

Create The Life You Love

Loretta Honeychurch Personal Growth Coaching

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The Power of Focus

I was in Sydney a few years ago at an event with the Entrepreneurs Organisation, and this is a group of high functioning, successful business leaders. It was the middle of the recession. And we asked them, “are any of you in a recession.” Not one person put up their hand. In fact, they were experiencing enormous growth. Why?

Because to them there was no recession. They weren't focus on the recession. They were focused on prosperity, problem solving, moving forward, making profits. They focused on positive outcomes. They looked for opportunities for growth. They created a reality that served them in a positive way.

How do you do that?

By Focusing on What you want.

When you focus on something, what happens? It expands.

There is a small part of your brain called the Reticular Activating system, (RAS) It's an automatic mechanism inside your brain that brings relevant information to your attention. It is located at the core of the brain stem between the medulla and midbrain. It's a little bunch of cells in your brain known as “The Control Centre” and it filters what enters your consciousness.

Your attention span is limited. You are literally processing millions of bits of information per second and out those millions of bits of information we can only consciously process 126 bits of information per second. This is based the work of Miller (1956) and Orme (1969). Miller showed that we could process seven (plus or minus two) chunks of information per unit of time. Rome showed that an “attentional unit” of time was 1/18th of a second based on earlier calculations by Von Uexkull. Therefore we can process about $7 \times 18 = 126$ bits of information per second. It is estimated that there are millions of bits of information available to you per second.

If we are only conscious of 126 bits of information per second, what happens to the rest of the information? It's get's filtered out through he process of Deletion, Distortion and Generalisation, in order for you to make sense of it. The RAS is the is the self filtering system in charge of sorting the information and it chooses what you accept and reject according to your values, beliefs and attitudes. The information that remains in your attention forms you “internal representation” or “map” of reality. Also known as your awareness.

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We use our RAS all day, unconsciously.

The focus of your Reticular Activating system is determined by you and your particular circumstances.

So, for example, when you are in a crisis you will automatically search out more of what is wrong as a protective mechanism.

As soon as it finds more of what is wrong it sets off another stress reaction, which releases adrenalin, and searches for more of what is wrong. And you are trapped in a cycle of looking for more of what is wrong, finding it, and looking for more and finding it and so on. So you can see that what you focus on expands.

And after a while your mind is no longer the driver. Your body is. Now, you can do it consciously, deliberately. By looking for more of what is right, even if it doesn't seem right, you are reprogramming your RTA to seek more of this information. The more RIGHT that you find, the more you will begin to produce the behaviour necessary to override the cycle of getting more of what's wrong.

Your brain's function is to constantly predict outcomes by continuously sorting, classifying and comparing events to determine where they fit in the models of reality.

If your model isn't working for you, change it.

Make it a better model by discovering what information you are leaving out, that if brought back in would have a positive and profound effect on your life. Then focus on the things that support your new model.

This is critical in turning adversity into advantage. You have to be constantly focusing on what you want.

It is also critical in accomplishing goals and creating reality. To create success in your life you need to focus on what you want, not what you don't want. You can communicate to your unconscious mind to set your RAT to find events or opportunities that support your goals. You literally say to your unconscious mind "focus on finding more of (fill in the blanks).

Your RTA system is working for you every second of the day, most of the time out of your awareness. Now you can do the process consciously to create results that you want.