

# THE GAMES WE PLAY... can change our lives

I remember watching an inspiring and tear jerking movie called 'Life is Beautiful' which tells the story of a Jewish Italian family in the second world war. Along with thousands of others Guido, his wife Dora and young son Giosue are taken away to a Nazi concentration camp. The men and women are soon separated leaving the Guido and Giosue to fend for themselves. It is a terrifying experience for everyone except the young boy Giosue...why? Because his father, Guido convinces him that it is all a big game of hide and seek and they all have to hide from the guards to win the game. He explains everything that happens in terms of the game and because he is so determined to protect his son, Giosue believes him and thinks it is all great fun. Whilst the movie has a sad ending it is brilliant and has a powerful message about how we can use games to get through the challenges in life.



In Giosue's mind the whole experience was fun, even though the experience for most people at that time and in that place was was horrible beyond belief. For Guido the process of convincing his son that the concentration camp thing was all a game actually turned it into a game for him. He had to stay imaginative and keep it fun for Giosue which even helped him cope.

## Let's play some games

Let's face it there are a lot of things in life that just aren't any fun! How sick are we of hearing those 'so called' motivated people telling us to **just do it anyway**? I bet there are plenty of things they don't do because they don't like them! I simply don't believe anyone will continue to do something that they despise just because they believe that it is good for them... for example, I don't care what you say to me I am not going to eat Brussel Sprouts!! Do you know what I mean?

But, what if we could trick our minds into believing that what we hate doing is a game and that it is fun? Would that make a difference? It most certainly has for me. It is no secret that I hate exercising in its purest form, even though I totally understand how important it is for my wellbeing – it is uncomfortable, it is inconvenient and it takes time away from things I would rather be doing. To overcome this I have been able to play games that trick my mind into actually

tolerateing and even semi-enjoying exercise. Whilst I am in that yucky, painful phase of training I am always visualising myself about to win an olympic gold medal infront of thousands of adoring fans. As dumb as that sounds it pushes me to finish strong. Every time I take my handful of nutritional supplements which I hate swallowing, I imagine them entering my body and releasing a surge of power, energy and I actually feel them doing me good.

### **What other mind games can we play?**



What is your challenge? What is it that you hate so much that you just don't do, even though you know you need to do it? Are you in sales and hate rejection so avoid making phone calls? What if you played a game and set a goal for how many no's you could get? Would you end up with more sales? I think you would. Do you hate eating breakfast because it makes you feel sick? Could you imagine that every time you put some food into your body when you get up it is starting a massive fire that will help you power through the day? What else could you do?

I hate taking out the rubbish. Laura would have to nag me and nag me until I finally did it. Then I came up with this cool game; I get our shopping trolley and I put all the rubbish in it and wheel it

through the underground carpark at our apartments to the rubbish area. On the way back to the apartment I play a game of golf with the trolley as I push it as far as possible and try to get back to the apartment with the minimum number of pushes. Yes, I know...dumb. But it works and I have loved taking the rubbish out ever since.

### **Decide it will be fun and it will be**

My advice is that we shouldn't even attempt to do something that we hate, even if it is good for us and we really need to do! What we need to do is to take that yucky thing and run it through the 'fun-o-matic' game maker! That simply means turn it into a game and decide that it will be fun. If we can tap into our imagination and creativity we can turn anything into a game and when we do that we can see how absolutely anything is possible no matter how hard or horrible it may initially seem.

