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Is Your Life Like “The Hunger Games”?

"The Hunger Games" begin when we begin the downward spiral of "failing" (according to us), with nobody else to point the finger to, except ourselves.

by **Carol McCall**

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You know, many of us have been there! We decide to "play big", take actions "outside-the-box", take on projects that "stretch" us. Perhaps someone who has recently read Jim Collins book, "BHAGS" (big, hairy, audacious goals) tells us to "go-for-it", treat it like a "game". Prove to ourselves we really can do it! Like the Nike ad "Just Do It!" So we set out to "just-do-it!"

Then several weeks go by and the reality of what we have undertaken hits and the basic instinct of survival kicks in. A peculiar combination of trust and blame now appears. When "stretch goals" become the promise, we have entered "The Hunger Games". "The Hunger Games" begin when we begin the downward spiral of "failing" (according to us), with nobody else to point the finger to, except ourselves. We watch with horror and intrigue. "What's next?" we ask. We enlist others to enter into the dynamics of this "game". Mergers, alliances are temporary, with the need to be the "last-one-standing". At all costs! What's wrong with this picture?" The answer is simple and not easy!

First, WE STOPPED LISTENING! We stopped listening to the "still small voice" that informs us of the resources needed to hit big goals. We stopped listening to the "warnings" that indicated the depletion of the assets that will occur to achieve the "stretch" goals. Take inventory of what it's going to take to hit the big goals. STOP, LISTEN, ACT! Like Apple Computers, they stop (survey) "listen" to their end users(test), which enables them (act) to create a more productive company, without squandering their assets.

Instead of "just do it" reinvent the "mantra" and practice "listen, then do it"

Second, listen to what it takes to achieve the goal. The first thing that we eliminate is our inclusion in the process of accomplishing the goal. I have coached hundreds of highly productive clients, who leave themselves out in terms of "taking a break" to replenish their energies. When we don't take a "time out" to replenish our reserves, we suffer from "decision fatigue". We get "tired". As we get tired, we make decisions that don't serve the bigger picture -and now we're into the death spiral.

Third, take time to acknowledge the continuous completion of each stage of the project. Many of my "type A high achiever clients" use Scrum as a "death march"; the moment one stage is done, they move on to the next one without even a "moment-of-acknowledgment".

Without acknowledgment comes burnout, frustration and resentment.

So, has your life become like "The Hunger Games?" If the answer is "Yes", here are some solutions.

A. *STOP* - take an inventory of what's needed and required to "stretch".

LISTEN - to what has worked in the past and test what's working now - stay focused.

ACT - take creative, "not done before"(bold) actions that lead to different results.

B. SCHEDULE time for yourself and self reflection, no less than 20 min per day. I promise you whatever you have on your plate will still be there after your 20 min break and refresh yourself

C. CELEBRATE - what you accomplished step-by-step of the project. I guarantee, that when you celebrate your incremental success, there will be less "burn out", fatigue and resentment.

There have been numerous men and women who said, " I didn't really think that I needed to do this and yet what I discovered is that I hadn't updated myself. I was still living in the pre-internet period of my life. This is a new day and I wasn't listening to how things operate NOW! "

"Listen, There's A World Waiting To Be Heard!"

In Partnership and Listening!
Dr. Carol McCall

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CAROL MC CALL, PhD. D., Entrepreneur, business executive, educator, therapist, social psychologist, author, trainer, lecturer with more than 40+ years experience in communication and personal development is the founder of the Institute for Global Listening and Communication, LLC. She is one of the early pioneers (since 1988) in the coaching industry and holds the highest designation of Master Certified Coach, M.C.C., from the International Coach Federation, ICF.

Author of the book, ***Listen! There's A World Waiting To Be Heard,*** now in 5th reprint, creator of ***The Empowerment of Listening*** tape series – soon to be available on CD and MP3-**The Listening Course, The Possibility of Woman** (**POW** sm) workshops and the **Life Development Coach in Communication** (**LDCC** sm) training program, she has touched the lives of over 2 million people through her workshops, lectures, TV appearances, articles, book and tape series. She is a respected veteran leader,coach and trainer in the MLM industry since 1990. She is known for her unique listening skills and her “laser” coaching ability that quickly moves people to turn their desires into commitment, action, productivity and profitability.

For further information contact: Dr. Carol McCall at wigc4u@aol.com
Phone number: 1-888-966-8339
http://drmccall.wordpress.com (blog)
http://twitter.com/DrCarolMcCall