

Catalyst[©]

Catalyst is for alumni of our leadership development seminars to remain connected, and for coaching clients, prospective clients, and other interested parties to learn about who we are and what we do.

©2002 Dancing Star Productions except where indicated.
All rights reserved.

Are You Playing Your Biggest Game?

It is entirely human to seek comfort, yet prolonged comfort results in stagnation, and the cessation of growth. The size and quality of the game you are playing designs who you are becoming...

– Laura Whitworth

These statements opened a *Bigger Game Coaching* workshop I attended recently given by business owner/author/coach Laura Whitworth. The model is delineated from Whitworth's own experience of taking coaching training into prisons (see page 2).

What's a Bigger Game to you? What *must* be different in your world, that you can impact? What will grow you and the people around you that is worth having as your legacy; perhaps even worth giving your life for? This hunger for a more meaningful life bespeaks a Bigger Game.

This is followed closely by a “gulp” – essentially “this must be done, but I can't do this...but it must be done and I am the one who can do it”. How often do you feel the excitement, the challenge of a gulp?

To be a player, you then need to develop new competencies, identify and stretch beyond habitual comfort zones, fully invest emotionally, physically, and even (dare I say this?) in some way spiritually in your vision. Is the investment you are currently making sufficient? Have you yet become all of who you need to be to achieve your goal(s)?

A Bigger Game demands you step past where you normally stop, while realizing you cannot achieve it alone. This is where allies come in. Allies are collaborators that you can design

to help you keep reaching your goals. Even enemies can be allies – those who show you most clearly what you need to strengthen to succeed. How many allies do you have in your life? How effectively and how often do you use them?

My clients are senior-level players in business and the arts. Often they have Very Good Reasons for why they are stuck, until together we start challenging old assumptions, habits, and beliefs. This Bigger Game approach challenges and excites them to identify and move beyond their blocks into more meaningful, more fulfilling lives and careers.

Want to play your biggest game in your life or at work? Email me, *Deborah@DancingStar.com*; let's talk.

– Deborah Huisken

WORKSHOP ROUNDUP

Going Beyond Your Stop

How do you tap into your creativity, and how freely do you express it in your work? Where do you stop, and what is it that stops you?

This May in Toronto I co-lead The Mastery, a workshop which helps answer these questions, apprenticing with long-time leaders Ian Kennedy and Tanis MacDonald.

I first took the Mastery in 1995 to hone presentation skills. To my surprise it gave me a huge push forward in other areas of my life in which I

had been blocked, personally and professionally, as I confronted and then created with some of my deepest emotions. The impact on me and my career has been significant, and I have watched it impact numerous others as an assistant on many Masteries since.

Using simple acting exercises, the Mastery helps participants access competencies they may only have suspected. Thousands of participants



have completed the workshop since it was created in the late '70s, with companies all over Europe, Canada, and the US sending people to it or hiring Mastery leaders as consultants. Rather than talking or reading about moving beyond blocks, in Mastery exercises you do it, giving you a powerful experiential resource to take back into your life and work.

I use this approach in my work, particularly the Catalysts for Change executive retreat, sessions of which Ian will be co-leading with me. For details see *DancingStar.com/cfc.htm*

– Deborah Huisken

ARE YOU UP FOR IT?

To enroll in our Catalysts for Change retreat for leaders, our leadership development workshops (Dimensions of Leading, Power at Work, Dare to be Seen and Heard in the Workplace), for executive coaching (a sample session is free) or consulting services, contact Dancing Star Productions by telephone: +1 413.367.9416, email: *info@DancingStar.com*, or on the web at *www.DancingStar.com*.

Why not go out on a limb? That's where the fruit is. – Will Rogers



Catalyst - A Dancing Star Production
One must have chaos within to give birth to a dancing star - Nietzsche

Publisher

Dancing Star Productions

Editor

Deborah Huisken

Submissions

Send comments, questions, and submissions for Catalyst to 32 North Taylor Hill Rd, Montague, MA 01351 USA, or e-mail Deborah@DancingStar.com. For return of postal submissions, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We reserve the right to edit articles for length, clarity, and readability.

Advertising

Rates and deadlines available on request. This issue of Catalyst was sent electronically to over 1300 people worldwide.

HELP FOR MY FRIENDS

– Laura Whitworth is raising funds for her Coaching into Prisons project. For details and to help, please go to www.TheBiggerGame.org.

– British colleagues at Tapin2it offer creative consultancy services (analysis and inspiration, creative thinking, graphic design). They're good. Interested? Contact Amy Morgan at amym@tapin2it.com.

– I will be traveling to Cape Town, S. Africa and Japan in July. If you have contacts in either place who would be interested in hearing about my work, please email me on Deborah@DancingStar.com.

Deb's Corner



Direct communication. How often do you and the people around you use it, whether personally or professionally? Do you typically put on a “professional”

mask or speak your thoughts openly?

In my experience, direct communication is too rare, and rarely done well, even among leaders. Yet, it has been said that communication is the lubrication of business; this is one of its clearest forms.

Here's what I see. Many of us feel we “should” be something: professional, competent, self-reliant, in control, etc. Talking to someone else about the ways in which we are not – the ways in which we feel that we are “imposters” – goes against the grain, and we resist.

Yet when we open up, we find that we are not alone. Others share our doubts, fears, weaknesses, questions. Others also feel they should not let anyone else see what they feel. That is part of why we are so isolated from each other – and why an event like September 11 brings us together so profoundly, because suddenly we can say what we really feel knowing that others feel much the same.

A simple example: in a recent workshop I made a passionate statement, then noted a blank face opposite me. I asked directly (albeit with a touch of humor) about the blank look, saying it unnerved me. He thought a moment, then said he had had similar but heretofore unarticulated thoughts and ideas – the blank

look was his mind processing my comments. We went on to have a great conversation.

Subsequently, a colleague said “you always make me *think*.” Joking, I replied “maybe that's why no one wants to talk to me”, to which she replied seriously, “you may have a point.” In my very next call the discussion turned to our experience that often people resist directness, and the attendant looking within for self-awareness, in part because looking within sometimes necessitates bringing closely-guarded secrets into consciousness. This can be scary and uncomfortable initially, yet it is the only way to fully explore who we really are and therefore what our unique contribution can be.

As leaders, it is critical that we grasp fully who we are, both the light and the dark; and that we then talk with others – peers as well as those we are leading – about what we have learned. Taking this risk helps us and those around us to grow in wisdom and maturity.

There is an art to this, as people have different levels of comfort with such directness. The key is to stay aware of our impact, tempering our delivery to connect with our listeners where they are, while at the same time leading them (and ourselves) into new territory. It helps to ask, “what outcome do I want here?”

This can be hard work to do. It is so worth it, because it ultimately makes our companies and our world healthier and more comfortable for us all. That's what I think - you?

15 Minutes of Fame

“Try as we might, we really can't have it all.” says yours truly, quoted in an article in the June 2002 issue of **Runner's World**, Special Section on Women's Running. The article is on Time Management, and that most important of skills, saying no.

On Being Fully Human

It takes so much to be a full human being that there are very few who have the enlightenment or the courage to pay the price. One has to abandon altogether the search for security and reach out to the risk of living with both arms. One has to embrace the world like a lover. One has to accept pain as a condition of existence. One has to court doubt and darkness as the cost of knowing. One needs a will stubborn in conflict, but always total acceptance of every consequence of living and dying.

– Morris L. West