

## Do Something!

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### Are You Sleepwalking Through Life?

This newsletter comes to you from Kate Harper of Harper Coaching.

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Welcome to this issue of **Do Something!** - the newsletter that drops into your inbox every 2 weeks and is intended to inspire you to change the way you think and to stimulate you into action.

If you like what you read, please pass it on to your friends and colleagues.

Welcome to all our readers, new and not so new!

I am so happy to be able to say I have subscribers from pretty much all over the world - **Albania, Australia, Canada, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, the UK and the USA.**

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I have been having one of those weeks. (OK two of them, really!) You know, the ones that throw up extreme challenges, the type that tests you on all fronts, but also which brings the most glorious weather and reveals to you the kindness and support of strangers, as well as those closer to you. It has been a time of looking to the past, as well as to the future, but most of all, it has made me realize that the most important time to me and to everyone else, is NOW.

In coaching, much time is spent looking forward to where you want to be. Goals are set and action plans are formulated, and the ways and means of measuring progress are devised. This is all well and good, and is a proven way of making the changes we seek in our lives; however, it can be that some of us are looking forward so much that what is happening now can pass by without our realizing. Have you ever looked at a photograph of you in the past and only now realized what you hadn't noticed then? What you were experiencing at the time, but that has now passed by? Obviously the experiences you have had since that day will colour how you look back at that time – whether it was pleasant or painful, but *did you notice at the time?* In a lot of cases, I suspect the answer is 'no'.

Looking forward is natural, as life consists of the steps we make towards the future, whether it is the next second, the next hour, the next day or year. Seasons come and go and we follow along a timeline that stretches ahead of us. There is nothing wrong with that at all. It is as it is. However, how many of us are guilty of spending so much time looking forward to a life we *might* be living, that we forget to live the time we have now, to make the most of what we have now?

I came across this:

*'Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are. Let me learn from you, love you, bless you before you depart. Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow. Let me hold you while I may, for it may not always be so. One day I shall dig my nails into the earth, or bury my face in the pillow, or stretch myself taut, or raise my hands to the sky and want, more than all the world, your return.'* ~ Mary Jean Iron

I think it's time to wake up and smell the roses, before they have lost their scent.....

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**Do Something** to move you towards your goals. I am not recommending that you stop setting goals, just that you stop being so attached to their outcome. What are you doing now? How does it feel? Are you able to respond in a flexible way to whatever comes along, or are you so focussed on your goals that you are unable to deviate, and therefore, may miss a fantastic opportunity that presents itself? And if it did present itself, would you even notice it?

**Do Something** today that you've been putting off for a while. Have you been paying attention? Or are you making judgements about what may happen next, without really knowing what the outcome will be for sure? Let it go. What is happening now? Recognize and accept and then you can move on.

(If Procrastination is one of your challenges and you haven't already done it, go to <http://www.harpercoaching.com> to sign up for my complimentary 7-day mini e-Course on this subject.)

**Do Something** for yourself. Are you like a sleepwalker in your waking life? Are your actions automatic, while your brain spends time dwelling on the past or projecting forward to a future that is yet to be? By choosing to become mindful to all you are experiencing now, you will really be doing something for yourself. *Mindfulness reduces stress, boosts immune functioning, reduces chronic pain, lowers blood pressure, and helps patients cope with cancer. By alleviating stress, spending a few minutes a day actively focusing on living in the moment reduces the risk of heart disease.* (See a really good article here: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/pto-20081027-000001.xml>)

**Do Something** active every day. Becoming more aware of what is going on around you, what you are feeling physically and emotionally, instead of letting your mind-chatter block it all out, takes effort and practice. It is so easy to be distracted by what has gone before or to spend time wondering what will happen next. Start simply. Take time to really appreciate the first cup of coffee or tea in the day. What does it look like in the cup? How does it feel when you hold the cup in your hand? When you sip it, how does your body feel? What does it taste like? And smell like? Can you feel it going down when you swallow? How do you feel when it is finished? There is so much to notice, if you decide to do so. I am noticing the noise of the keys as I type. The rhythm I sometimes make when I am on a roll. The faint rumbling of the computer (Do I need to worry?) and the noise of my fingers as they brush over the wrist support in between thoughts, as I realize that I tend to rub it or do some drumming when I am thinking.... What are you noticing?

**Do Something** because you want to, not because you *have* to. Are you tied up with fear and worry because you are attaching too much to the past and/or future? Does this worry and fear make you feel that you have to do something? Do you fear the consequences of not doing it? What is the worst that could happen? Facing up to that now can help you decide how to deal with it.

**Do Something** new every day. By opening your mind and attention to what is happening now, you can rekindle a sense of newness. Take a look at young children who don't waste time looking either backwards or forwards in time, but have fun in the present. You used to be like that and you can be again. Make each moment a fresh one, even if you are doing the same things as you did before. Just take time to notice them in a new and different way.

**Do Something** creative every week. What are you waiting for? The time for having fun is now! Just let yourself go and enjoy it totally. Don't worry whether you are any good at it or not. That really doesn't matter. What matters is your enjoyment of the experience. So detach yourself from the outcome and go for it! Savour each and every moment as it happens.

**Do Something** for nothing. Acceptance of what you are experiencing is part of the process. This does not mean that you do nothing about it, but some things will happen whether you like it or not. It is what you choose to do next that is important. Whatever you do, don't let life pass you by. It costs nothing to bring yourself into the present, with a little practice and consciousness. Sleepwalking through life is one way, however, the more vivid and colourful way is to wake up and notice each step that you take.

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**Do** enjoy this quote:

*"If you have one eye on yesterday, and one eye on tomorrow, you're going to be cockeyed today."*

*Author Unknown*

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I do hope that this issue of **Do Something!** has inspired you to wake up and enjoy life!

Have a good couple of weeks and, even if it's only a *little thing*, **Do Something!**

Warm wishes,

Kate

**Passionate about helping you achieve your goals.**

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