

## Tyranny of What if..?

A number of years ago I had a client who came to me in a really bad stressed out condition. He came for one session, and then the next thing I knew I was told he had had a nervous breakdown. When I visited him in the hospital, I was quite surprised to see that his face had certain radiance to it. I asked how he was doing, half expecting to hear a litany of bad news.

Instead, the man smiled and said the following. "I feel very lucky right now. Very blessed. I have let go of nearly everything I was trying to hold onto and I finally became aware of the mantra that I had been repeating to myself over and over again."

"What happened to me was so surreal." he said. "I was sitting in an unemployment office and I was feeling more and more agitated. Then all of a sudden I passed out. Or at least they told me I passed out because I don't remember that part. What I do remember is waking up in this bed, and for the first time in my life, there was this deafening quiet inside my head, and a great calmness in my body that touched my soul. For the first time in my life, for at least a few minutes time I had no internal dialogue. This was a very amazing experience."

"You see," he said, "When I first came to see you I was afraid of losing my job, my wife, and my house. I was relentlessly repeating various 'What if' mantras. What if I lose my job? 'What if I lose my wife? As it turned out I did lose my job. And upon getting fired, because my finances were already totally frazzled, I soon had to hand over ownership of my house to the bank. And upon learning about the foreclosure on our house my wife immediately left me. And now I feel like a bright and energetic fourteen year old starting all over again! I have new dreams, new ways of thinking, a whole new life ahead of me now, and perhaps most importantly I have a new mantra."

"My only sadness is that I wish I would have had my nervous breakdown much earlier in life, so I could have much sooner gotten into living from a place of enthusiasm rather than a place of fear. I just didn't realize how fantastic a nervous breakdown could be! I have lost everything, but in the process I have gained a completely new way of being in the world. It is such a joy to know that I no longer need to live in fear."

In the process of finally being released from the tyranny of "What if" this man attained great wisdom and peace of mind.

After chatting a bit longer I finally got ready to leave. My ex-client said "One more thing if you don't mind me suggesting it. When a client comes to you stressed out and fearful, tell him to take a moment, and take a deep breath. Then suggest that the best thing he can do is to have his nervous breakdown right then and there. Invite him to have his breakdown on the spot, so that he can get back into living a full life again, free from stress and fear! Believe me, the sooner you can completely let go, the better. In math, ten minus ten equals zero. In life, if you take everything that you have and minus all of it, you wind up with much more than you ever dreamed of!"