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Newsletter
February 2011

Editor's Note

By Raj Narayan, ISEC Editor

Many of us may recall our first tryst with a bicycle. As a 9-year-old, I was convinced that it required positive dexterity to stay atop a contraption that was bigger than me and had wheels two inches wide. This led me to believe in the superhuman abilities of all cyclists in neighborhood in Delhi.

At 4-feet, I could barely reach the bicycle seat that stood at 5-feet. This meant I had to put my leg through the bike frame to reach the right pedal. Later I learnt that this style of cycling was called the "Kranchi" - a mispronunciation of the Hindi word "Kenchi" that meant a pair of scissors.

After the mandatory crashes, I eventually managed to keep the cycle wheels in motion with me dangling precariously in between. My dad, who couldn't cycle, told me "Guess what? You have achieved at 9 something that I could not at 40." After he retired, the old man actually learnt to cycle in our village!

When I asked him what prompted the decision, he quoted Mahatma Gandhi back at me. "Men often become what they believe themselves to be. If I believe I cannot do something, it makes me incapable of doing it. But when I believe I can, then I acquire the ability to do it even if I didn't have it in the beginning."

This edition of the ISEC Newsletter is all about beliefs and how they shape our destiny. Read on and share your thoughts with us...

MENTOR'S MUSINGS:Rules of the Game

By Krishna Kumar, ISEC Founder-Director

"He's losing it, Coach!" This remark by my student echoed the thoughts of our group as we watched our star player compete in the finals of a national tennis tournament.

Those who know him well were aware that the Star's calm demeanor belied his inner turmoil. Small hand gestures and facial expressions indicated that he was very upset. It was, therefore, only a matter of time before he completely lost his composure and quite predictably the match against an opponent clearly weaker than him.

Some hours later on our drive back home, I gently quizzed about his anger on the court. "He cheated on the line calls, Coach," was his only comment but one that spoke volumes. Most matches at the junior tournaments are not officiated with the players calling their own lines/points and creating a tempting environment for getting "cheap" points. From a very young age, sport teaches kids to be fair and the Star's reaction was nothing new to me in my decades of coaching. It is very tough to coach students on how to react to cheating.

As adults chasing our own careers we too encounter instances where circumstances lead us to believe that we were treated unfairly, not least because the society's rules us are often unclear. Particularly, in the business environment, we often face situations that mirror the Star's predicament on the tennis court. It is a rare executive who has never left a customer's premises or a manager's

room with a feeling that they got a raw deal. Or, was in effect, treated unfairly.



Clearly the Star's approach was self-destructive and is not recommended. But, there is a dilemma that it raises in our minds. Do we also cheat to fix a player who cheated us? Or, do we believe in our ability to overcome the odds (however unfair) and soldier on? I am sure you would have guessed my advice to the Star on how to deal with such problems in the future.

Continuing on the topic of belief in oneself, please read Will Craig's article below:

Coaching Believing

by Will Craig

A young man fell asleep during math class. He woke up as the bell rang, looked at the blackboard, and copied down the two problems that were there. He assumed they were the homework for the night. He went home and labored the rest of the afternoon and into the evening knowing if he didn't complete the work he would surely fail the class.

He couldn't figure out either one but he kept trying for the rest of the week. Finally, he got the answer to one and brought it to class. The teacher was absolutely stunned. The boy feared he had done too little, too late. It turned out the problem he solved was supposedly unsolvable.

Power Commanders

How did he do it? He was able to do what was thought to be impossible because he believed it was possible. He not only believed it was possible, he believed that if he didn't solve it he would fail the class. Had he known the problem was unsolvable he could never have done it.

The Birth of Excellence

Beliefs are the commanders of our brain. When we believe something is true, we literally go into the state of its being true. Handled effectively, beliefs can be the most powerful forces for creating goodness in our lives.

Beliefs control our destiny: The belief we have in ourselves... the belief we have in our clients... the belief others have in us. The birth of excellence begins with the awareness that our beliefs are a choice.

Beliefs are the compass and map that guide us to our goals. Believe you can do something -OR- believe you can't and you'll be right every time.

Will Craig is the Founder of Coach Training Alliance and the past president of the International Coach Federation (ICF) Denver chapter. His [LearnMore System](#) is the foundation for all CTA programs.

You

Notes:
Can!

Readers' React

Found the article **Fear Is Not the Key** interesting and informative, and it took me right back to my psychology classes! To add to what you've said, when we're babies there are only 2 emotional responses: distress and contentment. Later, these two become more nuanced and when faced with perceived harm, the "distress" part becomes linked with our survival instincts - one of our most ancient primitive instincts. The Fight or Flight reaction then gets triggered in a fabulous display of cellular pyrotechnics - and like you said, leads to dramatic changes in the system. Today we're not being faced with sabre toothed tigers or woolly mammoths, but we still react the same way during arguments with the boss or a call from our banker, though here, we can neither fight nor flee! We can actually control this involuntary response by increasing our awareness of it - and use its energy rather than letting the energy use us. I remember reading Joan Borysenko's *Minding the Body, Mending the Mind* - where she warns of the dangers of becoming a serial worrier. I guess we all have our own unique ways of coping with the FoF response - quieting the mind is probably the most effective way of shutting off the mental chatter that accompanies the physical reaction to stress.

Sulekha Nair

I am writing this email to highlight my views on **MENTOR'S MUSINGS: *Fear is Not the Key!*** Nice & crisp article! I like the topic chosen - Fear. So many times, we have experienced a different fear too - 'Fear of Failure'. Coming back to the article - I found a lot of emphasis on the negative. Positive words were outnumbered. If the intention is to explain the current problems faced in the start of the article, I think it should be backed up by strong positive tips/advice/points. This article needs an audience who is capable of knowing the truth (fear can be dangerous) & being OK with it. If this article talked a bit more on how to tackle it, then this would have been a GREAT article for any audience. Now, I feel it's a GOOD article. I love your writings and I chose to comment on this as I liked the topic.

Ajay Balamurudas

ISEC Events:

ISEC Founder-Director, Krishna Kumar, presented the "Discovering the Inner Coach" program to 20 CEO's/CIO's on 24th February 2011 at the Leela Palace Hotel, Bangalore. The event was conducted by 9dot9 media, publishers of CIO and Inc magazine.

**With warm regards,
Krishna Kumar
Executive Coach & Founder-Director, ISEC**