



Desperate Times Call for... Simple Measures

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From talking to clients in various countries, from talking to radio talk-show hosts, from following the latest news it could be said that we live in desperate times. And, as the old saying goes, desperate times call for desperate measures. No they don't. What people need now is a sharper and clearer understanding of the reality of the here and now, rather than continuously wallowing in the perceived desperation of today's apparent reality.

My last sentence is a deliberately loaded one. The normal person doesn't see or experience reality. The normal person perceives their own version of reality through the fog of their own internal baggage and the relentless noise of random thought that research proves is predominantly negative. To make matters even worse, the normal person's resultant behaviour, based on a completely false understanding of reality, is nothing more than an automatic, pre-programmed knee-jerk reaction to what he or she perceives as reality. And, more often than not, reacting to something makes things worse, not better. That's what's currently going on in our economic, political, professional and personal lives. That's why these desperate times have become so perceptibly desperate.

Yes, the world economy has suffered its historically most seismic earthquake. Yes, people have lost their jobs. Yes, people have lost their homes. Yes, many people who still have jobs are living in fear. These are realities brought about by the warped perceptions of normal people. But if we continually react to these realities in the normal fashion, things won't get any better (we perceive that they will get better, but that's nothing other than the normal myopia that tells us that the next unsustainable boom will actually be realistically sustainable!). My point is that things don't get better as a result of normal reactive behaviour, they get worse.

So, you, in your life, have to call a halt to normal behaviour for you.

If you've lost your job, it's an opportunity. Perhaps it's the opportunity of a lifetime, an opportunity to do the things that really turn you on. Imagine, you might end up doing what your heart desires which means that you'll never have to work another day in your whole life – because, when you're doing what you love, it's not work. If you've lost your nest-egg, it's gone, it is what it is. You may believe yourself to have been stupid or greedy in the manner in which you invested, you may blame someone else. It doesn't matter who you're blaming, it is what it is, it's in the past – the only way

you'll better your situation is be learning from the past and moving on to the here and now – and the very real opportunities that the here and now presents you with (if you stop perceiving the here and now through that normal fog we talked about earlier).

If you're working, if you have a job, how effective are you going to be at that job if you're living with the fear that you might lose that job? How much of you is actively engaged in doing your job if you're entertaining those fearful thoughts? Research would suggest that about 1% of you is actively involved in doing that job of yours. Do you think anyone who only puts 1% in deserves to keep their job? (It's OK, all the other normal people, wasting their energy on useless, self-destructive thoughts, are only putting 1% in as well, so no one will notice!). On a practical, daily, sanity-saving level, what in God's name is the point of fear? Fear is not real, fear does not exist. The well-known book, "Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway" has led thousands of people astray. There is no fear other than in the mind of the fearful person. If you have a job and you're wasting your mental energy on fear of losing it, you deserve to lose it. Cop yourself on, pull yourself together tell fear where to go next time it comes out to play.

Now, you may well say to me that what I've written is all very fine – but there are bills to pay, hungry mouths to be fed, children to be educated – there's a long list. I'd just like to point out that many of my clients have quite explicitly told me that they listen to and learn from what I say, because I do not talk about anything that I haven't experienced myself. The space available in this article would be far too short to enable me tell you all the stupid, normal mistakes that I've made, or the hurtful, normal disasters that have befallen me. But, hey, here I am, writing this article, from my beautiful alpine chalet, perched on the shoulder of Mont Blanc. I know the difference between useless normal thought and fear and useful, practical and life-changing clarity of mind. I know where feeling sorry for yourself can take you and I also know, first-hand, where a clear and present mind will lead you. So do my clients.

You may think that you're desperate, you may actually be desperate, but desperate times do not call for desperate measures – they call for the simple changes in how we use our mind that will enable us see what's going on – minus the mental fog. Spend five minutes every morning (yes every morning, do you think you might be worth it?) developing your innate ability to perceive reality through paying full attention to what you see, feel, hear, smell and taste. You can do it on the train, do it in a coffee shop, do it in the park – but you've got to do it because, until you start paying attention to the reality of the moment and, as a consequence, stop paying attention to the crap in your head, you will never rise to the heights that can otherwise be effortlessly reached.