

Monday Motivation

*Quotes and Coaching Questions to Help Keep You
Focused, Motivated and Living an Extraordinary Life*

Monday Motivation includes 29 sheets. Print them out and hang them in your cubicle or set them on your desk to encourage you to stay focused on what you want in your life, keep asking the really important questions, and motivate you to make the changes you desire.

by Life Coach, Leanna Fredrich
Amazing Mondays, LLC



Live a Bold Life

"The ultimate secret to aging exquisitely is to identify more with the part of yourself that doesn't grow older-the inner part-and less with the other part that metamorphoses through ages and stages all your life long." *Victoria Moran*

"The older I get the greater power I seem to have to help the world." *Susan B. Anthony*

"Life was meant to be lived, and curiosity must be kept alive. One must be kept alive. One must never, for whatever reason turn his back on life." *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Thinking It Through...

I often hear from client's that "they are too old to make the career change they have always wanted." What a sad commentary on life and getting older. So often we allow our world to shrink instead of expand. We feel we must get smaller, less valuable. What a bunch of self-defeating baloney!! Now is the time to create your dreams. Age has nothing to do with it.

The greatest regrets people express on their death bed is that they did not take enough risk, did not take excellent care of themselves and they were not as vulnerable to the people closest to them as they wished they had been. In short, they played life safe and small. Don't make the same mistakes. Live life boldly, taking risks that mean something to you and live large!

Challenge

Where have you been playing small in your life?

What is a risk you need to take?

How can you take excellent care of yourself today?

What is one thing you can do today to live large?

Permission to Rest

"Let's make a toast to the long art of lingering." *Lee Upton*

"Rest and be thankful." *William Wordsworth*

"If you want inner peace find it in solitude..." *Stewart L. Udall*

Thinking It Through...

After beginning the book, *A New Earth* by Eckhart Tolle, I have been spending a lot of time thinking about not thinking! Although maybe not the point of the book, it is a step in the right direction for a severely addicted thinker like me. I realize how much time I think in frantic circles and how little time I focus on what is going on right now. I catch myself, under stress, breathing so shallowly that it is barely breathing at all. The beauty of watching my thinking is that I am now reminded to breath, to focus on what I am doing now, to God-forbid rest for a moment!

Challenge

How often do you rest from your thoughts?

When is the best time during your day to take some time for solitude?

How often do you just focus on your breathing?

What is right about your life in this moment?

Take Action

"Don't wait for a light to appear at the end of the tunnel, stride down there and light the bloody thing yourself." Unknown

"I couldn't wait for success, so I went ahead without it. *Jonathan Winters*

"Achievement seems to be connected with action. Successful men and women keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit." *Conrad Hilton*

"Opportunities are usually disguised by hard work, so most people don't recognize them." *Ann Landers*

Thinking It Through...

Behind the success and glamor of the people we see who have achieved their dreams is, if we look closer, a lot of work! Often when we read success stories it seems as if they were just lucky and had instant success. How misleading! Usually when you look further that "instant success" was preceded by years of action. Consistent action is critical to achieving your dreams. Even though the actions you may be taking feel mundane and small they are, at the very least, a way to build up the "action muscles" that you will need to reach your goal.

Challenge

Where in your life do you need to take action today?

Are you taking daily action towards your dreams?

Are you focusing on each step and putting your energy into it?

Are you choosing to enjoy the journey to your goals?

The Power of Words

"When the mind talks, the body listens. We literally talk ourselves into and out of every victory or defeat in the game of life. *Dr. Denis Waitley*, human performance scientist

"Words form the bridge between mind and matter; they play a vital role in shaping our reality." *Victoria Moran*

Thinking It Through...

Words are powerful and the words we choose, especially when we are talking about ourselves, are like windows into the beliefs our subconscious mind holds. This is often easier to see in others. How often have you complimented someone only to have them discount what you said? "Oh, this old thing!" "No big deal."

Have you heard yourself or others say things like..."I'm not the smart one in my family." "I'll never make that much money." Each time words like this are said the subconscious files them away as fact. The subconscious mind doesn't get jokes! It takes every sentence you say about yourself as truth. Our beliefs and the words we say create our reality. It is so important that we watch our words and choose those which will create a reality we want to live in.

Challenge

Notice your words today. Are they supportive of what you want in your life?

Do you put yourself down? "I am such a slob." "I'm such an idiot sometimes."

Do you diminish your accomplishments? "Oh it's nothing." "Anyone could have done it."

Catch yourself using self-sabotaging language and choose words which will support you instead.

What Do You Want?

"You've got to ask. Asking is, in my opinion, the world's most powerful and neglected secret to success and happiness." *Percy Ross*, Self-made millionaire

"Just get used to the idea that there's going to be a lot of rejection along the way to the brass ring." *Jack Canfield*

"To be alive at all involves some risk." *Harold MacMillan*

Thinking It Through...

In order to get what you want in life it is important to have the bravery to ask. For most of us this is extremely hard to do. It involves facing rejection head on. The truth is that thinking about the rejection is much harder than facing it and you just might get the wonderful answer of "Yes!"

Ask for what you want directly and politely. Prefacing your request with, "I know you probably don't want this but..." or "It's ok if you say no" is not the way to ask. Just ask directly and then a simple "Thank you." for a yes and "Thanks anyway" for a no response. Keep it simple and keep asking. It gets easier and the rewards are huge!

Challenge

What would you like to ask for at work?

What would you like to ask for at home?

How has being afraid to ask for what you want hurt you?

What will you ask for today?

What is Important?

