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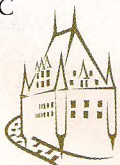
TREASURER

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TMAC



RENDEZ-VOUS 2004

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Career Development

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sacred. Consider this time to be equally as important as your most important client meeting. If you're not valuing your time, who else will?

Follow the three-foot rule: After following the steps outlined above, you will begin to gain more insight into what you are passionate about and what your next move might be. Once you have a clearer picture of what you want, get out there and ask for it. Tell everyone within three feet of you what you are interested in. Ask them how they can support you in achieving this. You will be amazed at how many people are willing to help you and the contacts that you will start to collect by being clear. You will also attract a posse of people who will hold you accountable for following your dreams. They will ask you how things are going, and you will want to have something to report, which will further propel you towards your ideal career and life.

At the end of the day, you are the only one who can chart your course when navigating through career and life transitions. It takes energy and strength to ask yourself the tough questions. There is help available to you if you choose to accept it. You can find career and life coaches, career counselors, colleagues, mentors, friends and family all waiting for you to ask for their support. The more you step out of your comfort zone, the more comfortable it will become. The path to your dreams is not likely a linear one and will require a curious mind, open heart, a few bumps along the way and a desire to live passionately. If you are up for the challenge, the ultimate result will be for you to turn your ideal life into reality, one baby step at a time. Good luck and happy hunting!

Lindsay Sukornyk is the founder of North Star Coaches, Inc., a life and leadership coaching company in Toronto. For more information, visit www.northstarcoaches.com or email lindsay@northstarcoaches.com.

Handling rejection

What beliefs do you have about how your life is supposed to be?

By Ida Covi

MRS. DEBBI FIELDS OF MRS. FIELD'S COOKIES, HAVING LITTLE college education, was turned down numerous times before she raised \$25,000 to open her first store. But she would not take no for an answer. Every day she made a list of lending institutions and, with a freshly baked plate of cookie, she continued to ask each one for a loan until she found someone who believed in her dream. Her motto became, "No is not an acceptable answer."

Upon thinking that she had conquered her biggest problem she ran straight into another wall: She couldn't find anyone who would sell her the 25 pounds of chocolate chips that she needed to bake her cookies. It was too small an order for the larger manufacturers. Once again, her perseverance led her to the only company that would handle the order. But her order was too small for the company's delivery trucks. Sensing Debbi's dilemma, the owner delivered the chips himself in the trunk of his car. Today, he sells thousands of pounds of chips per year to Mrs. Fields. Bigger companies now aggressively solicit Mrs. Field's business, but she remains loyal to the man who delivered her first order.

Rejection happens in all areas of our lives. I had been dating a man for four years at the time I began pursuing my book and business. This man didn't like the fact that I was no longer an investment banker traveling the world doing mergers and acquisitions. Soon he ended the relationship, because I was no longer good enough for him to present to other people. I thought I was in a relationship; to him I was only an arm charm. It was an emotionally difficult way to find out the truth, but, in the long run, it was a very fortunate event.

It takes a lot of courage and perseverance when you venture out. There is always someone who will try to scare you back to where it's safe and secure. But what fun is that? Another person for whom I had worked once told me when I started my own business that I was wasting my time and mind and that I needed to get a real job. In the next sentence the same person offered me a

partnership in his investment banking company.

In expecting life to be easy, people feel frustrated when they confront difficulties. Life is not easy. It is filled with surprises. Many events – whether they are positive, like a job promotion or a new relationship, or negative, like a death or injury or a failure – may alter the course of our life. Babe Ruth was famous for holding the home-run record in one season. People don't realize that he also led the major leagues in strikeouts for one season.

Reviewing mistakes may be emotionally difficult, but it's a necessary part of a person's development. How many women and men have dreamed of playing professional sports? It is easy to assume athletes live an exciting lifestyle without pain or adversity. But playing in the big leagues of professional sport also involves having your mistakes and failures being broadcast by television and radio to millions of people, complete with slow-motion replays and discussions of mistakes. Exciting? Think again. If that's not enough, most athletes review videotapes from their games as part of their training.

Adversity and struggle are essential to our growth. We learn most by overcoming the challenges and obstacles we encounter. That requires hard work and our best effort – physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. Misfortune and pain are teachers that help us develop. In fact, if life were easy, we would learn very little.

