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*"We are shaped
and fashioned by
what we love."*

~Johann Wolfgang
Von Goethe

*"Let the beauty
we love be
what we do."*

~Rumi

What Gallup Knows About Success ... And You Should Too

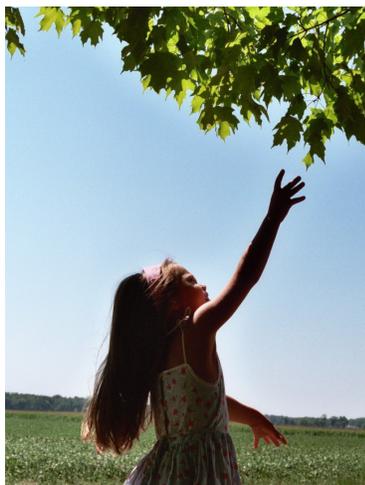
In the last edition of *Live Your Strengths*, I wrote about the idea of building on your strengths to achieve your goals. This edition will take that concept a step further by introducing some interesting research carried out by the Gallup Organization.

Gallup studied successful companies and executives to identify which traits seemed to contribute most to their success. This research led to the publication of the books *First Break All the Rules* and *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, which both advocate focussing on the unique strengths of each individual to increase business success.

Throughout the last three decades, Gallup has interviewed over 2 million people from around the world. One of the questions they have asked is, "At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?"

Surprisingly, **only 20%** of the people interviewed felt that their strengths were being used on a daily basis. This realization becomes even more important when it is

correlated with other business statistics. When employees felt that they were using their strengths on a regular basis, there was lower employee turnover, higher productivity, and higher levels of customer satisfaction.



Furthermore, when researchers looked closely at the responses from the top performers in their respective fields (the best doctors, teachers, salespeople, housekeepers, and so on), they consistently found the most successful people in their fields had an intentional focus on their strengths.

The top performers also found ways to *manage around* their

weaknesses, rather than concentrating on *fixing* them.

So how do we determine our strengths or our business' strengths? There are a number of ways of identifying your unique gifts. Last month, your challenge was to take a free online assessment at www.authentichappiness.com to find your top 5 character strengths.

Likewise, the authors of *Now, Discover Your Strengths* have a useful online *StrengthsFinder* assessment www.strengthsfinder.com that is available to you when you purchase the book.

However, one of the most effective ways of identifying your strengths is through self reflection – noticing your actions and reactions in your daily life and reflecting on what meanings your observations hold. Self reflection means stepping back and seeing yourself in relation to others and becoming aware of the power of your choices in each moment.

Ready to begin? Start with this month's *Live Your Strengths* Monthly Challenge (see page 2).

Back by Popular Demand!

Featured Teleclass: Managing Stress Effectively

4 part teleclass series: Tuesdays in August, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. (Aug 1, 8, 15, 22)

Registration fee: \$79 + GST

Stress is part of all of our lives and sometimes it can feel overwhelming. However, there are ways to effectively manage stress which will allow your life to be more positive and enjoyable. By taking part in this interactive teleclass series, you will:

- Learn about what stress is and how it affects your body
- Discover techniques to manage stress
- Develop a personalized action plan to allow you to bring serenity back to your life

Because of the individualized nature of this teleclass, participation is limited to 15 people. To ensure your spot, register early by sending an email to denise@insearchofexcellence.ca

“The subconscious sometimes offers wonderful gifts of truth from the inner self. You may be surprised and even amazed at what comes out through your pen when you invite your inner self to speak.”

~Joyce Chapman

Live Your Strengths **Monthly Challenge**

Your challenge this month is to start a journal to help you become more aware of your strengths and how you are currently using them.

Each day set aside some time to reflect on one or more of these questions:

- What activities have you always been instinctively drawn to (perhaps even since you were young)?
- What activities are you able to learn or pick up very quickly, without much effort?
- What activities do you receive immense satisfaction from?
- Describe an experience in which you achieved a big goal in your life or business. What did you do to contribute to that achievement? What skills did you bring to the challenge?
- How would significant others in your life (co-workers, family, friends) describe your biggest strengths? (*Hint: Ask them!*)

Don't limit yourself to seeing only 'traditional' strengths such as being



determined or hard-working. Look for your own unique set of skills, which at first may not seem apparent.

For example, in *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, the authors list strengths we may not always think of, such as Adaptability, Empathy, and 'Woo' (the art of winning others over).

Could you use some guidance with this challenge? Call Denise for a free 30-minute coaching session. Start living *your* strengths!

Do you have suggestions for upcoming newsletters or success stories you want to share?

Contact Denise denise@insearchofexcellence.ca