

Make Your Mark Graphic Facilitation & Coaching



Christina Merkley
Publisher

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A Note From Christina

Dear Christina,

Yippee, its summer and I am in my element – I love this time of year!

Thanks to my client, Doug Thompson (a consultant who flew in from the Eastern U.S. for some one-to- one basic skills training) I had a fantastic birthday on July 21st.

Doug inspired me (or should I say shamed me) into going on a whale-watching excursion. Having dropped him off for the last boat out after one of our training days, he reported back the next morning on what a great time he'd had and lambasted me for never going! You see, I basically grew up here in Victoria B.C. and have been back in town for four full years now (after a decade down south) – and during all that time I have never gone to see the whales (killer whales / Orcas).

My friend Mandeep and I took an [Ocean Explorations](#) tour – open zodiac boat. We lucked out, we found whales in about an hour just off of San Juan Island (Doug had to haul butt for two hours and almost all the

Welcome to your August SHIFT-IT e-Zine.

SIX WAYS to CORRECT a NEGATIVE SPIRAL

We've all have them. Sometimes they last a short period. Sometimes they last weeks, months, years, decades - yikes, perhaps even a lifetime. I'm talking about downward spirals. Where negatives things pile one on top of another, until it seems that is the only reality that exists.

In the last few weeks I've fielded several calls from colleagues and friends who are in a down place. They've hit a bump, a logjam --- what seems and feels like a downright calamity. They turn to me for some hope and inspiration, as they know I've weathered tough times and have come out the other side. So, having been through this process, I can understand it a bit and hopefully guide others about what to do and what NOT to do. So here is what I am sharing with them.

1. Recognize What You Are Doing: If you've got a negative spiral occurring, the first thing you need to do is recognize that you've got one and take responsibility. Chances are this has been building up for a while. Negative spirals don't just come out of the blue. They are a slow build up of energy that eventually picks up speed – attracting negative situations and events like a magnet. Like attracts like. Somewhere back in the chain of events you got something you didn't like and you really focused on it – and unfortunately, you began an attraction parade from there. Its very easy to do, and unfortunately again, our society kind of supports this way of thinking and being.

way over to Vancouver on his trip).

Ohmigod, it was exciting.

I'm told this doesn't happen often, but upon cutting our engines, the big lead whale (they are all females – as killer whales are matriarchal) changed course and headed directly for us.

She burst through the waves about 15 feet from our boat and then dove under – we could see her black and white markings rippling under us. Talk about power and grace.

She moved with the strength of a freight train through the water. After that we saw some young juveniles breaching – jumping fully out of the water and landing on their sides. I guess kids will be kids. The day was gorgeous and warm and we topped it off with steak and lobster dinners and a few liquid libations back in town. Have got to say it was one of the nicest birthdays I've had in years!

Well, there is no way for me to link whale watching to this month's article – except to invite you to break out of your norm too and go for things that make you feel good.

There are things we can all do to get ourselves into an upswing. Hope this month's article gives you some helpful hints for doing so – we do have so much more power to affect our life than we often acknowledge.

See you next month. Happy Shifting!

Christina Merkley, The SHIFT-IT Graphic Coach

2. List the Benefits of the Trauma: When a negative event happens we always have the choice of how we are going to interpret and apply meaning to it. We can choose to think of it in a negative way and as a result get an associated lousy feeling or we can choose to think of it in a more positive way and as a result get an associated better feeling . I'm not talking about being a Pollyanna or just slapping a happy face sticker on things (to quote [Abraham](#), my favorite Law of Attraction source). I'm talking about at least finding a slightly better feeling way to think or talk about things. Your power lies in figuring out how to think more proactively or productively – if needed, shift to a bigger picture perspective.

Yes, sometimes the 'silver lining' approach can only be seen in hindsight. I know when I was back in San Francisco and 911 hit (and 80% of my worked dried up), my Green Card process was denied (try getting a lawyer to explain graphic facilitation to an INS official!), and my live-in relationship dissolved, all in a very short period of time, it took me a while (ok, up until about last week – hee hee, just kiddin') to see the good in all of that. The benefit of that very trying time in my life is that it got me to stand on my own two feet in a much larger way. It got me into my 'real' work and made me play bigger. It got me to become my next self, which in the bigger picture was a very good thing!

So, if you've got a challenging event, or several of them (like in my previous situation) do your very best to focus on the embedded benefits. How might this situation actually be serving you? How could this be a 'good' thing at some level? What role can you appreciate that it might be playing in your life? List all of these things onto paper. It is really important to extract them out.