"For even when the time comes and you can relax, you hardly know how." *Alice Foote MacDougall*

"If anybody says, "I need it pronto," remember that in Italian pronto is just another way to say "hello." *Unknown*

You create stress for yourself because you feel like you have to do it. You have to. I don't feel that anymore." *Oprah Winfrey*

Thinking It Through...

Life can become so busy that we feel in a constant state of overwhelm. We feel like we can never get enough done in a day. It is time to take a deep breath and schedule some silence and emptiness into our lives. Prioritize each day so you know exactly what is most important and then focus on that. Allow yourself to enjoy this day.

Challenge

Ask these questions each day... If this is the only thing I accomplish today, will I be satisfied with my day?

What are the top three activities I use to fill time to feel as though I've been productive but really are usually used to postpone more important actions?

Do I allow my cell phone and email to dictate how many interruptions I have during the day?

If you could only work two hours a day what would be most important to do?

Honor Your Uniqueness

"You have to find places where you recognize yourself." *Victoria Moran*

"There are no precedents: You are the first You that ever was." *Christopher Morley*

"I'm not suggesting that you refuse to perform necessary tasks but when you have some say in the matter, you can save yourself from the spare peg-round hole frustration of activities that are antagonistic to your essential self." *Victoria Moran*

Thinking It Through...

We have all known people who adopt the interests and activities of the people around them until they appear to become a different person. We have also experienced the person who will agree to take on a project for which they are not suited at all and do a bad job of it while being grumpy. This is not the way to live a passion-filled life! Spend most of your time doing things that fit you, that give you energy.

Does that mean we never try anything new? No! What I am saying is that life is too short to try to fit into someone else's mold. It is time to find out what we love and spend our time there.

Challenge

Are you spending most of your life on things you are passionate about?

Are you trying to squeeze yourself into someone else's idea of who you should be?

What will you do today that you are passionate about?

What activities do you need to say "no" to so you have more time to do what you love?

Step Into Your Dreams

"Nothing changes until you do." *Unknown*

"Success follows doing what you want to do. There is no other way to be successful." *Malcolm S. Forbes*

"You are today where your thoughts have brought you; you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you." *James Allen*

Thinking It Through...

You have a wonderful, exciting goal... Perhaps you have a business idea that lights you up or a book begging to be written or maybe an adventurous trip you are longing to embark on. Whatever dream you are holding onto, begin today to step into the identity and belief that you are ready and GOING to reach this goal.

Often the most simple way to begin is to act and dress as if you have already reached your goal. For example if you wish to create a best selling novel and spend your days engrossed in writing then get up a little earlier or stay up later and devote your time to writing. Put on the cozy robe you plan on wearing as an author. Wear those fuzzy slippers and grab your favorite cup of tea. BE an author for a space of time each day! It is not important if you write a lot or little.

Another way to begin living your goal is to find other people who have already done what you want to. Join the groups and associations they belong to. Go to the meetings and mingle with people you aspire to be like. We are social creatures and by spending time with others who have done what we want to do it is motivating and educational. Soon it will be easy to believe that "I can do that too!"

Challenge

When you reach your goal how will you be dressing? Start dressing that way as much as possible now!

What associations or networking groups will you be in when you reach your goal? Join them now.

Who could you talk with who has already reached your goal? Ask them how they did it.

Will you talk any different after you have reached your goal? Have those conversations now.

It's Always Your Choice

"Inaction, contrary to its reputation for being a refuge, is neither safe nor comfortable." *Madeleine Kunin*

"Trust life, and it will teach you, in joy and sorrow, all you need to know." *James Baldwin*

"This isn't the end of the story. It's just a twist in the plot." *Victoria Moran*

Thinking It Through...

I have met many people who seem to live wonderful almost charmed lives. My mother is one of these people. You would never know that she lost her mother to cancer when she was in high school, she lost her three-year-old daughter to a heart defect and 8 years ago lost her husband to a stroke. I know other people who's lives seem to be cursed. They are always experiencing one crisis or another. What is the difference? I know from experience that people like my mom understand that life sends us troubles occasionally but they choose to focus not on problems but on what is going well. They look for a silver-lining. They take any action they can to end the trouble and accept what is beyond their control. They always believe that things will get better.

In contrast, those who seem to marinate in trouble focus on it with helpless horror. They talk endlessly about it and do little or nothing to change it. They worry that trouble will constantly plague their life and usually that is exactly what happens. As our country faces crisis it is easy to focus on problems, problems, problems but each of us has a choice... Perpetuate the trouble or look for a silver lining and focus on what is going right. What is your choice?

Challenge

What will you do today to improve your life?

What is going right for you?

How will you write the next chapter of your life?

What are 10 things you are grateful for today?

What is Your Ikigai?

“Learn to get in touch with the silence within yourself and know that everything in life has a purpose.” *Elisabeth Kubler-Ross*

“Decide upon your major definite purpose in life and then organize all your activities around it.” *Brian Tracy*

“It’s time to start living the life you’ve imagined.” *Henry James*

Thinking it Through...

I was reading the book, The Blue Zones which shares the results of research studies done in areas (Blue Zones) where more people live to be over a 100 than anywhere else on the earth. The researchers were looking for commonality's among the octogenarians to discover the secret to their long and healthy lives. One of the clues they found was that all of the octogenarians had Ikigai (icky guy) or purpose, a reason for living. (Really, it is lots more fun and exotic to say Ikigai than purpose!) In Okinawa, one of the Blue Zones, they talk about it all the time. In fact if you stop one of the Okinawan octogenarians on the street and asked what their Ikigai was they could tell you without a pause. If I asked you, could you tell me your purpose? Do you know why you get up or is your day just made up of an endless to-do list that feels meaningless? If you are without an Ikigai then it is well worth your time to find a quiet place and think about it. Don't worry we all have one! Consider what is meaningful to you and what you really care about... Here are some examples of purpose statements:

“To leave the world a better place than I found it, for horses and for people.”

