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roadSIGNS Newsletter

Vol.15 No. 9
February
2016

Greetings!

As I sit to write this month's e-letter, my head is flooded by a cornucopia of knowledge. Two of my four January weekends have been spent in Toronto with my fellow CAPP participants. I feel like I have been noshing at an overly abundant buffet and at the moment, I am full and savouring the abundance of knowledge I have been exposed to.

CAPP, the Certificate in Applied Positive Psychology, has both stretched me and made me feel at home. ME FIRST and the work Jim and I have been engaged in for years is based on the principles of Positive Psychology. This program has legitimized the work which has engaged us as well as provided ample food for thought regarding what's next and tweaking our offerings.

So what is Positive Psychology and how does this differ from regular psychology. My memory of my psychology courses was that it focused on human development (Child Psych., Maslow, Jung, etc.) and where people fall off the wagon (Abnormal Psych, etc.). Positive Psych., in contrast, focuses on what helps people flourish and building what is right with individuals. To quote Martin Seligman, the founder of the Positive Psych. Movement, Positive Psychology focuses on going 'north of neutral' and enhancing the positive aspects of people's lives.

In the Centre for Flourishing Model, the focus is on Self-Awareness, Self-Compassion and Self-Care and taught through the lens of the PERMA-V Framework: Positivity, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement and Vitality (©Emiliya Zhivotovskaya).

In completing our Achievement Module this past weekend, the focus was on coaching. As most of you know I have been coaching for the past 25 years, albeit when I began, it was not referred to as coaching. Despite my experience, I have learned the importance of keeping my skills sharp and fresh and that every coach needs coaching. And I was coached by some of the best over the weekend as we practiced and played together. This leads into the topic for this month's e-newsletter, **The Coach Gets Coached**.

Enjoy the read!

Betty

We will be continuing HEALTHY LIVING CAFE in collaboration with the QUIRKY CARROT on the 3rd Tuesday of each month (January 2016 to June 2016).

On February 9th, Betty Healey will be sharing some of her learning from the Positive Psychology program she is engaged in. The title of the talk is "Managing Mind Chatter".

Find out more and register [HERE](#)

Our next Labyrinth walk is scheduled for March 19th at 6:00 PM. For more information go [HERE](#)

Watch for our new schedule of events and retreats coming April 2016 including an updated ME FIRST and a newly designed WE FIRST.

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This month's roadSIGN



"Seventh Chakra"
Earth Energy Art by Betty Healey - 2015

February Newsletter

***"It is really important to be able to receive love and receive compassion.
It is as important as being able to give it."***

Pema Chodron

THE COACH GETS COACHED

One of the aspects of coaching that I most enjoy is that it forces me to be fully present and mindful. In fact, the qualities that one engages in coaching are the key tenants of Conscious Communication: Embracing a Coach Mindset, Conscious Listening and Powerful Questions.

Embracing A Coach Mindset

Unlike therapy, coaching assumes that each person is whole and that you have the resources/answers within you to lead your life fully and richly. It is essential that a coach views clients as resourceful and creative; able to source your own answers from within. You are, in other words, the expert of your own life.

While this belief of wholeness is key to coaching, coaches also recognize that clients do not always see the greatness of who they are or access their gifts, talents and knowledge. The coach's job is to help the client bridge the gap and guide the client to increasing self-awareness. This might include clarity regarding your purpose, your essential 'WHY', clarity regarding how you wish to live your life or pursue your career, making healthy life choices...whatever it takes to move forward with your life.

Finally, the coach is there to create a safe container for this important personal work to occur in. Non-judgment is essential. And while every coach is equipped with expertise from their own background and experience, we should not be advice givers. Our essential job is to be spirit builders, supportive yet challenging, always with the greatest good of the client in mind.

My model for the coaching mindset this past weekend was Janet, my coaching partner in one of our first exercises where we were allowed to ask only two questions: 'And what else?' and 'Tell me more...' Okay, just so you know, this takes discipline because coach or not, there are so many places where you just want to jump in!

It was after the activity, during our debrief, that she held up the mirror for me sharing the following: "It is evident that you are passionately engaged in what you are doing, it shows in your face. And, when you talked about your art that is when your eyes really lit up. Tell me more...."

I am still reflecting on this. The coach is the catalyst, something she modeled very well.

Conscious Listening

When is the last time you really listened to someone? When is the last time someone really listened to you? In our fast paced technology infused world, being heard and understood has, in my view, diminished significantly. We simply don't make time for face to face conversations, whether that is with family, friends or colleagues.

And yet this is how we come to understand one another and to understand ourselves.

From the coaching perspective, Whitworth et al suggest that we need to listen to, for and with. Listening to implies active listening, being fully present to the person speaking, mirroring and paraphrasing what the other person is saying to assure yourself that you fully understand. OMG think of all the times you and I jump to conclusions because we think we have understood what the other person said. Imagine the grief we could save ourselves from if we simply paraphrased and checked-in.

In terms of listening for, the coach is searching for the Diamond: the person's inner landscape, their vision, values and purpose which contribute to their worth.

