



The SHIFT-IT e-Zine



Christina Merkley
Publisher

VOL. 2, ISSUE 11 , November 3, 2006

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A Note From Christina

Dear Christina,

Writing from a rainy, quite smelly airport terminal – stuck waiting for a delayed flight in San Francisco on my way back from Honolulu. Travel just isn't what it used to be – is it! If I get another pair of nail scissors or tube of toothpaste confiscated I'm gonna flip (and not in the way I usually use the word! 'flip it, flip it good').

Things continue to be busy this fall --- lots of interesting graphics-related work with both groups and individuals. Been facilitating and kicking out quite a few custom info graphics, mostly history and journey maps for larger organizations that are in the midst of a change process. Mapping out their past, present and

Welcome to your November SHIFT-IT e-Zine.

LESSONS FROM THE DOG WHISPERER

I have a guilty pleasure confession to make – I'm a bit of a DVD nut. I watch a lot of movies (especially when I get fed up with TV and have my cable disconnected). Lately I've been blitzing through the first season of this National Geographic channel show, called the 'Dog Whisperer'. Have you seen or heard of it? It follows the ins and outs of this 'dog psychology expert' named [Cesar Millan](#).

Now, I'm not a huge dog fan (although everyone in my family has one and I grew up with them). I like them and all, but its not like I go out of my way to usually watch dog stuff. But I remember hearing about this guy and was curious, as he trained Oprah on how to work with her dogs so she had a miracle turnaround with them (yup folks, it's the people who need the most training, not the dogs).

So, a few weeks ago I picked up the first DVD of the series, and I've been hooked ever since. Surprisingly there are several strong parallels between righting wayward dogs (and their owners) and helping people define and create their desired futures (personal visions).

It's an Energy Thing: The cool thing with dogs is that you can't fool them. You know the old adage that 'animals smell fear' --- well, according to Cesar, dogs are no exception. They sense your energy. And, its not just fear, they basically know how you feel about them and more importantly, how you feel about YOURSELF. Whether you are in charge, confident and comfortable in your own skin (and around them) or you aren't.

future so they can communicate what is going on to their internal folks. Very interesting to see how different companies and industries are dealing with the challenges of our fast paced and competitive times.

Just missed the annual International Forum of Visual Practitioners conference. Peter Durand of Alphachimp studios did our graphics community a real service by documenting the event on [his blog](#), check it out for summaries on the different presentations, panels, for photos, etc. Sounds like it was a really great event, as per usual.

Didn't get too much R&R in on this trip, so I'm planning on going back in January for a Hawaiian cruise. [Abraham-Hicks](#), my favorite Law of Attraction teachers are offering an intensive workshop format during the 'at sea' portions of the cruise --- can't wait to ask Abraham all the questions I've been saving up about strategic visioning and planning and the best ways to coach

Funny thing is, your Personal Vision is pretty much the same. It's all about energy. Your Vision can tell how you feel about it and how you feel about yourself. Whether you are comfortable and secure, or whether you are afraid and hesitant. Visions, just like dogs, like stable and reliable energy. A place they can feel safe and aligned in. Otherwise they will walk all over you, or worse, turn nasty.

A Strong Pack Leader Mentality is Key: Dogs are pack animals. And as such they instantly gauge who's in control – who the boss is. They need to know where the lines are and what is expected of them. If you don't assume the Pack Leader role, then they will take it over. Pretty soon you have a dog running you (as opposed to you running the dog). That is the problem with the majority of the Cesar Millan's episodes --- including Oprah. The dog has taken over the owners, and lots of neurotic behavior (on both sides) ensues.

Millan spends a lot of his time coaching the owners to assume the stance of a Pack Leader. Getting them to stand straight, walk powerfully and throw their shoulders back – holding the leash with confidence and verve. He also teaches them how to nip dissent in the butt, as soon as it shows, instead of waiting for escalating resistance --- pretty darn similar to what I often need to do with my coaching clients in relation to the new Vision they have just created for themselves. Getting you to envision yourself in your new life. Taking on that new world so it feels familiar and comfortable to you (not some far fetched fantasy). Walking in those shoes. And working step-by-step with the resistance that inevitably comes up.

