

Hello,

The past few months have been a blast, doing some of my favourite things: learning, having “real” conversations and seeing people grow. I have got through two month ends successfully, had petrol in the tank and food in the fridge. That’s a miracle in my eyes. Thank you to all of you for helping that happen, either being a client or referring clients to me.

I have met some amazing people and witnessed great courage as people have wrestled to be who they were created to be. I have always loved Michelangelo’s unfinished slave sculptures and the description in the book *Agony and Ecstasy* of how within a piece of raw marble he could see the form of whatever was trapped, and all he did was release it by chipping away the superfluous stone. What is the form within each of us, a David or Pieta or Slave and let us remove the protective dross. Sometimes we think the “marble” is flawed and therefore not good enough, yet David has his weight on the one leg which gives him innocence or something, and that because the stone was flawed. Our tragedies and hardships are so often those things which truly make us unique and exquisite.

I think two elements from the coaching process have really grabbed me and I am beginning to grasp their importance. Firstly, our Beliefs. “As a man thinks so he is” said Solomon (I think). “Take captive every thought” wrote Paul. Because we behave according to what we believe of ourselves and or what we believe of the world. And the degree to which we change is entirely dependent on the degree to which we can change our internal picture or image of ourselves. Our beliefs come from our environment, experiences, self talk, education and repetition makes them stronger and stronger. But the exciting and empowering thing is that beliefs change and therefore CAN BE changed, by adjusting any or all of the sources of belief. E.g. as a child I had two beliefs that education changed. I thought the night time noise of crickets was the stars “twinkling”, ‘cos twinkling is a sound isn’t it? and I had not yet met a cricket. And when our animals went to be “spade” they were put onto that garden implement, lifted up, put down never to have babies again. But of course they were being spayed, a whole lot more complex a procedure.

The other element is Responsibility. Eish this is the big one, yet I am observing the Liberty this brings to people’s lives. As we take ownership of our uniqueness, become accountable for all that we are and have; as we stop blaming, justifying or pretending that all is just fine so we blossom. And in our blossoming we inspire. And that is why I feel inspired regularly these days, because I am seeing blossoming on a daily basis.

Other than the one on one coaching I am group coaching 10 supervisors at Dusi Umgeni Conservation Trust (by the way there is a River Clean Up Day coming soon, let’s get a gang together), I am wanting to do more group coaching as it reduces costs for the recipients but adds another dynamic to the process; so if anyone is keen for that give me a yell. I am trying to organize such a thing at Amber Valley because I believe that a lot of people are forced into retirement when they still have lots to offer. I have also been doing some staff development for DUCT which I really enjoy. I have loved going down to Inanda Dam or Nagle Dam or along the banks of the Dusi to facilitate topics like communication, vision and values.

I have also met Trish and Di from Learning Identity, learned lots from them and am learning more because I believe that figuring out how our brain is wired to learn and express and communicate is part of seeing the form within the marble. I strongly recommend you contact them if you or your children feel like a square peg in a round hole at school or work.

www.learningidentity.co.za.

Some great books I’ve read recently: *Unbowed* by Watari Maathai, an amazing Kenyan woman who won the Nobel Prize for her stand against the government and society regarding environmental issues. *The Element* by Ken Robinson which

is about finding and living in your passion. Check him out on the web he's a profound but funny guy. Another one I am labouring through but is good is How People Grow by Cloud and Townsend.

Not many DVD's recently 'cos I've had some racy Patricia Cornwell novels but Brothers is provoking (and bleak so beware), about identity and self perception and behavior and that we will over-ride our values to fulfill our needs.

The long awaited roof wetting is on the horizon. The 30th September is being bandied about so be prepared for the invite. Don't forget that Life is a Choice and as Hubert Humphrey said (who the heck is he anyway?)

“Oh my friend, it's not what they take away from you that counts. It's what you do with what you have left.”

Keep well, keep searching, keep growing

Fiona