



Patience: The Path of Mindfulness and

By Melanie DewBerry-Jones

Why is it so difficult to hold steadfast to a commitment—to the very thing we desire? I'm sure you've had the experience of challenging your client with something to do, or to be, in service of moving them closer to their heart's desire. As you reconvene again and again, you note that the client can't seem to stay committed to the steps that will realize their dreams. Certainly the age-old response is fear—but perhaps there is more going on.

Frankly, sometimes I can feel like a nag, repeating that there isn't anything more cruel than wanting, desiring, or yearning for something—and then not giving it to yourself. It's like being thirsty and not giving yourself water. Denying the self the very thing that gives life joy is a form of spiritual starvation. It's disheartening to watch the spirit die at the hand of its human host.

What causes a lack of consistency in commitment to follow-through and achievement of desired results? It is not lack of effort on our clients' parts. Consistent commitment necessitates a depth of patience that our Western culture does not appreciate or support. We are a

multi-tasking world. We are valued, employed, and acknowledged for our ability to do more than two things at once. The multi-tasker is honored and revered and wears their ability as a badge of honor, proud and ready to go. If we are so good at doing so much at the same time, what gets in our clients' way of staying true to those things they are trying to change?

In creating ourselves as master

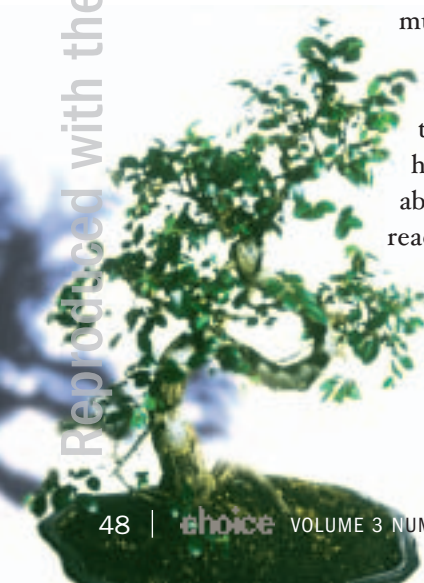
doers, we forgo the one thing needed for spiritual development—patience. Patience is not the art of waiting. It is the art of mindfulness, of slowing down to take in what is happening inside of our clients right now. Patience pauses to be with self. It is a focus of awareness centered in relationship with the current event. Patience puts the being in front of the doing.

Patience with pause is mindfulness. Mindfulness means being full with one's mind on one thing. There is no way to be “full of mind” with many things simultaneously. Neither our minds nor our hearts can hold ten things at once with equal commitment to awareness, let alone the lessons from that awareness that is occurring. We multi-task for rapid results, and in that energy we become anxious, we breathe faster; hyperventilating our precious system. Mindfulness is not devoid of results, but it doesn't try to create results before they are due to arrive. Mindfulness teaches us to commit ourselves to the moment, to the process, and to enjoy the ride. When we take pause for mindfulness, we experience life rather than race it.

Making a conscious commitment

The truth is that all of us are already exhibiting commitment to something right now. In examining their habits created by fear, our clients already have evidence for their ability to commit, and thus manifest. We do know how to commit. The difference lies between making a conscious commitment versus an unconscious one.

A conscious commitment is actively and powerfully chosen to align with the client's deep soul aspirations. A conscious commitment considers the impact of the intention and the desired results, and envisions the person they desire to become. The difference between





Commitment

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choosing default behaviors and ones that truly serve us is the level of consciousness applied in the choosing. The reason that being consistent to any practice we wish to become a habit feels more difficult is that in the conscious choice we focus (albeit obsessively sometimes) on the results, rather than on the experience itself.

An unconscious commitment is one chosen without pause for consideration or mindfulness. Unconscious choice is a default choice. We don't tend to take stock of the impact it will have, and only review its impact in hindsight. An unconscious default choice may work for your clients, but may not have the power to propel them to their desired result. You've heard the adage "It's not about the end result, it's about the journey." In committing by default, clients are literally absent-minded in doing what they always do—of course it feels easy and effortless, but that limited amount of effort can instigate a craving for more of something different. Like many of us, they have forgotten the "pause of patience" as part of the equation.

What happens to our patience as we grow up? Isn't this one of the basic lines we heard from our parents—

“Patience puts the being in front of the doing.”

to be patient. Granted it was mainly used in relationship to our waiting for them. Yet, I suspect that many of our educational and corporate institutions have trained us to be multi-tasking fools, and in a Pavlovian manner have rewarded us for thinking on our feet, being first with a solution to a problem, and responding quickly to downloadable requests. We want fast solutions to old problems. We love “Five Principles to...,” “One-minute

managers...,” and “Seven laws of...” kinds of answers to our dizzy chaotic lives. We want to believe that the answer is out there, perhaps in a 1, 3, 5 or 7 quick and easy formulaic format. Repeatedly, we are encouraged to move away from patience and to embrace frenzy packaged to look like speedy results. I know when I first started seeing all the programs, books and approaches that offered that 1, 3, 5 or 7 step solutions I thought they knew something I didn't. Not!

