Penney Murphy & Associates April 2011

CHOOSE HAPPINESS

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Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon.
~ Doug Larson

If you have health, you probably will be happy, and if

Happy April Everyone!

We'll be enjoying warmer weather anytime now...right? I certainly hope so. I can't wait to sit in the sunshine on our deck and enjoy the outdoors (without a parka & mitts). Bring it on!

At the end of March we heard a whole lot in the news about financial budgets on the provincial and federal levels. There was a lot of talk about spending, balanced budgets, new incentives, tax cuts and priorities.

As I was discussing my ideas for our April newsletter with my husband Brent, he suggested that I tap into the recent theme of budgets, but he noted rather than focusing on financials perhaps I could give it a personal touch. It made perfect sense. Of course I could!

Unfortunately I didn't have time to buy a new pair of shoes as is the tradition when delivering a budget, but I'm sure I can look after that in coming days ☺

So ladies and gentlemen, (insert drum roll here) with much pomp and ceremony, I am pleased to present Penney's April 2011 Budget for LIVING WELL:

Reduce DEFICIT by Increasing GRATITUDE.

you have health and happiness, you have all the wealth you need, even if it is not all you want.
~ Elbert Hubbard

A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book.
~ Irish Proverb

To avoid sickness eat less; to prolong life worry less.
~ Chu Hui Weng

Life is not merely to

By focusing solely on what we want or what's missing in life, we parachute ourselves into a perspective of "LACK" or "Deficit" whereby we dwell on what we don't have. However, if we include the practice of Gratitude on a daily basis our perspective shifts easily from lack to ABUNDANCE.

Being thankful for all of the good things in our life opens our eyes to how fortunate we really are. We can look at Gratitude on a large scale and be grateful for the people who love us, our health, the fact that we live in a great democratic society or that here in Saskatchewan while we suffer through long cold miserable winters we are not at risk for major earthquakes or tsunamis and the misery that follows such events.

Or we can focus on smaller, simple gifts like the morning sunshine, our dog greeting us with a lick and a tail wag at the end of a hectic day or a kiss goodnight.

There are many, many things to be grateful for and to appreciate.
However, if we don't make this a regular practice, we may be consumed by the Deficit perspective and miss out on how truly wonderful our lives really are right now.

Do yourself a favour and take a few minutes every day to consider what you are grateful for in your life. I guarantee you will like the feeling.

You will find more information in the article "The Importance of Gratitude and How To Use It" included in this newsletter.

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow". ~ Melody Beattie

be alive,
but to be well.
~ Marcus
Valerius Martial

The mind has
great influence
over the body,
and maladies
often have their
origin there.
~ Moliere

Confidence
and hope
do more good
than physic.
~ Galen

Looking for a SURPLUS in CONNECTING with friends/family

When it comes to living well, there are few things better than being surrounded by people who love us and who genuinely enjoy our company.

Unfortunately sometimes we are so busy and so caught up in the rat race that we don't' have time or make time to connect with others.

Our friends and family are our support network through which we recharge our batteries and make sense of the world. Making memories, sharing laughter and hugs, connecting and reconnecting...now that's living well!

"We need old friends to help us grow old and new friends to help us stay young." ~Letty Cottin Pogrebin

FOCUS on RESOURCES... How's your ENERGY level? If you want more energy, the fix is simple.

Increase your Positive Self Talk.

I'm sure the people around me think I sound like a broken record some days but I am a HUGE believer in the power of POSITIVE and that includes Positive Self Talk. (You know those 50,000 internal conversations we have in our heads every single day!).

Often we are not even aware of the amount of chatter that is going on in our psyche.
However, if you pause and listen a bit you will become aware of the messages you are sending to yourself.

You will likely be surprised at the negativity that is often lurking within these conversations. The danger in negative self-talk is that unfortunately

Although our inattention can contribute to our lack of total well-being, we also have the power to choose positive behaviors and responses. In that choice we change our every experience of life!
~ Greg Anderson

Always leave enough time in your life to do something that makes you happy, satisfied, even joyous. That has more of an effect on economic well-being than any other single factor.
~ Paul Hawken

Self-esteem is as important to our well-being as legs are to a table. It is

we quite often believe these negative messages and our thoughts, feelings and behaviors are impacted as a result.

Think of it this way: Imagine you meet 100 people today. Each of these 100 people tells you that you are the most amazing person they have ever met. Then you meet 1 person who tells you that you are an idiot. What are you going to think about tonight? The 100 people who think you are amazing or the 1 person who doesn't?