“To uplift humanity's consciousness through business.”

“To inspire and Coach people to live life with passion.”

“To bring beauty into people's lives through their homes and yards.”

As you read these statements it is obvious that there are many different ways these people could live their Ikigai and that's the beauty of a purpose statement. It needs to be big enough that it will still get you out of bed when you are a hundred and ten! The other wonderful thing about purpose is that you will never get bored because you can do many different things to live your purpose. For example; Let's look at the purpose statement “To bring beauty into people's lives through their homes and yards.” This person could be doing a million different things. They might build water features, open a boutique with beautiful things for the home and yard, have an online business, be an organizer... and the list goes on. When I work with clients to find their Ikigai they are often surprised to discover they are already involved in at least a few activities that relate to their purpose. The problem is they have not acknowledged their accomplishments and are not focused on their purpose. Knowing your Ikigai and focusing on it daily makes all the difference!

Challenge:

What is your Ikigai? What is it that gets you out of bed in the morning?

What are your top 3 unique strengths?

How can you use those strengths to live your purpose?

What can you do today to live your purpose?

Pamper Yourself - You Deserve It!

"Surely joy is the condition of life." *Henry David Thoreau*

"You were made for enjoyment and the world was filled with things which you will enjoy." *John Ruskin*

"One can get just as much exultation in losing oneself in a little thing as in a big thing. It is nice to think how one can be recklessly lost in a daisy!" *Anne Morrow Lindbergh*

Thinking It Through...

Never underestimate the value of taking the time to enjoy the little things in each day. So many people come to me who have lost sight of what they love, what they are passionate about. The reason they have disconnected from their true self is often because they have stopped taking time for the little nurturing activities which feed their soul.

It does not take much more time to live well as to live poorly. It can be as simple as pouring your morning juice or smoothie into a beautiful glass instead of a plastic super hero cup. Perhaps it is taking a bit more time in choosing food that really tastes good. A beautiful piece of dark chocolate to savor instead of mindlessly scarfing down a candy bar. Maybe it is taking time to turn on your favorite music the minute you get home from work or changing into luxurious soft clothing in the evening.

Sometimes it is mind-food that we need. Taking the time to read a book, a poem or listening to an audio book that will feed your soul. Whatever nurtures you and brings you pleasure do it today!

Challenge

What are some activities which nurture you?

How much of each day do you take time to enjoy?

What are you going to do today to feed your soul?

Choose Your Complexities

"Analyze your life in terms of its environment. Are the things around you helping you toward success-or are they holding you back?" *W. Clement Stone*

"One must live the way one thinks or end up thinking the way one has lived."
Paul Bourget

"Never underestimate the effect of clutter on your life." *Karen Kingston*

Thinking It Through...

There are many books and shows out there about simplifying your life and how important it is. They are right! Everything we do, own or commit to takes energy so it is imperative that we are careful what we add to our lives. The fact is though, that some of the most precious parts of our lives are actually huge complications.

For example when you get married it complicates both of your lives. Now instead of just considering your wishes you have someone else to consider as well. Not to mention all the stuff you both bring into one house! When you decide to have a child that's another big, sweet complication. When you start writing a book or any creative endeavor you add complexity.

For most of us the benefits of these complications far out way the energy spent. They are worth it! An important part of having an extraordinary life is to add complexity selectively. Make sure you get rid of the energy drains in all areas of your life so that you are free to focus on what matters to you. Now if there is a bit of clutter around you know it comes from projects you are passionate about. If there are complexities you have chosen them instead of the other way around.

Coaching Questions:

Where are some areas of clutter in your life that you can simplify?

What are the selective complexities in your life that you chose and want to keep?

Have you cleared out the clutter so you have time for what is important to you?

What can you do today to simplify your life?

Are You Hiding?

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure." *Marianne Williamson*

"To change the printout of the body, you must learn to rewrite the software of the mind." *Deepak Chopra*

"Ever try to change your mind, only to find out that your mind has a mind of its own?" *Robert Williams*

Thinking it Through...

Self sabotage. Are you familiar with it? I sure am! I've often heard that if you want to grow as a person start your own business or go further in your career than you ever thought you could. Taking a leap like that has the nasty side effect of bringing out more mental blocks and limiting beliefs than you can shake a stick at. I'll just choose one of my personal favorites to talk about today. This is a belief that has blocked my way so many times that it feels like an old friend (or enemy.) It is the belief that "It is not safe to stand out." It also ties very neatly with the belief that "It is not right to stand out." Does this sound familiar to you? In our society we honor those that stand out, at least for good things, and hold them on a pedestal until they fall. Then it's not pretty. Many of us remember experiences in school where we stood out as special and were quickly put in our place by teachers or peers. Most of us have been exposed to criticisms when we were in positions where we were noticed. Perhaps you heard from your parents or relatives that "The tall blade gets cut first" or "Don't get too big for your britches." No wonder so many of us find ways to disappear and sabotage when our career or business requires us to stand out, speak out and be noticed.

If you can relate to these beliefs you are probably wondering what you can do about it. The first step is to realize that you have the beliefs and take a good look at them. Do they make sense for you now? If you stand out you probably WILL get criticized once in a while. Can you keep yourself safe? Do you have strategies in place so you can handle it? A tool I most often use to remove the power from my limiting beliefs is EFT. It is very simple to learn and extremely effective. Whatever you choose to do, take a good look at your beliefs and make sure they are working for you not against you. It is time to live large, contribute lavishly and enjoy life to its fullest.

Challenge:

Are you afraid to stand out? What do you think will happen?

