



LIZ PLASTER

La Canción de la Corazón© The Heart's Song

Many people fail in life, not for lack of ability or brains or even courage but simply because they have never organized their energies around a goal."

- Elbert Hubbard

What is your story around work? Does it justify the hours you are putting in? When is good – good enough and when is it important to do more? What do you really want at work? What do you want in your personal life? Are you resisting your great work? Do you know what it is?

Have you ever felt like you were slowly wearing down and running out of juice . . . where you just didn't have the energy to accomplish what you wanted to do at the level that it deserved? Or spoken to people at work or at home in ways that not only did not move the conversation forward but possibly damaged future interactions?



Unfortunately, we often take our energy and our ability to manage it for granted; not even realizing we are in a fog until we hit a wall. Paul Hemp¹ in the Harvard Business Review called it *Presentism*, or disengagement.

As we mentioned in our June, '09 newsletter, "*Potential: Powered by You*,"² the results of *Gallop Management Journal's* 2006 Q2 survey found that of all U.S. workers age 18 or older, about 20.6 million – or roughly 17% – are actively disengaged (undermining) and another 54% are "checked out." Only 29% are actively engaged.

In Jim Loehr's book, *"The Power of Story"* (2007), he suggests that if you look at the bottom line, then the biggest single crisis facing American business today is inarguably related to health care; more pointedly, it's stress-related or disengagement related – *"Presentism"*.

The Harvard Business Review (Paul Hemp) writes that **"Presentism" can cut individual productivity by one-third or more.** "Many companies greatest health-related expense," he says, "is the almost invisible decline of productivity resulting from employee health problems. Some employers have estimated that loss of productivity is 3, 5 or 10 times the direct cost of health treatment."³ Jim Loehr states that part of this problem is that most businesses view the physical health and well-being of its employees as a private and personal matter. At work, employees are generally reluctant to take care of themselves; to do so is largely countercultural.

"Yet, if extraordinary physical energy – which directly influences emotional, mental and even spiritual energy - is the very thing needed for extraordinary productivity, then how can business ignore the demands that the human body makes every day?"⁴ How can you?

In the world of sports, medicine, physics and psychology, experts have long known that energy, not time, is the most important resource we have to manage. It directly impacts our ability to leverage our talents and perform at our best.

"Creating a joint venture between head and heart puts a power pack behind your goals. Getting your head in sync with your heart and harnessing the power of coherence gives you the energy efficiency you need to achieve changes that haven't been possible before. The head can notice what things need to change, but the heart provides the power and direction to actually bring about the changes...." - Doc Childre & Howard Martin, *HeartMath*

What can you do?

STEP I: AWARENESS.

Do you know yourself? How are showing up and how does your behavior impact others? Leveraging our energy and talents and performing at our best begins with a deeper **awareness** of how we are showing up - to ourselves as well as others. This means developing an ability to integrate our mind and heart.

How are you showing up? What are you feeling? What is your mind telling you? What is your heart telling you? Can you sense alignment or a lack of it? What does that mean? What are your patterns? What is your energy level? Are you bursting over or feeling depleted? At work, are you delegating? If not, why not?

STEP II: PURPOSE. Get clear why you are here. What do you want? Why? What is your direction or purpose? What do you have to offer? To perform at your best you need to be clear about your goals.

What is your story around work? Does it justify the hours you are putting in? When is good – good enough and when is it important to do more? What do you really want at work? What do you want in your personal life? What part is impacted by the decision you make here? Are you resisting your great work? Do you know what it is?

STEP III: ACTION PATH. After you get clear about what you want and why you are here then it is time to create an action path, a well thought out path that will help you obtain your goals. Clear steps can simplify your movement forward.

What are the actions needed? What specific activities, if you did them every day, would move you forward in the direction that you want?

STEP IV: ACCOUNTABILITY. What choices are you making on your action path? What drives them?

Are you activating your potential by taking 100% responsibility for your life? “No choice” or “allowing” is a choice. Are you acknowledging this?

*Have you ever stepped back to consider that your “one wild and precious” life is a result of the all choices you have made – either in attitude or action? What drives your choices? **How do you stay accountable to yourself?** Do you have both formal and informal accountability measures in place to benchmark your journey?*

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“Holding the Empty Space for My Heart’s Song

It is so hard to hold the empty space during the wait for revelation, Activities rush in like the tide covering the sand, Consuming every nook and cranny of my personal beach Until there is no dry space in which to sun and soak in the Divine.©

Liz Plaster, 3/06

Getting Started

Increasing your energy and awareness starts with opening up some space in your life. The space is needed to integrate the voice of your head with your heart’s wisdom, your **La Canción de la Corazón**.

Opening up this space in your life to hear your heart’s song can increase your awareness, improve your relationships and help you better manage your energy and therefore obtain your goals.

Time Frame: Research says that it takes a minimum of 21 days to re-route our neural pathways in order to bring change. After 21 days our mind can see the benefit and is more receptive to change.

Being fully present and disciplined in an activity for 21 days can provide you with more focus, clarity, and consistency. It can help you to get clear on what you truly want which can be a catalyst for renewing your energy AND powering up your potential in order to reach your goals!

Location: Start where you are.

What You Can Do: Here are some suggestions on ways to begin, **just choose one of these or design your own**. Commit to doing it for 30 minutes or more each day for 21 days:

- Begin a practice of gratitude: Write down 3 things you are grateful for each day and take time to reflect on each one.
- Simply sit still, breathe deeply and meditate for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Take a walk alone in silence, being fully present and aware of everything (Think lunch break).

- Write or draw in a journal each day. (I set a timer and give myself a 3 page minimum/maximum – some days I write big, some days I write small- cramming everything in).

My 21 day quest started on July 1, 2009. To open up more space so that I could hear my personal La Canción de la Corazón, I went by myself to Santa Fe, New Mexico and rented a tiny one room casita. I was inspired by my friend, Mark La Blanc and his camino (well worth reading). I am using physical movement, quiet meditation and creative expression (writing, photography or art) on a daily basis (see BLOG at www.lizplaster.wordpress.com). I am continuing to work about 3 to 4 hours a day. It is important to just start where you are with the resources and opportunities that you have.

“In our deepest moments of struggle, frustration, fear, and confusion, we are being called upon to reach in and touch our hearts. Then, we will know what to do, what to say, how to be. What is right is always in our deepest heart of hearts...”

- Roberta Sage Hamilton

Are you ready to leverage your energy and your talents and perform at your best?

What will you choose to do to begin hearing your

La Canción de la Corazón?

Links:

Emotional Intelligence:

- lizplaster.com
- www.6seconds.com
- Doc Childre & Howard Martin: www.heartmath.com

Mark LeBlanc: <http://blog.smallbusinesssuccess.com/>

Heart Quotes: <http://www.heartquotes.net/Heart-quotes.html>

Paul Hemp, “Presentism at Work-But Out of It.” Harvard Business Review, October 2003, pp.49-58.

Liz Plaster, “Potential Powered by You. www.lizplaster.com, June 2009.

Reichfield and Sasser, “Zero Defection: Quality Comes in Services.” Harvard Business Review, September-October 2003, pp.105-111.

Loehr, J. (2007). The Power of Story. New York: Free Press, p 27.