

# *Passion for Life Coaching*

*Making Deliberate Choices for a Fulfilling Life*

Newsletter by Suzette Langley, Life Coach and MSW

May 2005

## **Accept Yourself**

*If I could define enlightenment briefly I would say it is "the quiet acceptance of what is." – Wayne Dyer*

Acceptance can be difficult for most of us. In part, this may be because acceptance is often confused with approval. According to the American Heritage dictionary, acceptance means "a favorable reception; approval" or "a belief in something; agreement." And, approve means "to express a favorable opinion or to signify satisfaction." Thus, by these definitions, acceptance equals approval. But does it?

My recent struggle to accept where I was emotionally prompted my exploration of the issue of acceptance. April 25 marked the 3 year anniversary of my mother's passing. Although I knew it was "that time of year", I was not consciously aware of how it was affecting me because I had many business events and concerns that were distracting me. My husband and my coach brought my emotions to the foreground when they noticed that I was crying more easily, had low energy, difficulty sleeping, and lacked motivation to do much of anything. Once I realized how I was being affected emotionally and physically, my next challenge was to accept where I was. Immediately, I judged that "I should not feel so sad. It's been 3 years! I could accomplish more if I just felt like myself. Would mom want me to feel this way and be so out of sync?" Shoulda, coulda, woulda ... all those words that make us feel guilty, inadequate, and frustrated.

And, no doubt, I felt all those things. I wanted to move my business forward by scheduling presentations and networking. The problem was that I did not want to be out. I wanted to be alone. I fought my feelings and wants and forced myself to be out. I thought I could still make progress. However, I only achieved disappointing results. My concentration was low, my creativity lacking, and my personality less than outgoing. After some reflection, a good session with my coach, and encouragement from my husband, I stopped fighting where I was and let it be. I accepted it even though I did not like it! And, guess what? It worked. During my alone time, I was able to slow down and reflect on where I wanted to be personally and professionally. I had been feeling scattered and stretched thin in both areas. When I stopped fighting where I was emotionally, I released that energy to work on defining my personal and professional focus and on moving forward from where I was.

Acceptance can be an important part of how we choose our actions. For example, I have known many competitive athletes who have complicated a simple injury by competing when they should have rested. They refused to accept the injury and listen to the pain signals their body was giving. The results usually meant a more serious injury, longer recovery time, and perhaps medical attention such as a brace or physical therapy. In this instance, acceptance does not mean approving of the injury but acknowledging its existence, and all the frustration it causes, so that the best course of action can be chosen.

Even more difficult than accepting unwanted circumstances can be accepting negative qualities. These are the qualities that we dislike about ourselves, that make us uncomfortable, and that we wish we did not possess. Examples include being easily angered or being judgmental. Ignoring these traits can have negative consequences physically and emotionally. If we deny that we are angry, it may transform into an upset stomach or tension in our shoulders. Ultimately, we may hold anger in until we explode, possibly at someone or something that really is not the cause of our anger. Or, consider how being judgmental prevents us from becoming more open-minded. Without accepting that we are judgmental, we are not likely to know when we are engaging in the behavior much less be able to take action to change it. Accepting that we have a certain quality, even if we do not like that quality, empowers us to know ourselves better and be more conscientious in our actions.

April was a difficult month. I did not like that I felt sad and unmotivated. But, looking back, it was helpful for me to slow down and reflect on where I was, where I was going, and where I have been. I also believe the time of reflection will help the grieving and healing process. Perhaps then, acceptance is not the same as approval, or agreeing with or being satisfied with a feeling or circumstance. Acceptance is a higher level of knowing yourself. It is about knowing your blind spots so that you can make better choices and use your energy for progress rather than struggle.

*We cannot change anything until we accept it. – C.G. Jung*

I am partnered with Big Vanilla Athletic Club. As an integral part of the holistic services department at the club, I address the mental and emotional aspects that are part of overall well-being and life success. Visit the club website at [www.bigvanilla.com](http://www.bigvanilla.com). Holistic Health services, including massage, reiki, skin care, occupational therapy, and nutritional counseling, are open to members and nonmembers.

My article “Getting Organized for Your Health” appears in the May edition of the *Severna Park Voice* in the Health and Fitness section. On May 4, I was a panel presenter with two area coaches at the Home-Based Business Showcase at Office Depot in Severna Park, MD. The topic presented was “Marketing and Networking Made Easy.”

To learn more about coaching, visit my website at [www.passion-for-life-coaching.com](http://www.passion-for-life-coaching.com).

If you found valuable information in this newsletter, please pass it along. I welcome new subscribers! To subscribe/unsubscribe, please send an email to [passionforlifecoaching@verizon.net](mailto:passionforlifecoaching@verizon.net). I also welcome feedback and topic ideas.

Are you struggling to accept difficult circumstances or emotions? Coaching can help you learn how to accept yourself and how acceptance can create opportunities for personal growth. To find out more, contact me at [passionforlifecoaching@verizon.net](mailto:passionforlifecoaching@verizon.net) or 410-757-7326 to schedule a complimentary 30-minute session. Coaching sessions are generally conducted by telephone so you do not need to reside in the same area as the coach.

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