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Strategist

Creative front-end strategies assured by effective back-end controls



Case Study 2:

Breaking out of a deeply-rooted sense of personal inadequacy

I asked Nikki, a young married staff member of a small family business, who attended six coaching sessions with me, to sketch a brief account the impact these sessions had on her life as a whole and the difference it made to her sense of self.

Before the Assertiveness Training:

- I had no believe in myself whatsoever
- ! Didn't stand up to my boss
- I Allowed my boss to misuse and abuse me
- I was quick to anger in traffic, at shops and at the bank, but was unable to express myself properly; this frustrated me to the point of tears.
- I didn't have any ambition
- I studied for a BSc degree but never completed the course, I had a mental block against studying because of past personal experiences.
- I Blamed myself constantly for not finishing - but did not have the 'Guts' to complete the course.
- ! was constantly in tears at work, took every little criticism to heart and out of proportion.
- My relationship with my husband was not too good; I took all my frustrations at work out on him, when I came home.
- I took on everybody's case-load from work, causing me to be excessively tired, over-burdened, stressed out and depressed.
- Because of my being the youngest (*the "Laatlammetjie"*) I felt very distant and "left out" from my family. Visits were excruciating, as they caused me to feel completely alone, and isolated.
- I avoided my family, because I couldn't deal with the risk of being hurt again.
- I was unable to say "NO" to everyone - my family, my boss, and my colleagues.
- I felt numerous people disliked me, because I was so pathetic and allowed myself to be used and trampled on.
- This gave me even more, a feeling of self-loathing

After my Assertive Lift-off:

- I Started to say 'No' in a firm, but kindly manner
- I stopped getting so upset by the boss lady's attitude towards me
- I was able to handle criticism better
- I only took on tasks that I knew I could finish within the time available
- I now don't get so overly upset in traffic, at shops or at the bank
- I don't feel so bad now, if I make a mistake
- I enrolled for a new degree (*also a BSc*), and achieved an 85% pass rate in the October 2010 exam
- I've reached out and made contact with some of my friends again: before I avoided them because I felt I was not good enough, since I did not finish my Varsity degree.
- I keep my family at a distance, which works better. We are friendly with each other, but they are unable to upset me as much as before. I realise now that I'm not responsible for them, I cannot change their minds or their thinking. I cannot take their issues away from them. That is for them to deal with themselves.
- They also seem to subconsciously sense a new dimension to our relationship and appear to respect the new boundaries which I have created
- My relationship with my husband keeps on improving; I realised what my role in our relationship is

- And our communication with each other has improved considerably.
- Because of where I am personally in 'my own head' at this time, I can lead a bit more; and allow him to sort things out for himself, which he was never allowed to do before.
- Overall I feel more confident and positive about myself
- I try and take more care of my appearance. *(This is a difficult concept, as I am a nature person, either digging in the ground or crawling through a bush to look at some or other interesting gogo ["insect"] or plant)*
- In other words, I try to look scruffy in a fashionable and more pleasing way.

Nikki 2010

If you would like to become a truly assertive person click here