

## The Magic of Brainstorming

By Faith Monson

I recently passed a car with a sticker that read, “No Fear.” That got me thinking. To the driver of that car, “No Fear” was just a brand name. To everyone else, waiting until we feel “no fear” is one of the top reasons we avoid taking risks and keep ourselves from achieving personal goals.

What would you change in your life or business if you had no fear? What would you dare to try? In my experience, fear is usually caused by a lack of knowledge. If you aren't sure how something works, it's natural to be afraid. I've also found that the more you learn and the more you practice skills to tackle your fear, the more the fear decreases. Confidence and knowledge can banish fear.

As a coach, I find a lot of people holding back out of fear. Fear of the economy. Fear that success might be too much to handle. Fear of change. But the truth is, they usually have all the tools they need to succeed—they just need someone to help with the confidence. That's where brainstorming comes in.

When I brainstorm with someone, we have fun opening all the doors to possibilities and seeing what's out there waiting to be discovered. I help my clients “try on” a new job or a new personal image. It feels a lot like theatre, because we imagine together. There are no barriers, just possibilities. You can't get into trouble or embarrass yourself by imagining yourself doing something slightly or completely different. As the director/ talent scout, I see my client differently than they see themselves, and I see them as infinitely more talented than they give themselves credit for. I love pushing my clients off the end of the branch. They deserve to fly, but they just need a nudge. They already have the wings, they just don't know it.

When we brainstorm, there are no limits to the ideas, and no one is going to rain on your parade with negatives. I encourage clients to reach way out of their comfort zone and reinvent themselves, using the strengths and skills that they already have.

I have been doing a lot of coaching lately and I am amazed at the talent people take for granted, forget to mention or don't think is unique or valuable. I talk to clients for several sessions and find out a month later, through ruthless digging, that they teach classes, have written a great article or created a trade show. If we are good at something and do it effortlessly, we often don't appreciate its value. Clients seem to focus on what they aren't doing and/or wish they could do. That's why I encourage clients to do a skills assessment, since they often leave out major abilities or don't see the potential application for a talent.

Part of the fun of brainstorming is using tools like free association, where I throw out a word and the client says whatever first comes to mind. The ideas are unlimited, and there is no risk, just wide-open opportunities. Often, clients discover that they can take their proven skills, talents and experience and expand in new directions and new roles. Sometimes it just takes feeling confident to move up to larger scale successes, like bigger audiences or larger projects. Other times, it means thinking about different ways to deliver products or services, a broader target market, a new job or an exciting new career move.

Once we fling open the box and take a fresh look, it's amazing at how much energy fills the room. Bouncing ideas off a supportive coach helps put fear in perspective and enables clients to gain the confidence needed to tackle new goals. Because I believe in my clients, my clients begin to believe in themselves. That is a powerful transformation that lets clients get out of their own way and be their very best.

Brainstorming is a fantastic tool for entrepreneurs and professionals who feel stuck in a rut. There's no risk and the possibilities are endless. Get the new year off to a good start with the magic of brainstorming and feel the energy sizzle!

Faith Monson is a Success Consultant who works with entrepreneurs, designers, retailers and sales-driven organizations. She makes people and businesses better by daring them to be great and helping them to reach their full potential. Visit [www.FaithMonson.com](http://www.FaithMonson.com) or contact her directly at 703-237-2077 or [Faith@FaithMonson.com](mailto:Faith@FaithMonson.com).