Consistent Application Over Time: One after another Millan gets fabulous results by demonstrating to pet owners how to be and act around their pets. The key is consistent application over time. They've got to retrain themselves and their pets to create new habits that get them the desired results – not the same old, same old. And, the kicker is, the pets actually like the discipline and lines of command that are given – they relax and go with the new flow (and things right themselves amazingly fast).

The same goes for the Vision side of things. If you have a hard time creating or getting something in some area of your life, then you need to do things differently --- you need to retrain yourself and create new habits. The retraining (just like with the dog

lasting shifts in people. Should be a relaxing and fascinating time, I'm really looking forward to it!

Hope you've checked out the new website and blog: if not see www.shift-it.com.

Thanks for the supportive notes and emails --- makes me feel good to know things are being so well received. And yes, I'll have the store portion up as soon as I can -- probably a few more weeks as we get the remaining downloads and the backend stuff complete. You know that technology isn't my forte so thanks for your patience and understanding -- it is coming!

See you next month.

Yours in SHIFTing!

Christina Merkley, The
SHIFT-IT Graphic Coach

**SHIFT-IT Graphic
Coaching Services**



Experience Graphic Coaching for yourself. One-to-one sessions either in-person (having everything drawn out large right in front of you), or by phone (working with

stuff) might need to occur in the mind and energy area. Or, it might need to come in the behaviour (doing) area. The key is to keep up with the new way of being until it too becomes a habit. Just like with the wayward dog situation, you can begin to see results almost immediately --- but you need to keep it going in order to sustain the change.

Healthy Confidence and 'Dominance': Some of Millan's clients are uncomfortable assuming the dominant stance that Millan coaches. He often has to define the word 'dominant' for his clients. That dominance in the way he is using the terms doesn't mean being mean, harsh or militaristic (or abusive or dysfunctional). It does mean being strong and in command in a relaxed and confident manner. He has to reassure them that it is ok to take this stance and that their dogs need it in order to feel safe, calm and to act appropriately.

I too often have to coach my clients that it is ok to take a more dominant stance in your life --- to ask for and expect things. To get comfortable in receiving more and holding more -- in whatever areas of life that you are wanting to expand.

If your commands and stance are wishy washy, so will your results be. In order to manifest what you want you need to send out a direct and confident message about who you are becoming and what your world will be like --- what the rules are and what the 'universe' (or whatever you want to call it) is expected to produce for you.

We Aren't Dogs, And: Now in closing, let me reassure you that I'm not equating people with dogs or drawing the metaphor too strongly here. People are people and dogs are dogs. However I think Cesar Millan's interesting approach with animals and their human owners does have some helpful hints in how we people also manage our own affairs.

So, if your interest has been piqued, perhaps check out Millan's DVD the next time you are at the video store. And view it through the lens of what it tells us about how our personal energy is picked up by the larger world around us and how by making some shifts in our inner world we can exact changes in our outer world. Give some thought about stepping up and assuming the Pack Leader role in the areas of life that are giving you trouble --- and watch the shifts start to unfold.

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my line of coaching templates and manuals that we email back and forth).

A very powerful experience to see inside your mind and heart to where your answers are. Get clear, get focused, get moving forward.

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The SHIFT-IT Graphic Coach

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Christina Merkley, "The SHIFT-IT Coach" is creator of the SHIFT-IT Graphic Coaching Process. To learn more about SHIFT-IT, Graphic Coaching and Personal Visioning and Planning, visit www.shift-it-coach.com.

New SHIFT-IT Coach Website

The new SHIFT-IT Coach website is up and live. Check out articles, portfolio, blog and lots of other resources about the Graphic Coaching methodology -- helping you do personal visioning and planning work in a helpful, visual format. Get clear, get precise, and get what you want in work and life!

shift-it-coach.com

View New Site:

About Christina, The SHIFT-IT Graphic Coach:



Christina Merkley, M.A. is a Graphic Facilitator and Coach specializing in Strategic Planning and Visioning. Having worked for such notable companies as BBC, Readers Digest Funds, eBay and Stanford University, she uses interactive, visual thinking processes to literally draw the best thinking out of organizations, groups and individuals. Creator of the SHIFT-IT Graphic Coaching Process, after years in San Francisco, she is now based in charming Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Full Bio

New Blog:

Regularly posted ramblings, insights and other tidbits -- the new blog where you can participate by leaving messages and reading what others think about this graphic way of working.

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