

Ten Steps to Joyful Living and Thriving Business

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I'm a life coach and I help people realize their dreams and build joyful lifestyles and thriving businesses. I do this by coaching my clients how to stay in a positive mindset while choosing small easy actions to realize their goals. That's what a life coach does.

In coaching, keeping this positive mindset is the essential ingredient to making the goals a reality. Research from both positive psychology and brain science have shown that you cannot achieve joy or any real change toward positive living when your mindset is in a fear-driven, survival mode. This is a real stumbling block if you look at the negative messages especially around fear themes delivered by media and our everyday communication. It appears as a culture we have an addiction to negative thinking. Negative thinking and the level of fear have increased exponentially in today's struggle with financial realities and the failure of some of our major institutions.

Joy and a positive mindset are not only important in promoting desired positive change. They also result in optimum performance, the ability to think outside of the box, build your immune system, and make inspired decisions ...essentials to life, work or running a business in today's present climate of high negative challenges and fear-based thinking.

So what can you do about this present survival mindset in order to get to the joy necessary for meaningful living and working? There are two requirements: (1) using tools to access and bring about a positive mindset while decreasing the survival mode, and (2) using the tools, developed by research from positive psychology, that will increase and promote joy.

Tools to access positive thinking and decrease negative:

1. Sit down and just start focusing on your breathing, just notice your breath going in and out and how that feels in your body. Keep bringing your noticing back to your breathing, letting go of any thoughts that occur.
2. While you are in this calm state, ask yourself any question you have about a problem to which you want a solution. Continue just breathing and let your inner voice come up with a solution. It may pop into your head or you may have an urge to write something down.
3. Regularly do yoga, tai chi, or meditation.
4. Ask yourself what you are thinking, e.g., what are your negative thoughts? Write them down. This is what I call your Operating Self™, e.g. your thoughts pertaining to fear and survival. It is important to make these thoughts conscious so you can choose not to stay in this mindset. The more you pay attention to negative thinking in this way, the weaker this mindset gets.
5. Finally, it is essential to identify the part of you that I have labeled the Empowered Self™. You do this by remembering some time in your life where you have felt more confident, more in control and

happier. Try to remember some of the thoughts you had during this time. Write them down. Making these thoughts conscious forms the foundation for accessing your Empowered Self. Choose to go with the feelings and thoughts of your Empowered Self rather than your Operating Self. The more you do this, the stronger the Empowered Self gets.

Tools to increase joy and maintain it:

1. Think of a positive experience from your past. Imagine it as if you were really there. How do you feel, who are you talking to, what are you thinking, what are you doing, what does it look like around you? Do this once a day.
2. Have a day of random acts of kindness.
3. Find a career, business or project that is meaningful to you.
4. Find something that creates passion and joy where you feel you are making an impact beyond yourself.
5. Notice the good things that are happening to you each day; write them down or tell others about them.

In summary, these suggestions are a beginning toward forming a new way of living. That is we deliberately create our life, work and style of business, rather than passively take what comes or constantly struggle to make something happen. This approach is also reflective of a paradigm shift in how we live and want to live, from one of largely survival and struggle to one of joyful living, work and growing a business.

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