

Tomorrow's Life Coach

Volume 2 Issue 5 : May 2003

Going Global, and Doing It Well

There is a globe on my desk. When I was a child my friends and I would set a globe spinning, close our eyes and place our finger on the globe and make it stop. We would then create an imaginary adventure that would take place in whatever country our finger landed on. Today, the "game" is easier than ever.

All around the globe people are learning that, despite new viruses in the news, a healthy lifestyle is still the best health insurance we can carry. Statistically, in America, we have determined that about 60% of what determines our health is all related to the lifestyle choices we make. Knowing that, companies continue to invest in personnel who deliver wellness programs. Knowing about healthy lifestyles, people are ever increasingly investing in their own wellness.

Making lasting lifestyle change requires more than just information. This is where the coaching alliance proves it's worth. Where wellness coaches shine is in helping people to make real behavioral changes around the actions they know they need to do for themselves. We know how to help people make changes, and make them last. When we combine these skills with a more developed knowledge of the field of wellness, we can really help people live healthier lives.

Taking it global

There are sixteen million people in the city where I'll be delivering a keynote on wellness this summer. It's the second biggest city in the world. Any idea where I'm talking about? All too few people in the United States, anyway, would know that I'm referring to Sao Paulo, Brazil. Can you find Slovenia on a map? I was fortunate enough to keynote on wellness in that country last summer. There is a vast planet out there, and most people on it are interested in the same things we are...living happier, healthier lives.

With international phone plans, calling cards, etc., it is possible to affordably coach individuals overseas. With e-mail facilitating communication, websites telling the world about our services, and faxes, cell phones, etc. at our fingertips, the globe I used to play with seems about golf ball-sized today.

Going global requires us to adapt our coaching, and our wellness strategies to the environments our clients are a part of. Urging a stressed Thai client, for instance, to be what we would call "appropriately assertive" might not work in Thailand's socially sensitive culture. With the client we co-create a new solution.

Foundation Work

Gaining the trust and respect of international clients requires true respect for the values and cultures of others. Be genuinely interested in other cultures. Simply put, be genuine.

Part of gaining credibility and the experience necessary to be an effective wellness coach is to take yourself through the experience of enhancing your own health in all dimensions of wellness. Wellness is a holistic concept, and that means attending to the areas that we personally avoid working on, whether it be physical fitness, diet, spirituality, or personal relationships. Walking our talk attracts clients, and by the way, longevity! Give that globe a whirl.

Dr. Michael Arloski, info@realbalance.com (www.realbalance.com) is a coach, psychologist, trainer and speaker who has presented on wellness on three, and soon to be four continents. He and Dr. Pat Williams are developing a curriculum for an Institute For Life Coach Training program to certify Wellness Coaches. He resides in Colorado, USA.