

News Letter – June 1st, 2006

Following the Right Path

Note: The Student Success Mindset Ezine will be going to monthly publications for the summer months. Bi-monthly publications will resume in September. Have a great summer!

Coming in the Fall - The Coach Approach to Classroom Management!

Life is full of transitions and I find myself in the midst of one this summer. My oldest son is getting married and his younger brother, my second child, graduates from high school this week. It is an exciting time as I watch my boys ready themselves for adulthood. I am cherishing every moment this summer with my sons before they embark on their life journeys!

I've been listening to my graduating son and his senior friends and I detect an uncertainty that envelops them. They wonder if they are making the right decisions, heading down the right paths. A few seem more certain than others as to where they are headed in life and others are downright afraid.

Have you taken some wrong turns in your career and life path? Are there ways we can help the young people in our lives feel more comfortable when making life choices?

I have learned that while we may not know where a path in life leads us; there are signposts that help guide us in the right directions. If you are facing a fork in your road, have an important decision to make, or if there is a young person in your life that could use some help in setting out on life's journey, here are some "signposts" to ease the way:

1. Follow your interests. Interests are major signposts. Over my career as a coach, I have met many people who chose their professions for all the wrong reasons – money, prestige, position, or because they felt pressured into it by a parent or family member. These people were generally unhappy with their lives or at best, resigned to "doing" their time until retirement. Following an interest, even if it is a hobby guarantees a fulfilling pastime and often leads to a rewarding career.



Encourage the young people in your life to follow their interests when making career choices, even when it is not apparent that a living could be made from it. Examples of people turning dreams into reality from improbable interests: a young man who made a career out teaching kids illusion through magic tricks, a young woman who followed her passion of caring for animals into a pet sitting business, or a young entrepreneur turning his love of fishing into a bait business. Success and happiness are more than prestige, position, or money.

Questions to ask yourself or the teens in your life needing help:

- What things do I like to learn about? What “captures” my interest?
- When I think of the future, what kinds of things would I like to do or see myself doing? (Adventurer, raise horses, study fish, raise a family, etc.)

2. You don’t have to know the final destination. Keep options open while staying aware of opportunities. I struggle with trying to control where I am going – I want to see exactly where and how a given decision will play out. One of the hardest lessons I’ve had to learn is that we are better off in life not seeing what is ahead. Through staying flexible, amazing opportunities that I could never have foreseen just seemed to present themselves. When I let go of the need to know and control, events, people and things just come together in synchronistic ways. By letting go uncanny coincidences come along when we least expect them leading us in directions we never anticipated!

Questions to ask yourself or others you care about:

- Do you have a hard time giving up the need to know the exact game plan? In what ways can you teach yourself to be “more in the flow”? How will you build the trust in yourself to “know” the right decision?
3. Stay “tuned” into messages; check in with your body signals. When making decisions we need to recognize what our inner guidance and intuition is telling us. We can help the young people in our lives become aware of the ‘gut’ reactions and feelings they may be experiencing and to use them as clues to guide them in making the right choices. Do they feel dread or excitement? Are they uneasy or does it feel “right”? Are things falling into place or is everything a struggle? Paying attention to our inner voices helps us make choices we won’t regret later.

Questions to ask yourself or young people in need of direction:

- Identify your energy levels when considering different options, which options feel light and which ones feel heavy?



- What feelings are you feeling at a surface level? At a deeper level? How do you interpret your feelings?
4. Align choices with values and strengths. Most people cannot clearly identify their most important values or their dominant strengths. Yet these are two areas that can give us clear guidance when we are faced with difficult life decisions. Values are what we hold as most important and what we stand for. Do you value authenticity and being “natural”? Then it might be difficult for you to work in the fashion or performing arts industry which specializes in creating illusion. Is optimism something you value? You may want to think twice before marrying someone who sees life from a negative perspective.

Strengths can be in the form of an obvious talent such as an artistic flair for decorating or it could be as subtle as people feeling immediately accepted and valued by you. I guarantee you have far many more strengths than you realize. It is not uncommon for us to take our strengths for granted because they are generally things that come to us easily and therefore are easily discounted. A purposeful life is organized around our strengths. Doing so guarantees deep satisfaction in perfecting our strengths and in using them to serve others.

Questions to ask yourself or others:

- What do you stand for? What are the predominant values that guide your life? Are your values and strengths reflected in the choices you are making for your life right now?
5. Seek passion. To excel at anything, we must have the passion to move us through the tough times. Most people give up when things get tough or the way no longer seems clear. We’ve all encountered people who were passionate about what they did. They positively oozed of energy, were consumed with purpose and vision, and demonstrated enormous resiliency in the face of adversity. Passion effortlessly fuels success with a force that comes from the highest and best within us, a force that cannot be denied.

Questions to ask yourself or others:

- What do you get passionate about? What are you willing to stand up for? How can you fuel your passion?

Making major decisions in life is not easy. Surrender your need to know the future or to control. Be flexible and open to new opportunities you may not have previously considered. Check in with your heart and soul and align with



your strengths and values before making a major life decision. Share this with the important people in your life – especially teens making important career decisions – and watch them gain a new confidence in making their decisions!

Online Newsletter for Student Success Mindset™. If you find the information in this newsletter of value, please forward it on to your colleagues and friends.

If you have an idea or story to share related to this topic, please [drop me an email!](#)

When Kids Think They Can, They Will! The Teacher's Guide to The Student Success Mindset™ - [See It On The Web Site](#) or [Buy It Online](#)

© 2006 Linda Tarr, All rights reserved. You are free to use material from the Student Success eZine in whole or in part, as long as you include complete attribution, including live web site link. Please also notify me where the material will appear.

The attribution should read:

'By Linda Tarr of Da Vinci Learning Technologies, Inc. Please visit [Linda's Web Site](#) for additional resources on personal growth and development for adolescents and teens.' Make sure the link is live if placed in an eZine or in a web site.)

