Future Works GAZETTE
Making Futures Great℠

Karen Sands, MCC
Your Ultimate Guide to the Future℠
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Sept., 2009
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Rock On To Your Greater Future

Easy Principles for Living in Your Groove℠

September, 2009 Principle
Welcome the Unknown

Experience has shown me that what keeps us on the road to great futures, personally and professionally, is to have a set of core tenets that guide us when the going gets rough. Each month's issue of the Gazette is focused on one of these principles.

In This Issue

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Karen Recommends • Tools, Tips & How-To's
Widening the Circle

A Note From Karen

There's a new chill in the air as our soggy Northeastern U.S. summer recedes. The autumnal change has always been my favorite time of year. "See you in September..." was my teenage favorite song. I get a rush when I see the first turning leaves signaling summer is ending and new beginnings are in the offing. I've always grooved on change and the exhilaration of the unknown. Thank goodness or I'd be splat about now.

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Throughout human-time prayers and thanks have been given for the blessings of the autumn harvest. In prayer and deep reflection we are reminded of time fleeting as another harvest comes and goes -- a marker event reminding us that we must welcome the unknown and prepare to follow its lead.

As I travel and speak with folks around the globe, it is clear that the

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FEATURE

What Did I Do With My Life?

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You make your own night
And sometimes you win
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But you always get through
Oh, show us the light

~Doobie Brothers
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Still in shell shock from my husband Mark's recent heart attack, I was uncertain of my footing as I prepared for my full-day program, *Mid-Career in the Fast Lane*SM, for the World Future Society, (WFS), at their annual conference. Staying focused was not easy. Every possible obstacle came up along the way to derail my plans. It was the first time I've used PowerPoint for a full day presentation – from the moment I did my test runs it went haywire with slides going forwards and backwards at will—just not mine!:)

No matter what, I was determined to show up and be fully present. I wanted to give more than was expected. No need for me to have worried. More...

Karen Recommends

Everyday someone new offers the only guide to using social media. But there's just one guy that brings it within reach without your having a PhD in webspeak. Please check out Joel Comm's newest book entitled, Twitter Power.

Tools, Tips & How-To's

TIP: *Forewarned is Forearmed*
In case you are already noticing a quickening pace of upsets, miscommunications and things going awry, please note that we are experiencing an increased period of astrological turbulence as the Mercury Retrograde started September 4th.

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Tool:
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Widening The Circle

When you look forward to the unfolding of the last months of 2009, are you able to say that you will use this recession to your advantage? What are you doing to make your future rock?

Please share your responses.

To provide us with an opportunity to really address important issues that we are all facing, your input on what is relevant and timely matters. If you'd like to engage in this dialogue please email me with topics or questions you'd like addressed.

I also invite you to get some 'real time' with me and your elite cohorts on one of my complimentary teleseminars and our upcoming weekly, Future Works® Network Member Meetings, launching October 20th.

Are YOU A Change Agent?

Innovation is the hallmark of our generation. We are called to be *Masters of Reinvention*SM and *Everyday Futurists*SM in creating today's new paradigm.

Future Works Institute is researching the critical strategies for catalyzing change and welcomes your stories and strategies for creating positive futures.

Go to the **Research Info** page.

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As I travel and speak with folks around the globe, it is clear that the chaos and complexity of our times is rattling us to the core -- throwing us off our game and bringing many of us to our knees. For all of us there is so much unspoken fear -- taunting us at the edge of our consciousness --from our personal worries to macro issues like rising seas, fierce fires, and the rampant breakdown of what used to be sacrosanct.

> *Unemployed Feel "traumatized" by Recession -- A new study finds that the recession has left many jobless workers struggling to cope with the psychological stress ...*
>
> (AP) – NYT 090309

We already have the know-how to bring us back into sync with our deepest inner knowing. Going inside to the calm center we can use this holy time to call in our ancestors to help us harvest the best possible new future of our own making. Not only do we have the know-how

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handed down from the ancients, we also we have the tools and resources to birth this new future forward. Our own emerging conscious evolution and the paradigm shifting new sciences provide us with access to 21st century futures thinking that will allow us to cross the unknown divide between what was and what will be.

For our family these holy days will be extra blessed with the arrival of our first granddaughter-- a big deal since it means my maternal lineage will continue. In fact, she is due the week of Yom Kippur, our tradition's holiest of holy days, bringing auspicious blessings for this wondrous soon-to-be new addition.

As with birthing new life, we must welcome the unknown with open arms.

Karen Sands, MCC
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Feature

What Did I Do With My Life?

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No matter what, I was determined to show up and be fully present. I wanted to give more than was expected. No need for me to have worried.

I was joined by some savvy experienced careerists who made it easy for me to show up -- together we became present and went with the flow of the day, exploring being in mid-career finding yourself and your career in the fast lane of the "Great Recession". That's a multiple whammy for most of us because first we have to answer these fundamental questions:

What is Mid-Career for you? How do you define fast lane? Do you want to get back in the fast lane, find an exit ramp or perhaps just change lanes?

If you are one of those Mid-Careerists who are part of the reported 10% plus unemployed in the U.S., (which does not include those who have given up looking for a job*), you have to do both: answer these

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questions, while also looking hard for a paying job. I would call this being on the "side road". *NYT: Faces of the Uncounted Unemployed - U.S. 090909

The conference was going great until out of nowhere music was blasting and people were cheering at the top of their lungs and stomping so hard that our water glasses swished! Only it wasn't us. In the next ballroom throngs of people were reveling. When we heard the host bellowing out welcomes to the annual Chicago Black Hawk fan festivities, I almost swooned.

