

People Focus

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Editor's Message

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Aurora Executive Solutions

In March and April this year we distributed two html versions of this newsletter to some of our subscribers for comment. We continued to receive good feedback on our html versions. The majority prefer the second layout, which is the version that we've sent out this month. We intend to discontinue distributing the pdf version from June 2005 onwards. The pdf format would still be made available for download through our *Resources* page of our website.

In this issue of the **People Focus** newsletter, we share some ideas and insights into personal development. It's an eclectic mix of how to de-clutter our lives, speaking up for our needs, identifying our internal roadblocks to success, and how the power of intention can propel us towards our goals and dreams

The **People Focus** 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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Playing The Inner Game To Win

The inner game takes place within the mind and is played to overcome the self-imposed obstacles.

Tom has worked at his company for more than four years and knows he does a great job. His boss even tells him so. He's wanted to ask for a raise for several months, but it just never seems like the right time to ask. At least, that's what he keeps telling himself.

But could it really be that Tom is afraid of rejection? Or on some level - perhaps a subconscious one - he doesn't feel he "deserves" to get paid well for the work he does?



"In every human endeavor there are two arenas of engagement: the outer and the inner," says Tim Gallwey, author of *The Inner Game of Work*. "The outer game is played on an external arena to overcome external obstacles. The inner game takes place within the mind and is played to overcome the self-imposed obstacles."

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Internal Roadblocks

You can try harder to change by taking more action in the “outside,” physical world. But if you’re powered by limiting beliefs and negative feelings, chances are you’re just going to go faster in the wrong direction.

So how do you effect real change, change that starts from within? The first step is to identify just what is holding you back. Some common internal roadblocks are:

Fear. Probably the most popular culprit, the list of fears is endless. Whatever your fears, they prevent you in some way from experiencing your full potential.

Thinking Small. If you expect less, you get less. You have to think big and believe you can have success before you will actually experience it.

Being Out Of Balance. When we over-focus on certain areas of our lives to the exclusion of others, we experience stress and incongruence. Creativity is then compromised.

Lack Of Motivation. Without passion for what you’re doing (or at least a big payoff), it’s difficult to get moving in any direction.

Once you determine your specific roadblocks, it’s time to face them head on, reprogramming your beliefs and defining (or redefining) your life priorities and purpose. Working with a coach helps many to determine a practical strategy for navigating the roadblocks. Steven Covey of *Seven Habits* suggests writing a personal mission statement (as you would for a company) and then organizing your life around it.

For the goals that seem impossible to accomplish, Barbara Sher, career counselor and best-selling author, suggests throwing an “idea party.” Get a group of people together and take turns throwing out your ideas and their obstacles - you’ll be surprised at some of the creative answers you’ll receive.

But whatever you do, keep looking inside. Take responsibility for what you create externally and work on winning the inner game. When you do, you’ll start winning in the outer world, too. ■

What’s That You Said?

The Fears That Prevent Us from Speaking Up.

Do you value being seen and heard? Do you want to have truly successful relationships? Do you want to make an impact on others? Then speak up!

Of course, for some people, that’s easier said than done. You might prefer to train wild lions than tell another person what’s really on your mind. But it is possible to develop an assertiveness connected to head and heart that clears the way for honest, empowered living - without being rude to others or surrendering to “nice-itis.”

“We all need to learn to dance in rhythm to the beat of our own soul,” writes Kelly Bryson in his book, *Don’t Be Nice, Be Real: Balancing Passion for Self with Compassion for Others*.



Those who stay mum when they would be better off speaking their mind do so for a variety of reasons:

Fear of being rejected. Any time you risk disclosing yourself, you become vulnerable. Communications skills, such as those taught in Non-Violent Communication (NVC) or Powerful Non-Defensive Communication (PNDC), teach how to combine vulnerability with strength and compassion for powerful connections.

Fear of what you would tell yourself if you or any requests you make are rejected. If you speak up and tell your officemate how much you would like to go out with her, you definitely risk rejection. But if you are rejected, does that really mean you’re unlovable? Destined to a life alone? Or is that just story?

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Fear of hurting feelings. Related to this is the belief that it is better to please others, even at your own expense. As Bryson points out, being Mr. or Mrs. Nice Guy or Gal is actually a form of violence to yourself and others, and an escape from a fully lived life.

Fear of “rocking the boat,” or upsetting the status quo. The writer Muriel Rukeyser spoke to this fear in her memorable quote: “What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life? The world would split open.”

