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## Coach's Corner: creating possibilities

By: Sharon Pahlka , Journal Newspapers

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Many of us get stuck even when we are trying do stuff that matters. We want and need to get it done. But we can't think what to do. We start unnecessary debates with ourselves. We procrastinate. And we bog down. How do we get unstuck?

Recently I went to a brainstorming meeting to get new ideas on a problem we were trying to solve. The organizer had us sit at tables covered in butcher paper with colorful stickers (George of the Jungle) interspersed with drawings in big Crayolas, colored markers and pens. I felt like I was in a kindergarten class. It was fun. She first asked us to make lists (all the uses you can think of for a chalkboard eraser. I thought of buffing my teeth). Then we were to ask questions unrelated to our topic, and to think totally out of the box. It made me realize the importance of opening yourself to new possibilities and thinking, especially when you are stuck.

When we are stuck, it is because we can only see one way and often don't like what we see. In truth, we can always create new possibilities in life. By opening ourselves up to new thinking and giving ourselves permission to explore new avenues, we can see the choices we really have. When we have more choice, then we can have more freedom to create the life we want. I am all for a "good" life but even more in favor of a "great" life. It is not always easy and takes courage, dedication and perseverance to get there, but I feel it is possible to follow our dreams. When you are at a standstill, try this:

\* Decide on something you might be stuck on that matters to you: the book you have always wanted to write, quit smoking, be an involved parent or start your own business.

\* Envision the outcome you want.

\* What are some different ways to take that on? Try to come up with at least five. They don't have to sound serious. There are lots of creative possibilities in silly ideas. What are some powerful questions you could ask yourself to promote new thoughts and ideas? These are hard questions that stop you in your tracks and cause you to think differently.

\* Take an action step.

\* Set up accountability. Your chances of success go from 40 to 90 percent if you tell someone you will get it done by a certain time.

**Coaching Question:** Are you feeling stuck right now? What did you do the last time you were stuck?

**Coaching Tip:** As soon as you notice that you feel stuck, take action and get moving.

**Quotes:** *"If we really want to live, we'd better start at once to try."*

-W.H. Auden

*"If you want to take your mission in life to the next level, if you're stuck and you don't know how to rise, don't look outside yourself. Look inside."*

-Bruce Jenner

Sharon Pahlka is a life coach and speaker. In her coaching, she helps her clients live well and meaningfully, especially those with chronic health challenges. Sharon's column, Coach's Corner, offers helpful tips from her work.

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