

The Noing of Knowing

By: Marti Benjamin

What do you Know?

I recently had dinner with business colleagues after a full-day planning meeting, in which I munched on snacks and goodies all day. The dinner menu was very creative, the food delightful, the company engaging and I ate much more than I enjoyed. As we were leaving the restaurant and I was feeling absolutely miserable from over-eating, I said to my colleague, “I do know that it was my own arm that raised the fork from the plate to my own mouth and continued to do so long after I was no longer hungry. I knew I would feel just as miserable as I do right now and I kept doing it anyway.” Knowing was clearly not enough to generate noing.

Information, in and of itself, is never enough to change behavior or achieve goals. If it were, there would be no tobacco use, no drug or alcohol abuse, and no need for coaches of any kind. Knowing alone does not generate the power to shift away from behavior that contradicts the knowledge.

We use our knowing to set goals and standards for ourselves. We know we would be healthier if we exercised, ate the food our body wants, avoided over-indulgences, adopted an optimistic perspective, got eight hours of sleep, yada, yada, yada.

And then, we “should” on ourselves: I should eat better, I should get more sleep, and I should go to the gym more often. So, now we know what to do and we know we are not doing it, and we beat ourselves up for it, which only serves to make us feel worse. A vicious cycle, all in the pursuit of a healthier and happier life!

Enriching the Knowing

The answer to changing behavior does not come in a one-size-fits-all package. There is no one formula for effecting change that guarantees success if you just follow it. That is just a more sophisticated “should” as in, “You should be able to do this because someone else did.” The noing hiding in the knowing is unique to each of us; it is our own resistance and our own pattern of associating what we know with what we do.

Acting on your knowing and achieving your goals depends on finding the unique and individualized support that will make the goal personally compelling, maintaining the focus in the midst of all the possible distractions that show up and being accountable. Often it is helpful to begin with a clear image of what it will feel like to be successful, add the rich texture of detail, imagining yourself as you will be when you have achieved that goal.

For some, it helps to put it in writing or pictures, to make the image in your head concrete and real in the physical world by capturing the elements that are most energizing and attractive. Here are some ways to do that:

- Write a letter to yourself after the goal has been achieved, describing how it feels to be on the successful side of that ambition and what it took to get there.

- Create a collage of photos from your own life, magazines or the Internet; capture the images that are most vivid for you about your life at the completion of your journey toward this goal.
- Use a camera cell phone to take a picture of the collage and use it as the screen saver on your phone and your computer.

The support comes from being reminded frequently of what it will look like to be reaping the rewards of achieving this goal.

Bringing Out Your Best

Achieving that meaningful goal—what you know you are capable of—means understanding the personal qualities that will serve you well in your effort to change your habit, determining what you need to know more of and what action you need to take.

Where in your life are you noing? You know.

© 2007. Marti Benjamin

WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR E-ZINE, WEB SITE OR TRAINING PROGRAM?
You may do so as long as you include this statement with it: "Marti Benjamin, MBA, Professional Certified Coach is the president of ***Business Energetix—Success Coaching***, a Business Coaching enterprise offering individual and team coaching for independent business owners and their key contributors. To learn more about Marti and Business Energetix services and to sign up for her free monthly ezine, visit www.businessenergetix.com."