3. Remember It's a Vibrational Game: Why is it important to do the work of pulling out the benefits? Because it's a vibrational universe that's why – like attracts like. Everything has a certain vibration or field to it. A more downer thought creates a more downer feeling in you. And that downer feeling is like a radio signal that goes out and attracts more downer things to you. That is why a downward spiral picks up such speed. A downer thought, creates a downer feeling. A downer feeling attracts a matching event. Which elicits another downer feeling, perhaps just a touch more intense. Which attracts another event, of a matching downer intensity. And so it goes. Until you've got a really bummed reality built (that's a technical term –wink).

SHIFT-IT Graphic Coaching Services



Are you a visual learner? (72% of the population is!). Graphic Coaching is a powerful coaching methodology that literally draws your best thinking out of you - so you can SEE how you are creating your current reality and course correct to get what you really want.

Save years of going in the wrong direction or being stuck in a rut. Identify and work through self sabotaging beliefs and patterns. Develop a solid, tangible Personal Vision and a custom Action Plan of your next immediate, short-term and long-term steps.

Located in beautiful Victoria, British Columbia, Canada --- we can work over the phone or in-person. Or, come for a coaching group to join other like-minded people on their own SHIFT-IT journey - see this issue for announcement on fall dates.

See [Fees and Packages](#) for more information.

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4. The Good News: The good news is – the same phenomenon also occurs for the upward spiral. You can course correct a negative spiral by interrupting the pattern. Stop the insanity. Turn the train around by choosing to find a slightly better thought – that will create a slightly better feeling. Which will attract a slightly better event. Which will create a slightly better feeling. And so IT goes. Except this time you are headed in the direction you really want to be – upwards and onwards!

5. Be Optimistic, Have Faith, Believe In ‘Crazy’ Possibilities: Another thing – it is good to set aside logic for a bit and allow for the possibility for ‘crazy’ things to happen. There are ways for you to come out of whatever situation you have created for yourself. It is possible for good and unexpected things to occur. I’m not suggesting that you sit around and wait for something magical to happen – no. What I am saying is to open up your thinking a tad, to allow room for something you haven’t thought of to come through. The ‘universe’ (or whatever you want to call it) has a very wide range of possibilities to draw from. Imagine and really feel that your situation is solved, and then be open to the unique forms that may show up as an answer.

6. Take Inspired, Aligned Action: You do have an active role to take in turning your downward spiral around. First, you need to do the belief and attitude and focus work we have been talking about – you need to shift your emphasis to what you really want (instead of complaining, worrying and fretting about what you don’t – and in doing so attracting all of that towards you at warp speed). And, you need to find the positive aspects in what is happening to you.

The other thing you need to do is to identify and just take your next step. Get quiet, get settled, tune into your higher self or inner coach or inner strategic planner (whatever you want to call it!) and listen for what your next step is. If you are honest with yourself and settle down enough to listen, you will know what your next step is. Then – do it!

I didn’t shift out of my situation by thoughts and attitude alone – it took a lot of persistence and hard work – it still does. I take a lot of actions on a consistent basis. So do my clients who are the most successful. There just doesn’t seem to be anyway around that. I’m not saying you can’t have fun or enjoy your steps – I certainly enjoy most of what I do. But you must take inspired action. You must

move towards the things that you really want. They won't just come to you. You have a very active role to play in their manifestation. So trust yourself and do what you know is your next step. And, once you have done that, take the next one after that. They will emerge, like a trail of breadcrumbs for you to follow --- leading you out of the negative forest you have created.

Helpful Resources: Here are some easy books that are life preservers for making the turn I am talking about:

- [The Attractor Factor](#): Joe Vitale
- [Excuse Me, Your Life is Waiting](#): Lynn Grabhorn
- [The Amazing Power of Deliberate Intent](#): Esther and Jerry Hicks

All the best in turning your negative spiral around – if I can do it, you can do it too. Just keep flippin' your thoughts and takin' your steps - and trust that your process is a wise one, even if you can't quite see that yet.

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WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR E-ZINE OR WEB SITE? You can, as long as you include this blurb with it:

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.makemark.co m

Upcoming Fall Workshops



Make Your Mark Graphic Facilitation © 2003

SHIFT-IT Graphic Coaching Weekend

October 27-29, 2006, Victoria, BC, Canada.

Need to take some time to get clear on what you want (personal vision)? Ready to get organized and in gear? Want to have fun while doing productive personal thinking?

