

# *Passion for Life Coaching*

*Making Deliberate Choices for a Fulfilling Life*

Newsletter by Suzette Langley, Life Coach and MSW

June 2005

## **Self-Acceptance Part II: Patience**

“Patience is a virtue” and “Good things come to those who wait” are two phrases that ring in my ears from my parents. I heard them often because I was rarely patient. If I wanted something to be done, it needed to be done immediately. In fact, the perfect personal theme song for me would have been Queen’s, *I Want It All (And I Want It Now)*. Last month’s newsletter on self-acceptance inspired me to consider patience. Why? Because patience is a key ingredient to self-acceptance. And, I have struggled to be more patient while wrestling with the fact that I am very impatient!

My impatience is a quality that I have never liked about myself. It adds pressure to get things accomplished to my daily activities. It creates anxiety about how and when things will be completed. It also makes asking for help difficult because I worry if another person will respond and complete the task. I know I am not alone in this situation. I have a friend who says, “It needs to be done...yesterday.”

To the outside observer, I do not appear to be impatient. When I was a therapist, my clients were surprised if I shared how impatient I could be. They would respond that they felt I was patient with them even if the process of change was moving slowly. And, that was true. I could assess their progress and provide encouragement from my perspective. However, stepping back to gain perspective on my own progress and abilities was a far more challenging task. I fell into the trap of placing higher expectations on myself than others did.

In the past year and a half, my high self-expectations have pushed my patience to its limits. First, buying a house stretched my patience because I could not complete every home improvement project in a couple of weeks. Second, starting a business has been a source of frustration as I expect that I should have a full practice, be well known, and have a solid income by now. In these situations, my impatience creates discouragement and agitates the negative voice in my mind that says, “You are not succeeding. Your efforts are not enough.” It becomes difficult to keep making the effort when I perceive that I am not getting results I believe that I should.

From childhood, based on the reaction of my parents, I had learned that being impatient was a decidedly negative quality. I would certainly agree when my impatience makes me more critical of myself and creates anxiety. In addition, I believe that I should be more patient and criticize myself for not being so. Although I considered my impatience a negative trait, my coach challenged me to see it as a positive trait. Her challenge reminded me that “good” and “bad” are relative labels and what is “bad” can also have a “good” side as well. In considering how my impatience can be good for me, I immediately realized that it motivates me. I get more done in a shorter period of time, and I am a problem solver. I am also more creative! Viewing my impatience as a potentially positive quality actually helped me to be more accepting of it!

Now, I have discovered that I am aware of and can identify when I am being impatient. When I recognize my impatience, I pause to consider if my impatience in that situation is helping or hindering me. Perhaps impatience is helping me to stay motivated and it gives me an advantage. Or, if it is hindering me, I can more easily find that kernel of patience because I recognize that I am creating unrealistic expectations or causing myself unnecessary stress, worry, and negativity.

Accepting my impatience has actually allowed me to increase my patience. A feat I never thought possible! Self-acceptance often means embracing the parts of yourself that you dislike the most. Accepting what you dislike can be the key to opening the door of change because you stop fighting yourself and become an observer of your actions. You may notice the positive and negative sides of a quality and then make effective changes in your life. And, these positive changes will build further self-acceptance.

*Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections but instantly set about remedying them - every day begin the task anew.*

*– St. Francis de Sales*

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.

In June, I will be offering 2 FREE workshops at Big Vanilla Athletic Club. On Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:00PM, I will present “Goal Setting for Success.” Participants will learn how priorities influence goal setting and results, learn to set SMART goals, and discover the power of positive thinking in creating success. On Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30PM, “Identifying and Managing Time Vampires” will be the topic of the workshop. In this workshop, participants will review how they spend their time, develop their “ideal” day, identify what steals their time, and develop strategies to manage time more effectively. Space in the workshops is limited. To register, call 410-544-2525.

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 ideas for future topics.

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.