

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptoms

Fragmentation
Being Paranoid
Scarcity Thoughts
Either/or Thinking
Qualifying Statements
Complaining/Petulance
Being a Victim or Martyr
Taking Things Personally
Talking of The Past or Future as if it is the Present



Excuses
Defensive
Deflection
Solidifying
Bargaining
Resignation
Comparison
Being Vague
Justification
Impulsiveness
Rationalization



ace ACADEMY OF COACHING EXCELLENCE
Licensed Seminar Leader

Monkey Mind Symptom #1

Being vague

Being vague is one of the more subtle forms of monkey mind. What does this look like? Here are clues: When we use words like **sort of, kind of, probably, maybe, sometimes**, we're being vague. When we talk around an answer, instead of answering directly, we're being vague. The problem with vague is obvious – we're not being specific, and it is only when we get specific (ideally by looking, seeing and telling the truth) that we can take authentic actions or our next meaningful steps. What does being vague buy us? As long as we're being vague, we don't need to commit. It takes courage, to tell the truth, to get specific, and to promise to take action. So the next time you hear (or think) yourself being vague, take a deep breath and ask yourself, "What would it look like if I got specific in this conversation? What promise am I willing to make? And what action am I willing to take?" And then thank monkey for this opportunity to get clear.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptom #2

Scarcity thoughts

"I don't have enough _____ (time, money, energy, creativity, patience, stamina, motivation, smarts, etc.) to accomplish this _____ (goal, dream, plan, the authentic action I promised my coach)." Sound familiar?

These are examples of the monkey mind symptom of scarcity thoughts. Scarcity can also show up as not starting a project because we don't know how to complete it perfectly enough because there's a scarcity of certainty around how it will look when we're done. Notice the preponderance of "not enough" inherent in scarcity thinking. What if we became willing to be enough, and to see that we have enough, to reach our goals and dreams? Maya Angelou taught us, "You alone are enough. You have nothing to prove to anybody." We don't have to prove that we are enough, or that we have enough. So the next time monkey starts whispering scarcity thoughts in your ear, whisper back, "I am enough and I have enough." And thank monkey for encouraging you to see this truth of who you are.

Monkey Mind Symptom #3

Talking about the past or future as if it is the present

"I've never done that before.... When I tried that before, it didn't work... We've never done it that way before... I'm not sure if this will work...what guarantee do I have?" These are all examples of the monkey mind symptom of talking of the past or future as if it is the present. Why is this a problem?

The answer is in the symptom. When we are focused on the past or the future, we are not present. We are not open to the possibilities of this moment. Our focus on the past can also be tinged with regret, grief or guilt, further stopping us in our tracks. Our focus on the future can create anxiety, doubt or worry, not exactly conducive to that sense of possibility.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptom #4

Defensive:

“Whaddya mean by that?” One definition of defensive is to protect someone or something from attack. Another explains that someone on the defensive is concerned with justifying their actions or words. If you know that to defend is *to protect*, you have an idea what defensive means. When a person is acting defensive, they're trying to protect or justify themselves. So notice that inherent in the symptom of defensive is the assumption that we're being attacked.

Monkey Mind Symptom #5

Taking things personally:

I'm going to reference the master on this one. According to Don Miguel Ruiz, author of *The Four Agreements*, “Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering. When you make it a strong habit not to take anything personally, you avoid many upsets in your life. Your anger, jealousy, and envy will disappear, and even your sadness will simply disappear if you don't take things personally.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptom #6

Comparison

The most obvious example of the problem with comparison lies in the observation that when we're comparing, it's our insides to someone else's outsides. Social media is one of the biggest culprits/sources of this type of comparison. Our tendency is to post us at our best, and of course, our friends do the same. :-) It's not that we're being deceitful, we just usually choose not to share our darker/sadder/angrier/nastier moments, our "shadow" so to speak. This can cause the type of comparison we alluded to earlier, i.e. we see and compare ourselves to everyone's outsides without knowing what's going on on the inside. Everyone sees each other at their best and can feel inadequate in comparison. Another form of comparison, that can cause as much or more suffering, is comparing ourselves to our past or future selves. "I used to be younger/thinner/stronger/more productive/had a better memory" or "When will I be wiser/stronger/more patient/more productive...". You get the idea. The comparison is a notorious joy-sucker. The antidote is to thank monkey for sharing and to be in the present moment... to remember who we are (our Standards of Integrity), what's important to us (our Life's Intentions) and what we want to do about it (our goals). When we focus on this, and how we can contribute right now, the comparison has no interest or power over us. We can acknowledge that we are all human beings on an incredible journey, with hero's hearts and monkey minds, here to make the difference only we can make. No comparison necessary.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptom #7