Our on-demand culture

There is little permission in our work culture for a person to take thoughtful time in responding to a request; accordingly, our clients give themselves little permission for results to occur over time, nor moments to enjoy their process. Instead they become easily irritated at the process and at slow-to-show results, which invariably poisons their commitment. We are in the Blackberry age—as long as you have thumbs, emails are sent from wherever, whenever. We are an on-demand culture. For example, at a monthly event created to give corporate executives a place for spaciousness and pause, I found a gentleman emailing on his Blackberry. When I asked why he was emailing during this event, he answered, “I got an email while in the bathroom that said, ‘I know you have your Blackberry, so get back to me now!’”

When I first began teaching coaching courses we had an exercise called “be with the corner” that drove me crazy! It was just a corner of a room, what the heck was there to “be” with? Over time, it became clear that there was nothing and everything to be with. I was in such a hurry to get to my future as a trainer and to learn the next set of skills that would ensure my mastery that I was missing the present moment.

choice services

Resources

The European Mentoring and Coaching Council

United Kingdom
phone: +44 (0)1628 661919
www.emccouncil.org

International Coach Federation (ICF)

Washington, DC
phone: 888-423-3131
email: icfoffice@coachfederation.org
www.coachfederation.org

International Association of Coaches (IAC)

email: info@certifiedcoach.org
www.certifiedcoach.org

Miboso Radio

phone: 877-219-9616
email: radio@miboso.com
www.mibosoradio.com

My Dream Circle®

phone: 415-435-5564
email: info@dreamcoach.com
www.dreamcoach.com

Peer Resources Network (PRN)

Victoria, British Columbia
phone: 250-595-3503
www.peer.ca/coaching.html

Professional Mentors & Coaches Association (PMCA)

email: info@pcmaonline.com
www.pcmaonline.com

Services

Audio Strategies

phone: 802-744-2015
email: Info@audiostrategies.com
www.audiostrategies.com

Avaunt Performance Advancement Solutions

phone: 770-643-2061
email: Ready@AvauntPerformance.com
www.avauntperformance.com

Cinchy Marketing

phone: 866-200-6945
email: info@clairecommunications.com
www.clairecommunications.com

Client Compass

phone: 425-369-1220
www.clientcompass.com

Coaches Café

phone: 512-659-8971
email: products@coachescafe.com
www.coachescafe.com

Coaches VA Solution

phone: 307-635-3296
email: va@coachesvasolution.com
www.coachesvasolution.com

Coach Track

phone: 866-717-8700
email: sales@coach-track.com
www.coach-track.com

Coaching Toys Inc.

phone: 612-822-8720
email: info@coachingtoys.com
www.coachingtoys.com

DM Knapp, CPA

Austin, TX
phone: 512-697-8711
email: dknapp@dmknapp.com
www.dmknappcpa.com

Effective Effort Coaching

phone: 734-476-2041
email: thecoach@usa.net
www.thekoach.com

Inner Human Design

phone: 619-557-2700
email: Info@InnerHumanDesign.com
www.innerhumandesign.com

Portable Publisher

phone: 310-274-5542
email: Info@PortablePublisher.com
www.PortablePublisher.com

Potentials Realized

phone: 866-217-1960
email: potentialsrealized@primus.ca
www.potentialsrealized.com

The Relationship Coaching Company

phone: 877-262-2456
email: kat@relationshipcoaching.com
www.relationshipcoaching.com

SIX ADVISORS Coaching Academy

phone : 856-351-1095
email : saca@sixadvisors.com
www.sixadvisors.com/saca/

Virtual Accuracy

phone: 866-GOT-DALE
email: va@virtualaccuracy.com
www.virtualaccuracy.com
www.assistanceforcoaches.com

Work inSanity?

phone: 303-791-9585
email: info@workinsanity.com
www.workinsanity.com

The power of presence and pause

Many clients are missing their presence in the present moment. When does our action-driven coaching help them speed pass this thing called life? When we hold clients accountable, what are we really asking them to commit to? Are we asking them solely to complete a task, or to commit to the process and learning of the task? And let's be honest, are we pushing for results to quantify our skill?

Clients want to be committed and to stay committed. After all it's why they hired us. Our listening must include when it's time to s-l-o-w down; notice if what they are doing is working, and if not, get committed to something and be consistent with it. Results may not come on their timetable, or in exactly the way they envision—but success will come. As we all learn to slow the pace and to see what we really feel, believe, see, and notice, we come to know ourselves more fully. Consistent commitment causes change. Consistency is the deliverer of our clients' desires.

Coaches would be well suited to pause and reflect as they listen to clients' replies to powerful questions, regardless of how profound the next question to be asked. Clients too can be shown the power of pause before they answer inquiries, allowing them to absorb the question rather than reacting to it with an efficient response. Endless mysteries will unfold; "patience pause" allows our clients to bare witness, experience them and to be changed by them. •

Melanie DewBerry-Jones is a twice-certified coach and a senior trainer for the Coaches Training Institute (CTI). Melanie is a speaker, storyteller and member of the National Speakers Association.

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