

THOUGHTS FOR THE  
**good**  
**life**

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*The sweetness of spring dances around us with the promise of rebirth, yet it is difficult to completely enjoy the goodness of the season. It has been eight months since we witnessed horror on American soil. How have you incorporated this event into your being? I often find myself feeling fears that I didn't know existed before 9/11. What if an airplane flies into a building where I do business? The images are so fresh. My recourse is to commit myself daily to enjoy each moment and stay connected to my dear ones.*



*Be well and enjoy.*

## What's on your Life Platter?

I recently started working with a successful professional, Isabel. She has become bored with her job and started coaching to figure out what's next. She wants to start a family and is struggling with the decision of making this job work again or looking for another opportunity. Isabel is hard working, has abundant energy and is used to seeing quick results.

As we looked at her life with the metaphor of a large platter, we saw it was full with her demanding job, a solid relationship with her spouse, a commitment to regular exercise and a busy leadership role in an extracurricular activity. As we inspected the platter, we discovered that the missing piece was time to think and listen to her internal clues. Isabel is a "doer" and she was willing to incorporate some "being" activities, as long as they did not become another chore. She chose to incorporate journaling and meditation without a strict schedule.

How often do you make time to listen to your internal clues for where you are going? Here are some ideas to practice daily or weekly to bring your inside out:

**Journaling** Write at least three full pages upon waking in the morning. Don't edit your words or reread them. Jot down your thoughts and feelings. Ask what's next. For example, you might ask yourself, "What do I need to accomplish to feel complete? How do I start the process?"

**Executive Think Time** Often called meditation. Either practice first thing in the morning or a take break during a busy day. Just clear your head and stare out the window for at least five minutes. Solutions to your challenges may just show up as you let go of doing.

**Walk Quietly in Nature** This is a solo activity, not for chatting with a pal. It is wonderful to close your eyes and take in the smells and sounds of nature. Feel the sun on your face. Invite your inner spirit to walk with you.

**Centering** Take a break any time, particularly when you feel stressed and overwhelmed. Take three deep breaths. Focus on filling the first third of your lungs with fresh air. Move your focus to the second part of your lungs as you relax. By the time you get to the lower third, you will feel considerably calmer. You may even have a new approach to the current challenge.

**Incorporate a Weekly Yoga practice** Yoga is an opportunity to stretch and strengthen your physical body, quiet the mind and connect within. Try a local class or enjoy a tape in the quiet of your own home. New insights to the questions of your day may show up effortlessly.

Experiment with several of these practices. See what works for you. Notice if you feel calmer and more able to focus on the bigger picture of your life.

### Hire a Coach for a New Perspective

**An old friend of mine recently was fired from his high-level management job. He didn't love the job, but was surprised to be let go. He is smart, incredibly hard working and has a strong point of view. He is in his mid-40s and has only had two jobs in his career. He was fired from both of them, the first one after 14 years of service.**

**I happened to call him on the day he received the pink slip. He said, "I think I will hire a coach. I need to get a better understanding of what makes me successful and at the same time holds me back." I was impressed that one of his immediate responses was to learn from the job loss. I also liked hearing his openness to getting another point of view on what was getting in the way of his success. It was a bold response to a significant challenge.**

**How could a coach's ability to bring new perspectives to your career and life impact your success? Think about inviting a coach on your team.**

"Stress is when your mouth says yes and your gut says no." AUTHOR UNKNOWN

## What *Aren't* You Saying?

Recently a client, Mark, told me he hadn't enjoyed his recent family vacation. There had been one upsetting event after another and he returned home barely speaking to his wife. The mother of one of his old friends had died suddenly. Then Mark's elderly aunt cut her finger and they rushed her to the emergency room. His uncle fell into tears, revealing that he no longer felt capable of taking care of his wife.

As we talked about the distressing vacation, Mark acknowledged that he most feared feeling out of control. The events were a double-edged sword: he felt out of control as he watched his loved ones feeling out of control. As his feelings escalated, he grew quieter and quieter, choosing not to share his uncomfortable feelings with his wife or other family members.

For his coaching homework, I challenged him to have an honest, open conversation with his wife about how he felt. Although it was the last thing he had in mind, he said he would consider it.

The following coaching session he reported feeling surprised and satisfied with the conversations he had initiated with his wife. He also noticed that the tension he had been feeling with his wife had disappeared.

Are there important feelings you are avoiding? Do they continue to be present as you move through your daily life? Find someone with whom to share these thoughts. Be honest. It takes a lot of energy to hide or cover up the uncomfortable feelings. The power you give them usually dissipates when you speak truthfully.

## When do we Think of Ourselves as Old?

Feeling old is all in the perspective of how we view ourselves. I often hear clients say they are too old in their 50s, 40s and even 30s to learn a new profession or make significant changes. A recent visit with an older friend reminded me just how important our perspective is to our willingness to approach life with freshness.

I was visiting my friend Shirley, who is 81 years old. As I was leaving her home, Shirley commented on how cool the morning had been when she delivered her newspapers, just a few hours earlier. Needless to say, I was shocked that she could possibly have a paper route. She smiled with a twinkle in her eye and said she throws the morning newspapers up to the door for several of the “older” neighbors. The older folks are 90-something! Shirley's attitude certainly underscores the saying we are as young as we feel.

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*I hope you enjoyed this newsletter. If you want me to forward a copy to a friend or don't want to receive future copies, you can call, fax or send me an e-mail message at [SSpritz@aol.com](mailto:SSpritz@aol.com).*

**Be well and enjoy! Susan Spritz Myres Tele: 847.242.0351 Fax: 847.242.0352**

## COACHING AWARENESS CONTINUES TO GROW

I recently attended the annual luncheon for the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO). I was thrilled to hear several business leaders share openly how coaching has supported their success.

*Lisa Argiris*, owner of International Musical Supplies, was honored as NAWBO's 2002 Women Business Owner of the Year. When Lisa received her award, she gratefully acknowledged her accountant, lender, lawyer and staff. The last person she introduced was her business coach, who Lisa said has helped her grow both personally and professionally.

*Judy George* was the event's keynote speaker. Judy is a charismatic, self-made businesswoman who started the successful East Coast furniture stores, Domain Home Fashions. Judy hired a coach when she realized she was burning through key personnel as fast as she was running through the venture capitalist's investment in Domain. With the coach's input, she came to understand how her interpersonal skills and employee choices were not serving her business goals. She made significant changes in her approach and her business thrived.

What a delight it was to hear such strong endorsements for the coaching profession ... and in front of 500 business people!