How has that belief held you back?

When have you sabotaged your success?

What is the downside of changing your limiting belief?

What new belief will you choose to have?

Are You One of the Living Dead?

"The great tragedy of life is not death, but what dies inside of us while we live."

Norman Cousins

"And the day came when the risk it took to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom." *Anais Nin*

"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" *Mary Oliver*

"It takes a lot of courage to release the familiar and seemingly secure, to embrace the new. But there is no real security in what is no longer meaningful. There is more security in the adventurous and exciting, for in movement there is life, and in change there is power." *Alan Cohen*

Thinking it Through...

Have you ever noticed how often people over forty talk about old age? When I really started listening, old-age conversations were everywhere! For example, I was at my son's Taekwando school talking to one of the mom's. She told me that she had always wanted to take Taekwando but now she was too old. Had she ever noticed the couple attending the same school , in their 70's, enthusiastically earning their black-belts? She had not, because her beliefs about what you can and can't do after age forty were blinding her. If I had a dollar for every time I heard that someone was too old to start a business or a new career I would be a very rich woman. I was completely shocked as I had a conversation with a healthy, 40ish woman who said that although she would love to travel she was too old to take those kinds of risks! I've heard all kinds of "too old" beliefs... I'm too old to fall in love, enjoy amusement parks, learn a new sport, exercise, go back to school... the list goes on. How sad. It is like dieing before you're dead!

The truth is as a generation we are living longer. Many of us will live to be well into our 90's. Do we really want to start playing it small and safe when we have fifty more years of life to go? ! The way some people are heading by the time they are in their 60's they won't leave their houses. I think it is past time to take a look at our beliefs about aging and get clear on how we wish to use the next 50 years. It is so sad to see people shrink and play it safe at the very time when their lives are full of such potential. Usually during the second half of our lives we have more freedom. Our families are almost raised and on their own, we have a wealth of life experience, we know more about ourselves and the world. This is the time to really come into our own and play big. We need to have adventures, take risks that are meaningful to us, and grow, grow, grow. Live while you're alive!

Challenge:

Where in your life are you playing small?

What are your beliefs about getting older?

Are your beliefs growing or shrinking you?

What new beliefs do you need to adopt in order to live a big, meaningful life ?

Inside Secrets of a Professional Worrier!

“I have lived a long life and had many troubles, most of which never happened.”
Mark Twain

“Worry is like an April Fool's Joke without the laughs!” *Leanna Fredrich*

“Anxiety is nothing... but repeatedly re-experiencing failure in advance. What a waste.” *Seth Godin*

Thinking it Through...

Since I have been working lately on coauthoring a book about using the wisdom of your body I have become much more aware of my body sensations. For example when I wake up in the morning, usually the first sensation I notice is a racy or tight feeling in my stomach. Usually these sensations point to fear and anxiety. So early in the morning?! So then I asked myself what was causing those feelings? The answer was worry. Sometimes I'm worried about something specific but I am quite ashamed to say that often it is just random, undefined worry. I'm afraid that I have a wee bit of a worry habit. There's a good chance I was born with the natural talent of worrying. Perhaps that is what kept my ancestors alive and well ahead of the jaws of a saber-tooth tiger but in this "kinder, gentler" time, worry is hurting not helping me. Sadly for me, since I am so good at it, worry is a huge waste of time as it doesn't solve a thing and most often what I am worried about won't happen anyway.

So here are a few tools from a "Professional Worrier" (Me!) to help fill your life with more peace and less worry.

Write it down! You can do this anytime you catch yourself worrying. Instead of letting the worries spin around in your head write them down. It is amazing how small and impotent they look on paper.

Start the day with gratitude. I've noticed the knot in my stomach begins to loosen as I start listing things I am grateful for. I do this the minute my eyes open in the morning. That must be why being grateful for my warm bed is so often on my list!

Take action! If I am worried about something that I can and need to take action towards then the sooner I do it the better I feel. All of a sudden the worry leaves and in its place is accomplishment and focus.

Take time for quiet. It is essential for chronic worriers (and actually everyone) to allow themselves space to relax and meditate. That may look like a peaceful walk in the spring air or listening to guided meditations or perhaps driving in silence to work. Allowing the mind to stop racing is strong medicine for a worrier's life.

Challenge:

How much time are you wasting with worry?

Check in with your stomach several times a day. Do you have butterflies or a tight feeling?

Take one of the steps above and check in again. Does your stomach feel more relaxed?

Tired of the Same Old Stories?

“Nothing changes until you do.” *Unknown*

“My inner world creates my outer world.” *T. Harv Eker*

Thinking it Through...

We all have stories that we tell over and over. They are the stories that drive our family crazy as we share them at every public get together. However annoying those stories may be to our loved ones, they are usually quite harmless. Unfortunately, many of us have stories which we tell that are devastating to our lives. For example, a friend of mine is always saying how tired she is. (By the way, she has been thoroughly checked out by multiple doctors and has a clean bill of health.) One day I decided to count how many times she mentioned her exhaustion. After I hit a dozen in a half hour I was too worn out to continue! This behavior is called “Story Fondling” by the best-selling author and Coach, Martha Beck. We tell the same story out loud or in the quiet of our minds over and over and over. “I don’t have enough money.” “I’m old.” “I’m not smart.” Sadly enough we are programming our minds with these negative beliefs and as we do, the beliefs become a self-fulfilling prophecy. So often “story fondling” keeps us sad, discouraged and preoccupied with a mournful past or a frightening future. As we run that well-worn story track , we are missing out on opportunities and joy in the present moment.

