



# Passion for Life Coaching, LLC

Lead, Learn, Laugh...Live

Newsletter by Suzette Langley, MSW, CPC, Executive Coach & Trainer

## My Dog – The Teacher

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When we moved into our house, my older dog began a love-hate relationship with the stairs. In our previous home, our steps were carpeted. To her dismay, the new home's stairs are hardwood and a bit slippery. The first few weeks in the house were fraught with distress as she acclimated to the smooth surface. She literally debated the worth of going up or down against the potential to slide. Eventually, she adjusted to the surface, so I thought.

In recent weeks, she began hesitating to travel up the steps again. Lacking her brother's superior stair navigation skills (he goes forwards, backwards, and sideways), once she starts the ascent, she has nowhere to go but up and finish the trip. For reasons I cannot identify, one night she froze, three steps in. She seemed suddenly afraid so I provided encouragement and praise and she completed them without incident.

Initially, I was concerned she was injured or the hesitation was age-related. But, other times, she has no issues scooting up the steps two at a time, like when I dump food in her bowl. What's the problem then?

The problem appears to be when she thinks too much! If she pauses at the bottom, she seems to recall times she has slipped or fallen on the steps. She becomes overly cautious and the slower she tries to move, the higher risk of sliding she has. When she doesn't give it a second thought, she's at the top in a few seconds.

The irony of watching her struggle is that I see the same struggle play out in my life and those of my clients. How many times have I known exactly what needed to be done but hesitated, over-thinking the options, debating, tentatively moving forward? Then, when I finally acted, my confidence had taken a hit with all the questioning. I move part-way through the process and freeze with worry or fear. I've come too far to turn back but still have a long way to go.

We often question ourselves, our abilities, our intuition. The doubt mounts and we experience the "analysis paralysis." Should I set certain expectation for my employee? Should I commit to this workout plan? Should I delegate work to a coworker? Should I choose healthier foods? Should I apply for the promotion? Should I set better boundaries with family members? The argument in our mind ends up looking a lot like my dog staring up the steps, putting a foot forward, stepping back, and occasionally whining.

Although some decisions need to be well-thought out, there are times when we just need to trust ourselves and move forward without overthinking the steps. We know our destination so why trip over ourselves getting there? Do what needs to be done and celebrate a successful climb.

Are you overthinking a decision? Feeling stuck? Coaching provides clarity and allows you to act with confidence.

Please forward this newsletter to others you believe would enjoy it. I welcome new subscribers! To subscribe/unsubscribe, please send an email to [Suzette@SuzetteLangley.com](mailto:Suzette@SuzetteLangley.com). I also welcome feedback and ideas for future topics. For more information, visit [www.SuzetteLangley.com](http://www.SuzetteLangley.com) or call 410-757-7326.

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