

KATE RAMSAY AND THE AnD COACHES WELCOME YOU TO OUR STAYING IN TOUCH NEWSLETTER.

In **Learnable Moments** in this edition we share how you can discover your six signature strengths in a free online survey. In **Did You Know?** we give the summary of client evaluations for our coaching services in 2010 and we refer you to a blog of Kate's about the value of time to reflect. A **Good Read** in this edition is Hugh Mackay's book about the ten desires he believes drive us humans. Our **AnD Story** tells how a client made a breakthrough by shifting from an either/or to an and/both view of the world. We close with a link to a happiness newsletter.

Learnable Moments

One of the things we coaches do with coaching clients is help them look within so they can better understand themselves. The benefit of this to them is twofold – greater self-awareness will enhance their quality of life and will also improve their interpersonal relationships, be that with team members, colleagues, their own clients or their loved ones.

We use a range of different tools to help people to better understand themselves and we are always on the lookout for more. Recently a colleague alerted me to the Values in Action (VIA) strengths survey - developed by psychologists Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman in 2004, and subsequently made available by the Mayerson Foundation to the public domain free of charge at <http://authentic happiness.org>.

The survey lists 24 strengths within the six categories of: wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence. Once the client has identified their six signature strengths, the coach either helps them explore how they might further enhance their top strengths, and/or how they might bolster their less developed strengths.

I used the VIA to identify my six signature strengths late last year and was so happy with the result that I've transcribed them into my 2011 diary as a reminder to utilise them.

Why don't you give it a go?

Did You Know?

■ Coaching evaluations

At the end of coaching contracts our clients are asked to evaluate the worth of their coaching experience to both themselves and their organisation. Once a year we collate these, and here's how we rated in 2010:

On average our Learning Retreat clients rated their experience at 20/20, our Leadership Coaching clients rated it at 19/20 and our Coach the Coach in Leadership Coaching clients rated it at 18/20. The value that clients identified for themselves from their coaching included developing their emotional intelligence, time for disciplined reflection, focus on taking action and generation of new ideas. For organisations, the most frequent value responses ranged from enhanced productivity and quality of products/service to improved communication. Our evaluation also asks for general comments. Here's what one client had to say:

My time with my coach has been extremely beneficial to me, and therefore to my organisation. I liked that the AnD philosophy of coaching takes an and/both (whole of life) approach. I also appreciated that the AnD coaching methodology is grounded in theory and that my coach has had many years experience.

■ The value of coaching for reflective practice

A recent blog of Kate's tells the story of a Sydney client who was due to attend a conference in Japan. She flew up a couple of days early and, while wandering the streets near her hotel, she happened upon a public garden. In she went and spent several hours there. To her

amazement, new solutions to old problems started popping into her mind as she soaked in the beauty of the place. She recorded her thoughts in a notebook she always carries with her and brought them back to her next coaching session. During our debrief she exclaimed, "Kate, I now understand what happens in my coaching sessions – they're like regular visits to that Japanese garden because they give me the time and space to reflect!" For the complete Japanese Garden Story go to the blog page at andconsulting.org and scroll down to the fourth blog.

A Good Read

Kate writes: In a previous newsletter I wrote about an American psychiatrist who believes that, to have a fulfilling life, we need something useful to do, something to look forward to and someone to love. Hugh Mackay in [What Makes Us Tick?](#) (Hachette. Australia. 2010) takes this further. From his many years as a social researcher, from his observations of human nature, and from his reading of others' work, Mackay has identified ten desires that he believes makes we humans 'tick'. He stresses that none of these are inherently good or bad, and that each has the power to bring out the best and the worst in us.

They are a desire:

- To be taken seriously
- For 'my place'
- For something to believe in
- To connect
- To be useful
- To belong
- For more
- For control
- For something to happen
- For love

In preparation for writing this piece, my partner and I worked our way through the list of Mackay's ten desires over a morning coffee. This proved to be an enjoyable and insightful experience – we learned a little bit more about each other, and even about ourselves methinks. Further, I can see myself referring to these ten desires with coaching clients as another entry point into their inner reflections about themselves.

However at times I felt Mackay seemed to labour the point with his explanations and explorations of each desire. I also share Ruth Wajnryb's concern, in her review of the book in the Sydney Morning Herald (11/12/10), about what she calls the "squeaky clean, white-bread feel" of Mackay's interviewees. However, in spite of my 'niggles', I believe this book is worth a read if you want to make more sense of we complicated humans.

An AnD Story

Kate writes: A recent Leadership Coaching client began her session by saying she was feeling "torn between two different selves". She told me that she had previously had her own graphic design business but is currently working in a demanding management position in a not for profit organisation. She said that she enjoys her job, needs the salary and knows that she brings creativity to how she does her work. Nonetheless her graphic designer self is craving attention and at times distracts her from a full commitment to her current job.

Before we looked at how she might resolve her torn feelings, I invited the client to articulate and write down her vision for five years time. We then looked at an AnD coaching tool called the Dilemma Resolution model (attached). We used this to help her see that, with her five year vision front of mind, and by doing the 'and/both dance' described in the model, she could continue to enjoy her current role for the next two to three years, knowing she can then pursue her vision in graphic design. She left saying she felt excited and motivated about the journey ahead.

Ah – the power of an and/both view of the world I smiled to myself as I tidied up our glasses and cups after she left.

And to Close

The [Think and Be Happy](#) newsletter from the **Happiness and Its Causes Conference** people has just landed in my email In box. There are links to several Australian and international people doing research and on the ground work to enhance happiness in our world/communities. If you'd like to discover more about thinking and being happy, contact vajrayana@au.terrapinmedia.com or see www.happinessanditscauses.com.au.