

Passion for Life Coaching

Making Deliberate Choices for a Fulfilling Life

Newsletter by Suzette Langley, Life Coach and MSW

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Get Out Of the Zone

Wait ... don't I mean "Get into the zone"? Most of the time people focus on getting into a zone for productivity or efficiency, a place where things happen easily. However, I am talking about a comfort zone.

Wikipedia defines comfort zone as "a type of mental conditioning that results in artificially created mental boundaries, within which an individual derives a sense of security. These boundaries tend to result in an internal state of mind which may not necessarily be true. This may or may not manifest as an external situation in the individual's life."

Our comfort zone is where we spend most of our time. We know what to expect. We know how to act. We know what to say. We feel completely safe and secure. Change and challenge rarely happen in our comfort zone.

We don't like to move out of our comfort zone because the unexpected occurs "out there". We risk facing uncertainty or loss or having a lack of confidence and knowledge. We also face our fears head on. Fear of failure, looking stupid, being hurt, being judged, being out of control, being rejected, the unknown all become larger than life outside our comfort zone boundary. It's no wonder we stay where things feel safe and secure!!

What would possibly move us out of our comfort zone? In a word, discontent. Our movement begins with an idea that there is more to life than what we are experiencing. Maybe we desire to use our talents in a way our current job does not require. Maybe we want to express ourselves more clearly. Maybe we have a greater vision of how we want to help others. We may prepare ourselves for the change by imagining what it will be like. Then, we question the boundaries of our comfort zone. Are the boundaries our perceptions or are they reality? We test the boundaries and start to stretch them out. For example to challenge our physical boundaries, we sign up for an event that pushes our abilities. If we want to be more outgoing, we challenge ourselves to talk to three new people per day.

Next thing we know, our comfort zone has expanded and we look back to say, "I never thought I could..."

How do you know you are stretching your comfort zone? You constantly question yourself. You wonder if you can do it. You worry others will think you are "stupid." You feel queasy. Your head feels like it is spinning and you aren't sure where to start. You feel like a stranger in your own skin. You bounce between feeling elated (I can totally DO this!!) to feeling gloomy (What was I thinking? I am a complete fraud!). Sounds like fun, right?

Instead of focusing on the negative feelings of widening your comfort zone, focus on the positives. What is there to be gained? Personal growth, satisfaction, new opportunities, discovering unknown potential, increased confidence, clarity, new ideas...the list goes on! Isn't that much better than all those worries? Staying focused on the positives when you have so many worries can be difficult but is well worth the effort!

So, consider this – will your comfort zone become an excuse or are you willing to take some risks?

Here are some small ways to stretch your comfort zone by doing something differently –

1. Drive a new route to work or school
2. Read a different type of book than you would normally choose
3. Go to a different restaurant or coffee shop
4. Try a new product, like shampoo or makeup
5. Change your routine in the morning when you get ready (eat breakfast, then shower)
6. Meet 3 new people today
7. Take a class or workshop on a topic you don't know much about
8. Do a new exercise or machine at the gym

"Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve." - Napoleon Hill

Upcoming Events:

Workshop for Women – Sunday, October 29, 1:00-3:00pm

In this 2-hour workshop designed for women only, come and learn that "selfish" is not a dirty word, how to eliminate energy drainers and how to say no gracefully. This workshop has received wonderful reviews for content and for providing women the opportunity to connect on common issues such as significant others, parenting, meeting your needs, and friendship.

Cost: \$40

Ah, It's the Holiday Season – Wednesday, November 15, 6:30-7:30pm

Do you dread the holidays? Do you hate the rush of events and the endless holiday tasks? Does January 1st leave you wondering where the time went but the credit card bills tell you what you did? Learn how to manage holiday stress and spending so that you can have a peaceful holiday focused on what matters most to you.

Cost: \$20

Healthy Holidays Group – Wednesdays November 29, December 6 and 13 6:30-7:30pm

You worked hard in 2006 to achieve your health and fitness goals. Now comes the most challenging part of the year – the holidays. Don't start from the same place you were in last January. Maintain the healthy gains you made this year with the support of a coach and other motivated individuals. This group will cover how to resist temptation at holiday parties, how to manage stress without food, and how to manage your time so that your workouts remain part of your schedule.

Cost: \$60

Both workshops and the group will be held at Big Vanilla Athletic Club, 1209 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD. Please call 410-544-2525 or 410-757-7326 to register.

Please forward this newsletter to others you believe would enjoy it. I welcome new subscribers! To subscribe/unsubscribe, please send an email to passionforlifecoaching@verizon.net. I also welcome feedback and ideas for future topics.

For more information, visit www.passion-for-life-coaching.com.

Fall is a time to change. Are you ready to move out of your comfort zone and make some changes? If so, explore how coaching can support your goals and move you forward by contacting Suzette Langley, at passionforlifecoaching@verizon.net or at 410-757-7326. 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.