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Newsletter
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Editor's

Note

By Raj Narayan, ISEC Editor

Hark back to the time when, as children, we rushed home to announce a success. It could be getting a 'star' for good hand-writing in kindergarten, topping the class in primary school, winning an elocution contest at high school or beating an arch-rival in sport at college... each one of us will still carry memories of that day when we shared our success with our parents and friends.

Our joy was unbridled and nothing else would have mattered at that moment, but sharing the news with those close to us - our parents, grandparents and the friendly neighborhood buddies with whom we played gully cricket. What's more, the greater the success, the longer the joy lasted... days, weeks or even months.

As we grow from teenage to adulthood, the duration of this unadulterated joy at achievement diminishes till the time when a salary raise or a promotion at work is arbitrarily disposed of with a "treat" to close friends, after which it is back to the grind. On occasions, our minds wander back to work even when we are celebrating the success.

Having gone on a 14-day retreat recently after promising myself that neither my hand phone, nor my laptop will form part of the vacation, I realized that solitude is the best friend for an introspecting mind. Nestled securely in the lap of Nature and far away from work and colleagues, the mind slowly unwinds to the present by giving up on the future and its fears.

By the time one is halfway into this supreme solitude, the mind actually starts ruminating on all that happened in the none-to-distant past and begins to see the road ahead in a much clearer fashion. And when it is time to return to the grind, I promised myself to return to solitude at least once every year. In this issue of the Newsletter, our Founder Coach speaks about the power of solitude and how the lack of it results in success resembling failure. Read on and share your experiences with us....

MENTOR'S MUSINGS: When Winning at Work Means Losing at Life

By Krishna Kumar, ISEC Founder-Director

A senior executive performed brilliantly by exceeding expectations by over 200%. He receives accolades from the top management, is assured of a handsome pay rise and promotion and is rewarded with an all-expense paid vacation cruise for his family.

During what was supposed to be that relaxing cruise to celebrate his success, the executive cannot keep himself away from work and repeatedly glances at his Tab and often plugs in his laptop. Despite being physically in the midst of nowhere on the high sea, the man is mentally very much glued to his office desk. The result: He returns to work hardly relaxed and barely refreshed. He even cribs that "now he needs a vacation to root out the effects of his vacation."

Now, take the case of the high-powered CEO who rewards herself with a luxury penthouse in an upscale boulevard. She shows me around and when I mention that she must be proud of her beautiful new home, her first

response is a reference to the large mortgage and the monthly interest payout that came with the swanky house. Can she really enjoy the new acquisition?

Instances of success stories where the incumbents wallow in pity instead of savoring their moment of glory are aplenty. The story is the same for all classes of people - politicians, entertainers, sportspeople, artists, professionals etc.

This brings us to the moot question. Why then do successful people fail to enjoy the success and end up getting more stressed? They are clearly intelligent and talented folk who should know better and it is such patterns of behavior that my good friend and leadership coach, John O'Neil has addressed in his seminal book, "The Paradox of Success."

John writes that the paradox of success has its genesis in the shadow. Everything that demonstrates success - money, fame, power - tends to feed the shadow. The shadow is our hidden self that we don't like to acknowledge or that we have been discouraged from showing. The shadow generally remains hidden but can occasionally appear in real life, such as when we unintentionally insult someone, lose a job or face a marital crisis.



While some may recognize the shadow lurking below the success, others may not feel this situation. Still others may rise to a level that they train themselves to ignore the shadow and live for the moment. Even so, they might feel a sense of dissatisfaction souring the taste of their achievements.

It is at such times, that one needs to step back and take some time out to ruminate. Ideally taking time to observe and reflect is best done in a retreat. What is a retreat? A retreat can be any amount of time you spend away from your usual productive round of activities, as long as the time is spent in pursuit of learning... more about oneself and one's surroundings.

A Time for Retreat and Reflection

There is a time in every life
when the very act
of looking back and taking stock
becomes essential
to going forward.

Without the light

that shines out of the darkness
of the past,
we cannot chart
a new path
to the future.
Monastic spirituality
is built around
a life of retreat and reflection.
In every Monastery of the Heart,
there must be regular times
set aside
to go down
into these inner recesses of the soul
once more, alone and centered,
to take another look, a new kind of look,
at ourselves.
Retreat, reflection, Sabbath,
and soul-space
are of the essence
of the monastic spirit—
not for our sake alone
but for the sake of those
who depend on us
to make the promise of creation
new again.

Excerpted from *The Monastery of the Heart: An Introduction to a Meaningful Life*

by Joan Chittister (BlueBridge)

Ask yourself, when was the last time that you retreated into solitude? Retreats can be as short as a few minutes. It can be a session of meditation, a short walk in a peaceful park, enjoying a game of your favorite sport or immersing yourself in music or dance. In effect, a retreat is a refuge from a world in where you lost yourself and a place where you can find yourself. Do write in with your comments and ideas to me at kk@intradconsult.com

Coaching

Notes:

Enabling Genius By Myles Downey

There are two significant shifts that I notice emerging that may well result in far greater need for coaching - and for a variety of interventions based on coaching principles.

