

COLLABORATIVE LIFE COACHING

February 2010 Newsletter

By Jeanne Erikson, PhD



Build Your Assets- Kindness

“Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can.” John Wesley (1703-1791).

Wesley tried to describe “kindness” nearly 300 years ago. Capturing it in words is like describing the proverbial elephant or describing “art”. You can describe the pieces, but only the totality holds the essence and power. Pieces of kindness include acts of invitation and respect, as well as consideration, generosity, empathy, and genuine appreciation. Without the patience and accurate intuition to sense what the other really needs, however, these acts can create instead awkwardness or condescension.

Successes can be empty and seen as arrogant if you are not overtly kind in the process. Think of Donald Trump shouting “you’re fired!”, or Jimmy Carter building communities for the poor. A criminal or divorce judge may often act with overlooked kindness. The price of success not wrapped in acts of kindness is isolation, as peers will feel jealous and resentful.

The word ‘generous’ comes from the Latin root *genere* meaning ‘to beget’. Acts of kindness have sticking power. Demonstrated as consistent acts of non-violent patience and forgiveness within families, kindness creates ongoing positive ripples through generations to follow. I was blessed with a very kind set of parents, and tried to raise my own children with a gentle and kind spirit. Some days I may have done it right, as all three seem to be kind and generous adults. Acts of meanness and powerful control create the opposite generational effect; your children and grandchildren will experience fear and selfishness, and will be susceptible to all forms of self-abuse.

Creating kindness takes emotional and spiritual energy. How can you generate this energy? I would have these two brief but important coaching questions and suggestions for you to ponder:

- * What makes you feel angry and mean in response?
It needs to leave your life.
- * What motivates you to give openly without keeping score or expecting a return?
Find a way to do it more.

I wish for you the energy to have a loving, kind spirit this month. See you next month for thoughts about discretion.

To your wellness,
Jeanne Erikson, PhD, PCC