Think for a minute... Do you spend time “story fondling?” If you are not sure ask a very honest close friend or family member. Is that story serving you in a positive way? My droopy-eyed friend is served in a way by her “exhaustion story.” It gives her a ready made excuse to cop out on life and go to bed. But at what cost? She is missing out on so much and the world is missing out on benefiting from her unique gifts and strengths which she is too tired to share. Take this month to notice your stories and change them to serve you. You are the author of those stories after all so it is your right to change them!

Challenge:

What stories are you fondling?

Are they serving you in a positive way?

If not, then how can you change your stories to positively impact your life?

What stories do you need to tell yourself to easily create the life you desire?

What's Stopping You?

“The secret to my success is that I bit off more than I could chew and chewed as fast as I could.” *Paul Hogan*

“You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” *Eleanor Roosevelt*

“The only way to the Place beyond Fear is to do the thing you fear most. This is how to surrender to your best destiny.” *Martha Beck*

Thinking it Through...

This weekend I went to a terrifying and wonderful seminar. Terrifying, because for three days I was forced to do the one thing that has always scared me most... SELL. I love teaching, coaching, listening but when it comes to asking for money I have a truck-load of beliefs holding me back. So here I was, forced to face my fear head-on. The first day I was sure I would lose the breakfast I didn't have. That evening I knew exactly the beliefs I needed to shift. I pulled out the tools I've learned to change those beliefs and got to work. The next day I began to enjoy the process in a sick sort of way. More limiting beliefs showed their ugly little faces and that evening I worked through those. By the third day I was almost having fun with the selling process. I started to see it in a different light as I wrapped it in a soft blanket of service.

The whole weekend was a reminder that the quickest way to get past self-sabotage and fear is to face it. Jump in that fire and your limiting beliefs will fly in your face. You won't have to wonder what is stopping you. You will know! When you know, you can get the help you need to change those beliefs and move towards your dreams with freedom.

Challenge:

Are you stuck in an area of your life?

What can you do to jump into the fear?

When you do this, what limiting beliefs show up?

Write down those limiting beliefs and get help to change them.

How to Follow Your Desires

“To understand the magical nature of the mind is to acquire awesome power. It is to understand that at every moment of our lives, we have the power to accomplish everything we want.” *Deepak Chopra*

“We come this way but once. We can either tiptoe through life and hope that we get to death without being too badly bruised or we can live a full, complete life achieving our goals and realizing our wildest dreams.” *Bob Proctor*

Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart...He who looks outside, dreams. He who looks inside, awakens. *Carl Jung*

Thinking it Through...

Do you remember as a child that feeling of desire? Of wanting something and dreaming of having it so intensely that you absolutely knew it would be yours? Dangerous stuff right? I’m sure by now, since you are a responsible adult, you have safely cloaked, squelched and muted your desires. What a relief! You are protected from that dreaded feeling of disappointment. All is right with the world. Ha! What I have found working as a Life Coach, is that safely hiding your desires away is not safe at all, in fact it leads to a feeling of numbness and even depression, that often makes the dreaded feeling of disappointment a welcome visitor.

Desires are a map to our passions, our true path and if we have the courage to follow them they lead to a vibrant, joyful life. So how do you retrain yourself to follow your desires and find your path?

The first step is to get quiet. Take regular time to be still and think about what you desire. Be very honest with yourself even if your desires make you feel uncomfortable. Often our initial desires, especially if they are destructive or negative, are really just sign posts to our true desires. Take the time to be still and explore them.

Pick a desire, any desire and follow it. When you discover a genuine desire begin exploring. If the desire is not accompanied by feelings of openness, happiness, peace and growing interest then it isn’t your core desire. Follow the trail of your desires until you find an authentic one.

Let your desire be intention. Change your wishful thinking into a belief that you will get what you want. (What about disappointment? When you are following your true heart’s desire you enjoy the journey not just the destination. You will survive any disappointment along the way.)

Allow the path to your desire to unfold the way it wishes. You may be surprised where it will take you and that is part of the adventure. Don’t lock it into happening only one way.

As you explore always ask, “Then what?” “I grow a successful six-figure business, then what?” If you are as excited by the “then what?” as you are by the goal then you have a winner.

Believe that you can have the fulfillment of your desires. Much easier said than done! You

will need to frequently reassure yourself that step by step you will move towards creating a life around what you desire. As you take those steps it will be easier to believe.

Challenge:

What do you desire?

What steps are you taking to explore that desire?

What beliefs are getting in your way?

What can you do today to move towards your desire?

Startling News: The Key to Passion is Fear?!

Those who do not move, do not notice their chains." *Rosa Luxemburg*

Any risk worth taking is worth taking whether it leads to success or failure.
Martha Beck

Thinking it Through...

I'm sure you've heard of people, may even know some, who love taking risks. Usually they are physical ones like sky-diving or deep-sea cave exploring. They are hooked on adrenaline. Most of us shake our heads in amazement at their choices. While we may never, ever want to copy them I believe they are on to something. Taking risk makes us feel alive. More importantly, growth of any kind requires a certain amount of risk. Anytime I hear someone say they have no fear and are content where they are, it makes me wonder... How alive are they feeling?

I am the first one to admit that I love comfort. My favorite adventure is to head on over to the nearest spa! It is easy for me to live in my comfort zone. What I have come to realize though, is that my desire to live in my comfort zone and my desire to grow, create and live a passionate life are often in direct conflict. I need to stretch my comfort zone and the only way to do that is to take risks. My risk muscles need building. I start by scaring myself everyday. I did that today by dealing with an IRS issue. I really wanted to put it off, bury the offending letter and pretend it wasn't there but I didn't. I handled it and the feeling of strength and power it gave me was well worth the feeling of risk I had to face. (It helped that I was able to prove I was right!)

