

## The Importance of You - Value Yourself!

Are you the type of person who looks after everyone else and puts your needs at the bottom of the list? How many times have you said "Oh, I don't have time to do that for myself, I have too many other things to do"? Recently I overheard a conversation between a manager and an employee regarding a professional development event. The employee wanted to attend something which related to self care. The manager said that the workshop needed to pertain to the job. Initially I thought "that makes sense". Then I realized that taking care of yourself relates to any and every job. If we don't take care of ourselves, who will? One of my clients often spoke about how she always felt rushed. She agreed to make a list of all her commitments and then realized the reason she felt so overwhelmed. She worked full-time, was married and had 3 kids who were involved in various extracurricular activities. She was quite involved with her church, was a class parent and was involved in a fundraising project for a local charity. Her parents were getting older and had some health issues which she often had to attend to. She recognized that there weren't enough hours in the day to do everything and that she rarely had time for herself or her relationship with her husband. She began to evaluate her priorities, practiced saying "no" to requests and learned how to delegate. She became more energized and clearer about what she wanted and recognized that it was time to start valuing herself. If you have ever traveled by plane you have heard the spiel about putting the oxygen mask on yourself before you put it on your child. Often it is instinctive to put yourself last. Let's examine ways to put the oxygen mask on you first. Make a list of all the commitments and responsibilities you have. Consider what you can eliminate and delegate. How much time would that free up for you? If you are having trouble with this, you might need to ask for help in order to make some changes. The next step involves you considering yourself and what your needs are. What gives you pleasure and energy? What are the things in your life which excite you? Many of my clients have been out of sync with themselves so long time that this question initially stumps them. What do you do for fun? How often do you incorporate fun into your life? If you are having difficulty identifying things, think about what you did as a child that you enjoyed and relished. The last step is to take Action! Do 1 or 2 of the things that you have identified. Notice how it makes you feel both physically and emotionally. What impact is it having on your life? Here are the guidelines for you to begin to place greater value on yourself: Clarify - Write down a list of all things you'd like to do or want to try. Don't eliminate anything, no judgments, just write for 5 minutes. Action - Peruse the list and choose two things that you want to take action on. Schedule yourself time to do it within the next week. Ideally do it in the next two days. Just do it! Create supportive environments - Our intentions are often good, but we tend to slide back into the old habit of putting yourself last. What or who could support you in taking action? Tell at least two people your intentions so that they can help you move forward. Have fun!! Copyright 2008, Gail Solish.

## About the Author

Gail Solish provides executive and personal coaching to managers, directors and executives focused on workplace development and relationship management. You can contact Gail at <http://www.actualizeyourgoals.com> or at 416-322-0029.

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