



PeopleFocus



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Editor's Message

It is a brand new Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day this month! So what actions would you take to create a more balanced work and personal life?

Lionel L Lim

Aurora Executive Solutions

This month marked the beginning of the New Year on the Chinese lunar calendar. 2005 is the year of the rooster. According to the Chinese zodiac, people born under this year are supposed to be industrious, honest, and proud.

This month is also noted for Valentine's Day! This day isn't just for spouses and lovers. Give more than a moment for your Mom and Dad, your children, a good friend or a neighbour who may appreciate an appropriate greeting. We all need to know that people care about us!

In this issue of the **PeopleFocus** newsletter, we take a look at how we can eliminate tolerations in our lives, our top 10 fears, how well we handle worry and our relationship with money.

The **PeopleFocus** newsletter aims to provide informative articles and resources to organisations to help improve workplace performance and to individuals to develop their personal effectiveness in their career and life goals.

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Tolerations Take A Toll!

At the root of our tolerations are a variety of limiting beliefs that immobilize us and rob us of an appropriate work-life balance.

What do desktop clutter, inadequate tools for the job; a too-chatty co-worker and a troublesome relationship with the boss have in common?

Yes, they're all tolerations, the little and big things we often put up with – and often without realizing it – that sap our energy and drain our life force. Every time we tolerate something, we deplete the energy we could be using to grow our business or make desired changes or to simply experience joy. It's like living with a low-grade fever or pain that somehow dulls our experience and zaps our full vitality.

When am I going to get to all that paperwork? Zap!

Ughhhh, I wish he would just be quiet. Zap!

My computer just froze for the third time today. Zap!

At the root of our tolerations are a variety of limiting beliefs that immobilize us. For example:

- "I can't take the time."
- "That's just the way it is."
- "Don't rock the boat – play it safe."
- "Don't complain or be too demanding."
- "It's not that important."
- "I have no control."

There are countless limiting beliefs, yet they all serve to dampen our life force and keep us playing small. And, boy, are they exhausting!

If we are committed to creating work and personal life that is balanced and fulfilling, if we want to fully express our unique gifts and be of service, it is necessary to consciously evaluate and eliminate the tolerations standing in our way.

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Here are some ideas on how to evaluate and eliminate the tolerations that stand in our way:

Appraise

Make an honest appraisal of what you are tolerating in each of the areas of your life: environment, health, work, money, relationship and so on. Write down everything that annoys you or that you feel you are putting up with. You will likely come up with more than 100 of these tolerations!

Choose

Based on your values and goals, you get to choose. What will you say “No” or “Yes” to? Make sure the “Yeses” really excite you. Commit to making them real!

Plan

With the support of your coach, friends or family, develop a strategy for eliminating these tolerations. You don't have to do it alone – in fact, it's more fun to partner up or create a support team.

Verify

Create accountability around your goals, with specific deadlines for eliminating tolerations. How many and which ones will you eliminate each day?

Evaluate

Examine each underlying limiting belief that has kept you putting up with these things. Again, get support to help you break through them. You may be so close to some of these beliefs that you can't fully recognize them for what they are.

Appreciate

Take an honest look at what you are getting out of keeping things as they are. There is always some kind of payoff for whatever is going on in your life. Who in your life – or what part of you – does not want things to change? Appreciate that person or part, and look for ways for it to be win-win for all concerned.

Request

Remember that complaints are usually unspoken requests. What requests do you need to make?

As you eliminate tolerations, you will feel the joy of being at choice, an increase in your vitality and a sense of empowerment. And then YOU will be in the driver's seat...and wouldn't that be a beautiful and worthwhile ride! ■

Top 10 Fears That Keep Us From What We Want

Fear often stands between us and our ability to make decisions, take actions, and ask for what we want – even to know what we really want. It is the gatekeeper of our comfort zone. But as poet-philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “He has not learned the lesson of life, who does not every day surmount a fear.”

Below are the Top 10 fears that commonly get in our way.

- 1. Fear of being judged.** Needing approval from family, peers, co-workers can keep us from going after our dreams and goals.
- 2. Fear of rejection.** Rejection just means that someone else has a different opinion.
- 3. Fear of emotional pain.** Rather than incapacitate us, painful feelings can sharpen our sense of joy and gratitude.
- 4. Fear of embarrassment.** Making mistakes publicly is awful only when we let ourselves feel ashamed.
- 5. Fear of being alone / abandoned.** A strong sense of self-worth and what we can offer the world reduces this fear.
- 6. Fear of failure.** A biggie for most of us and born of the notion that it's not OK to fail.
- 7. Fear of success.** More responsibility, more attention, pressure to perform can be frightening when we don't believe in ourselves.
- 8. Fear of expressing feelings.** An authentic life means being willing to express our true feelings to our loved ones, colleagues, adversaries – even ourselves.
- 9. Fear of intimacy.** Emotional intimacy – really being seen by another – can be as scary as sexual intimacy.
- 10. Fear of the unknown.** The unknown can be exciting and vast if we shift our fear to curiosity. ■

How Well Do You Deal With Worry?

