

The Coach Approach

By Benita Stafford-Smith

“Life is either a daring adventure of nothing at all.” Helen Keller

This Coach Approach explores the idea of adventure. How does adventure show up in your life? Does adventure draw you to a new understanding of yourself? Does it challenge you to new explorations both professionally and personally? Or does the lure of adventure lead you astray? Is the lure of the adventure much more appealing than the adventure itself?

John Amatt states *“Adventure isn’t hanging on a rope off the side of a mountain. Adventure is an attitude that we must apply to the day to day obstacles of life – facing new challenges, seizing new opportunities, testing our resources against the unknown and in the process, discovering our own unique potential”*

As a person who values adventure in my life I appreciate Mr. Amatt’s thoughts. You see, sometimes, adventure for me is hanging on a rope off the side of a mountain. I have received a lot of very valuable insights when I push my limits in this way. I also am careful to watch out for adventure just for the sake of adventure. There is no growth for me in those situations although there is certainly a lot of excitement. Neither is right or wrong. For me it is simply a question of where you are directing your life at this time. I used to satisfy my adventurous nature through very challenging relationships - lots of adventure but not much else. Today I satisfy my adventurous nature by participating in activities that are far beyond my comfort zone. Today I craft my adventures carefully!

The arrival of summer brings thoughts of adventure to mind. The earth is dressed in its finest splendour and is lush and inviting. The warmer temperatures and the vacation season invite us to adventure.

I invite you to step out of your comfort zone this quarter. Listen to those callings you’ve been ignoring because you’re too busy or you’re too adult or you’re too broke, you fill in the blank, you’re too _____. Perhaps it’s a drama class, an art class, learning a different language, a new scientific arena. Perhaps you are a business owner and you could institute a new program for the summer months in your company – something like a 10-15 minute health break each morning. If your staff is small enough you could organize the health break by having each staff member introduce an activity for the break. For example - deep breathing, Qi-Gong, a meditation technique, a visualization technique, nutrition tip, a skill from their favourite sport. Some of this may take some research but gives everyone an opportunity to do something different and builds the team. If your staff continues some of the practices, the long term benefits are exponential, both for your staff and for your company. For locations where the summer months are short you could initiate a “Sunshine” break and have staff meet outside in the sunshine for a 10-15 minute meeting.

For those interested in something that keeps you a little closer to home I discovered this gem of a book on a wilderness canoe trip. *Wild Heart Dancing – a Personal, One-Day Quest to Liberate the Artist and Lover within* by Elliot Sobel, ISBN 04941100. Mr. Sobel leads you through a one day retreat from the comfort of your own home - “There is a creative genius inside of you just waiting to get out. Wild Heart Dancing shows you how to free that innovative spirit by spending a day playing with words, music, songs, dance, and paints. You don’t need to be artistic to benefit from the teachings of Elliot Sobel, you just need to open up and take the time to try your hand at new ways of expressing yourself.”

Whatever it is you decide to explore it is a great opportunity to get out of your comfort zone. Your personal growth will be reflected in everything you do.

“Alas for those who cannot sing, but die with all their music inside them” anonymous, from a Jewish prayer book.

In the July issue of Fast Company there is an article titled – 7 Habits of Spectacularly Unsuccessful Executives by Sydney Finklestein. Mr. Finklestein habit #2 is – they identify so completely with the company that there is no clear boundary between their personal interests and their corporation’s interests.

I encourage you to be creative, stretch yourself and see if you can connect with a new level in your life during this next quarter.

As promised in the last Coach Approach, we will explore Personal Power from the Personal Path program.

The Personal Path

The Personal Path is a coaching assessment that looks at ten areas of your life – inner peace, personal power, happiness & joy, spiritual bliss, grace and love, full satisfaction, natural balance, personal passion, vitality and wellness and fulfillment.

PERSONAL POWER

A powerful person has resources and knows how to use them:
Includes the people, skills, information, experience, abilities and focuses which influence, cause and create one's environment and results. We all have power available but must open ourselves to access it fully by being a conduit for power.

WHEN EXPERIENCING PERSONAL POWER, A PERSON:

- Is able to accomplish a lot with little suffering
- Is able to create by using available resources
- Is results-oriented but process sensitive
- Is always at cause, not at effect; uses whatever power one has

WHAT HAPPENS UNTIL A PERSON GETS HERE:

- Weakness, at-the-affect of circumstances and life
- Inconsistent performance due to moods, energy
- Frustrated at length of time it takes to accomplish goals
- Dominating, pushy, too results-oriented

10 STEPS TO INCREASE PERSONAL POWER

Raise personal standards to reflect higher self-worth
Empower others directly: Recycling their power by listening
Start being for others/results vs being about them
Go for the quality vs quantity of what you produce
Get the phrasing you need to express yourself fully
Have things be acceptable or unacceptable vs forever gray
Initiate everything; wait for and follow no one
Take many, many risks and experiment as much as possible
Get to work, maintain momentum, be dedicated
Read those books which inform and educate you well

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