The first of these is move in a small but increasing number of work organisations away from traditional hierarchical

structures towards something more flexible and accommodating of the needs of the people operating within them and of their customers and clients without.

The second shift is happening in the thousands of people who go to work every day - particularly the younger one's. They have seen how the generation that preceded them sold their minds and bodies to the organisation and were let down. As a result they are seeking a greater sense of purpose and meaning from their working lives. They also have a stronger sense of their own autonomy and independence.

These shifts are obviously inter-related, not least because the search for meaningful work, coupled with environmental and economic pressures, is causing the leadership of many businesses to take a stronger ethical stance and to produce goods and services that are of greater quality, last longer and do not deplete the Earth of limited resources.

These shifts require people in work to behave differently and to have a different order of conversation internally in the organization and between the organization and its customers and clients

Coaching is one such conversation that, in its purest form, is about helping people to discover their own autonomy, their own authority, their own voice. I sometimes talk about Enabling Genius. Genius refers to the vast reserves of potential that reside in each and every one of us and, if you take it back to it's Latin root *genitum; to beget, to produce or cause to happen*, you will see that genius is not genius unless there is a result.

Coaching, Autonomy and Joy

No one has the right to define coaching, at least not in the sense of how it is done - a particular model or approach. Coach, that is a carriage or vehicle, is a term that was taken from the town of Kocs in Hungary where the first coaches were built in the 15th Century and were called 'carts of Kocs'. The word later emerged in the 1850s in the British universities when a coach was someone who carried you through your exams. So that's what it is - how they did it was not given.

That has left the world of business coaching with a significant problem because any one who purports to 'carry others' can call themselves a coach, regardless of how they go about it.

I tried to solve this problem in my book 'Effective Coaching' by defining effectiveness in coaching and suggested that, in the world of business coaching, the following outcomes could be considered a suitable yardstick: sustainable performance improvement, learning and taking responsibility. I then went on to argue that such results could only be delivered by an approach that was predominantly 'non-directive'. Somewhat self-serving as an argument - but with some truth to it.

But in my world coaching is much more than that. So much so that, increasingly, using the term deflects from my real intent as most people understand coaching to be about learning and development (not even performance).

What I find compelling is that people should learn to stand in their own two shoes, be themselves, if you like. Or in other words discover their own autonomy and authority, free from 'should, must and have to', free from fear, doubt and greed. And this is no idealism. When people operate from a sense of their own identity or authority they achieve more, grow and experience more joy and, in doing so, become better colleagues, team members and community members.



Myles Downey is the Founder of The School of Coaching. He is one of Europe's foremost business coaches and has worked all over the world with major organisations,. Myles is the author of Effective Coaching (Texere) 1999, which is widely regarded as one of the seminal works on performance coaching. Prior to establishing The School of Coaching, he was a founding member of a coaching and consulting firm, which The Economist Intelligence Unit acknowledged in '93 and '95 as "the leading provider of Executive Coaching in the UK"

Happenings @ ISEC:

ISEC Mentor Coach, Vijay Lourd, is a pioneer in introducing western dance to India. The winner of numerous international awards for both dancing and teaching the subject, he recently added a glorious feather in his cap by creating a Guinness world record for performing an intricate salsa dance routine. The routine involved doing the maximum number of "flips" within a minute. In his characteristic humble style, Vijay comments on his record breaking achievement:

"I started out to find someone who would break the record because I scout talent. Nobody was willing though, so I thought I'd give it a go myself. It wasn't a life defining challenge for me, it arose from the fact there wasn't a single dancer who had the confidence in his abilities to make an attempt. I wanted to prove that it was possible."

Within these brief comments, Vijay captured the essence of self-coaching. Combining a high degree of self-awareness, he set for himself an exciting goal and then went about taking both ownership and responsibility for reaching the goal.

ISEC Founder-Director, Krishna Kumar, was recently certified to conduct the Harrisons Behavioral Assessments, an internationally reputed tool that can be used in the coaching process. The program was conducted by Dr. Dan Harrison, the inventor of the assessment system.

Forthcoming Events @ ISEC:

ISEC will be conducting the following workshops during May and June 2011.

(1) Mentor-Coach Workshop for persons interested in developing their coaching skills on 13-14 May 2011

(2) Executive Coach Workshop on 22-23-25 June 2011 for those who have completed the Mentor-Coach workshop and wish to start a career as a coach.

**With warm regards,
Krishna Kumar
Executive Coach & Founder-Director, ISEC**