

## **WELCOME TO QUIET COURAGE – April 2009**

The online newsletter for navigating life's changes and transitions from Bailey Coaching and Mary Ann Bailey, MC.

### **Feature Article: How to Feel Settled in an Unsettled World**

One of the main themes among my clients these days is the sense of unsettledness. Some of them have lost their jobs and are in the process of finding a new career path. Some have been thinking about retiring; however with the current economic situation they are now rethinking and redesigning their timeline. Others have no immediate crisis, but have absorbed much of the fear and uncertainty that is so pervasive right now.

There is no doubt that these are unsettling times. What we are going through as a nation is unprecedented. Every time we turn on the TV, pick up a newspaper or look on the internet we are bombarded with some sort of bad news. People are fearful and that fear is contagious. It's similar to a flu epidemic; if you come into contact with a fearful and panicky person, it's hard not to catch their hysteria. So, what's fueling all these feelings of unsettledness?

When life throws us a curve, our illusion of being in control is challenged. When things are going along the way we want them to, we believe that we are in control and that is why things are so good. When our life hits an unexpected snag, we think we've lost that control and that scares us. We do not like to feel out of control and it is easy to spiral into panic mode.

In reality, control is just an illusion. We are never really in control. Life does what life does. Our job is to first understand, that in spite of our best efforts and intentions, bad things will happen. Next we need to become proactive and create a framework or process by which we can lessen the impact that life's unexpected twists and turns can have on us.

The following questions will provide you a starting place to begin creating this framework.

1. What is the actual issue that is causing you to feel unsettled? Take some time with this question to make sure that you get to the true root of your uneasiness. Is it the actual loss of your job, the anticipation of losing your job, financial worries, concerns about what other people might be thinking, generalized anxiety, etc.?
2. Once you figure out the key issue, make a list of what you need in terms of information, resources, support, etc., to lessen your fear. Do you need to meet with a financial advisor? Do you need to hang out with more positive and upbeat friends? Do you need to work with a professional counselor or coach? Do you need to turn off the TV and/or quit reading the newspaper?

3. Now that you have this list, create a mini-action plan for each item. Who do you need to talk with? What specific information or resources do you need? Where can you get it? Make a specific timeline for each step.

4. Then create a plan of support for yourself. How are you going to take care of yourself during this difficult time? What can you do to relax? Who can you ask to be part of your support team? Be careful in choosing your team. You want people who won't feed into the hysteria and who are able to understand your needs and provide the kind of support you want.

5. Post your plans in a place where you will see them daily. This is important not only because it will remind you to take action, but also because it will remind you that you don't have to accept feeling fearful and unsettled - that there are steps you can take to guard against this epidemic of panic. Taking positive action steps is the best antidote to feeling out of control.

You may not have control over what life dishes out, but you do have control over how you choose to react to it. You have the power to decide whether you want to take the passive, helpless approach and get caught up in the hysteria; or whether you want to take a more proactive approach and create a plan of action that will empower you, keep you moving forward and greatly decrease your feelings of fear and unsettledness. The decision is up to you.

Until next time,  
Mary Ann Bailey, MC