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### **Need to be Busy 4: What are You Afraid of?**

*By Brooke Loening*

In the last column I challenged you by stating that being busy all the time it not necessarily better. If you are avoiding difficult issues by staying busy, it will be difficult to make changes, without embracing them. If you are busy all the time, even if is not to avoid certain issues, you may be blocking your most creative inspirations, which many times come from a place of silence. Today I would like to look into some of the deeper subconscious reasons that we have trouble staying still even for short periods of time. If any or this rings true for you, it might free you to enjoy and benefit from times of not doing anything.

After much discussion on being busy Rick had a revelation. He remembered that when he was younger his father used to yell at him “get off the couch and do something!” He became aware, through talking about it, that every time he sat down and did nothing he felt this urge to get right up and do something productive. The voice of his father was still resonating in his head on a subconscious level, urging him to get up and “do.”

Is there a subconscious thought pattern in you that keeps you on the move? Try an experiment. Sit down and just be quiet for ten minutes. This may seem like an eternity, but set a timer so you don't cheat yourself. What are the thoughts that arise? What are the thoughts that you are inclined to push away? The following are some examples of thoughts that have come up for people in some of our group coaching meetings:

- I have so many things that need to get done, I would feel better if I worked on my do list rather than sitting here.
- I don't want to think about my work situation which is what will happen if I sit here; it's not great but I am living with it and there is nothing I can do about that feels realistic.
- If I sit here, I will think about my blood pressure issue. I'm, afraid the doctor will tell me there something terrible and I don't want to deal with paying for possible testing that she will ask for.
- I really need to make that phone call, and I won't be able to relax until I have made it. If I sit here, all I will be able to think about is that call.
- If I sit here and do nothing that is time that I could be spending doing something productive. I really want to be as productive as I can be.
- I want to get the most out of every day, and that means “doing” at every available moment.

Do any of these sound familiar to you? The last one is of particular interest to me and inspires me to discuss a very deep subconscious issue that we all live with on some level. I suggest that we all have a subconscious fear of death and our own mortality and that fear plays itself out in our every day lives. That may sound a little heavy, so another way

to put it is this: we want to get as much “done” while we are here, and nonproductive time does not fit into that equation. Many of us feel the need to be productive with our time and get the most out of every day, because someday we will not have the opportunity.

Let’s take a look at this line of thinking and see if it actually is driving us, and if so, if it is working for us in a positive way. Try this exercise. Imagine you are on your last day on the planet looking back. Write down some of the changes you would make with the way you spent you time during your life.

- Do you wish you had been more productive?
- Do you regret not having more time of peace and quiet?
- Do you feel like your life went by too fast because you were so busy all the time
- Did you chase some goal of getting everything done that was never attainable?

The truth is that when you die, you will have a do list which has not been done, you will have a mailbox with mail in it, you will still have email coming in, and there will be messages on you cell phone.

We will never reach a goal of having everything done so maybe getting everything done should not be the goal, consciously or subconsciously. Asking these questions may help you to determine what is really important in you life.

An affirmation I use is, “I allow time each day to do nothing and to just be present, and that is one of the best ways I can use my time.”

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