Finally, listening with relates to the coach's ability to tap into their intuition and heart, perhaps hearing/seeing things on the client's behalf that they can't see for themselves. This can include images and metaphors, ways of expressing what the client has said and offering it back to you in a way that gives new meaning.

Pun intended, Janet's feedback encouraged me to paint a new image for my future, to consider that my work may be quite different from what I have been focusing on. How can your art serve others? What do people experience when they stand before one of your creations? She listened with me.

Powerful Questions

Suffice to say, it is challenging to ask powerful questions without the coach's mindset or active listening.

Great questions like 'And what else?' sometimes frustrate clients; they force you to peel the onion. Remembering that the goal of coaching is to move forward, to enhance understanding and to build on what you already have available to you, questions are best designed to focus on solutions rather than problems.

Questions that are open ended are better than those that are close ended (answered with Yes or No). Opened ended questions encourage exploration and are best started with what or how? Why can work and I find that it can often sound or feel judgmental, so

needs to be used sparingly.

I love to begin my coaching sessions with the following question, 'What would you like to leave this coaching session with?' or 'What would you like to accomplish in our time together?' Immediately the tone is set. Can you imagine that if we also used this strategy with our life partners or children, how the energy of communication could be shifted?

In my second coaching conversation with Lydia, I decided that I wanted to formulate a plan for "Earth Energy Art" and respond to Janet's feedback and questions. Lydia kept me focused on solutions and moving forward. Her final question, 'What are you committing to in moving forward?' helped me define my 'what's next'.

Here we go:

- Define my intentions for Earth Energy Art - to Janet's question, what experience am I creating for my viewers.
- Make time in my weekly agenda for painting and creativity (reflection, visualization)
- Schedule an Earth Energy Art Exhibit for Late May/Early June

More to come.

Final Word

Yes the Coach was indeed coached. And it feels like fresh air. Isn't it just what we all need more of: to feel important, to be listened to and to be asked those important questions?

And don't we all want to move forward with our lives, regardless of age, to know that we still have the capacity to dream and that we can take steps to help those dreams shift into action.

You now have a choice to either coach yourself or find a coach. What is your first step? What is waiting for you to claim?

Your asSIGNment

Start being a coach in your own life.

Coaching, as you can see is about conscious communication: being present, active

listening, and asking great questions. Imagine for a moment that you:

1. Start being fully present to yourself, your own thoughts (and yes perhaps your self-critic) and also your uniqueness, your purpose, your intentions, and so on.
2. Really listened to yourself through the lens of listening to, for and with., allowing your heart and mind speak to you regarding your desires and dreams.
3. Asked yourself those big questions such as,
 - What do I want?
 - What are my dreams?
 - What is working well for me and what can I build on?
 - What is my first step?

Travel Tip

A coach, whether that is a family member, a close friend or a professional, always has your back. People, like cars, occasionally get buried in the mud. A coach helps you identify the solutions for getting unstuck and back on course.

Conscious Communication Coaching

Conscious communication is mindfulness. Our coaching clients are experiencing amazing results in their life as they learn to be clear about what they want and to take action in doing and being.

roadSIGNS is dedicated to offering coaching packages and retreat programs based on the principles of Conscious Communication and designed to assist you in living the life of your choice.

Here is what two of our coaching circle participants shared with us recently:

... the nuggets of wisdom that have revealed themselves throughout our short and powerful six weeks (of coaching) will continue to unveil themselves to me and lead to new questions and discoveries.

...The coaching sessions in FROM CRITIC TO COACH have helped me discover how to return to pure energy, to experience the true meaning and purpose of the game I call Life.

Give yourself the gift of coaching. [Contact us](#) to arrange a coaching consultation and explore the options.

Lumina Learning Systems

An amazing way to learn more about being the best YOU today is through Lumina Learning. Lumina Learning is an excellent opportunity to assess your unique qualities and strengths and align yourself with your full potential, as well as providing a great coaching tool for moving forward. If you are interested in learning more about Lumina Learning, we offer individual Lumina Spark Coaching Packages. Lumina Spark allows you to assess your core strengths and opens the conversation for how you live these strengths in the world.

Check out the website, www.roadsigns.ca for more information and/or contact betty@roadSIGNS.ca .

Events:

For details regarding any of our upcoming events in 2015 [visit our website](#)

Healthy Living Cafe - Tuesday February 9th,2015

The title of this month's Healthy Living Cafe is "Managing Mind Chatter". Join Betty Healey for a discussion on learning to manage the "Monkey Mind" that is constantly chattering in your ear.

Betty Healey is a teacher, coach and facilitator. She is currently completing a Certificate in Applied Positive Psychology.

At the HLC you can also indulge in some coffee or tea and a Quirky Carrot sweet treat which is included in the price of admission.

For more details and to register go [HERE](#)

Spring Equinox Labyrinth Walk

Join us for the next Labyrinth Walk on March 19th. Details [HERE](#)

Your comments and suggestions on this newsletter are greatly appreciated. Forward this e-mail to a friend or colleague who you think would appreciate the message. A

simple way is to use the "forward e-mail" button below my signature.

If you would like to sign up for my monthly e-mail, please follow this link

<http://www.roadsigns.ca/newsletters.html>

Sincerely,

Betty Healey
roadSIGNS