If so, come to Victoria BC for this intentionally small coaching group that will work you step by step through the 17 moves of the SHIFT- IT Graphic Coaching Process.

Draw out your own private Life Maps. See your current crossroads. Navigate your choices. Build a custom Personal Vision and detailed Action Plan. Identify and bust through negative thoughts, beliefs and obstacles.

Plenty of private thinking time and level of public sharing is totally up to you. Work on a business idea. Plot your way out of a job you hate (and into work you love). Clarify what you passion is and how to attract more of it. Get committed and energized for the next chapter of your life.

"Fabulous workshop. Gave me a crisp picture of where I'm going and my major steps. Wonderful group. I found the large graphics, small maps and all the demos and personal help from Christina to be immensely beneficial". **Karen Stratvert, Napa, CA**

"Christina's SHIFT-IT workshop is probably the most significant gift I have given myself in years. Loved the time to reflect and hearing about the processes of others. I expect the learning to resonate for a long time." **Sharon Hoyland-White, Vancouver, BC**

"What a powerful way to shift my life into a state of achievement rather than staying in a dreaming or aspirational state. Its tough but rewarding work - come ready and willing to grow." **Lisa Morgan, Calgary AB**

For more detailed info on The SHIFT-IT Graphic Coaching Process, [click here](#).

Space limited to just SIX people, to ensure individual attention and comfort. Held just minutes from Victoria's beautiful Inner Harbour.

For More Info: Click Here and View Option 3

MEETING GRAPHICS 101 WORKSHOP:



When:Friday, October 20, 2006, 9:30-5pm

Where:Royal Roads University, Victoria, B.C

Have you seen me (or a graphics colleague) in action? Interested in the basic skills behind Graphic Recording, Graphic Facilitation and Graphic Coaching? This introductory workshop is for consultants, facilitators, coaches, managers, trainers, and other leaders who want to add interactive graphics to their toolkit --- live demos, hands-on-practice, tools of the trade, graphic resources and many insider tips and techniques.

No art or drawing experience is required (art phobes fully welcomed!). A fun and practical day - you will walk out with skills you can put right into action!

"This was an exhilarating, fun filled introduction to the world of graphic facilitation. Christina's style put me at ease and set the stage for me to step outside of my comfort zone". **Melissa McLean, Senior VP, Marketing & Communications, Tourism Victoria**

"These skills offer me new ways to creatively bridge chaos and complexity, a value add to my skills as a consultant working with whole systems and culture-shifting in organizations!" **Michael Keller, Consultant, Learning Inside-Out**

"Truly a very valuable way of expressing ideas and working with clients. One of the most interesting courses i have ever taken". **Shannan Brown, Coast Community Credit Union, Human Resources / Internal Coach**

Half the spots have already been reserved. This will be the last public workshop offered in '06.

More Information: [Click Here](#) and View Option 1

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.

More about Christina:

PAST E-ZINE ISSUES:

New subscriber? Missed past issues? Past issues of The SHIFT-IT e-Zine are posted on the website.

Click Here for Past Issues:

Advanced Training & Mentoring:

Advanced Customized Graphics Training and Mentoring: Already have a bit of graphic facilitation and/or recording experience? Want to take your skill up to the next level? I offer customized, private workshops in my Victoria BC studio (for one to three people). One and two day agendas tailored specifically to your needs and skill level. Writing and drawing drills, demos, tips for weaving graphics into meeting design, template creation, reproduction methods and much more. See : [Training and Mentoring Opportunities](#)

Heads up. I'm floating the idea of doing a two-day 'Graphic Recording Boot camp' in February '07. This will be a very experiential and practice-practice-practice kind of experience – for folks who have already gone through the Meeting Graphics 101 training (or have equivalent training or experience). The emphasis will be on developing more skill, speed and confidence with live graphic recording and with creating custom charts (posters, templates, murals & specialty maps).

This Boot camp is in direct response to the increasing requests I'm getting from past Meeting 101 and private training attendees for a 200-type level course. You folks are doing great and I'm thrilled with the unique and varied ways that you are using your new graphic skills! I'm just floating the idea out here for now, so feel free to drop me a line if this interests you and look for more formal announcements here in The SHIFT-IT e-Zine if I decide to go ahead with this new, advanced offering.

And, anyone in the Victoria B.C. area who knows of a good, central, downtown meeting site with plenty

of wall space and close to hotels (or in one) – I'd be very happy for any location leads. I'd like to bring this one a bit closer to town than the Royal Roads University locale I'm currently using.

Email Christina:

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