For many of us taking a risk such as sky-diving pales in comparison to the risk of speaking our truth or god-forbid really taking a long look at what is going on with our lives and why we have lost the passion and zest for living we once had. It is terrifying to sit with our feelings and be still. By far the hardest assignment and the one most often ignored that I give clients and workshop participants is to sit quietly for 10-20 minutes and just focus on your breathing. Why is that the hardest action to take? Perhaps because that short space of time is about stopping and facing truth and feelings. The one thing we must do is the hardest to face.

So are you willing to pay the price of risk-taking in order to have a passionate life? Can you keep growing your comfort zone and learn to venture out of it regularly to expand and really live? If you are still reading this then I think you are! So join me in scaring yourself everyday. Remember you can always run on back to your place of comfort, catch your breath and then take some more risks. Start today!

Challenge:

What truth do you need to face that you have been avoiding?

Do you feel passionately alive?

What risk will you take today?

Is “Not Knowing Enough” Stopping You?

It is not only by the questions we have answered that progress may be measured, but also by those we are still asking. *Freda Adler*

I am still learning. *Michelangelo*

We are more often frightened than hurt. Our troubles spring more often from fancy than reality. *Seneca*

Thinking it Through...

As I talk with people, there is a fear common among so many entrepreneurs and service professionals. A fear that haunts them and removes much of the joy they could experience in their business. It is the fear that they do not provide enough value or they don't know enough. Much to my amazement I have heard that fear expressed by some of the most competent, excellent, service providers that I know. It doesn't make any sense but that is the problem with fear. It doesn't have to make sense.

I met a highly educated and articulate man on the plane recently. He had been on a spiritual journey and longed to share what he was learning. He had started a book but felt he need to restart it as he had learned so much more. I asked him what was stopping him from teaching small groups of people what he had learned so far? His answer was that he didn't know enough yet. That's fear talking! Fear of being wrong. Fear of not having all the answers. Fear that people might criticize you. The problem with waiting until you have all the answers is that it will never come!

There is another problem in waiting for the holy grail of “knowing everything”. By the time you feel you are close, you are so far down the path, that it is hard to help others who are struggling at the beginning of the journey. For example, I was talking with a Fitness Coach who had struggled with her weight as a young woman. As she begin learning about nutrition and fitness she started teaching it. She started right away sharing what she learned and experienced. She gave a huge amount of value to those she worked with. If she had waited until she was perfectly fit and at her ideal weight odds are that she would not have communicated as effectively with her struggling clients.

As a business owner, service provider and human-being, learning and growing should be and will be a part of the package. Don't wait to share. You will be providing value as long as you are giving from your passion. Give what you know now and I promise many people will benefit from what you have to offer.

Challenge:

In what area of your life are you not sharing value because you “don't know enough”?

Is there a business you are passionate about but afraid to start?

Take a minute to sit down and list all the ways you give value in your business or career.

The Simple Question That Will Change Your Life

Rest and be thankful. *William Wordsworth*

Could we change our attitude, we should not only see life differently, but life itself would come to be different. *Katherine Mansfield*

If the only prayer you say in your life is “thank you,” that would suffice. *Meister Eckhart*

Thinking it Through...

This weekend I attended a Christmas Musical Program. In between the songs several people spoke. It seems that the theme of the narrative was about distress, hardship and pain. The audience was indirectly encouraged to look back at all the troubles they had faced over the year . Well, if you had asked me before the service how my year went I would have said, "My year was great." By the end of the program I had thought of several hard times I had endured this year and was feeling that perhaps this next year would be best spent with my head safely under the covers! What we focus on is a powerful predictor of what we feel.

As I dragged my depressed self home I decided to change my thoughts. I asked the simple question, "What am I grateful for?" It didn't take long before a smile came to my face and energy back into my body. I was eagerly looking forward to 2011. As we end one year and move into the next I encourage you to ask yourself this most powerful question..."What are you grateful for?" You can start with your magnificent body. " I am so grateful that I don't have to even think about breathing. It just happens. I am so grateful that my blood carries nutrients to every part of my body and it doesn't feel hard at all. I am so grateful that my hair grows, my heart beats, cells divide, all without conscious thought. What a miracle!

Are you feeling better already? We have such power over our feelings. Take a hold of that power and choose thoughts that make you feel fabulous. Life is ours to enjoy or be miserable in. As this new year approaches choose to spend it in gratitude. I promise it will make all the difference.

Challenge:

Have you set up a gratitude routine?

Notice how your body feels when you are thinking thoughts of gratitude. What do you feel?

List 7 things that happened so far this year which you are thankful for.

Find at least one person you can express gratitude to today.

The Brain Experiment...Using Your Head to Reach Your Goals

“Mind is the master power that molds and makes,

And we are mind, and evermore we take

The tool of thought, and shaping what we will,

Bring forth a thousand joys, a thousand ills.

We think in secret, and it comes to pass,

Our world is but our looking glass.” *James Allen*

“...Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve.” *Napoleon Hill*

“The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want.” *Ben Stein*

Thinking it Through...

People throughout the ages have discussed how powerful thoughts are and how they can change your life. Often the explanations can get very deep or scientific as they talk about quantum physics and energy. While all of the discussions hold truth , there is a far simpler explanation of how your thoughts change your life. It all begins with a part of your brain called the Reticular Activating System.(RAS) This diminutive part of your brain has an exceedingly huge job to do. It's job is to filter through all of the stimulus we receive every second of our lives and then let us know what is important for us to focus on. Without this part of our brain we would go crazy trying to pay attention to everything from how our socks feel on our toes, the hum of the refrigerator to the sounds of a child crying outside. Everything would grab our attention equally and the result would be major overwhelm. Thankfully this beautiful part of our brain offers up to us only what we have decided is important. And that is where the power of our thoughts come in. Whatever we think about over and over especially with emotion, that is what the RAS shows us.

