



## **Follow these five steps to success**

By Amy Higgins Peninsula News  
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Are you living the life you've always wanted to live? Have you accomplished everything you set out to do? Do you love your job?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, you've lost touch with who you are and what your purpose is, according to Michelle Armstrong, an internationally recognized "results coach," motivational speaker and president/CEO of Mind Management LLC.

Armstrong holds a bachelor's degree in metaphysical science (is working on her master's degree), is a certified Hypnotherapist, Neuro-linguistic psychotherapist and NLP trainer, master NLP results coach, Neuro-semantic practitioner, and holds academic qualifications in counseling and communications from the Australian College of Applied Psychology in Sydney, Australia.

She spearheaded a free session of her "Kickstart Your Success" seminar Tuesday night at the George Nakano Theater in Torrance

"Who says you can't be stinkin' rich, happy and successful at the same time?" said Armstrong. "For as long as I can remember, I have held the belief that everyone deserves to live the life they choose. Whatever you desire to do, I believe you can have it. I refused to give in — and still do — to the popular belief that our future is out of our hands and that our life is destined to the cards we were dealt at birth."

Armstrong said she didn't come to these realizations easily. More than 10 years ago, while suffering from clinical depression, a bad relationship, severe financial problems, some extra pounds and a job that left her unfulfilled, she stayed in bed for three weeks and said she couldn't even find the energy to commit suicide.

"I always believed that I was going to do something with my life, but something happened along the way that tipped that idea out [of my mind]," she said. "All I knew at the time was that my life was going backwards and I needed to find a way to get out of that situation. I had given up on my life and I had given up on myself."

Suddenly, though, everything became clear. "I can't quite describe the feeling except that it was just a shift," she said. "Something just shifted, and I saw the world differently, and I actually saw myself in relation to the world [and realized] that I was creating everything that was going on in my life."

From that point on, Armstrong has worked to help others see the same shift she saw and to believe that each person is the "creator of his/her own experience."

In her seminar, Armstrong shared five of her seven success strategies to get audience members thinking differently about their lives.

### **Success strategy 1: Live in your truth**

Armstrong said the first step to creating the life that you want is to recognize and live in your truth — that which makes you tick, so to speak. What do you want out of life? What don't you want? Answering these questions can help you figure out your truth if you don't know it already, she said. Focus only on how to accomplish what you want, not on what you failed at or may not be able to accomplish. Armstrong suggested that you make a list of things you want out of life and look at the list every day to keep it in your mind's foreground.

### **Success strategy 2: Manage your thinking**

"Thoughts trigger emotions, which drive behaviors, which equals results," said Armstrong. "If you want to change your life, you need to change your thinking. You are the creator of your experience." In other words, change will only come about when we change our ways of thinking. We need to focus on seeing what it is we want, not what we think we can't have. Armstrong said everything that happens around us is a physical manifestation of our thinking. "Become intimately aware of your thinking," she said.

### **Success strategy 3: Operate from the now**

According to Armstrong, there is no past or future, there only is the now. "Each moment is a new moment filled with endless possibilities to choose from," she said. "You can't do anything with the past because it's happened already, nor can you do anything with the future because it hasn't happened yet. All we have is the present." Armstrong also likened the present to an Etch-a-Sketch toy — it is a clean slate that you can draw on, then shake up to erase whenever you end up with something you don't like.

### **Success strategy 4: Personal responsibility**

"You are always responsible for your thoughts, feelings, actions and behaviors, choices, decisions and results," said Armstrong. "With personal responsibility comes power, peace and freedom." According to Armstrong, an example of taking personal responsibility is when we say, "S/he made me mad." We blame the other person for our feelings instead of taking responsibility for the way we reacted — i.e., getting angry — to the situation. Come up with ways that you can get yourself out of situations you are in that you don't currently like. For example, plan to control your frivolous spending so you can pay off debts instead of being angry that the debt is there, leaving you with less money to spend. "To know how to think, feel, react, choose, etc., you need to know what it is you want," said Armstrong.

### **Success strategy 5: Follow through**

Make a list of things you will commit to change. Combine the other four strategies and implement them into a new way of thinking and living. To explain this strategy, Armstrong quoted Einstein: "The definition of insanity is continuing to do the same things over and over and expecting to get a different result."