

## CREATING YOUR OWN LUCK!

By Yvonne Thomas, Ph.D.



As we head into the month of March, St. Patrick's Day approaches, with its charming four-leaf clover, "luck of the Irish" folklore. In accordance with this, I thought it would be very timely and appropriate to address the subject of "luck" and how relying on luck too much can actually cause some UNWANTED consequences in one's life.

Individuals often attribute luck as to why certain events or results happen to oneself and others. People may say that they were in the "right place at the right time" or that they had good timing when a wanted opportunity or outcome occurs. Luck certainly can play a PART in helping create desired situations and results for people, but luck probably is NOT the main reason behind why certain people get what they want in their lives.

In actuality, those individuals who frequently have positive opportunities and results come their way usually do NOT just passively wait for "luck" to find them. Instead, these people tend to make a concerted effort to proactively "make things happen." And if luck happens to be in the picture for that person at the same time, then one's chances are even greater for reaching his or her desired outcome.

Be aware that there can be significant, negative consequences from primarily depending on luck to create opportunities and results related to one's career, romantic relationships, financial success, etc. These can include not taking control of one's life, but being more of a passive "spectator," not living up to one's fullest potential, and missing opportunities and/or not maximizing them. One can also experience emotional upset such as feeling depressed, anxious, confused, sad, disappointed, insecure, and/or scared as a result of living one's life at the mercy of external elements such as luck, rather than taking an ACTIVE role in what happens to him or her.

So, how do people make their own luck? I believe there are certain key elements that are NECESSARY for creating "lucky" opportunities and outcomes. These elements include specifically pinpointing the goal one wants to achieve, identifying the steps needed to obtain the goal, planning a schedule for when to work on these steps, following through by actively working on these steps, and, in general, trying to remain realistic about and patient with the time it may take to create opportunities and achieve one's goal.

Although these steps may seem logical and doable, at times it can be difficult for people to implement some or any of these due to different reasons. A person may have trouble identifying what exactly one has in mind for a goal, due to perhaps not knowing enough about one's own interests and/or needs or about the goal itself. Conducting research on the potential goal and how to reach it can help one clarify if the goal truly appeals to him or her, and to better understand one's needs and interests in general.

Other people can get stuck trying to delineate and organize the steps, and can get overwhelmed or confused regarding where to begin, how much to undertake, and how to find and make the time to actively work on the steps. It can be helpful to break the goal down into time-related increments such as in pieces that realistically can be worked on over a one-week period, etc. Also, varying the tasks decreases monotony and resistance, and keeps one engaged. In addition, it can be very powerful and motivational to write out the schedule on a posted calendar that can CONCRETELY remind, and hopefully reinforce, one to remember and work on one's steps. However, seeking some professional assistance from a Psychologist can lead to some empowering opportunities and results if a person is still HOPING for luck, instead of CREATING it.

Happy St. Patrick's Day! I hope your efforts - and luck - get you your desired results!

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