

Subject: March Thinkwell-ezine

## **THINKWELLE-zineT**

### **INSPIRING PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES**

The newsletter for thinking people!

Issue 4    Volume 3    March 2004

Are Message Whispers working in your life?

Over the last few weeks, I have been working on a contract that has heightened my awareness of effective communication. What I have found is that Message Whispers are alive and well in the work environment.

What do I mean by Message Whispers?

Well, when I was a young girl, one of the most popular games we used to play at parties was Message Whispers. We would all gather in a circle and one person would start with a phrase and pass it on to the next person by whispering in their ear. You were only to say it once, and the person given the message had to say what they THOUGHT they heard to the next person in the circle. We all laughed madly when it got to the last person, who would say out loud the phrase they "heard". I don't need to tell you this, but it was always very different to the original phrase. While I laughed and thought it was funny as a little girl, I did not realise it was, in fact, showing me real life behaviour performed by people routinely on a daily basis. This is actually gossip or hearsay.

Now, there are times when there is "good" gossip -- like passing on the good that someone has achieved, received, etc. You know, the nice, feel-good stuff. However, most gossip we hear is not good. It is based on innuendo and supposition and is so destructive. It can destroy friendships, break up families and relationships, create a division between workers and management

- there is no end to the destruction this behaviour can cause. Passing on incorrect, unsubstantiated information causes much unnecessary pain.

How does this happen?

I don't believe that people are knowingly nasty and vindictive. You may not agree. Distortion of passed-on communication happens for a variety of reasons. Few of us are really good rote learners, where we are able to pass on word-for-word what we have heard. - and those of us who have trouble with exams will understand what I am saying - we simply cannot remember everything we are told, and we have to improvise and interpret what we THOUGHT we heard or think we know.

If you want something done, one of the ways miscommunication can be avoided is to write down exactly what you want done. However, be aware that this can also be distorted, as people read things into the written word that simply is not there. Part of our communication is our body language, voice tone and timbre, how we are feeling at the time, etc. This is one of the problems with email and communication books. The person writing in them just says what they are thinking at the time, frequently with no adverse feeling attached to it, but depending on the feelings of the person reading or receiving them, they can be interpreted very differently, and suddenly there is a full-scale war on.

Is it any wonder we have trouble with communication?

So how does one deal with these situations? Well it can be quite simple:

1. Make a choice not to buy into gossip and innuendo
2. Check out the facts
3. Be aware of Message Whispers and how easily an innocent comment can be distorted
4. Go straight to the source - don't act on what someone else has said
5. Check in with yourself and see exactly what you are feeling/experiencing at the time. Are you over-reacting?

Always remember that each of us is solely responsible for our own communication with others. We cannot blame others all the time. Look within and ask yourself what is fact and what is fiction. Check in and see how you are feeling on the day.

As part of my work life/balance workshops I talk about this fact and how we can make our lives easier by understanding ourselves.

If communication is a major problem in your work place, give me a call and ask about my workshops and how they can help. If you want personal help in this area, please contact me. I am happy to work face to face or over the phone or internet.

Leigh

Leigh is a Registered Nurse who practices as a Wellness and Lifestyle Guide. For workshops, seminars, keynote presentations on stress, fatigue and lifestyle management give me a call, email or, for more information, visit my website <http://www.thinkwell.co.nz> <<http://www.thinkwell.co.nz/>> .

CHECK OUT MY WEBSITE FOR UPDATED INFORMATION ON THINKWELL'S PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

"THE BEST INSURANCE POLICY IN THE WORLD IS A HEALTHY MIND, BODY AND SOUL"

Books for sale

To purchase Leigh's book, "Life's an Illusion": A guide to caring for people with Alzheimer's disease, please post a cheque for \$25.00 plus \$3 postage and packaging -- the book and invoice will be posted to you. (Price quoted is in NZ dollars)

National Speakers' Association NZ meets the last Tuesday of each month at the Sheraton, Auckland. For more information contact Maureen: [biz@flyingfingers.co.nz](mailto:biz@flyingfingers.co.nz)

The National Speakers Association of New Zealand invites you to learn in just 2 days how to

"TRIPLE your income using the Eight Core Competencies!" 9am - 4.30pm  
13th  
& 20th March 2004. For more information contact Secretary 09 3786430  
during  
business hours or email [biz@flyingfingers.co.nz](mailto:biz@flyingfingers.co.nz)

Leigh Kelly NZRN ADN ASM Professional Speaker, Author  
<mailto:leigh@thinkwell.co.nz>

"Inspiring people to understand themselves"  
<http://www.thinkwell.co.nz> <<http://www.thinkwell.co.nz/>