are receiving counselling through your EAP. If your counsellor believes it would be beneficial to speak to someone about your situation, you will be asked to provide your written permission before they do. Job security and promotional opportunities will not be jeopardized by seeking help through your EAP.

Accomplish Your New Dreams in the New Year

How inspiration and confidence lay the path to success

Published on December 26, 2011 by Melanie A. Greenberg, Ph.D. in The Mindful Self-Express



Successful achievements begin with a dream

As the end of the year approaches, this is a perfect time to take stock of our lives. It is extremely helpful at this time to reflect on the achievements of the past year, congratulating ourselves for both personal growth and goals met, and revising our goals for the new year. Taking a break from our daily routines and nourishing ourselves with food, family, and good company helps us to be re-motivated and re-inspired with fresh vision and energy. Inspiration has been defined as "The process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something, especially to do something creative." Put more simply, inspiration is a creative force that fills us with passion, purpose, and determination to accomplish a particular goal or embody a particular quality or value in our lives.

Inspiration is a quality of leadership and entrepreneurial endeavours; the guiding force that allows us to navigate the stormy seas of life, never taking our eyes off the desired endpoint. Many of the great philosophers of our time have attempted to define what it is to be inspired, committed, and creative in the pursuit of what we value or what is most meaningful to us. So, join me on an inspirational journey, using their wise words to guide your transition to a new year and a wiser, better way of being in the world.

The Courage to Dream

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." Harriet Tubman

Our journey begins with a dream, the contents of which are as varied as the people on this earth. Each of us has unique gifts, qualities, and experiences that shape the course of our lives. Even experiences of great suffering can teach us lessons or strengthen our resolve to make things different. But, we have to develop the wisdom to be open to the lessons and the courage to speak up for ourselves and give voice to our feelings, wishes, and dreams. It is difficult to do this alone. We need to bring supportive friends, mentors, and guides into our lives to point us in this direction.

Once we regain touch with our inner voice, we can begin to dream about how things might be different and take the first steps to making them so. Inspiration can come from childhood memories, movies, books, conversations with friends, observing our family members, experiences at work, or spiritual practices. Never worry that your dream is too grand or beyond your capacity to achieve. You can always refine it later on. At this stage of the journey, the important thing is to find your own vision of what you want to accomplish and contribute to the world. Once you have found it, write it down to make it real, post it on your mirror and read it at least three times a day.

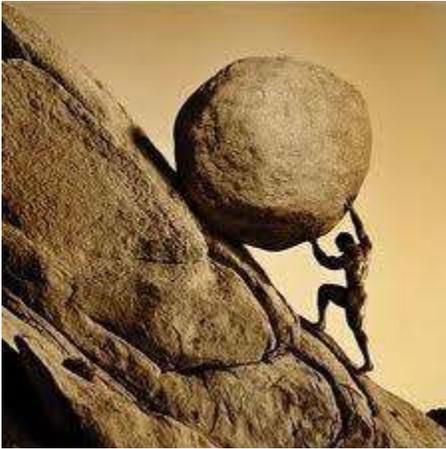
Finding your opportunities

"No great man ever complains of want of opportunity." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Once you have a vision and have translated this into some concrete, doable goals for the next year, the next step is to seek out opportunities to help make your vision a reality. This is the stage at which many people get stuck, dragged down

by worry about not finding the right opportunity. When this happens, you would do well to heed Emerson's words. The most successful people create their own opportunities. So, get out in the world (or on your computer), look for like-minded people and begin telling them about what you want to do. Listen carefully to their stories about what they have done and learn from them. Then roll up your sleeves and get to work producing a product or advertising your services. Over time, networking, creating a product, or volunteering your services, joining organizations in your field and working hard and creatively can result in opportunities you cannot now imagine.

When your opportunity comes, be ready to grab it confidently with both hands. And, if it doesn't come, try to think creatively and flexibly about alternate paths. Do not focus on the money or expect grand results at this stage, because you are investing in your own real-world education and marketing. You may have to pursue your dream in the evenings, after your regular job, or use part of your nest egg to buy yourself time. Whatever you do give yourself a realistic period of time for investment and judge your success by efforts made rather than outcomes, so as not to get too easily discouraged.



With vision and motivation, you can accomplish much

Be Confident, Persistent, & Patient

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined." Henry David Thoreau

The stage between having a dream and finding the right opportunity is often the toughest, because this is when you will begin to doubt yourself and fear the future. What makes the difference in those who persist and those who give up is often confidence. Albert Bandura, a Stanford University Psychology researcher, coined the term 'self-efficacy' to describe a person's predictions about their likelihood of achieving a particular goal or following through with a desired behaviour,

Self-efficacy predicts future outcome over and above past performance. If you truly believe you have something valuable and unique to offer, remain confident, even when it seems like an uphill battle. Most successful people have taken risks, worked hard, sacrificed, and faced temporary failure in the pursuit of their dreams. Often people give up on a path, never knowing that success lies just around the next corner. Have faith that if you put out your best effort and commit yourself to this work with all your energy, you will find a way to your goal. You may have to think flexibly and revise your goal a few times to better fit your circumstances and level of ability.

Also, how you formulate your goals is of key importance. Do not get too attached to a particular outcome, such as earning a six-figure salary, as this may depend on organizational or competitive forces beyond your control. Rather, define your goal in a way that depends more on your own efforts, such as working in a particular field, expanding your skills and knowledge, doing creative work, guiding and teaching others, innovating and building an enterprise, solving a particular environmental or practical problem and so on. The more your vision and its sub-goals are under your control, the more you can be confident that you will eventually accomplish them in some way.

Final Thoughts

Go forth and pursue your dreams and do not let short-term failures deter you. Find your inner strength and remain grounded amid the storms of fate. Like an ancient tree, bend with the wind, but do not break. As Johann Wolfgang van Goethe once said, "Character is best forged in the strong billows of the world." Remember to enjoy the journey and be patient. As the ancient Chinese proverb stated, "Be not afraid of going slowly; be afraid only of standing still."