



May 2010 – Are You Your Own Worst Critic?

Amazing how we can beat ourselves up, even over the smallest things. In my monthly thought last month there was a typo – an error in spelling, or more so an error in typing. Life was Lif3e. It was clearly a slip of my typing fingers and not paying attention to spell check and proof reading.

There are a few lessons here:

1. We see what we want to see – I proof read the article a few times, even had someone else proof read it and we didn't see the obvious typo. I knew what the word should have been and I read it that way despite what was in black and white. Where else in life am I seeing only what I want to see?
2. We are quick to judge others – in the past I have judged others who have made spelling mistakes. Resumes that I'd review while at Procter & Gamble (not Proctor & Gamble) were not even considered if the applicant had misspelled the company name. I graduated from Wilfrid (not Wilfred) Laurier University so cringed when I saw that error in newspapers and such (he was the 7th Prime Minister of Canada). When a judgemental thought comes to mind, what is it about this that frustrates me? And have empathy for others – you don't know what they are going through.
3. We are quicker to judge ourselves – one person pointed out that error in last month's thought, one out of hundreds that received it (and I know more than 1 person read it as I did receive comments). I started to beat myself up over the mistake – it's so obvious, why didn't I double check it, pay more attention. When you start to beat yourself up, acknowledge it, assess the scope of the error, correct it if possible, and move on.

It's great to strive for improvement (I won't say perfection as that creates an unrealistic goal) and to have attention to detail, be accurate, and use the available resources and technology. And it's also great to have empathy and compassion for yourself and others – is this a big deal? Have I done irreparable damage? How can I correct it? What can I learn from this?

I also want to be clear that there are some mistakes that do cause lots of damage – a surgeon nicking an artery during surgery, falling asleep at the steering wheel while driving – take the time to prevent those types of errors.

For everything else in daily life, as the old best-seller was titled, "Don't sweat the small stuff". What are you beating yourself up over? What can you do to be more compassionate with yourself?

Live your potential!

Anne Taylor

DIRECTIONS – Coaching for Results

www.taynac.com/directions

coachanne@taynac.com

© 2010 Anne Taylor