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Motivation by comparison

By John Watson

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Motivation by comparison is a dynamic form of motivation which can totally transform our attitude of mind.

It is used much too rarely. It is so powerful it could and perhaps should be used every day as a part of a morning ritual of preparation for the day ahead.

Every day we should thank God or the Universe that we are not blind or disabled in some other way (unless of course we are blind). We should be motivated by comparing our lot with that of the blind, sick and disabled.

Most of us think about this occasionally. I am suggesting in this article that we should systematically think about this every single day of our lives especially early in the morning

When we feel sorry for ourselves because we are faced with some problem or other, let's just think for a few moments about how we would deal with the problem if we were blind.

I have some official and confusing documents to sort out tomorrow. I am not looking forward to this but if I were blind, it would take me twice as long to get up for a start. I would also have the thought of another day without sight weighing me down and making me feel tired before the day gets going.

I would then (unless I had special technology) have to ask someone to read the documents over to me and would then have to ask someone to write the reply for me when I had thought over the problems.

This might involve paying someone to do this or waiting for a friend or relative to have the time to help me. It might take several hours if not days to sort out the problem. Without having to do all this, the problem could be sorted out within an hour or two at the most.

If I were paralysed, I would also need to rely on help and would also have to fight all the problems of poor health that immobility encourages.

Motivation by comparison

I should find myself motivated by the comparisons above. Life is so much easier for me that I should be thoroughly ashamed of any self pity or lack of motivation.

I watched a tribute on the BBC1 Program 'Breakfast with Frost' this morning (Sunday October 17th 2004) to Christopher Reeve who died last week

Sir David Frost started by saying that Christopher Reeve had been a guest on his show several times. He had always been inspirational.

David Frost continued: "The Superman in film became a real life superman when he refused to let his paralysis deter him in his fight to promote stem cell research "

In fact, Christopher Reeve, since his fall from his horse in 1995, had promoted the cause of spinal cord injury research with determination and energy. He had brought hope to many spinal injury victims including himself.

Frost decided to end this morning's program with a tribute to Christopher Reeve by showing Christopher's answer to a key question.

David Frost asked him how he faced up to hopelessness and bleakness. Christopher's reply has many great lessons to teach us:

"The way out is to pick something very proactive, very constructive. Think of something that needs doing – some cause – something that will take you forward if you think about it.

So I just get busy with that and I am back in shape. It takes will power but fortunately I was an actor for 28 years and as an actor you get very used to rejection.

You might get one part out of twenty auditions and so I think the discipline of being an actor for all those years has really helped me because you still have to believe in yourself. And I believe in what is happening in the research.

With sheer will power you can keep your body in shape.

This is a big test, a big, big test but fortunately I have tremendous help from my family and friends and staff and we'll go forward and get out of this."

I am not sure if the last few words were actually what he said as they were a little indistinct but his attitude was mainly one of hope for the future.

Christopher used his work to lift any depression he might be feeling. He saw the promotion of medical research as a worthwhile cause. Just getting down to work promoting it put him back on track.

He also acknowledged the help of friends, family and staff in keeping him going. Gratitude is a great motivator and it opens the mind to expect and receive help from the universe

Motivation by comparison

I was surprised that he linked discipline with being an actor but when you think about it discipline is all about keeping going and doing whatever needs doing even when you feel disappointed and as if you are getting nowhere.

An actor must feel down and think about giving up every time they are rejected at an audition. If they keep attending auditions they have discipline.

Christopher kept going after his accident by calling on his history of self-discipline and will power. This kept him doing whatever physical exercise he thought might help.

The other thing that keeps an actor going is belief in himself or herself. After his fall from his horse, Christopher's belief in medical research kept him promoting the research to the general public.

If he could show this kind of discipline, will power and belief in the face of the big, big tests he faced surely we can show the same qualities in the face of the much smaller tests that we face.

If he had lived in the UK, he would probably have been knighted Sir Christopher Reeve both for his films and his work to relieve suffering. Americans have honoured and will honour him in their own way.

A little time spent comparing ourselves with Christopher Reeve should provide us with an endless source of motivation in the future. Motivation by comparison works.

John Watson is an info publisher on the internet and a martial arts school owner. He taught Religious Studies and Life Skills to teenagers in London schools for about 33 years before retiring in 2000 A.D. His own e-books and those of the English multimillionaire, Stuart Goldsmith, can be found on his site at www.motivationtoday.com

Are You in Touch With Your Inner "M"?

By Donna Monday

"M" is for Motivation.

What motivates you to do a good job?

Is it a sense of achievement?

Recognition for a job well done?

Helping people?

Desire for responsibility?

Solving problems?

Motivation by comparison

Making more money?

You should give some thought to what motivates you to do your job better and allows you to feel a real sense of job satisfaction. Motivation is one of those thought-provoking questions that some interviewers may ask you while you're interviewing for a job. Be prepared to answer the question:

What motivates you?

Prepare for this challenging question in advance so you won't ramble if asked. Having a motivated employee may be one of the qualities an interviewer wants to see during the interview, so think about the times you really felt enthusiastic and/or energized at work. What made you feel that way?

That's your motivation.

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Donna Monday

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