



Who Encourages You?

By Fred Schafer

I have two boxer dogs. A male named Bosco and a female named Mugsy. Bosco is a powerful brute. Mugsy, though smaller, is more ferocious. Put together, however, and they are one powerful fearless package of protection for my home. They will take on anyone or anything and not back down.

Over the past few months, however, a challenge has emerged. My dogs have an insatiable desire to roam. I am fortunate to live on six acres. Six acres, however, does not seem to be enough for my dogs. Their natural instincts are to hunt, and they are driven with their seemingly inexhaustible energy to ravage the countryside in search of anything they can chase in the hopes most likely of a catch and.....

The problem, of course, is that my neighbors do not appreciate their wanderlust, and they have informed me of their displeasure of visits from my high wired pets. My property is surrounded by a six foot chain link fence, and practically barricaded in some spots. Still, this has not been enough. The dogs always seem to find a way out. They dig new burrows under the fence, etc and to be honest, it has been very difficult to figure out how and where they get out.

And then one day, by accident, I made a discovery. If I let the dogs out *one at a time*, they will not leave the property. In fact, they pretty much hover right around the house. On occasion, I have seen ground squirrels chasing them back to the front porch (Just kidding). What I discovered was that, by themselves, my dogs are wimpy. Together, though, they are unstoppable.

We humans are much the same. I *love* the work that I do as a high performance coach. Lately I have become so busy with speaking and writing that I have gotten away from working with other individuals one on one. Over the last few months though, I have been training a few people, and I have been reminded of the most powerful success principle

perhaps in existence. **Find a source of encouragement.** The word encouragement means, “To give courage to”.

While we should not *need* the encouragement of others to be successful, it certainly is a powerful help, especially in times of uncertainty, struggle and difficulty.

I possess a high degree of expertise in success, high performance and fitness, health and wellness. I know little tricks that can take a person’s results from just average to smoking. Nevertheless, what makes me perhaps *most effective* at what I do is no different than any good manager, teacher, coach, parent or friend. Simply to look another human being straight in the eyes and say, “YOU can do this thing. **I know you can do it.** Don’t give up. Great things lie ahead of you if you just keep showing up and putting forth consistent effort”.

Now, don’t get me wrong. Most of us would like more than just a rah-rah cheerleader. It is best if the person encouraging us **has already been through what we have been through** and come out on the other side of the tunnel. Sometimes, though, it is tough to find a source of encouragement.

In fact, what many of us have experienced is the opposite. Sometimes even those closest to us can be discouraging, even when they think they have our best interests in mind. They feel they should save us from trying so hard at something, “We were not meant for, or won’t ever succeed at”.

To be honest, *most* of the encouragement I have received in my life *initially* came from people I did not know and never met. Usually it came from books written by people who had already done what I wanted to do. In fact, I bet I’ve read close to 1,000 books on how to get more fit, healthy and strong, be successful in business and how to be a professional speaker.

As I have gained a degree of success in some of these areas, it is interesting how many more encouraging people have shown up in my world. As the saying goes, “winners attract winners and success attracts success.” Every once in awhile though, a discourager still comes along, but I have learned to ignore small minded whiners. You should do the same.

So, the question is.....**who encourages you** in your pursuit of getting leaner, healthier, stronger, fitter, happier, more hopeful, dynamic and vibrant??? You too may have to rely on books and tapes for awhile, but two other sources can be very powerful, as Bosco and Mugsy have shown us.

- First would be a personal trainer. Did you know that the average American spends \$4,000 a year on medications?? They would be far better off using that money to get 100 hours of personal training (At \$40.00 hr) and learn how to really improve their body. Medications are the path to a substandard destination. So are most surgeries.

Take your life to a new level in 09 with a good trainer in your hometown. Interview them just like you should your doctor or realtor.

- Second option would be to get a good training partner. ***And***, you could still do option one as well. If both of you went to the trainer together, you could probably get a reduced rate. Or, invest in a good fitness program and learn and perfect it together. Those who get a partner to train with double their chances of staying with it for the long haul and get better results overall. Those without a partner, on the other hand, have double the failure rate. I have trained by myself for the past 35 years. A few months ago, however, I found a good training partner. My workouts are easily 10-20 % better because of his challenging me, encouragement and camaraderie. Remember, we are usually more courageous, adventurous and joyful with a good partner (Like Bosco & Mugsy).
- Whatever you do, don't listen to the toxic and negative people and influences. Unfortunately they seem to be everywhere. I continue to be shocked at what I hear people saying about fitness, health, wellness, and success. And, this includes many of those in the medical profession and of course, the mainstream media. Usually, though, it's just the person you work with or a well meaning friend who says, "Well, you know, you are getting older..... etc, etc. Don't believe it. It's bunk. I am here to tell you that you live in an ***amazing*** body, and what you could accomplish is absolutely phenomenal. And, I don't care how far gone you are, how out of shape, sick or over-fat, or how many surgeries you have had or how many meds you are on. I wish I could train every single person reading this. Really. Because I know I could encourage you, and likewise, you would encourage me. Plus, I know that you would eventually feel so good you might decide to join Bosco and Mugsy and run wild around the countryside!

But for most of you, it is not possible for us to train together. So, do the next best thing. Find a good partner now to train with in 2009. If possible, work with a trainer together. At least be sure to follow a sound program. You might want to check out my products at www.fredstrikes.com or others I recommend under "links" on my newsletters which you can sign up for on my web site. And then, encourage and challenge each other through 2009. The world needs more over comers.

Strike back at mediocrity! Coach Fred