



How to Catch Your Shark

You are feeling great. Never better. Then something happens. You look at your bank statement. You're over-drawn. All of the sudden your mood drops. You get that sick feeling in your stomach. You project into the future and see yourself drowning in money problems, losing your home...what if you lose your income?

Your Shark Has Found You

You are in the middle of the ocean facing a shark. The shark is bigger than you. You feel powerless and can't focus. This lack of focus impacts your productivity. You keep making mistakes. You get very little done, and you are cranky with your associates, employees or partners.

How do you get back to peace? Follow these steps.

1. Stop judging the emotion
2. Ask yourself the right question
3. Tell yourself the truth
4. Find your strength

Stop Judging the Emotion

So you feel bad? Don't make a story out of it. What you feel is a good thing. An unwanted emotion simply gives you information that something needs to change. You may not know what you need to do, or even what you want, but at least you know what you don't want. Look at the emotion as information that cannot be ignored. (Don't resort to alcohol, gambling, or some other addiction to ease the pain.) Instead wake up and be thankful you have such a strong signal to help you make good decisions.

Ask Yourself the Right Question

Listen to your inner dialogue and you'll find all kinds of wrong questions: Why am I such an idiot? What in the world did I do wrong? Why does this always happen to me? All drama and distraction! Instead ask the right question: Given where I am now, what do I want to create? This focuses your attention in the right direction. Instead of focusing on the shark, you are now focused on the island.

Which picture is bigger in your mind...
your island or your shark?



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Tell Yourself the Truth

If you are reacting to something so strongly, there must be a story operating somewhere. Stories are just old programming based on the past, and not on the current reality. You are telling yourself that you are in trouble that someone is going to be mad, that you are an idiot, or you are shouldering all the blame when you are only a part of the puzzle. All stories have four components: Reactive, Emotional, Attachment, and Repetitive. Chances are you are repeating a mind pattern that is stuck in your past programming.

Find Your Strength

Find the part of you that is in charge. Get control of the "monkey mind, by saying STOP it, every time it takes over, the re-direct your thoughts. Say something like, "I have resources and I am responsible. I will take the next right step." This takes focus and practice, but once you learn how, you never have to be at the mercy of your thoughts or worries. Take a little time out, breathe, get still and learn how to relax. Once you relax, you can then start to still your mind, and look at what is happening and create a plan to move yourself in the right direction.

The truth is, all it takes is one sale, one situation, a few conversations or some movement in the right direction to ease your anxiety and help you move toward your island instead of getting swallowed up by your shark.

Points to Ponder

1. What is your shark? Name it, describe it.
2. In what ways are you unkind to yourself when you have an unwanted emotion?
3. What will your new re-direct message be to yourself when you get off course?
4. What one thing could happen to turn your unwanted situation around?
5. What kind of action can you take as the next right step?