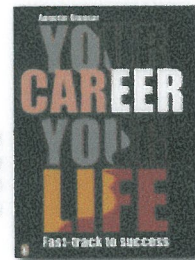


TELL A FRIEND

YOUR CAREER, YOUR LIFE **"Fast-track to Success" by Annette Kinnear**

Life wants to see what you have learnt from your experiences.

This time you will pass the test, because you know so much more about making choices than you did when you set off on your journey. For a start, you will have learnt to base your choices on positive thoughts. Of course, negativity in the workplace can be quite entertaining. Being angry with your boss or customers can be fun. Feeling sorry for yourself can feel good, and blaming others can feel like a soothing ointment on a painful bruise.



In fact, it is not healthy to deny reality and to pretend to feel great 24/7.

It is good to acknowledge negative emotions in the right way, at the right time and in the right forum. The danger lies in negative thinking that becomes a habit and reaches 'critical mass'. (Critical mass is a term borrowed from physics, and refers to the minimum amount of material needed to keep a nuclear chain reaction going. In this case, it is the amount of matter significant enough to affect or change an outcome.) If you keep bingeing on negative thoughts, they will outweigh your intake of positive thoughts and gradually make you 'obese with negativity'. The extra weight you carry will one day break your back and turn you into a broken person: depressed, bitter and lonely.

An old Cherokee was teaching his adolescent grandson about life. 'A fight is going on inside me,' he said to the boy. 'It is a terrible fight, and it is between two wolves. One is evil – he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. This same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person, too.' The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, 'Which wolf will win?' The old Cherokee replied, 'The one you feed.'

(Source unknown)

If you have made the mistake of feeding yourself mostly negativity, you may think, 'I have messed this up. I have gone the wrong way. There is nothing I can do about it. It is too late now.' This is not true.

As leaders, we know that if an employee makes a mistake it is always because the person is not yet ready for something. Even when we say things such as 'she should have known' or 'he did know, it was just carelessness' or 'I should know better' – a mistake can always be traced back to some form of non-readiness. Making an error brings the matter into the person's consciousness and readiness develops from there. That's why mistakes can be very good for our career progression.

Yes, an opportunity may have been missed in the process of learning, but out of the lesson grows another opportunity. It is never 'too late'. A lesson is not a setback – it is just another starting point. What matters is not where you are right now or where you were. It is simply where you are going to from here. Higher or lower, forwards or backwards? You can choose. You are what you are today because of the choices you have made until now.

Many smokers who try to stop smoking are unsuccessful. At the same time, many people who have chain-smoked for forty years suddenly stop, from one day to the next. When you speak to them, they tell you that giving up smoking was easy and that they do not miss it. That is because they really *willed* giving up at the time.

Actions are controlled by the will.

The same truth applies to reaching professional goals. Will it, and then act on it: what you want to happen will happen.

YOUR CAREER, YOUR LIFE - Fast Track to Success by Annette Kinnear