We tend to focus on the negative and totally discount the positive, thereby giving credence to that 1 person and disregarding the 100 people who think we are great.

If left unchecked our negative self-talk can deplete our energy in a heartbeat. It can also lead to a loss of self-esteem and self-confidence, depression, anxiety and panic attacks.

You can control your self-talk and it's not rocket science. It simply takes practice. You will find the article called "What Do You Say To Yourself?" in this month's newsletter written by our own Elizabeth Smith. I hope you find it helpful in terms of mastering your thoughts. Of course if you would like some assistance just give us a call at 242-1010. We Can Help!

"Carefully watch your THOUGHTS, for they become your WORDS. Manage and watch your WORDS, for they will become your ACTIONS. Consider and judge your ACTIONS, for they have become your HABITS. Acknowledge and watch your HABITS, for they shall become your VALUES. Understand and embrace your VALUES, for they become YOUR DESTINY" ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Another way to increase your energy is to move. I don't mean leave town, I mean get up and move your body. Take a walk, do a little dance, skip, play ball. It doesn't matter what you do or how funny you look doing it...just do it.

essential for physical and mental health and for happiness.
~ Louise Hart

Being Conscious of our ENVIRONMENT - Let's get lots of Fresh Air & Sunshine this year.

Did you realize that Saskatchewan has over 100,000 lakes? We are also home to 2 National Parks, 34 Provincial Parks and almost 100 Regional Parks. We live in the most beautiful part of the Canada without a doubt. If you want some inspiration take a look at the Tourism Saskatchewan website. Great pictures and a lot of great information can be found at www.sasktourism.com. A visit to this website will have you wanting to dig out your camping gear and get going!

"In wilderness I sense the miracle of life, and behind it our scientific accomplishments fade to trivia." ~Charles A. Lindbergh

The simplification of life is one of the steps to inner peace. A persistent simplification will create an inner and outer well-being that places harmony in one's life.
~ Peace Pilgrim

In summary, showing gratitude of a daily basis, connecting with friends and family, positive thinking, increased energy and enjoying our environment are all essential components to Living Well. I hope you will take a moment to consider what Living Well means to you, for as Malcolm Forbes reminds us "It's a very short trip. While alive, live".

Thanks again to all the people who have contributed to date to my "Lessons We've Learned About Love" booklet which will be a wedding present for my daughter Chelsea as she marries her love Alan in July.

Here are some more "Lessons" I've received to date via email:

Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened.

Never miss out on the opportunity to celebrate. As young newlyweds, my husband and I were very focused on paying off debt and buying our 1st home together. As a result, we agreed not to buy each other anything for anniversaries, birthdays,

Happiness never decreases by being shared.
~ Buddha

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. As long as this exists, and it certainly always will, then there will be comfort for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances may be.
~ Anne Frank

In our lives, change is

Valentine's Day etc. We both regret that now because those occasions are only a few of many opportunities to show your spouse how much you love and appreciate them. ~ T.V.

Growing up in a house filled with 5 girls I always remember the laughter the most. I fondly recall mum saying (unsolicited too!) as many times as she could in her English accent, "Oh girls, I could never have married a man who couldn't make me laugh!" 57 years later, mum and dad continue to share the laughs. How true that came to be for me. There isn't a day that passes that my husband and I aren't "filling our pants" over something hilariously trivial. Good times, good times. ~ B.C.

Love is a decision. We all make many decisions throughout our busy days; why not wake up making the conscious decision to love your spouse in a special way every day? Think about the small things you can do or say to show that love and appreciation and do them! ~ T.V.

Well said! As I am hoping to collect as many "Lessons" as possible I invite you to continue sending your thoughts, advice and insight in a short email to my personal email address: penneymurphy@penneymurphy.com.

With your help, I will compile all of the information for inclusion in a booklet to give to Chels & Alan on their wedding day, and I will also make it available to all of you.

Remember, as a token of appreciation for your help with the "Lessons We've Learned About Love" project...everyone who sends an email submission will be entered in a draw for a fabulous "LOVE package"....Limo to and from a romantic evening at the incredible IVY restaurant including dinner and a fine bottle of wine, and an exquisite bouquet from my favorite flower shop "Blossoms". Thanks again for all of your help.

unavoidable, loss is unavoidable. In the adaptability and ease with which we experience change, lies our happiness and freedom.
~ Buddha

Live with intention. Walk to the edge. Listen hard. Practice wellness. Play with abandon. Laugh. Choose with no regret. Do what you love. Live as if this is all there is. ~ Mary Anne Roadacher-Hershey

Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the

I leave you now with a favourite quote about Living Well:

"Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens."
~ Khalil Gibran.

