



Stellar

Coaching & Consulting

L.A.U.N.C.H

*Learning to be Authentic, Uninhibited,
Naturally Confident & Happy*

January 2008

Welcome to 2008, and the year's first edition of L.A.U.N.C.H., the newsletter specifically designed to have you take your life to new heights!

A new year, like any other beginning point, brings with it new opportunities. Which ones will you respond to? How will you know when opportunity knocks? How prepared are you to listen? The feature article in this edition of L.A.U.N.C.H. will focus on the art of listening: how to listen, when to listen and what can show up as a result.

Do you have a listening experience that stands out for you? Or maybe a question that you want to ask? If so, send me an email at info@stellarcc.com. Your story and/or question may be featured in a future edition of this publication, and either way, I'll be sure to respond to you personally as well.

As you look ahead over the next 366 days (that's right, it's a leap year!) or 359 or whatever the number is, depending on when you're reading this, I want to challenge you to be still and listen

In This Issue

[Knock, Knock...Who's There?](#)

[Let's Lock It In!](#)

[Hey, You Asked!](#)

[About Gail & Upcoming
Events](#)



. Gail Barker, B.A., C.P.C.C.

with your whole self. Hark! Who goes there? It might be your best self, leading you on to the year of your dreams!

Wishing you a 2008 that's absolutely great (and with fewer corny rhymes)!

Yours in possibility,

Gail

Monthly Quotables:

"Not to react, not to revise or embellish or expound, not even to respond, but simply to listen is a gift. When we are able to be truly silent, to truly listen, then God can speak."

~Johan Christoph Arnold

"Make sure you have finished speaking before your audience has finished listening."

~Dorothy Sarnoff

Knock, Knock...Who's There?

Before we dive into this feature article, I want to invite you to go up and re-read the first "monthly quotable" for this edition. What comes up for you when you read it? Can you relate to the idea of listening completely? Can you imagine what it would be like to do so? What does the notion of "listening" mean for you?

When I first read this quote, I had a somewhat physical reaction to it. I was recalling numerous times when I'd been on the receiving end of an interaction in which I knew that the "listener" wasn't really listening. You know what I'm talking about. Those situations where you're speaking to someone and you can see that the other person really isn't engaged in what you're saying. Their mind is elsewhere; they're thinking about their response to the first statement you made, or they're contemplating what to make for dinner, or trying to figure out how to deal with that work-related problem. I daresay that much of the world operates this way, particularly in this day and age of multi-tasking and thinly-spread selves. And, if I'm going to be completely honest, I myself have had the experience from the other end -- being the "listener" whose attention has gone elsewhere (I find this tends to happen especially when the sports-minded individuals in my circle of influence valiantly try to fill me in on the latest sports news -- but my brain can only handle so much of the "did you see that play?" conversation before I genuinely get lost. I swear, I'm trying to focus! But I digress.). So what's the problem? If it's as "normal" to not listen as my experience has been, what could possibly be wrong? Well, to be rather cliché-ish about the whole thing, if you're not really listening, then you might not hear when

Meet Gail Barker! Gail is the principal and founder of **Stellar Coaching & Consulting**, and finds fulfillment and joy in supporting others as they create the lives of their dreams. Her unique insights and experiences have allowed groups to work successfully on issues related to improving team function and productivity, and individuals to work towards achieving their goals without compromising a sense of balance. Gail is also

co-author of "The Control Freak's Guide to Living Lightly: Manifesting a Life of Total Trust", which is available online at www.controlfreakseries.com, or at select, independent bookstores.

To learn more about Gail, to ask her a question, or to arrange for a complimentary coaching consultation, visit www.stellarcc.com.

My Mission:
To support 10 000 women in shifting their lives out of neutral and into high gear, by 2012! It's about losing the sense of overwhelm and finding peace, ditching the monotony and embracing possibility!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jumpstart 2008 -- Experience Your Best Year Yet!

opportunity knocks.

Now, before we go any further with this, let me address the second part of Johan Christoph Arnold's view. To reiterate, he says that when you listen, God can speak. For those of you who want to dismiss this quote as a result of the word "God", I want to invite you to use different terminology if it is easier for you to plough ahead with this article. How do you refer to the divine in your life? Whether it's "universe", "Allah", "higher self" or something else altogether, I believe that the essence is the same. So use whatever language is going to have you get the point -- namely, that the ability to listen with your whole self is vital.

You see, sometimes opportunity knocks very softly. Sometimes, opportunity doesn't knock at all -- it whispers. And at other times, opportunity just shows up and asks you to notice (it might wear a floral mumu to really get your attention, but that's another story altogether). However opportunity makes itself known, if you're not willing to listen, if you're not prepared to pay attention, then you're not going to know the direction in which opportunity is beckoning. You're never going to be able to answer with certainty the age-old question, "what's my purpose?". When you do listen, when you allow yourself to be still, to hear, to notice, to be led, then even if you're only seeing a small bit of the road ahead, you'll always know the way to go. The end-result may still be hazy, but the path is well-lit.

As a coach, the ability to listen is vital to my ability to serve my clients. Even outside the realm of my practice, however, I have concrete experience of the benefits of unadulterated listening. When I give myself permission to be silent, to hear what's being said to me, to ask a question and wait for the answer, I'm never disappointed in the result. I always make a discovery that moves me forward on my path. Bottom-line: when we listen with our whole selves, we've got access to all the information we need to make the choices that are right for us as individuals. So, assuming that you're looking for ways to make 2008 a great year for you and yours, how ready are you to be fully informed? How prepared are you to "simply listen"?

