

Stress Bytes Newsletter

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"WHEN STRESS BITES, BITE BACK!"

THE NEWSLETTER OF ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.
LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR.

No Guarantees: Go for the Gusto

When we are struggling to make a decision about something important that will affect the course of our lives, wouldn't it be great to have a guarantee that everything will work out the way we hoped? I often wish that a deep voice would boom down from the heavens telling me exactly what I should do...the RIGHT thing to do. No such luck! The most I can count on to guide my decision-making is that "still small voice" inside me which insists, "Push the envelope. Go for the gusto. Reach for your dreams. Experiment with life. See what might happen." Sometimes I wish that little voice would shut up or I pretend I'm hard of hearing or otherwise o c c u p i e d !

Making decisions is hard. Implementing them is sometimes harder. It upsets the apple cart. It ushers in change. When I hear people say that they "hate" change, I suspect what they mean is either they "hate" a change that THEY didn't choose, or that change scares them, makes them feel inadequate, or taxes their ability to cope. I

don't hate change. I hate waiting to see how things will turn out once I make a decision. I'm impatient. I have to learn to take action and let go of the o u t c o m e .

So we should get a guarantee on the front end, right? No way. If everything turned out the way we hoped it would, we'd never learn anything new, never gain new skills and abilities, and never meet new challenges that will grow our confidence.

Yes, it's stressful to change, but change is a fact of life. We can either roll with life's punches, only reacting to what life throws our way - bobbing and weaving in an attempt to stay out of reach of real danger - or we can set our own course and respond to the w i n d s o f change by making calculated adjustments as we go. Do you react to life or respond to it?

Life is calling. What will your answer be? What are you being called to do or be in this life? In Greg Levoy's book, Callings: Finding and Following an Authentic Life, he says,

"Our own unfolding requires that we be in constant dialogue with it." He goes on to discuss the importance of discernment, which he says is a path between these two questions: "What is right for me?" and "Where am I willing to be led?"

Such ponderings may bring up questions of meaning. "What does my life mean? What do I want it to mean? Does life have any meaning?"



"When opportunity came knocking, I couldn't hear it because I was listening to my success tapes."

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No Guarantees: Go for the Gusto —cont'd

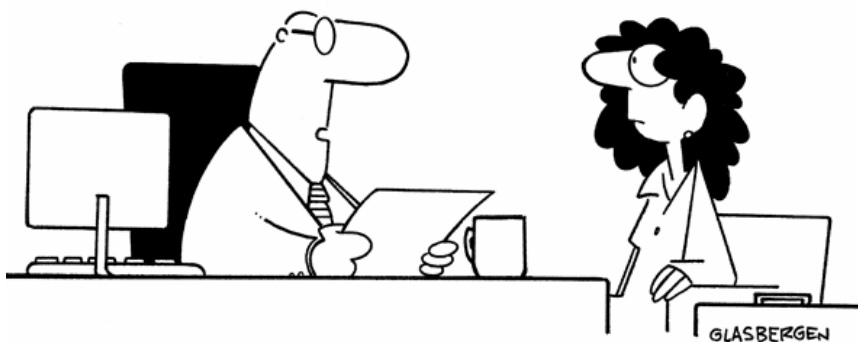
The famed mythologist, Joseph Campbell said, "People say that what we are all seeking is a meaning for life. I don't think that's what we are really seeking. I think what we are seeking is the experience of being alive...the rapture of being alive." Wow! If Thoreau was right, that the mass of men lead lives of silent despair, then who among us has the courage to break out of that and seek the rapture of being alive? To do so we have to be willing to wake up to the state of our lives, assess where we want to go, figure out where are passions are and make the changes necessary to get there.

Passion? That ought to be fun. Well, not always. Passion is derived from the Latin word, *passio*, which means suffering. According to Levoy, the reason most of us don't pursue our dreams is because we instinctively know the price we'll have to pay to do so. Following one's passion could be like opening Pandora's box. It can release all sorts of trouble into your life. However, the last thing that is released into the world from Pandora's box is what we all need in life.....hope!

"I've come to believe that each of us has a personal calling that's as unique as a fingerprint - and that the best way to succeed is to discover what you love and then find a way to offer it to others in the form of service, working hard, and also allowing the energy of the universe to lead you."

Oprah Winfrey

NEW: PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE DISCUSSION OF THIS AND OTHER TOPICS AT DR. VAILLANCOURT'S BLOG AT [HTTP://ENTERTRAININGYOU.BLOGSPOT.COM/](http://entertrainingyou.blogspot.com/)



**"Of course we have an employee fitness room.
That's where we send our executives to run with the
wolves, swim with the sharks, and soar with the eagles!"**

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Identifying Block to Success and Abundance

Write out your responses to each of the following questions. Give your "gut reaction" not what you think you "should" feel.

If I decide to be a PEAK PERFORMER, I would be/do/become..... (+/-)

What I *know* is holding me back from PEAK PERFORMANCE is....(fear of..., lack of..., too much of...I see myself as..., I believe.....)

My old or current view of SUCCESS was/is

My NEW SUCCESSFUL SELF is

List the aspects of SUCCESS that you are most comfortable with

List the aspects of SUCCESS that you are uncomfortable with

Which do you fear the most? Success or Failure?

I fear _____ the most because that would mean I am.....

Who in your circle of family, friends, and business associates would be most threatened/upset if you were more successful and why?

3 things I will do today to be/embody/demonstrate my SUCCESSFUL SELF

1. I WILL

2. I WILL

3. I WILL

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The Stress Doctor is IN!!!

“ONLY PASSIONS, GREAT PASSIONS, CAN ELEVATE THE SOUL TO GREAT THINGS.”

DENIS DIDEROT

“I GET UP EVERY MORNING DETERMINED TO BOTH CHANGE THE WORLD AND HAVE ONE HELL OF A GOOD TIME. SOMETIMES THIS MAKES PLANNING MY DAY DIFFICULT.”

E. B. WHITE

“THE MORE PASSIONS AND DESIRES ONE HAS, THE MORE WAYS ONE HAS OF BEING HAPPY.”

CHARLOTTE-CATHERINE

“FORTUNE DOES NOT CHANGE MEN, IT UNMASKS THEM.”

SUZANNE NECKER



“Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them by a friend who knows how to use Wikipedia.”

ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.

- Gently helping individuals, couples and groups resolve personal problems, manage stress, and reach their full potential since 1990.
- Specializing in Women’s Issues and Stress Management
- Emotional Freedom Technique for Peak Performance

Call **(618) 549-5935** to set up an appointment

READING LIST: FOR SUCCESS AND ABUNDANCE

The Success Principles—Jack Canfield

Callings: Finding and Following an Authentic Life — Greg Levoy

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People — Stephen Covey

How to Win Friends & Influence People - Dale Carnegie

Emotional Intelligence : Why It Can Matter More Than IQ — Daniel Goleman