Take care of yourselves and those you love.

Kindest Regards,
Penney

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What do you say to yourself?

Self-talk. We all do it, all the time. The internal monologue, i.e. the running conversation we have with ourselves in our head, is what is referred to as "self-talk." Self-talk is what we say to ourselves that directly impacts how we experience the world. Are you aware of your self-talk? Is your self-talk positive or negative?

Conscious living, mindfulness, self awareness - these are all buzz words that are frequently used in our current culture where people are searching for self fulfilment, purpose, and meaning in life. To be truly self aware, conscious, and mindful, one must be aware of their self-talk. The things that we say to ourselves in response to any situation

future.
~ Paul Boese

The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.
~ Buddha

Reflect upon your present blessings, of which every man has many - not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.
~ Charles Dickens

Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if

will determine how we feel and behave within that situation. This is why self-talk becomes very important in personal development and change.

The great thing about self-talk is you get to choose what you say to yourself. Many people feel they have no control over their internal monologue because it runs rampant with anxieties, fears, and negativity. When you get caught up in a pattern of negative self-talk, these thoughts often become automatic, i.e. unconscious. You are thinking in a negative way without even knowing it. These are called automatic negative thoughts. People who suffer with depression, anxiety, and chronic stress often engage in a constant barrage of negative self-talk. The negative thinker often begins self-talk statements with "what-if's" and tends to focus on worst case scenarios.

In his book *The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook,* Edward J Bourne identifies four types of negative self-talk. The first is "The Worrier" - this type of negative thinking promotes anxiety, or excessive worry. The worrier anticipates the worst case scenario, overestimates the odds of something bad happening, and creates inflated images of potential failure or meltdown. For example, the worrier's self-talk would be "What if I fall in front of a bunch of people, break my leg, and end up in the hospital for six months?!"

The second type of negative self-talk is "The Critic" - this type of negative thinking promotes low self-esteem. The critic is constantly picking apart his or her own behaviour and actions, pointing out any flaws and limitations and dwells on them. The critic compares him or herself with others, and always comes out the loser. The critic's self-talk includes statements such as "You're so stupid, can't you ever do anything right?" and "I'm never going to be good enough."

it were not balanced by sadness. It is far better to take things as they come along with patience and equanimity.
~ Carl Jung

He who lives in harmony with himself lives in harmony with the universe.
~ Marcus Aurelius

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion.
If you want to be happy, practice compassion.
~ Dalai Lama

When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door

The third type of negative self-talk is "The Victim" - this type of negative thinking promotes depression. The victim feels helpless and hopeless. The victim has difficulty problem solving and perceives obstacles to be insurmountable. The victim believes they have no control over their current situation and that nothing will ever change. The victim's self-talk includes statements such as "I can't do this" and "Why bother trying to make things better? Nothing will help, nothing can change."

The fourth and last type of negative self-talk is "The Perfectionist" - this type of negative thinking promotes chronic stress and burnout. The perfectionist's thoughts centre on pushing him or her to do better, be better, and work harder. The perfectionist is caught up in a world of "shoulds;" "you should be working harder, you should always be in control, you should always have time, you should..." The perfectionist relies on external rewards and feedback, such as praise from others, acceptance, money and rewards, being loved, and making others happy. The perfectionist determines self worth based on what they are able to do, rather than who they are. The perfectionist's self-talk includes " I should always be on top of things" and "I have to do this just right, or I'm unworthy of acknowledgement." The perfectionist craves positive feedback, but has difficulty accepting it when it is offered.

Do you see yourself in any of these types of negative self-talkers? Do not be surprised if you do...many people get caught up in negative self-talk completely unaware. The first step to changing negative self-talk is to raise your awareness of the things you say to yourself on a regular basis. How, you ask? I encourage you to take some time to become an observer of your thoughts. The next time you find yourself in a

that we do not see the one that has been opened for us. ~ Helen Keller

Happiness is not having what you want. It is appreciating what you have. ~ Unknown

True happiness... arises, in the first place, from the enjoyment of one's self. ~ Joseph Addison

Most of us are just about as happy as we

stressful situation or in a particularly rotten mood, I want you to stop, be silent, and listen to your thoughts. What are you saying to yourself? Your thoughts create your moods, which determine your behaviour and set the stage for how you experience the world.