Let's Lock It In!

This section will provide you with some concrete ways to get into the experience of the holidays.

QUESTIONS to PONDER: These questions are of the "mull-it-over" variety, and are especially helpful for those cerebral-types out there. You may or may not have an answer spring right to the fore of your mind, so feel free to chew on them for a while,

Are you thinking about how you can make 2008 GREAT? Striving to set achievable goals? Ready to figure out how to get started?

Join GAIL BARKER for this information-packed, interactive, hands-on workshop, designed to have you discover the steps to achieving your **most successful, most fulfilling year EVER!**

In this 2-hour seminar you will:

- clarify intentions
- identify your top three goals for 2008
- create an action plan, specific to your style
- learn how to create, build and maintain momentum as you move forward
- and so much more!

Date: Tuesday, Jan. 22nd, 2008

Time: 7:00 pm

Where: TBA

Cost: \$59 plus GST, includes all materials and light refreshments

Call 519-245-8928 or email info@stellarcc.com today to register!

****registration deadline: Jan. 17th, 2008**

****Payment must accompany registration in order to secure space**

Early-bird Bonus:

Register by January 12, 2008 and receive a complimentary, 30-minute follow-up coaching call.

and see what shows up.

That's a \$100 value -- FREE
-- just for registering by
January 12th!

1. What is it to "listen"?
2. Who do you consider to be the quintessential "listener"?
What sets this individual apart?
3. What question(s) weigh on your mind? What would it be like to have the answer?

ACTIVITY: Use the following ideas to support you in becoming a skilled listener.

1. Incorporate 5 minutes of listening time at the beginning of each day. What question(s) do you awake with? Ask these of the universe, and listen. Notice what you hear.
2. As a secondary part of the first activity, be aware of the explaining/justifying/defending voice that arises in response to the answers you receive. Quiet this voice, and continue to listen.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF: Every day for the next 2 weeks (or 4, if you're feeling really adventurous), create a conversational opportunity in which you simply listen. This could be at work, could be during dinner, could be with a friend. Regardless of the specifics, your challenge is to focus on what is being said to you. Take it all in, and avoid the temptation to insert your two cents worth. Notice what happens as a result: how do people respond? What changes in the conversational dynamic? What gets created when you truly listen?

Feel free to email me your "listening experience". Whether it's a breakthrough, challenge or question, I'd love to hear what comes up for you!

Hey, You Asked!

Dear Gail;

Okay, it's a brand new year, and I know that I should be making resolutions, but I just don't want to make any -- how do I explain this to people when they ask what my resolutions are?

Jordyn, Scarborough, ON

Hi Jordyn;

Thanks for writing! First, let me address the whole "I should make resolutions" thing. Where's the SHOULD coming from? I

know that resolutions are fairly traditional, and the new year does lend itself to the idea of making a fresh start, but I'm not sure there's any rule anywhere that says you actually SHOULD make resolutions. In fact, readers of L.A.U.N.C.H. who've been with me for a while will know that I'm not an advocate of resolutions at all. For me, it's all about intentions. But more about that in a minute. For now, I want to invite you Jordyn to release yourself from the idea that you SHOULD make resolutions, and give yourself permission to play with MAYBE -- as in MAYBE I'll make resolutions, maybe I won't.

Now, let's jump to the last part of your question: how do you explain yourself to others. I guess the critical part here Jordyn is understanding that how you explain yourself is entirely up to you. Assuming you've freed yourself from the "should-make-resolutions" notion, then your explanation, when asked what your resolutions are, is quite simply that you haven't made any. If people press you on this point, and inquire about your reasons, you can be as detailed or as vague as you want. What's true for you? From a simple perspective, your answer could be "I'm not making resolutions this year; I'm staying open to how things unfold". Something to try on.

Now, let's go back to the resolution/intention thing. You didn't ask about how to be with resolutions, but I often find that the aversion to resolutions stems from a sense that resolutions are hard to meet. So I want to offer another perspective -- my personal perspective -- which you may find helpful. Usually, traditional resolutions are set up around concrete goals: for example, I resolve to double my household income. People generally place so much stock, however, in the specific numbers and the measurables, that if by chance the numbers don't get met, then they experience a sense of failure. So, what if you could set the goals, but also define the essence of how you want to be? In this case, your resolution/intention would be something like I resolve to pursue new opportunities, and double my income in the process? By year's end, you might double your income, maintain your income, lower your income or quadruple your income -- but if you've been open and pursued opportunities, then you've been successful regardless.

The setting of numbers -- concrete goals -- is a crap shoot. You could hit the mark exactly, but you're most likely going to be off in some way. When you define the essence of your experience, however, then you're setting yourself up for success. Understand, I'm not saying to stay away from goals. I'm just saying to set the goals within a bigger frame -- within a frame of "essence". So here's what I want to know Jordyn: how do you want to be in 2008? If any resolutions stem out of that, great; make note of them. And if people around you want to know what you're up to, share as much or as little as feels right. Whether or not you make resolutions, and what those resolutions are, is as personal a decision as the decision to pursue a relationship, start a family or change careers. It's up to you to determine, and up to you to share however and whatever you wish. Good luck to you!

Quick Links

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www.stellarcc.com

For information about other Canadian coaches:
www.coachescanada.com

For general information about the coaching profession:
www.coachfederation.org

To check out the buzz about "The Control Freak's Guide to Living Lightly"
www.controlfreakseries.com