



# talking about...

August 2007

... designing better relationships for better outcomes

## Looking for Inspiration ...

*"... inspiration never arrived when you were searching for it."*

... Lisa Alther (1944 - ) US novelist

One of the greatest joys of coaching lies in the "aha" moment. That instant where someone has a flash of insight and can see something they could not see before. Often that person is being coached, sometimes it is the coach. No matter who has them, moments of inspiration create a surge of energy and excitement. We feel life is full of possibility as we step through a door into what appears as a new world.

As Lisa Alther points out, inspiration does not come by seeking it, rather it arrives unheralded. There is no obvious step by step process to follow. No surefire system that will create our inspirational moments. With the "aha" somehow things just come together and we literally find a new way of observing. One way of explaining how this happens lies in a concept of spaces that we use in our work. For instance, we seek to design a physical and emotional space conducive to effective conversation. We look to the space of possibilities and seek to expand it. We understand that our clients go through shifts in their way of being and in doing so pass through a space of nothingness, where they feel discombobulated and unsure of themselves.

For us, the concept of space is profound as it allows for things to happen that cannot be foreseen in contrast to systems and process where an outcome is expected. A space that is sadly lacking for most people is a space for reflection. A time where we can engage in a conversation, either with ourselves or someone else, about how things are for us. What works; what does not work; what we would like to create; how we would like to be. A conversation where we engage in speculation with the hope of bringing forth new possibilities and hopefully moments of inspiration.

In order to create a space where inspiration can spring forth, we have to deal with the challenge of remaining open to what is possible. If we want to see new ways, we must be able to open ourselves to see them. Many people judge and then accept or reject every idea as it is spoken depending on how it fits their view of the world. Such people quickly close off any thoughts that are incongruent with their existing worldview and are far less capable of inspiration. It is when we can hold ourselves open to possibility that we can see connections that did not exist for us before. All we have to do is make a commitment to put aside our judgments and be curious.

If we are open to another person's perspective then each conversation becomes an opportunity for inspiration. If you want more inspiration in your life, we invite you to take some time out to enjoy a conversation with someone with an openness to explore. You never know what might show up.

*With thanks to Rebecca Solomon and the conversation we shared that led to my inspiration for this piece.*

*"Gratitude is the most exquisite form of courtesy"*

... Jacques Maritain (1882 - 1973)  
French philosopher

## Ponderisms ...

*Thanks to our friend Graeme Schache for this amusing list ...*

- I used to eat a lot of natural foods, until I learned that most people die of natural causes.
- Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.
- The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.
- Never take life seriously; nobody gets out alive anyway.
- There are two kinds of pedestrians: The quick and the dead
- Life is sexually transmitted.
- Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.
- The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
- Some people are like Slinkies. Not really good for anything, but you still can't help but smile when you see one tumble down the stairs.
- Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.

Talking About Pty Ltd

PO Box 6652,  
St Kilda Rd Central,  
Victoria, 8008.

Ph: +613 9507 2464

info@talkingabout.com.au  
www.talkingabout.com.au

- Have you noticed since everyone has a camcorder these days no one talks about seeing UFOs like they used to?
- Whenever I feel blue, I start breathing again.
- All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
- In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.
- How is it one careless match can start a bush fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?
- Who was the first person to look at a cow and say, "I think I'll squeeze these dangly thingies here and drink whatever comes out?"
- Who was the first person to say, "See that chicken over there? I'm gonna eat the next thing that comes outta its butt."
- Why is there a light in the fridge and not in the freezer?
- Why do people point to their wrist when asking for the time, but don't point to their crotch when they ask where the toilet is?
- Why does your Doctor leave the room when you get undressed if they are going to look up there anyway?
- If quizzes are quizzical, what are tests?
- If electricity comes from electricity does morality come from morons?
- Did you ever notice that when you blow in a dog's face, he gets mad at you but when you take him on a car ride, he sticks his head out the window?
- Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?

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 ACN 112 307 892  
[info@talkingabout.com.au](mailto:info@talkingabout.com.au)  
 Telephone: +61 3 9507 2464