

## **Are You Falling For R-rated Thinking?**

Stress levels are soaring at present with the pressure of global forces at work. The ‘bigger than us’ feeling they invoke seems beyond our control. And mostly it is.

It is tempting to try to hold everything at bay, shore ourselves up, batten down and start fighting from behind the trenches.

If you are a warrior at heart and relish a challenge, times like these can be invigorating. Many people are motivated by adversity. They love a perceived threat to get their energy moving. It’s inspiring. They find out what they’re made from.

Unfortunately for others times like these cause high levels of anxiety, depression, knee-jerk reactions. Their language is full of blaming anything in the external world they see as remotely affecting their circumstances, denying their ability to do anything positive, and making excuses for their own situations. The stance they have chosen is to become a victim of the forces at play – real and imagined.

### **What’s Real?**

‘Get real!’ I hear you say. There is no denying the speed at which things are changing is having ‘real’ effects on our lives, particularly finances and investments, jobs, daily lifestyle. It takes effort to stay detached from the fears these ‘losses’ engender.

But beware the ‘R’ word. ‘Recession’ thinking is dangerous. The media picture is one of doom, despair and deterioration. If we buy into this picture, guess what? We create more of it. What we focus on is what we create.

This is not a ‘new-agey’ concept. The brain actually supports negative and positive thinking. As soon as we start thinking about something that causes us concern, the *right* pre-temporal lobe kicks in and starts to create even more pictures to support our story. Before we know it we have an epic drama to deal with mentally and emotionally - and ultimately physically. It doesn’t take long for our emotions to affect our health.

When we think about possibilities that excite us the *left* pre-temporal lobe begins to create even greater ideas to support a vision of excitement and change for the best. And our physiology kicks in to support these thoughts.

We have a choice. At very least we can choose how far down the rabbit hole we are prepared to go with our ‘recession’ thinking.

### **No More R-rated Thinking**

So what do we do to come out the other side in good shape?

No great solutions can be found in a state of fear. We access our wisdom from a space of calm. So a steady, clear state of mind and emotions is the first thing to cultivate.

Don't believe your negative thoughts. Explore a little deeper. Get into the feeling of the moment, and isolate the needs you want met. From there, in calmness and objectivity, start to see some options.

Explore the options then make a well-informed choice about what to do so that you can respond rather than react to the situation. All behaviour comes from a basic need that leads to an emotion that leads to a thought and ultimately an action. So be clear about the underlying *needs* you want met at this time. It is a good place to start if you are feeling confused or overwhelmed. Get to the need.

Keep your energy high and stay motivated by seeing this challenge as an opportunity to get creative. Aim for a better situation to emerge. All change is about growing into new possibilities. It is not about spiralling down – unless we choose to.

### **A True Story**

When I was divorcing, with two very young girls to raise, the 'recession' of the early 1990's hit. My way of dealing with the potential to crumble under the load of impossible financial challenges was simple. I said, 'I'm not having a recession.' And I didn't.

I managed to buy a home and keep it - even after being retrenched - and found a job in an entirely new field of work that led me to consulting part-time and earning a full-time income. I had time to be with my girls, read at the school with them, set up after-school care (which I now desperately needed), and look after my own health and well-being.

Through it all I made meditation the mainstay of my day. Even at the risk of less sleep, I made sure I meditated every evening if I hadn't made time in the morning before getting the kids to crèche by 7.30am. Incidentally, I'd heard that half an hour of meditation is equivalent to two hours sleep – so I had no excuse.

Yes, there were times of fear and stress. But I managed to make good decisions. In this economic climate, I trust I will once again.

### **Choose to Change**

It's your thinking that will empower you or deplete you. You have a choice.

Don't fall for R-rated thinking. Use your discrimination. Stop listening to the details aimed at generating another sensational night of T.V. Skip the mass of articles in the newspapers if they don't look like helping you to make beneficial decisions.

Watch your language. It's too easy to spread the disease. Share what you're learning in positive ways. It's time to elevate not drag down while a mass of money gets redistributed around the world.

Take the lead in your life, help others to pull together and ride the crest of the wave. Greater good can come from this. It might even be fun.

Now wouldn't that be something?

### **8 Steps to a Positive Future**

- Cultivate a steady, clear state of mind and emotion
- Choose your thoughts. Use your discrimination
- Calmly assess your options
- Keep your energy high
- Meditate, deeply relax
- Get creative. Aim for a better situation to emerge
- Watch your language
- Take the lead in your life and have fun

Indira is Director of Conscious Leadership, focussing on creating resonant and resilient Executive leadership and development in the corporate and non-profit sectors.

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Conscious Leadership  
PO BOX 982  
Mount Eliza 3930  
9787 7650  
0412 464548  
[www.consciousleader.com.au](http://www.consciousleader.com.au)