

Welcome to Quiet Courage – May 2004

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

Feature Article: You Can't Fail a Journey

I was recently talking with a perspective client who had just been promoted within her organization and wanted help developing her leadership skills. We discussed the basic process of coaching, talked about her specific goals, and where she saw herself getting stuck. As the call was wrapping up, I asked her if she had any other questions. She hesitated for a minute and then very quietly asked, "How many clients have you had who have failed?"

It was a powerful moment, because in that one small question laid all the fears and doubts that each of us go through when we push ourselves to try something new, especially when we are involving another person such as a coach. In any relationship-based process we are risking opening ourselves and letting the other person see our vulnerabilities, our fears, and even our strengths.

It takes a lot of courage to take that leap and I applaud any person who is willing to take the plunge. I applaud them because they are making the conscious choice to enhance their life, and I applaud them because they are willing to step outside the parameters of their daily lives to learn something new about themselves.

All clients come to coaching with a different set of goals and a different way of being in the world. All coaching relationships are unique, but the process is pretty much the same. Coaching is about gaining an awareness of how we are in the world. It is about becoming more cognizant of the behaviors, thoughts, and beliefs that drag us down in life.

Coaching is about becoming aware of what we need to let go of and the areas in which we need to grow. It is about developing the competencies and skills necessary to achieve our stated goals and to ensure long-term excellent performance. It is learning how to nourish ourselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Coaching is about growing and changing. It is about discovering our brilliance – wherever and whatever that may be – and being able to wear that brilliance with pride and comfort. It is about stepping fully into who we are and feeling the empowerment that comes from living our lives from a more centered and purposeful place.

Can people fail at coaching? No, just as they can't fail at life. Life is a journey and coaching can be part of that journey. You can't fail a journey. Each step of the way shows you new and different things. Each day teaches you new lessons. If you are open to learning, the journey will always be successful.

The following are some case examples of clients who are at different places in their journey.

Coaching Issue:

Sara came to coaching because she wanted help dealing with a very ineffective boss. She loved her job, but as she saw that she was losing her effectiveness as a manager because of the lack of support/resources given to her by her boss.

Results to Date:

Sara's positive attitude about a very difficult work situation helped her to quickly find solutions. She was willing to try a lot of different things to see what might work best. She worked on communication styles and conflict resolution skills. She worked to become more aware of what buttons were being pushed in her.

Sara could be amazingly objective about the pitfalls of her boss and was able to come up with some creative methods of circumventing his weaknesses and connecting with his strengths. At last report, Sara is once again very happy in her job. She has regained her voice as a manager and has become a great role model among her peers.

Coaching Issue;

Steve came to coaching because he wanted out of his corporate job, but had no idea what his next step professionally might be. He just knew that his present job was killing her both physically and emotionally and that he was completely burned out.

Results to Date:

It was difficult for Steve to leave his job without another job securely in place. While he had the financial piece in place to take some time off, it was just very scary for him to take that leap. But he realized that staying in his job was stifling his energy and creativity around looking for another job that would be a better fit for his skills and values.

He eventually took the leap, quit his job, and has spent some time doing informational interviews and researching different areas of interest. He is very excited about several possibilities and is now in the process of choosing the one he thinks would fit him best.

Coaching Issue:

Beth came to coaching because she wanted to start taking better care of herself. She had put her own self-care on the back burner so that she could put all her energy into her family and her job. As she was nearing middle-age, the neglect was beginning to take its toll and she knew she had to take some action or face some serious health issues.

Results to Date:

Beth has been struggling with trying to incorporate time for self-care into her schedule. Much of the difficulty stems from her belief that it is selfish to take time for herself. She feels guilty when she is not giving to others. She was raised to believe, as many of us were, that our needs can be addressed only when everyone else's are taken care of. Beth is working hard to turn down the volume on that particular tape, and she is beginning to see that if she doesn't take care of herself, she won't really have anything left to give to others.

As you can see, although each of these clients is at a different place on their journey, they are all succeeding. Each of them wanted something to be different in their lives, and they were willing to take that one extra step outside their normal way of life to make that happen.

So often we couch our fears and doubts in the context of failing, when in reality it is the fear of success that scares us. What would our lives be like if we really were to become a star? What if we actually did what we loved doing? What if we decided to pursue a dream and saw it come true? What if we were living from each day from a place of peace and joy instead of pain and suffering? Wouldn't that be a wonderful way to spend our life!

OUR DEEPEST FEAR

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our Light, not our Darkness, that frightens most of us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you NOT to be?

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

As we let our own Light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence
automatically liberates others.

Marianne Williamson

Until next time, all the best,
Mary Ann Bailey, MC

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