Fear that you have nothing worth saying. Years of poor self-image can lead to this. It is simply not true. Every human has a gift for the world, whether that be your own family, community or larger humanity.

Fear of sparking a conflict. If you have an abusive or volatile family history, you may have learned to keep quiet or be invisible to avoid confrontation. But constant suppression of powerful feelings can lead to frustration, possibly aggressive or abusive behavior, or illness.

It's important to distinguish between being assertive and being aggressive. Aggression trespasses on another's boundaries without regard for feelings. Assertiveness, on the other hand, communicates feelings, thoughts and needs clearly and directly.

Speaking up after years of zipping your lips may not be easy. You may need to take baby steps - take classes or workshops, join an assertiveness support group, work with a coach. But the payoff can be incredibly liberating! From increased feelings of self-respect and empowerment, to more effective and authentic relationships, speaking up has far-reaching echoes in our lives.

Go ahead...shout from your own mountaintop! ■

The Power Of Intention

Without vision and the intention to achieve some goal, we're just spinning our wheels. Intention is the motor that propels us toward our goals and dreams.

We can do, do, do all we want, but all that doing won't get us very far unless we have an ultimate vision. Without vision and the *intention* to achieve some goal, we're just spinning our wheels. Intention is the motor that propels us toward our goals and dreams. Because

it's such an important element of our happiness, it's a smart idea to understand what it entails and how to best implement it.

The Law Of Attraction.

It's not just some woo-woo theory, it's scientific: like matter attracts like. Since matter is energy, and thoughts are a form of energy, you magnetically attract into your life circumstances and things that correlate to the kind of thoughts (and corresponding feelings and beliefs) you hold. It's similar to a radio broadcast: when tuned into a particular station, you will only hear (attract) the frequency of radio waves that match that station's signal.

“Inherent in every intention and desire is the mechanics for its fulfillment,” writes Deepak Chopra in *Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*. Before you even begin taking action to make your intention a reality, the process of its fulfillment starts simply by having the intention. By thinking, stating or writing out your intention, you're putting it out into the world. And that's all it takes to kick the law of attraction into gear.

“One sound idea is all that one needs to achieve success,” writes Napoleon Hill in the classic *Think and Grow Rich*. Everything we see around us in our daily lives started as a thought in someone's head. Hill is not implying that the idea or thought alone will magically beget the result, however. It's a given that you have to take action to make it into a reality.

Once the energy is in motion, to focus your intention in the right direction and make it into a reality, you need to keep the desired end result in mind. “Begin with the end in mind' is based on the principle that *all things are created twice*,” writes Steven Covey in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. “There's a mental or first creation, and a physical or second creation to all things.”

This second part is where action and persistence come into play. But your imagination, when used to empower your intention through detailed visualization, also plays a key role maximizing the power of intention.

“Your imagination creates the inner picture that allows you to *participate* in the act of creation,” writes Dr. Wayne Dyer in his best-selling book *The Power of Intention*. “Your willpower is much less effective than your imagination, which is your link to the power of intention.”

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Pay attention to your thoughts. Are they mostly negative, based on fear or worry? It's important to realize that we get more of what we focus on, and that when we become more aware of our thinking, we can "switch" our negative thoughts to positive ones.

Whatever your desire, you have the power to intend it into being. Not just by doing things to make it happen, but by having the right mindset. *Decide* what you want as the final result, *visualize* it in detail, *feel* that you already have it, and *believe* it will come to be. And you'll be on your way to creating the life you've always dreamed of. ■

Top Ten Ways To Simplify Your Life

Few among us would deny our lives are too complicated and filled with too much stress. Simplicity is about eliminating clutter - from your mind, your home, your relationships and your lifestyle.

The following are ten ways to begin:

1. Get a clear idea of what you want your life to look like. This picture will help you discover what you must eliminate.
2. Let go of projects, roles or self-imposed obligations that take up time and keep you away from what you really want.

3. Say No to what you don't want in your life. Say Yes to what you do want.

4. Schedule "break" days for yourself where you don't do anything but what you really want. Don't cancel them.

5. Make a "to do" day and get all those chores and errands done in a single day.

6. Create space. File away or toss out; give away, sell or trade.

7. Make and return phone calls only during certain hours.

8. Shop only when you have to. Question your purchases. Consuming less is good for the planet, too.

9. Ask for and accept help. Delegate chores. Hire when possible.

10. Remember to breathe, to ground yourself and be physically present.

A gratitude list will help you discover what really matters to you. Simplifying means making choices that will improve the quality of your life. ■

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, DiSC 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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