



## Motivational Humorist/Coach/Provocateur

### **“From Dimmers to Shimmers; Stress Less...SPARKLE More”**

It's easy to feel like you're chasing after your life, and that you need to do a total life makeover to get back on track, but if you integrate a few SPARKLE POWER Principles you'll see a big difference in your life.

Here's how to begin:

#### **1-See Overwhelm as a Scared Child needing Comforting:**

When I'm overwhelmed or stopped by fear, I visualize the scared part of myself as an 8-year old child, who feels like she has the world on her shoulders. I visualize tucking her into bed with warm cozy blanket, soft sheets. I remind her that it's not her job, and that I, adult Lois, have it all covered. How we talk to ourselves makes all the difference in the world. When I breathe, and remind that part of myself (not my entire identity) that I can rest, I not only calm down, but I reinforce my own sense of competency and confidence.

**2-Separate out what you can and cannot control and take actions on both:** One of the strategies that has been really helpful for me is being crystal clear about what I can and cannot control in my life. I encourage my clients to focus on what they can control, and then practice the fine art of letting the rest go. You can write a list of all the situations that you couldn't control in your life, and had to let go, and think about how those things turned out. Chances are that things turned out just fine.

**3-Chip Away at the Big Rocks-** Although it may sound counter intuitive, once you have figured out what you can control in your life, go for the

big stuff first. It's so easy, in this dizzy land of distraction, to fritter the day away with busy work, leaving you further away from your goals. If you are tackling a new project that feels overwhelming, address the "big rocks" first. When you do the "big rocks first," you don't feel the stress of the "pebbles" not getting handled.

#### **4- Make your rituals mundane so the work can be magical**

I meditate pretty much every day for 5 minutes, and have for awhile, and while I've read countless articles on different techniques, and strategies, the most effective one, has been buying three \$10 timer and putting one in my apartment, my house upstate and my office. The one by my nightstand gets the most use. It is permanently set for 5 minutes and when my alarm clock goes off, I simply roll over and instead of pressing the snooze button, I press the start button on my timer, close my eyes, take deep breaths, and 5 minutes later, done! No muss, no fuss. The fact that I don't give it another thought, makes it that much easier to implement.

#### **5) Don't get "sexy" with your productivity tools, the "sexiness" will emerge in your work.**

Again workability is what works. I've moved from being technological illiterate, to resistant, to cranky, and now, I've graduated to resigned and on good days; hopeful. I know I can't clutch to my father's old Smith Carona (it is a fabulous relic though) and rant, "Those good old days with the word processor will come back." That being said, since technology does not come easy to me, when I find tools that help me get things done, they are rarely deeply seeped in the technology department. Find a few tools that work, and work them. If a paper calendar feels better than use it, don't worry about a new fancy digital schedule management system. If you are a digital native and that stuff comes easy to you, use it.

The real fulfillment comes from doing the work, and the satisfaction and fulfillment from the creative process, as well as the self-esteem when you keep your word to yourself.

#### **6) Don't let your ego boss you around**

One of the greatest sabotaging beliefs is that real commitment looks like large, sweeping gestures of grandeur, equivalent to bungee jumping off a 6,000 ft. cliff to show how bigger than life your passion is. That couldn't be further from the truth.

One of my favorite childhood fables was "Tortoise and the Hare," and in my mind, the Hare is the Archetypal Ego, that looks down on the very simple but powerful process of just putting one foot in front of the other and moving courageously towards one's goals.

Now brain science shows, as well as the system of Kaizen, shows, that when we take small but consistent steps that are aligned with our goal, not only are we less overwhelmed, but we are able to sneak under the fight/flight radar of the amygdala (the stress police of the body rooted in our survival mechanism) and can integrate these changes with less backlash and greater success.

A client of mine had no time but wanted to write a book. I suggested that she write for 15 minutes a day. She was relieved but doubtful at the same time, that 15 minutes a day, chipping away at her big project would get her anywhere. But 9 months later, she had written close to 200 pages.

Due to these amazing results, I now call small steps over the long haul as being a "turbo tortoise!"

**7) Do one thing every day to keep your SPARKLE! (Source, Power, Authentically, Rooted, in Knowing, Loving and Excelling)**

Guess what? You can be burned out and fired up at the same time.

It just depends on which angle of the prism in your life you are looking through. When my SPARKLE has gone South, here are some things that I do to reconnect with it:

- Take a dance class- These days my favorites are Jazz/Hip Hop and Belly Dancing.
- Shoot Some Hoops- Angry? Bored? Need to blow off some steam. Go to a local gym or school and spend 15 minutes "on the court."
- Set my timer and go on a decluttering rampage for 15 minutes with kickin' music.
- Talk to strangers- One of my favorite past times. By starting conversations with strangers, I've learned about the breed of maltese and their connection to the aristocracy, how fonts and letters have changed the history of communication via a passionate typographer on the "L" train, and met my treadmill buddy Lynn, by asking her about the book she's read. That's just over the last few months. Get out there and start conversations with the people

around you.

You have no idea how quickly your SPARKLE will return.



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