Resignation

“Never mind, it doesn’t matter... it’s really not important. This is much harder than I thought it would be, and it won’t make a difference anyway.” Oh, monkey, how you mess with us on this one! How often do we surrender to the defeated energy of resignation, trying to convince ourselves that it really doesn’t matter to us... when it really does. Resignation is often tinged with sadness, despair, fatigue and/or lethargy. True confessions: This is one of my top three MM symptoms. My personal coping mechanism for resignation is to take one small, sweet step. And I mean a very small sweet step. The paralysis (feeling frozen) often caused by resignation can feel overwhelming, making any movement monumentally difficult. Taking just one very small - teeny weeny - sweet step starts to thaw us at the border. It’s also important (as it is with all the symptoms) to reach out for support when we realize that we are having a huge monkey mind fit. And as with the other symptoms that stop us at the border, keeping our Standards of Integrity and our Life’s Intentions handy is helpful in reminding us who we are and that our goals and dreams ARE important.



Monkey Mind Symptom #8

Being victim or martyr

When we're in the victim and/or martyr energy, we believe that life is happening TO us, rather than BY us, or THROUGH us. We're looking for someone to blame, rather than taking responsibility for our decisions and actions. Remember the old Flip Wilson bit, "The devil made me do it!", the problem with not recognizing that we're accountable for those decisions is that we miss the chance to learn from our mistakes. As long as we're looking outside ourselves, for "who's the matter with us", we're not looking inside for the real growth opportunity. Martyr has a similar, but subtly different, energy. When we're in martyr, we're playing the "I'll just do it myself" card... the "I shouldn't have to ask" card. Ironically, a martyr is self-imposed victimhood. It's not someone outside of us that's victimizing us, it's actually us. We're deciding to be a victim by making up stories about how unappreciated we are, or how nobody understands us, or how the "system" is against us. One of the definitions of martyr from Webster's Dictionary is "A person who pretends to suffer or who exaggerates suffering in order to get praise or sympathy." Is this really how we want to show up in life? Is this how a loving family member, or a financially successful person, or a respected professional, or an effective mentor or coach would show up?

When we recognize that we're in victim or martyr mode, we get to ask ourselves, "What is this getting me? Is there another way to have that need met? How can I be clear and 'on my card' in this conversation and relationship?" This reflection shifts us from victim to victor, from martyr to master, from monkey mind to conscious conduit... a powerful shift indeed.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptom #9

Either/Or Thinking

Monkey really gets creative with this one. "Either I can save money OR I can pay off my debt. I can't possibly do both!" "Either I can get a good night's sleep OR I can exercise in the morning." Sound familiar? This symptom limits possibilities and stymies our creative process. The shift here is to both/and thinking. In the presence of either/or, we ask ourselves: How? How can I do both? How can I contribute to my savings/retirement account AND pay off my unsecured credit card debt? How can I get a good night's sleep AND wake up in time to get in a productive workout? What plan can I come up with, what support am I willing to let in? We can enroll a small, sweet step partner to set the arena with us every morning and support us in keeping our promises. When we observe that we're slipping into either/or thinking, we can also ask ourselves: What if? What if both options were possible? We become curious and willing to explore options previously not seen. If this sounds like look, see, tell the truth and take an authentic action, it is. Practicing the coaching model helps us to make the shift from the constricted, limited energy of either/or to the open, receptive, curious energy of both/and. This is a wonderful example of monkey being seen and experienced as "the loyal opposition," of giving us the opportunity to practice our principles and cross the border with a renewed sense of optimism and clarity.



Monkey Mind Symptom #10,11,12

10. Excuses:

We make excuses when we haven't done something we said we would do. Usually anything following "because" is an excuse: I didn't take the trash out because I overslept.

11. Rationalization:

A rationalization is an excuse with details: I didn't take the trash out because I overslept. And I overslept because I was up late researching the perfect birthday gift for my partner.

