

Don't Wait For Someone Else To Notice—Do it Yourself!

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Have you done anything worthy of recognition this week? (*Of course you have!*) Did anybody notice? (*Maybe yes—maybe no. It might have gone either way!*) The real question worth answering is whether or not you noticed. How much attention did you pay to your own contributions, accomplishments, innovations and progress?

Our daily busy-ness drives us from one task to another, often without a breath for reflection. There are clients to please, phone calls to return, emails to manage, projects to finish, children to tend, and bills to pay.

We get so mired in the gaps between where we are and where we had hoped to be that we forget to pay attention to the things that are going right in our lives. We put in a full day at work and don't see what was accomplished—only how much is left to be done. We attend a community meeting where the conversation centres on who hasn't shown up rather than focusing on the folks who are there and ready to get at it.

It's as if we're driving on automatic, tuned to the bad news channel. It's time to switch stations; after all, a good doctor checks for signs of life in the patient—not for signs of death. A heartbeat, no matter how weak, is a welcome sign. We'd be much healthier in spirit if we, too, looked for signs of life in our own daily exploits.

Start by cultivating the Good News Question.



Ask yourself, "What went well today?" Tie that query to your end-of-day routine—that last action before heading home. When you switch off your computer, clear off your desk, or walk to the bus stop, tune your mind to the 'Good News Question'.

Give yourself a pat on the back.

Stick that arm in the air, bend it at the elbow, and take it from there.

Treat yourself to a pat on your back in the middle of a workday, and it's certain that bystanders will want to know just what's going on.

Start a Me File—a folder in which to collect notes, cards, and letters of appreciation you receive from others. Though I'm a great believer in dejunking, I suggest you never throw away any good news you get about yourself. Me Files are great antidotes for 'slug of the earth' days—those times when nothing seems to go right, and everything you touch falls to pieces.

Invest in a Success Journal. For less than two dollars, you can pick up a hardcover, blank-paged 'nothing book' and turn it into something of value. Use it to record your own successes, accomplishments of which you're proud, appreciative comments from others that you'd like to savour, your narrow escapes from challenging situations.

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Or keep an on-line Celebration Log. Make it a daily practice to notice and record one thing worth celebrating. You'll be surprised how the good things start stacking up, once you actively search them out.

Build perks and rewards into your workday. If you've been avoiding tackling a tough problem, promise yourself a treat for taking that first step. Arrange coffee with someone whose company you enjoy. Take a few minutes to book a golf date for the weekend.

Share the news of your success with someone who cares. Avoid the people in your life who tend to minimize or 'one up' your good news. Find others who are genuinely happy for your success and share your news with them.

Learn to accept compliments with grace. Don't minimize a kind word from the person sharing the appreciation by replying, "It was nothing. Anybody would have done the same thing." Instead, offer a simple, "Thank you". By doing so, you reward the person who took the time to notice, and you tune yourself more sharply to the good news station.

Far too many people are starved for good news about themselves. Don't put yourself on a restricted recognition diet. Pay attention. Give freely. Give often. ■



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overwhelmed to get things done and have a life, too. Sign up for Pat's free weekly e-zine, *Pause*, and learn more about easing your load at www.pauseworks.com and www.patkatz.com.