

Jubilation - The Importance of Remembering to Celebrate Success

By Jeffrey Hull

Well, wow! What a historic week. I've normally stayed away from politics in my blogs -- and will continue to do so -- but since Oprah got unleashed this week with the election over, I guess it's ok for me to CELEBRATE publicly as well. So, even though I'm normally an unapologetic Independent in all things political, this week I do feel jubilant. Here's what I wrote to my west coast friends early on the post-election morn:

I found myself tearing up in front of the TV way after Midnight last night here on the East Coast...just watching history unfold before my eyes. I had just gotten off the phone with friends who were cheering and celebrating in Times Square...and I could feel the sense of elation and camaraderie and connectedness that was alive in the air-- breaking through the tyrannical shroud of fear that we have lived under for 8 long years--with thousands of people just over-flowing in the streets: jubilant and exultant that AMERICA finally got it right!!!

I too, am hopeful again... for our little ones who, when they grow up to vote for president, will no longer think of skin color or any other fear-based "otherness" that has for so long torn us apart. ...and for our friends around the world who had pretty much given up on the U.S. ever being a beacon of human rights, equality and compassion once again. Yahoo...we're back!

So, as you can clearly see...I was very pleased with the outcome of the election. I was moved deeply by the historic nature of the event, and the quality--and qualities--evident in the man who will symbolically, if not literally, lead us out of this dark period in American history. It is time to celebrate.

It is also a rare moment for me in the Adventures in Life-Shifting: I get to write about my favorite stage in the six-stage process of self-renewal: REALIZATION.

Most of the time in my articles about navigating life change--a.k.a. **life-shifting**, I focus on one of the other five stages in every cycle of major life change: the Rut, the Release, the Retreat, The Revival, and the Rehearsal. For obvious reasons, we all struggle mightily with the fears and anxieties and challenges that accompany being stuck, letting go, re-inventing ourselves and re-committing to new adventures and new behaviors. What I don't get to write about as often as I would like is the great moments of culmination, success, and victory that DO arrive now and again in life.

Sometimes we really do break through a glass ceiling. Sometimes we really do transcend our own limitations and transform our lives. Sometimes we realize our dreams. AND sometimes it is important to stop working long enough to relish the moment!

Truth be told, as moved as I was by Obama's somber and eloquent acceptance speech on Tuesday night, I was also just a tad disappointed. I am hopeful that he went home to Michelle, the kids, and his close pals...and threw a big party, at least for all the tireless

workers that carried him along the long, long road to the White House! They--and he--deserve it. I know that pundits were saying that it was "appropriate" and "impressive" that he avoided the triumphal tone of self-congratulation. Ok, I'm all for humility and gratitude. Apple pie and Chevrolet...those are the down home American values. Tried and true.

BUT...

in my experience with clients who reach a pinnacle of accomplishment and achieve hard fought goals: it is important to ENJOY YOUR SUCCESS. Sometimes the puritanical American cultural baggage of our forefathers and mothers makes it supposedly unseemly to really experience the joy, the exultation and the delight in realizing hard fought dreams. To that, I say BAH HUMBUG: let's party!

Far too many of my clients--and I see some of this tendency in myself as well--achieve some goal or dream and never bother to even stop, breathe and relish the moment. They are just on to the next mountain to climb.

I remember calling my client Colette, just after the press release had come out that she had received the job as head of Global HR for a major international bank. I was so happy for her, so proud of her. Here was someone who had been let go from another very senior position in HR with no warning or explanation, in the midst of a divorce, who rallied her spirits and quickly nailed down an even bigger job. I wanted her to celebrate -- to acknowledge herself and her gifts, her hard work, and her perseverance. Her reaction: "oh yeah, I saw the press release but didn't read it. I've got work to do."

OK...I get it. We are a nation of Do'ers. Strivers. Worker drones scurrying around always busy, busy, busy on this dust ball called earth. So I guess I shouldn't have expected to see Obama out there with a big grin and glass of champagne. And he's right, we do have a huge climb to get out of the deep hole of angst, despair, and distress that we've dug ourselves (don't forget, we elected G.W., sort of) for the past 8 years. Nevertheless, for today, for a moment, it is important to celebrate.

So here's my question for the day: do you celebrate your life? Do you feel real joy--lasting joy--in your accomplishments?

We are not talking about boasting or ego-stroking or putting others down here. We are talking about celebrating the miracle of transformation--in this country, in ourselves.

So, in unbelievable gratitude for the miracle of a new, black, proud and unvarnished voice that has arrived on the American scene -- in a defining moment of history -- I suggest that we all step back, take a breath, and embrace the realization of a true shift in collective consciousness! We now know that anyone, of any color, of any race, of any creed, really can become the leader of the free world. Not, of course, without a whole lot of hard work, talent, grit and determination--not to mention a crack campaign team, but it IS possible.

Humanity really is sometimes a marvelous machine of possibility. Evolution is nothing if not a series of unheralded, natural, mystical leaps in the dark. But humans--creatures of natural selection though we may be--are different: we can turn on the lights! We can light up the skies, penetrate the depths of the universe, and pierce through the veil of separation. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.

We can jump, as thousands in Times Square, Chicago, Paris, and Kenya, were doing on Tuesday night--for joy!

Yes, we can!

They'll be plenty of time for work when the next Rut stage sets in...but for now:

Oh Happy Day!

Dr J

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