12. Justification:

A justification is a rationalization made "holy": I didn't take the trash out because I overslept. And I overslept because I was up late researching the perfect birthday gift for my partner.

And I was researching the perfect gift because I love them so much and am such a considerate partner. So really, it's admirable that I didn't take out the trash!

-Excuses, rationalizations and justifications are monkey's way of not owning that we didn't keep our promise. Remember that monkey mind has the emotional maturity of a 9-11 year old. It wants to stay out of trouble! When we're excusing/rationalizing/justifying why we didn't do what we said we would do (or doing something we said we wouldn't do), we're missing the point. It's not about "why". It's about looking, seeing, and telling the truth about what we did or didn't do, cleaning it up, and doing it. No explanation necessary. This gets us back "on our card" and takes less energy than continuing to excuse why we didn't keep our promise in the first place.



Monkey Mind Symptom #13

Fragmentation

Fragmentation shows up as the “part of me” conversation. “Part of me really wants to create a goal worth playing for, but part of me doesn’t think it’s necessary.” Fragmentation allows us to talk ourselves out of taking powerful, authentic action. By going back and forth between two (or more) imaginary “parts” we suck the energy right out of even our most wonderful dreams and ideas. This symptom surfaces old beliefs that have held us back from accomplishing our goals, the voice that is determined to keep us “safe” and maintain the status quo. When this monkey starts to swing, we get to ask ourselves what ALL of us wants to do. What new conclusion are we willing to create that supports is in demonstrating in our wholeness? This symptom brings the gift of clarity. We actually hear the conversation that has been holding us back by stopping us at the border. And once we see it, we don’t need to be it.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth

Monkey Mind Symptom #14

Deflection

Deflection shows up when we're getting close to the truth, as in look, see, and tell the truth. It's usually in the form of a joke or sarcastic comment intended to deflect attention away from us by derailing the conversation. A common rationalization for deflection is "I was just making a joke. Get a sense of humor!" Deflection is an attempt to alleviate the discomfort of looking at something we'd rather not see. Webster's Dictionary defines deflection as "a turning aside or deviation from a straight line." When we are willing to be a demand for coaching, to search out and bring toward us all the lessons available to us in this interaction/experience, we are on a "straight line" to learning and growth, and the creation of an authentic action. Deflection is monkey's way of getting us off course and away from the border, of trying to "just get (us) comfortable", as Pema Chodron so wisely observed. When you notice a deflection about to pop out, breathe, get quiet and notice what's up. Are you willing to be uncomfortable for a moment? It's a small price to pay for the opportunity to wake up to what's been holding us back from accomplishing our goals and bringing our most heartfelt dreams into reality.



Monkey Mind Symptom #15

Solidifying

Solidifying is treating an abstract concept as though it were an object in physical reality. It is literally to make something “hard or solid” such as changing from a liquid or a gaseous form to a solid one. This becomes monkey mind when we solidify our beliefs and opinions, or our “issues”. For instance, talking about our self-esteem, or lack thereof, as if it was an actual, physical thing. Or allowing our structures of knowing to become so “firm” that we become intractable and un-coachable. Eastern philosophies suggest that we become like water, fluid and flowing, supple and moving. When our monkey is swinging with solidifying, we are reminded to be open and receptive, to soften our attachment to even our most closely held thoughts, beliefs and opinions, and open ourselves to the flow of possibility, to new ways of seeing, being and doing in the world.

Monkey Mind Symptom #16

Bargaining

Bargaining exemplifies another aspect of the 9-11 year old monkey mind, that of getting what we deserve. When we're in bargaining mode, everything becomes a negotiation. “If I pay all my bills on time this month, I get to use one of my credit cards to go shopping.” Or, “If I stick to my calories today, I can have ice cream before bed.” This conversation implies that we have been deprived in some way, and now we deserve a reward.

When monkey is swinging with bargaining, we might see taking an authentic action, and/or keeping a promise, as something worthy of a reward, instead of a demonstration of doing what we said we would do with clarity, focus, ease and grace. When we notice the energy of bargaining creeping into our life, we have the opportunity to remember the experience of coherence - satisfaction, fulfillment, meaning and harmony - and see that it is its own reward.

YOUR COACHING MATTERS



"Success is doing what you said you'd do consistently, with Clarity, Focus, Ease and Grace" -Maria Nemeth