



**Signposts:
Key to happiness? Learn to live!**

By Pia Muggerud

Many decades ago, Martin Luther King Jr. uttered the historic words “I have a dream”. Years later, these words still resonate with generations that had not even been born when they were said.

What is your dream? What is it you yearn for? What are some of the things that you have not done waiting for the right time to achieve them? Have you put a dream or wish on the backburner, waiting of the right moment to bring it forward? If the answer is yes to any of the above, then you have probably also said one or all of the following to yourself: “When I graduate, then I will take the time to exercise”; “When I get a promotion I will take that long-overdue holiday”; “When I get a boyfriend, then I will be happy” and so on..

Living in the future (or past) takes you away from being present and truly appreciating the here and now and the gifts that you are presented with every day. Make sure that you do and feel what you want now, rather than waiting for the much anticipated “someday”. I will be happy once I get that promotion, get a boyfriend, when I have enough money etc..

I had been coaching James for a short while when he brought up in our coaching session that he was feeling quite down in the dumps. He blamed it on the economic downturn and its effects on his earning potential. As I had got to know him a little already, as his Coach I felt that this was not necessarily the main reason for his feeling down. So I probed a bit deeper, asking some tougher questions that allowed James to slowly discover the answers within himself.

James had been focused on his work life a great deal whilst being in Hong Kong. He had got caught up in the work ethic that has nobody leave the office before 7 or 8pm. As a result, his life had become more and more lopsided, leaving little room for some of the things he hoped to achieve once he got the promotion and bigger salary.

Although James enjoyed life as a single man, his dream was to meet a woman to share his life with and eventually have a family. With his work schedule and demanding career, this had not happened. James also relied heavily on his friends for filling some of the

emotional needs a woman was not offering, and slowly he was starting to realise that they all had their own lives and were often not available when he needed a friend.

James admitted to me how he was feeling resentful towards his friends for not being there for him and as a consequence felt lonely and detached. Once he had put his truth on the table, we had something to work with! James could clearly see how he was not taking responsibility for his own happiness and his current life; that he was relying on outside sources to fulfil his needs 'in the meantime'.

First thing James did was to start getting out in nature. Sitting at his desk for hours at a time did not leave much room for clarity and peace of mind. Instead of staying in the office till late or having the one drink too many in the pub, two days a week he started getting up early to take a walk in nature. James raved about this new activity each time we met, saying he felt so connected to nature but also to himself whilst walking on his own. His feelings of being down in the dumps was replaced by vitality and a zest that have him appreciate himself on a whole new level. He also realised how much he enjoyed his own company; knowing now that he could always rely on himself for feeling good and enjoying life.

I assigned James a writing task at this point. After every walk, James would write in his journal about what was surfacing from his mind and heart on the walks. As a result of his new appreciation for himself, he was able to admit and take action on wanting to have more time for what he enjoyed outside the office.

The most important discovery that emerged from James' journal was how great he felt about the man that he had become. And once he started seeing himself for who he truly is, he started naturally wanting to engage in activities that was a direct expression of his deepest core.

As a result, James realised just how much he wanted to reach the dream of the family. He also was able to feel ok about perusing this, without having the salary he thought he would need to make this happen. He committed to start going on dates. He asked friends to introduce him to single women, and he also approached woman he would meet casually.

When your life is in great shape, it becomes easier to create and live your life in such a way that there is nothing in the way of you living your dreams. James is still taking the steps towards his dream. And more importantly, he is enjoying the process NOW.

What are the things that make you feel most like yourself: Well, connected, excited, glowing and effortless. Once you get clear, go out and do them today!

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