Focus on What You Want Rather Than What You Fear

By Julie Donley, RN ~ Success Expert & Author of *Does Change have to be so H.A.R.D.?*

"I have a new boss. With recent layoffs and downsizing, my boss gave up my area to a new director. My head is swimming with thoughts about how she will treat me, what she will expect. I'm nervous that she will find a way to get rid of me. I'm just so scared of what might happen with this new change."

All of us can relate to feelings of fear especially when they are born from thoughts about change that is out of our control.

This fear is created in your mind from thoughts that craft the worst case scenarios. Your imaginary center goes wild constructing dramatic stories about a potential - and often negative - outcome. There is no fact to the story; it's a fantasy. In choosing to give this thought process your attention, fear erupts within you as you anticipate this outcome *becoming* your future reality. Then you experience the "fight or flight" phenomenon and this physiological reaction makes it feel so real.

But it's not real. It's a story concocted in your mind. Your mind is playing tricks on you.

Stop. Step back from your thoughts and look at the facts. What do you know and what is unknown? You can succumb to the fantasy created by your untamed mind OR you can decide to embrace reality and take control by making good choices about what you would like to see happen and who you'd like to become in the process.

In the case with my client above, he has no idea what this new boss wants or how she feels about being shuffled into this new position. His first step is to be curious about the new boss and to learn what she needs from the manager in order to be successful in her new post. Yes, your job is to help your boss be successful.

Then he can ask for what *he* wants and needs from his new boss.

By being proactive, my client can set expectations for his new boss as he describes the department and how things work.

Awareness of the emotional reaction and the thoughts causing it is crucial for gaining control. Once you are aware, then you can take a step back and ask how you'd like things to be moving forward. You can craft a new story that focuses on success and identify the role or part you will play in making it reality.

You can expect success and take actions to create that success or you can allow your fear to take over forcing you to shrink, stress out and feel powerless.

Fear does not bring out your best qualities. It takes away your courage, forcing you to shrink, be less effective and less productive as you waste time in worry-land.

Chances are the new director has her own fears and concerns about how she will handle the new area and how people will receive or accept her in this new role. The manager can be confident and make it easy for the two of them to come together in partnership to create a good working relationship or he can allow his worries to take charge and make the relationship rocky, at least to start.

Your power is in your ability to manage your fear and to take action to create a better future.

1. Envision what you want – for the relationship and for the operations of the department.
2. Find out what the other person's goals are. What do they envision? What do they need and want?
3. Make direct requests for what you need and share your desires and ideas.
4. Together, come up with a clear vision or direction for your department and your relationship.

As you begin working together, you can make adjustments and corrections and keep the lines of communication open. By addressing things directly and talking about what is on your mind, you demonstrate leadership and create not only a good working relationship but help to lessen the fear you each have.

We create our own realities by how we think and the stories we tell ourselves. Take heed when fear has you create negative fantasies and instead, stop and take charge by refocusing on how you want things to be. You are much bigger than your fear! Ground yourself in reality and focus on what you want to create rather than what you fear.

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