

MEANINGFUL LEADERSHIP NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2008: PART TWO

PRACTICE • PRACTICE • PRACTICE

Greetings from Meaningful Leadership:

Okay, so now you have a new context for living and leading in 2008. What happens next?

In somatic coaching we say, “We are what we practice and we are always practicing something.” People don’t generally talk about actions in every day language as practices. We might call them habits or not call them anything at all. However, we are in fact practicing behaviors, thoughts, actions, patterns of movement in the body over and over again, all day long every day. When we practice, we get good at something—even things we are unconscious about or things we don’t plan to develop a competence for.

So how are your current practices sabotaging or supporting the context you have just invented?

Basic systems theory will tell you that structure shapes behavior. Whatever structures you have invented and been born into (including your body) all give rise to the behaviors and possibilities available to you.

For example if your old context is: “I’m never going to be caught off guard again,” then unconsciously or not, you have designed all kinds of ways of ensuring that you will not be caught off guard again. You may, for instance, watch others intently, not taking your eyes off them. You may do many things yourself that others could be doing for you, so as to not lose control of your environment. You may be fairly domineering of others at work and in life. All of these behaviors/habits are “practices” that support the context you created for your life.

However, they do not necessarily support the NEW context you articulated for yourself.

Two things:

1. Become aware of practices you do automatically, that support your old paradigm not your new one.
Practices can alter structure and open up new possibilities for thinking and for action.
2. Invent at least three practices for yourself that could support you in your new context and will ensure your ability to fulfill on your accomplishments in 2008.

Unsure how to proceed? Let us know. We’d be thrilled to talk you though it.

Warmly,

Jen Cohen