

## **It's Time to Celebrate!**

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**Many of my clients come to me complaining that there is not enough joy or happiness in their lives.** As they bring up past or current accomplishments, I often ask, “How did you celebrate that success?” This simple question seems to befuddle so many people. The typical response is “Oh, it’s wasn’t a big deal,” which translates into “I’m not worth all the fuss.” Here we have the opportunity to feel joy and pride in ourselves for working hard and accomplishing something significant, yet we push away this moment because “it’s no big deal.” How did we become such a celebration deficient society?

**Landing a new job is a big deal.** Finishing a major project is a big deal. Standing up for yourself is a big deal. Graduating from college is a big deal. Finally getting the vacuum cleaner fixed is a big deal.

**When I talk with my clients about effective strategies for reaching goals, I put particular emphasis on the last step: Celebration!** We have plenty of voices in our heads that doubt us and tell us what we are doing wrong. It is important to create positive voices that acknowledge what we do right.

**By celebrating and rewarding ourselves for reaching goals, trying something new, taking action,** and pushing through the tough spots, we begin to tame those doubting voices and encourage them to cooperate when we’re going after challenging goals and actions. Not to mention that celebrating can be a whole lot of fun.

**Recently, one of my clients was looking for more excitement** and realized that he had not taken a moment out to acknowledge any of his major accomplishments in life. Immediately following both high school and college graduation, he jumped in his car and drove off to a new job in a new town. He didn’t stay for the party. In essence, he told his spirit that the years of hard work he’d put into his education were “no big deal”. He was too concerned with “What’s next?”

**15 years later, he noticed he was feeling burnt out.** He was no longer motivated to work towards goals because the negative voices in his head told him that nothing he’d ever done was good enough or worthy of celebration. So, what was the point of accomplishing anything new?

**Fed up with his disappointing situation, he was ready and willing to try some celebrating.** Each week, he celebrated some small feat or success with a toast, dinner out, fun with friends or whatever struck his fancy. At first, this felt a bit awkward. After all, he had a lot of practice at not celebrating, not acknowledging himself for perseverance and integrity.

**Within a couple of months, he had transformed into this smiling, confident man who had tons of energy and zest for life.** Most importantly, he was consistently motivated to take action towards life long dreams and big goals, because he knew that with each step came reward and acknowledgement.

**The study of metaphysics teaches us that whatever you focus on expands.** If you are constantly pointing out your shortcomings and referring to your efforts and accomplishments as “no big deal,” you will find more reasons you are not worthy of celebration.

**On the other hand, by shifting your focus towards your successes,** no matter how small you may think they are, and then putting energy into acknowledging them, you are inviting more reasons to celebrate into your life. I have watched this simple tool of celebration bring so much joy, laughter, excitement, and fun into the lives of those around me.

**So, the choice is yours.** You can focus on shortcomings and live a life of pressure and disappointment, or you can take note of your accomplishments and choose a life of sparkles and bubbles and bows and music and dance and good food and laughter and fun. Your life and what you do with it is a big deal. I invite you to treat it that way.

### **Putting it Into Action**

To start the ball rolling, let's shift the focus away from failure and towards success:

1. List a least 2 major accomplishments in your life.  
Ex. Graduating from school, moving to a new city, ending a destructive relationship.
2. Now list at least 5 "small" feats you've accomplished in the past month.  
Ex, Taking out the garbage, attending a workshop, remembering mom's birthday.

Look over your lists and decide which success would you like to create more of in your life. How could you celebrate or reward yourself for that success? Is it a massage, a purchase, dinner out, a vacation, a toast with friends? Now, get out your appointment book and commit to making that happen within the next two weeks by scheduling it in ink.

Here's the key part, during the massage or while you're waiting for the food, chant over and over in your head, "I deserve this because I \_\_\_\_\_." If at any point during this celebration experience doubt or guilt comes in, repeat this chant again and again until the emotions fade. This is particularly useful when the bill comes.

If you are feeling resistance or self doubt come up, take a moment to acknowledge that you just read this entire article. That is an accomplishment. Now, what's the next small feat you can take on?

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