At its essence, worry is a useful response, helping us anticipate and avoid danger by taking constructive action.

All too often, worry becomes an endless loop that makes it hard to focus and perform, and stresses our physical systems.

What will happen?

How will it all turn out?

How can I act to make the outcome the best it can be?

The key to how well you handle worry is to shift your negative thoughts and actions to positive ones. Use this checklist below and see where you are in dealing with worry.

Negatives

1. I seem confident and happy-go-lucky to everyone who knows me. That's because I keep my worries to myself. I don't want to burden anyone by sharing my concerns.
2. I lie in bed for two or three hours at night worrying, just hoping to fall back asleep. I feel tired all the time.
3. My worries seem to come from nowhere, and they feel uncontrollable. When I'm in the grip of them, I feel incapable of coming up with any solutions.



4. When I'm immersed in my worried thoughts, I have, but rarely notice, physical sensations such as speedy heartbeat, sweatiness and shakiness.
5. The more repetitive my worrying becomes, the more persuasive it seems.

6. I worry about others because I don't really trust that they can take care of themselves.

7. I worry mostly about things that, in fact, have a very low probability of actually occurring – going bankrupt, dying in a plane crash, getting divorced, etc.

Positives

1. What really works for me when I'm feeling tense and afraid is to take a long walk, run or bike ride, or go work out. It seems that when I exercise more, I worry less.
2. When I find myself worrying, I get up and move around. Action seems to relieve my anxiety and gives me a better perspective.
3. Getting involved with my family, friends, church, neighbourhood, organizations, etc., gives me the sense of being part of something bigger than myself. When I turn the focus from inside to out, my worries seem to dissipate.



4. When my worries spin on in an endless loop, I know it's time for a gratitude list. Focusing on the things I am grateful for is like turning my worries inside out.
5. Rather than let my night time thoughts keep me from getting to sleep, I focus on physical sensations, such as the feel of the sheets and the warmth of my own body.
6. I try to catch my worrying as close to its beginning as possible. Then I take some time to relax, breathe deeply and get centred again.
7. When I'm concerned about something, I take action. Then I let go, trusting that I've done all I can do.
8. I write about my fears and concerns. This seems to take some of the power out of them. After writing, creative solutions seem to just show up.

Shift your worry to wonder. It opens up possibilities for curiosity and positive action rather than dread and immobility. ■

How Healthy Is Your Relationship With Money?

Money or rather the lack of it, the fear of losing it, the dread of not having enough, tops the list of concerns of many people.

The bottom line is that our unspoken attitudes and ideas about money may be getting in the way of a sense of well being and security in our lives. Take this Money Quiz to learn more about your relationship with money.

1. I have no idea where my money goes every month. I just don't think about money.
2. I act as if I have plenty of money, but inside, I'm always worried that I don't have enough, even to meet my monthly bills.
3. I have no idea where I got my attitudes about money.
4. I feel ashamed about having more money than my friends (or less than); if they found out, I'm afraid they wouldn't like me.
5. It seems like I'm always comparing my financial situation with others'; no matter how much I actually have, I always feel like I come up short.
6. I'm embarrassed about the amount of debt I owe; I would never talk about it with any of my friends or acquaintances.

7. No matter how much money I actually have, I'm secretly afraid I will lose everything and become homeless.

8. I'm clueless about money; I don't even know the right questions to ask. My financial advisor just tells me what to do with my money.

9. I keep having to use a credit card to cover my monthly bills.

10. I worry that I will never be able to make it financially if my spouse leaves me or dies.

11. I'll always have to do without, so I might as well get used to it. I can never really have what I want.

12. Having money means having control.

If you answered true to even five of the above questions, you may want to explore your beliefs around money.

By better understanding your attitudes and values toward money, you may be more able to gain control of money instead of it controlling you. ■



Happy Valentine's Day!

About Us



Lionel L Lim is the founder of Aurora Executive Solutions (AES), a Human Talent Management and Development Solutions firm. He is a US-certified EQ trainer, a career and life coach, a People's Association approved trainer, and a licensed facilitator of the Profiles occupational assessments. Lionel is also an experienced facilitator of the EQ Map, the Emotional Intelligence Style Inventory, MBTI tools and the INSIGHT Inventory.

Lionel is a graduate of the University of South Australia with a BA in Communication and Media Management. He also holds a Diploma in Training and a Certificate in Counselling Skills. Lionel has a varied experience in executive search, communication, leadership, training, coaching and mentoring, as well as the effective management of teams in both local and overseas assignments.

Lionel is a professional member of the Asian Association of Career Management Professionals, the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence Network, the Career Planning and Adult Development Network, the National Resume Writers' Association and the International Association of Coaches.

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Aurora Executive Solutions

10 Anson Road, #15-14
International Plaza, S079903
Singapore

www.auroraexecutive.com
enquiry@auroraexecutive.com
Office: (65) 6559 9690 Mobile: (65) 9838 3697