I just heard a fascinating example of how this works ... John noticed that everyday when he looked through the mail it consisted of bills and useless catalogs. “I sure wish my mail was full of checks instead.”he thought. John decided that he would imagine many times per day checks filling his mailbox. Each evening when he walked in the door he would ask his wife “Did I get any checks today?” Everyday the answer was “no” and his kids started thinking dad had really lost it. Months went by as John trained his RAS to look for ways to get checks in his mailbox. Then one morning as he walked into his office where he worked as a journalist the secretary said, “John, people keep asking for some of your old articles do you have any I could share?” John’s RAS started screaming! Here’s a way to get checks in the mail! So he took some of his old articles and put them in a small booklet to sell.

That was the beginning of John receiving checks in the mail almost everyday . He had let his brain know by his consistent imagining that getting checks in the mail was very important. The RAS started scanning his environment for anything that could bring him checks in the mail and kept at it until an answer was found. John used this process to bring more money in, my friend Debbie used it to lose weight and keep it off, the possibilities are endless. Using the power of your thoughts is not complicated but it requires daily imagining and the ability to remain curious rather than always asking if it's working! So here's to the RAS, imagining and curiosity! Start using the power of your brain today.

Challenge:

What do you want to create in your life?

What will you imagine?

Are you curious or desperate?

Commit to spending time everyday picturing what you want.

The "Yes List": The Key to Living on Purpose

You don't have to let yourself be terrorized by other people's expectations of you.
Sue Thoele

One must live the way one thinks or end up thinking the way one has lived. *Paul Bourget*

The more time you spend doing what is important to you the quicker the unimportant things drift away. *Leanna Fredrich*

Thinking it Through...

One of the keys to living a life of purpose is to know what your "Yes List" is . A "Yes List" is simply a list of your top priorities. The brain can handle only 7 goals at a time so choose a maximum of seven priorities for your life. Make sure YOU, your self-care, is one of those seven items. So often I see client's who quickly begin writing their priorities and leave themselves right off the list. The fact is, if you don't take excellent care of yourself then you might as well throw out all the other items on the list because you won't have the energy, health or creativity to do them well.

Write your 7 Priorities down on index cards or where you will see them often so you can check in frequently. Now, when someone asks you to do something that is not on your "Yes List" it is time to cultivate the fine art of saying "no".

I recently asked a client about her "Yes List". One of the items she wrote down first was to start the business she always dreamed of. I asked her when she last spent time working on her business. Well, that questions stumped her. She had to think and think before she hesitantly answered that it was about 4 months ago. Four months since she has devoted any time at all to one of her top priorities! Unfortunately, she is not alone. That is why it is critical to be clear on your priorities and divide your time up accordingly. Put yourself back in the driver's seat of your life.

Challenge:

What are the seven items on your "Yes List?"

Are they really your priorities or are you listing what you think they "should" be?

How much of your week are you spending on your "Yes List?"

What do you need to say "no" to so you have more time for the things that are important to you?

Let's Hear it for the Unbalanced Life!

“I will not should on myself today.” *Unknown*

“The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want.” *Ben Stein*

“Decide upon your major definite purpose in life and then organize all your activities around it.” *Brian Tracy*

Thinking it Through...

We hear a lot about the need for having a balanced life. “If I only had more “life balance” it would be better.” Give it up! We will never have a balanced life nor would we probably want one. What most of us want is a life full of doing what is meaningful to us and what we are passionate about. Think about someone who is passionate about their life. Is it balanced or are they spending huge amounts of time doing exactly what they value? Often we talk about needing more balance when what we really mean is that we are spending a lot of our life doing things that we don’t care about. That’s when our lives feel unbalanced. It is when we are spending our lives on “shoulds” that we start feeling futile. (For example the day I had last week full of running errands. Ugh!) So instead of worrying that your life is not balanced ask yourself how much joy and passion is in your life? Perhaps having a life full of passion will require spending a entire day painting, hiking or researching a topic of interest. Is that balanced? No, but it is fulfilling and purposeful. So my challenge for you this month is to discover the joys of an “unbalanced” life. Load your days up with activities that are meaningful and enjoyable to you.

Challenge:

What do you wish to fill your life with?.

What are the “shoulds” in your life that you want to let go?

What percentage of your day is filled with activities you love?

Take steps today to increase the percentage of time spent on those things you are passionate about.

Find Your Tribe

“Finding your tribe can have transformative effects on your sense of identity and purpose. This is because of three powerful tribal dynamics: validation, inspiration, and what we’ll call here the “alchemy of synergy.” *Ken Robinson*

“Be what you are. This is the first step toward becoming better than you are.” *JC Hare and A.W. Hare*

“Each person has an aptitude born with them. Do your work.” *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Thinking it Through...

One of the things I love to do in my Coaching practice is to help people find their strengths...those unique ways of thinking and creating that they were born with. I have been reading a book called The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything. One of the concepts in this book that I had not thought much about was the importance of finding your tribe. When you are with your tribe you feel inspired to create, take chances and most of all you feel “at home.” Even if your passion requires a certain amount of solitude you still need a tribe. Martha Beck, a self-help author, has a wonderful group of women writers who she meets with on a regular basis. Freeman Dyson, the physicist says that when he is writing he needs to be alone but when he is actually doing science he welcomes interaction with others. “Up to a point you welcome being interrupted because it is only by interacting with other people that you get anything interesting done.”

Perhaps you can even discover your passion by looking for the people you love to be around. By noticing their interests and strengths it will be a sign pointing to your own strengths and passions. Watch for the people and activities that fill you with energy and life. So here’s to filling your life with your passions and strengths and having a tribe to keep you inspired!