You get to choose your thoughts. If you find that you engage in negative self-talk regularly and it's creating feelings of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and low self worth, there is a process to change the negative thoughts into positive ones. Once you have a heightened awareness of your self-talk, you can begin to replace the negative thoughts with healthier, more positive thoughts that will absolutely change the way you feel. For example, a negative self-talk statement such as "I can't do this, this is going to be a disaster, I'm not prepared for this" can be changed into a positive self-talk statement such as "I can do this, I am prepared, and it will be fine. Breathe."

Once you are aware of your negative self-talk statements, or your automatic negative thoughts, start to keep track of them without judgement. Write them down. Weigh them for evidence. Then write down positive counterstatements. Every time you catch yourself engaging in negative self-talk, stop and replace it with a more helpful and positive counterstatement. The process is simple, but it is not always easy. Many people find it beneficial to have a professional counsellor assist them in changing their self-talk.

Changing your automatic negative self-talk statements into positive self-talk statements will increase your ability to cope with stressful situations, increase confidence and self esteem, improve your mood, and perhaps allow you to see the world through rose coloured glasses once and for all. It's worth a try...anything is possible, right?

make up our minds to be.
~ William Adams

For additional assistance, please feel free to contact us at Penney Murphy & Associates at 242-1010. We Can Help!

Elizabeth Smith, BA, BSW, RSW
Counsellor, Penney Murphy & Associates

Success is getting what you want. Happiness is wanting what you get.
~ Dale Carnegie

The Importance Of Gratitude and How To Use It.

Why is gratitude so important when leading a happy and successful life? Simply, if you don't appreciate what is then how are you going to appreciate what is to be! Yes, to be truly happy you need to appreciate everything. Appreciate:
- All your abilities (creativity, imagination, work ethic, etc...)
- Your family (children, parents, grandparents, etc...)
- Your significant other
- Your friends and co-workers
- All things that are important to you (career, hobbies, health, wealth, happiness, etc...)
- Things that you want (be thankful as if you have them)
- Things you enjoy (activities, etc...)
- Anything you want and feel should be appreciated

Happiness is the experience of loving life. Being happy is being in love with that momentary experience. And love is looking at someone or even something and seeing the absolute best in him/her or it. Love is happiness with what you see. So love and happiness really are the same thing... just expressed differently.

Okay, so now that you have an idea of what to appreciate, let's talk about how to appreciate them. For starters, at least once every day and preferably first thing, say out loud or to yourself "Thank you for _____!"

In the _____ insert the suggested things

~ Robert McPhillips

Happiness in life is not measured by the things we achieve, the places we go, or the route that we take to get there. Happiness in life is measured by the people that we share all of our experiences with.
~ Chris Needham

There is no stress in the world, only people thinking stressful thoughts and then acting on them.
~ Dr. Wayne Dyer

and/or other ones you are thankful for. Every morning before getting out of the shower, I, to myself give thanks for my wonderful wife and children, my friends and co-workers, my parents, my job and various other important things that matter to me. Why? Because, it's one thing to appreciate what you have, however, when you remind yourself and acknowledge them on a daily basis they become more meaningful, as well as the fact that you think about them in a positive manner. Also, it develops a habitual thought process of gratitude towards your life and the world you live in.

"People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing- that's why we recommend it daily!"- Zig Zigler

Now, if you believe in god, the universal mind, Mother Nature or any higher power then you can think of thanking them for what you appreciate or you can simply think of thanking yourself. Who or what you are thanking isn't important. What is important is that you recognize and appreciate what you have and what is coming to you!

What will this do for you? Daily appreciation of what is important to you will help you develop and maintain a positive attitude and outlook on your life and those who are in it. It will result in your being more aware of what is important, which in turn results in your wanting to enjoy and think of ways to demonstrate your appreciation. When you demonstrate your appreciation to others it is generally reciprocated and your interactions are more pleasant. You focus on what you like or love, rather then what you don't and this reduces any frustrations or annoyances towards others and yourself.

So, what are you thankful for?

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www.selfgrowth.com/articles/the-importance-of-

In the midst of movement and chaos, keep stillness inside of you.
~ Deepak Chopra

gratitude-and-how-to-use-it

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