

## Remember The Monkey Trap

As part of the incessant need to provide monkeys to research labs around the world, teams of monkey catchers have developed an interesting system to capture live monkeys. While it is still dark, the teams take long-necked heavy ceramic vases to places where monkeys are known to frequent. Fresh bananas are then placed in them and the teams go off and lay similar traps elsewhere. In the morning, the monkeys find the vases and discover the succulent fruit that has miraculously appeared overnight. With gusto, they reach into the vases and grasp a banana. When they try to extract their arms they discover that they can't. The fist that is grabbing the banana has now become thicker than the neck of the vase and the monkey is unable to get the arm out. When the monkey catchers return that night they find that the monkeys are still there, usually exhausted after trying in vain for hours to lift the heavy jar and escape with it. The monkeys are then caged and sent to some university lab on the other side of the world. Now, all the monkey had to do to escape his unfortunate fate was to let go of the banana, but the poor stubborn thing just hung on and on. We can smugly chuckle at the antics of the poor dumb creature that just didn't have the sense to release the prize. Of course, we're above that, right? What you may wish to ask yourself is whether or not this monkey business has any relation to your own life. Do you in fact have patterns in your life which approximate those of our evolutionary cousins? Are there counterproductive activities that you hang onto with the same stubbornness? Would you rather slowly kill yourself with rich, fatty food rather than eating sensibly by telling yourself that if you had to eat only "healthy" food, life would not be worth living? How many marriages or relationships do you have to experience before you are willing to let go of your need to be right, or in control, or to blow up in a torrent of anger if things don't go your way? How many stress symptoms or illnesses do you have to deal with before you can let go of the obsessive perfectionism that drives you to work long and hard and keeps you enslaved to your deep insecurity? How many demerit points and traffic fines will you put up with before you let go of your compulsive need to drive faster and faster? Recognizing and letting go of that which doesn't serve you, is the constant challenge everyone faces. As you confront tricky life situations, remember the monkey trap and choose to let go of the inappropriate choices. Alternatively, you can begin to look for a tree to swing on.

## About the Author

Eli Bay is one of Canada's most respected stress management authorities. He is a master at delivering the stress-free relaxation state to virtually anyone and has been successfully unwinding individuals and audiences for decades. Visit: <http://www.elibay.com>.

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