Challenge:

Who belongs to your tribe? What are their characteristics and passions?

What are the activities you do where you feel most like yourself?

When did you last lose track of time during an activity?

Do You Chomp or Savor Life?

“Each moment is a place you’ve never been.” *Mark Strand*

“The challenge is in the moment, the time is always now.” *James Baldwin*

“Curiosity is in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last.” *Samuel Johnson*

Thinking it Through...

I just finished my first product for this year, “The Secrets to Discovering Your Passion-filled Career” audio workshop. I have been teaching this workshop for years and had always dreamed of having it in a format so those who were unable to come to my workshops in Denver could still have the information, do the work on their own and experience the joy of finding their passion. So now I’m done! I had a moment of excitement and off I went to schedule the steps I needed to take to create my next product. Then this weekend I read a wonderful chapter in the book “Mastering Life’s Energies” by Maria Nemeth. The chapter was about using the energy of enjoyment. Maria talked about the difference between consuming, guzzling, chomping through life and the beauty of enjoying life. It soon became clear that I have been chomping more than enjoying! This little chapter reminded me to take the time to celebrate, to savor. Learning how to enjoy life is a skill.. One that needs to be practiced and developed. Questions are powerful and developing the skill of enjoyment requires a new question. Instead of spending our time asking “How can I get through this day?” we can ask the question “What might I savor about this moment?” That is my question for each day this summer... “What might I savor about this moment?” I started today and right now I am enjoying writing you. This morning I savored a run in the park and seeing two snakes. (Well maybe I didn’t take the time to enjoy the snakes!) I wonder what else I will enjoy today. I’m thinking this is a great way to go through life!

Challenge:

Are you chomping through life or savoring it?

What will you savor about this moment?

How will you celebrate life today?

Are You in Control?

“Most of the shadows of this life are caused by standing in one’s own sunshine.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

“If you don’t like something, change it . If you can’t change it, change your attitude. Don’t complain.” *Maya Angelou*

“We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.” *Dalai Lama*

Thinking it Through...

I was recently talking with a friend of mine about what we can really control. Many of us (myself included) want to feel like we control our lives. We do everything we can to keep things in order and going our way. The fact is we can only control one thing and that is our mind...our thoughts and from our thoughts come our actions. That is what we can control and that is enough! I find that it is more then a full time job to direct my thoughts in positive ways and choose a good attitude. So what are the benefits of controlling your own mind? They are endless but here are a few... More joy, more peace, more creativity, a feeling of direction and purpose and the powerful feeling that comes from taking responsibility for your thoughts and actions.

Challenge:

What would you like to focus your thoughts on today?

What are some action steps you can take today towards what you want?

Who or what do you need to stop trying to control?

What do you need to give up worrying about?

Get Ready for More Joy...

“It isn’t the great big pleasures that count the most; It ‘s making a great deal out of the little ones.” *Jean Webster*

“We set our goals based on the big picture, but our joy comes from the details.”
Victoria Moran

Thinking it Through...

Life’s pleasures come from the details, the small joyful occurrences. We live in a culture that celebrates the big, noisy accomplishments but really how often do those celebrations come along? To truly enjoy life we need to celebrate the details. For example; Easter Dinner is an event. Watching the children painting the eggs is a detail. Event: Driving to work. Detail: Noticing the snow on the mountains as you drive. Event: Going out to eat with a friend. Detail: Enjoying the sound of your friend’s laughter. Train yourself to go through life as an artist using her senses to notice each color and shape.

Don’t keep your appreciation of details to yourself. Point out the smell of freshly baked bread, a toddler licking an ice cream cone or the bright blue of the sky. Soon you will draw others into your “detail” game. Before long you will realize that the joy of life really is in the details!

Challenge:

What are some events you have today? For each event spend time tuning into the details.

What colorful details can you purposefully add and enjoy today?

Share some of your beautiful details with a friend or coworker.

Are You Sitting on an Idea?

“In action lies wisdom and confidence.” *Albert Schweitzer*

“...courage is only an accumulation of small steps.” *George Konrad*

“I’ve never been afraid to step out and to move out in order to make things happen.” *Victoria Gray*

Thinking it Through...

I love the world of ideas. That pure, perfect energetic world where anything can be created and obstacles are unheard of. I’m good at playing in that world. I love hearing other people’s ideas and I enjoy thinking up my own. There is no argument that the world of ideas is wonderful but taking permanent residence in “idea land” can become a problem. What I have found is that if I stay too long in the “idea stage” the idea becomes stale and bitter causing me to not even want to think about it. The idea that once was energizing becomes an energy drain!

The only cure I have found is to begin the messy work of taking steps to move the idea into reality. It is messy because the minute I take action to create what I have envisioned my “monkey mind” starts chattering. It says “helpful” things like “This will never work.” “I think you can come up with a better idea.” “There are too many problems with this idea.” or the particularly encouraging, “You’re an idiot and all your ideas are doomed for failure!” Taking action is also messy because when I take action that is when I find obstacles and things I need to change. Over time I have learned to hang in there because when I keep taking action a beautiful thing happens...My idea gives me energy again. Even though I come up against problems I feel excited because I am creating and creating is one of the aspects of life that makes it worth living.

Challenge:

What idea do you have that has become stale and bitter due to inaction?

What small step can you take towards creating this idea?

Every day for a week take at least one action step to create your idea. At the end of the week notice how you feel.

About the Author

Leanna Fredrich is a Life Coach who specializes in helping entrepreneurs and small business owners stay motivated, gain clarity and move past any obstacles which get in the way of their total success.