

evolve

by Jennifer M. Blair

DON'T SETTLE FOR BEING SECOND

In thinking about this month's theme, the # 2 issue, I started to think about how many times people settle for being second, as opposed to truly being first. Two is a great number for partnerships, but when it comes to having authentic, fulfilling relationships, how often do you or others you know settle for being the consolation prize?

It is interesting to me that people can accomplish much in many areas of their lives, yet when it comes to relationships or careers, they often resolve themselves or make compromises that do not honor what they truly need and desire. It seems like when the emotional stakes are at their highest, the bargaining begins. Stories get created such as someone, somehow, someday "it" will change and hope sets in. Perhaps they hang on to promises made. They accept that this is as good as it gets. Even worse, some people do not believe they deserve a better job, a wonderful relationship or the abundance that goes with a happy life. So, they settle for less without ever considering what they really need much less speaking up for it.

Being first means knowing yourself, doing your best and asking for what you want. It starts with being clear about needs, being proactive in achieving your dreams, and getting fierce for your desires. Being a priority means asking people to assist you and if they are not able to, find someone who is congruent in their words and actions and is willing to put you at the top. Demand respect and start being treasured by the people closest to you for your gifts, talents and personal excellence. And above all, get your needs met and be at the top of your list.

IDENTIFYING YOUR NEEDS:

Listed below are the more prevalent needs I have observed in my coaching clients and personal relationships. I suggest you consider what "needs" you currently have relationally, emotionally, spiritually, financially and physically. And of course, feel free to add your own... I would love to hear about any additional needs and the creative ways you find to get those met at jennifer@excavive.com

SOME COMMON NEEDS:

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| To be valued, recognized, validated | To be comfortable, protected, safe |
| To be appreciated | To have abundance, security, stability |
| To be loved or cherished, adored, treasured, supported, approved of, acknowledged, cared for, accepted unconditionally, saved, rescued | To lead, to follow |
| To be included, to belong, to feel part of | To be free, independent, self-reliant |
| To be liked | To feel important, needed, useful, busy |
| To trust and be trusted | To be noticed, remembered, seen |
| To have beauty, order, consistency, perfection | To improve, please or satisfy others |
| To be certain, sure, confident or positive | To do the right thing |
| To have peace, calm, quiet, stillness, balance | To have a cause, vocation, higher purpose |
| To control, dominate, command or manage | To be of service |
| To have power, strength, influence, acclaim | To have honesty, sincerity, loyalty, authenticity, integrity |
| To communicate, share, be heard, be listened to | To have fun, laughter, joy |
| | To have passion, play, pleasure |
| | To feel connected (to others, to a higher power, to yourself) |

AN EXERCISE IN DISCOVERING HOW TO GET YOUR NEEDS MET:

1. What would your life look if you were number one?
2. What's missing in your life that keeps you from experiencing true fulfillment and joy in your work and your relationships? Are there boundaries or requests you need to make?
3. Using the above list, identify the three most important needs you currently need fulfilled, rank them in order of importance to you and then find 3 creative ways to get each need met.
4. Take responsibility to meet your own needs AND enlist 4 different people to meet each need for the next month, overdo it! Here are some examples:
If you need to feel approval or validation, you might ask your boss for weekly check-in meetings or to tell you when you do a good job
If you need to feel adored, you might ask your partner to tell you how fabulous you are and maybe what qualities he or she likes about you
If you needed to feel peaceful, you might schedule daily quiet time, start a meditation practice or go for a walk, without technology.
If you need to feel accomplishment, you might make a list of your achievements you have done this year, so far.
5. You might consider having your best friend, boss or partner also do this exercise and then compare notes.

Jennifer is founder of Excavive Life Coaching in Louisville, KY. Her work focuses on personal and professional life coaching, public speaking, interactive workshops, creativity consulting, writing, and occasionally teaching salsa dancing. Her website is www.excavive.com. Jennifer can be reached at jennifer@excavive.com or 502.893.9589.