Adversity is a catalyst for change and development. It helps us to outline our boundaries, develop our values, shape

our life, and connect with others through compassion. During difficult times we gain the knowledge and empathy that give our life purpose. Knowledge and compassion change our environment and the world. Once we get through the adversity we feel alive with accomplishment and appreciation.

Without adversity and pain we can't find out how strong we are or how courageous we are. We can't know happiness or learn how much we can accomplish. Adversity helps shape our character.

We must slog through the adversity by ourselves—we can't hire someone to do it for us—but with the labour comes knowledge and wisdom. We become more analytical regarding our motives, thoughts, and behaviours, and we recognize when we react to stimuli with old habitual behaviors that they don't serve us anymore.

Ida Covi is founder and managing director of Synthesis, Inc. (www.onesynthesis.com).

ducts personal growth workshops and she encourages others to just do it.

We often think there must be a complicated magical code that would make things a lot easier, if only we could crack it. The truth is that the magic is in you. Sometimes all you need to do is to give yourself permission to just do it. Take advantage of those moments your soul is on fire with inspiration; the times you feel bold and courageous. Pick up the phone, open your mouth and take a step.

If you don't feel you have a compass to guide your next step, then ask yourself: "If I could do one thing that would move my personal life forward, what would that be?" And "If I could do one thing that would move my professional life forward, what would that be?" Make two lists and then break them down into small steps. Every day take a tiny baby-step forward, and eventually you will be on the other side of your bridge, eventually you will accomplish your goals. Baby-steps accumulate like compound interest. Action will empower you. It will grow your self-esteem. Action breeds courage, and courage is needed to keep taking risks.

The piano has 88 keys, and before we die our soul needs to hear our song played on all of them. I encourage you to keep planting seeds – read, listen, network. Learn. Stay alert to synchronicities, those magical coincidences that bring the right person or opportunity to your doorstep. Those are often your higher guides at work. Don't let fear stop you from actualizing your heart's desires. Make fear your friend and still take the step. That's what it means to just do it.

Grace Cirocco is an international speaker and training consultant and author of Take the Step, the Bridge Will be There (HarperCollins 2001) For more information visit www.gracecirocco.com This article first appeared on the website of the Canadian Management Centre (www.cmcamai.org).

Just Do It!

We can achieve what we set out to do, one small step at a time.

By Grace Cirocco

IT IS NOT BECAUSE THINGS ARE DIFFICULT THAT WE DO NOT DARE, it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.

SENECA

Everyone admires those who can just do it. That's why Nike's ads were so successful – they resonated with people. We want to do it, but we feel impotent. We often make it so difficult for ourselves. We procrastinate. We're scared. We blame it on perfectionism. We blame our circumstances on the weather, our parents, spouses and kids. We say we're not ready; we need to do more research or get another degree or additional credentials. We complain about all those things we still haven't done and yet we postpone taking action. When will we be ready to just do it?

When I lived in San Diego, California, I produced an afternoon radio program that went to air live from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. I used to arrive early and start digging for good stories to feature. I was always searching for what we called in the business good radio – people and stories that would touch the heart and add value to daily life. My search for the perfect show could have been endless. There was always one more telephone call I needed to make or one more lead to chase down. But every day at 3 p.m., I had to go to air with a show. There could be no more preparing or postponing. It was show time. I was forced to just do it.

Wouldn't it be great if our lives worked like that – if, at a certain time every day or week, our producer walked in and said: "Okay, enough procrastination. It's show

time. Just do it!" If you were forced to just do it, how would your life be different today? What have you been postponing? What projects or dreams have you put on the shelf? What undone dream is yearning for completion?

Sometimes we can't do it until we get a sign, a nod or a push from someone. In a workshop I was teaching, a woman stood up, walked over to the microphone and said, "I want to do what you're doing for French Canada. I want to motivate and empower people just like you." I looked at her and said enthusiastically, "Well, just do it!" Everyone broke into applause and the woman sat down. When this woman got home, she wrote me to say how significant my words had been for her. Hearing me say: "Just do it" right then and there had been a magical and decisive moment for her. It was the push she needed to get unstuck and move her life forward. Today she designs and con-

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