Then I laughed. We all did.

How appropriate that we had an unplanned hands-on learning experience of what futurists call a "Wild Card" event—one that is so out of the realm of likelihood—and its potential to trigger chaos and breakdown was quite clear-cut. Our boisterous fan invasion underscored our exploration of what it's going to take to navigate our epoch changing times with the unexpected being the norm.

Flexibility and resiliency are required skills for continued success these days – even more so in the future—They allow us to "go with the flow" , to let go and come on. This is especially important when change happens so fast. This is just the beginning. I promise you that change today happens far slower than tomorrow's.

Right on the spot we had to re-sync as a group—and individually re-center. Then we were able to refocus on what was in front of us *right now*, while keeping our "eye" on the future. Both the future we intend and the one that shows up. Sometimes planning alone just isn't enough.

With so much in the balance, it sure does feel like we are in the fast lane most of the time. If we are going to be able to shift in a moment's notice and still land on our feet and get behind the wheel again, we each must understand change vs. transition and how to respond successfully. Whether you own your business, lead an organization or are in-between gigs, the "Great Recession" is forcing us to make some tough new choices while demanding skill sets we haven't honed and perhaps never knew we had.

So many of us want to get a handle on *What's Next*; to understand our future -- and make our time on the planet well-lived, and matter. That's why futures education and continuous improvement means so much to me. It's the only way we'll all be able to make the leap from the old to the new -- only transformers need apply.

Futuring is not about crystal balls and witches -- although wise people abound. It is both a science and art. It is the deep exploration of our possible futures based on profound knowledge and know-how. Futurists can be found in most sectors. But many more will be needed as we go deeper into the 21st century. The majority of us are in midlife, a significant 50% of us stateside are over 40 and by 2020, 78% of us will be 50+. Many of the early pioneers are entering their later life, becoming

elders and mentors to those coming up the learning curve. I have no doubt that futures will be the field of the future. (Sorry I couldn't resist the pun.)

The WFS uses this annual conference to bring together the innovators and thought leaders of our time – those who are all about the future now, not later. Professional Futurists come from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines -- many with more than one. All are incredibly dedicated to making the future work-- in our personal lives, at work and around the globe.

Coming in to the conference I didn't know who was coming to the all–day session so I had to be ready to go in any direction based on who showed up. Everyone there is a thought leader in their field or discipline. It was a mixture of current executives, entrepreneurs, consulting/ advisory professionals and those in the government and the military. Some are between contract stints, a few are financially independent seeking new vistas, while others are career changers.

All are definitely innovators wanting to find meaning and significance in their *What's Next*: doing well, doing good. Several of the financially secure are taking the time to seek out new adventures and opportunities. They want to express themselves fully, while preserving and growing their wealth and freedom. Others are asking themselves, Should I leave? or Should I stay?" Others are in the next phase asking "When, How and Where?" A few know the outplacement "axe" is coming: it is just a matter of time.

So diverse yet so similar. It never ceases to amaze me how delighted I get when everyone starts to realize that they were meant to be in this session together at this time. Cross-learning acts as a catalyst to vault us into deeper terrain where we are able to separate the dross from the gold of what is needed to move forward successfully.

Armed with greater clarity about what matters most, each of us formed a new or re-invigorated template to determine our options for the probable and improbable alternative futures that we may face. Holding an unwavering holographic big picture vision, along with a refined or defined game plan, each of us knows much more now about what needs to happen to realize our own preferred sustainable future. We also learned we must explore all possibilities and keep refining our "futurecasting℠" skills so that we can respond to whatever comes from the unknown.

"Inspired By The Past, Built For The Future"

~Panerai Watch ad/Conde Nast Traveler

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Tool:
Regardless of your spiritual or religious upbringing or favorite perspective on the nature of the Universe, please use this seasonal change to reflect on the words of Lenny Kravitz.

For newbies to centering, here's how to get ready: More...

For experienced journeyers, grab you favorite drink that gets you ready to center, breathe consciously and when ready, proceed at your own pace.

Jot down whatever comes up for you about your current circumstances and the new tomorrow you want to birth forward.

Did I work on the battlefield?
Did I do what I thought was right?
Did I do all that I could?

Did I love all that I should?
To everyone in my sight?
What did I do with my life?

Did I exercise giving
And forgiveness with all my might?
Did I honor my freedom
And did I live in the light?

Did I cherish my moments?
Did I take a good enough bite?
What did I do with my life?...

Lenny Kravitz,
What Did I Do With My Life?,19??

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Toss away any regrets – especially the ones your inner demons call up to stop you cold…you know the *should have's* and *could have's*—I have plenty of those to discard too! Open up to what *could be* going forward. Take your time to consider your responses. Use each stanza to examine another aspect so you can consciously choose what you did and will do with your life as we head into the closing quarters of 2009.

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Here's a gift for you that will really help.

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Centering

Let's get started with some centering and focusing:

1. Close your office door or find a quiet spot. Give yourself private time to reflect. Find a comfortable place to sit with your feet on the ground and hands in your lap. Make sure to keep a pad and pen next to you for journaling.
2. If you're comfortable to do so, close your eyes and notice your breathing. Don't change your breath; just observe its flow in.
3. Shift your focus away from your mind to the area around your heart.
4. Imagine yourself breathing through your heart. It may help to put your hand on your heart.
5. Keep your focus there for 10 seconds or more. (Note: Remember you can always stop here and use this as a "Just in Time" recharge. Or combine this with the following exercises for more in-depth exploration and discovery.)

For experienced journeyers, grab you favorite drink that gets you ready to center, breathe consciously and when ready, proceed at your own pace.

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