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“LIVING THE LIFE OF YOUR DREAMS”

Are you living the life of your dreams? Do you have the best intentions to do so but something keeps coming up that seems more important? Are any of the following being shuffled to the lowest part of your priority list: self care, exercise, nutrition, doing something fun for yourself, starting and completing a project you have wanted to work on, following your own dreams, changing or starting a new business? If you answered yes, you're not alone.

I've asked many women: "What would you do if there were no obstacles in your way?" Most women say they would like to create or be a partner in some sort of spa or retreat venture to provide a place for other women to nurture and take care of themselves. As a business and personal coach, I find it interesting to observe that this is exactly what they're wanting but often not doing for themselves.

Why do they not do these things for themselves? They have the knowledge, the resources, the networks, and all of the things they need to successfully achieve whatever goals they have. What's preventing them from just doing it? The answer, quite often, is themselves. They might attribute it to outside causes but, in reality, it is their beliefs and perspectives about these things that are holding them back.

When I ask "How much of yourself are you going to have left to give if you don't do something to stay replenished?", the light bulb usually goes off! It takes energy to produce energy. Energy for humans comes in the form of exercise, spiritual connection, passion and purpose. When we humans find a purpose, we are described as 'on fire', and there's nothing that can stop us. When we have a strong enough purpose, it can carry us through the challenges to getting there. Another way we get energy is through exercise where keeping our temple in condition assists to release tension, burn calories, build strength and flexibility, combat the affects of aging of our bodies, and increase mental clarity. Reflection and spiritual connection give us context to a deeper meaning outside of ourselves which tie back in with purpose and passion. The connection between mind, body and soul is undeniable.

People that I initially coached knew me in my prior business role and had seen the transition I had made. I used to do this same thing ... putting things for myself on hold in order to do things for others ... the things that were on hold were critical to my health and well being like being with loved ones, exercise, taking time for quiet and reflection, looking at what was really important and vital for me. Why? I was too busy thinking that I had to do the other things first. What would happen if I didn't do them? I was afraid not to do them. If I didn't, I might not be a good mother, wife, or business contributor. What I found, through this transition, was that the very things I had put off were the very things that gave me life, passion and the motivation to do so much more than I could have ever imagined.

For those of whom the light bulb lights up and who have the new awareness of what they have been doing, they venture forward without looking back. They get going on themselves and realize that by doing so they create more time, space and clarity around what is important to

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them, what to do about it, and get into action with it. For others, it seems that things still get in the way ... work, too many activities, busy schedule, functions to attend or organize, volunteer responsibilities, more learning required to start something new or beliefs that they cannot do it ... really, below the surface, these mask other things in their own agenda – afraid of the unknown, not being good enough, that change may alter the lives that they know and are comfortable with, of having to change certain ways of doing things. This is self sabotage.

Be aware of self sabotage and flip it to the positive. With awareness comes the possibility to change things. We can respond rather than react. When we identify our own self sabotaging behavior, we can create a plan to deal with our internal negative voice or director. When we learn and apply ways to deal with our own unique self sabotaging thoughts, beliefs and behaviors, it is easier to step into the new and unknown.

What are some strategies you can use to deal with self sabotage and live the life of your dreams?

1. Have something positive to focus on. Make a theme statement for yourself and post it in a conspicuous place in your office and at home and in your wallet. Awareness is key.
2. Identify what is zapping your energy or distracting you from your focus. Once you know what this is for you, it will be clearer where you need to set standards and boundaries for yourself.
3. Identify what your motivators, the factors that you get excited about in life, are and build them into your life!
4. It is too important here not to mention here the power of gratitude. Seligman & Peterson did a study and found that people that practiced daily gratitude (3 things they were grateful for each day) and reflected on the causes of each daily over a 6 month period of time, had increasing levels of performance, life satisfaction and less depression.
5. Additionally, have a support person who is objective and not too close to your situation who can provide you a mirror for yourself and help you see things that you may not be seeing in yourself. As a trained and credentialed business and personal coach, I assist clients with tools, resources, and strategies to move forward in positive and inspired ways.

When we give ourselves permission to try, equip ourselves with tools and expertise to help us keep our focus, without imposing on ourselves a standard of perfection, we can make great headway.

The miraculous thing is that when people are equipped with the new knowledge, skills and strategies, start doing the things they have been putting off and the things that they thought they could not do because they might negatively impact their lives, they actually find life opens up for them. There are more opportunities, people to spur them on, doors that close make way for new doors to open, more energy, more confidence, more happiness and more vitality.

In the book, “Feel the Fear & Do It Anyway”, Dr. Susan Jeffers explains that we all have fear. The idea is to know: “Not only am I going to experience fear whenever I’m on unfamiliar territory, but so is everyone else.” The difference between those of us who succeed and of us who don’t is that the ones who do succeed recognize the fear, allow and motivate themselves to walk through the fear, and make it to the other side to find a whole new, wonderful world open to them.

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