

I'm such a cheeky monkey...

The start of every season has fashionistas everywhere excited and ready for hot new trends. We're given green light to shop! We can't possibly be caught in last year's apple green when 2014 is all about the majestic mint. Scandalous! But while fashion trends are fun and should never be life altering or cause us pain (do you hear me bodysuits?...I didn't pee from 1988-1993)...life trends can be a whole other story.

Unwanted life trends are situations, circumstances, or relationships that continue to show up in your life even though they cause you pain. If you don't think you have any of these just ask someone close to you what they've heard you complain about more than say a zillion times. This is obviously a tricky request and your friend/spouse or sister may understandably not want to remind you of the numerous times you've talked about "the guy that doesn't appreciate me" or "the horrible boss that is most certainly Satan" or "why can't I ever lose weight" for fear that you may rip their head off or cry or worse, talk about it **again...**but recognizing those negative life trends is key if you want to rid yourself of them. Ya gotta **Name it to Claim it** as they say. I asked my husband for his feedback and while I think he may have taken the safe route and not talked about my sometimes questionable "finance decisions" he did courageously share that I often complain about being late. Of course this isn't shocking to me, I know this is a trend in my life but for whatever reason I can't kick it. I know all the relevant quotes that are supposed to rocket me into freedom from my habits...

"If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got".

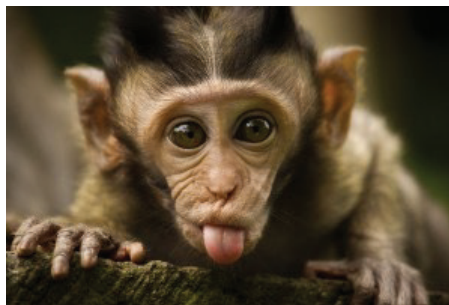
Definition of insanity courtesy of Albert Einstein "doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result".

Sometimes even after we identify our negative life trend we get stuck. I see this happen with clients often...they'll say "I know we've gone over this a million times BUT...". I can quote Einstein all I want but they're eyes continue to gloss over in this one area and they just can't see clearly. These are often areas that are so deeply imbedded in our personae its near impossible to imagine a life without them. So, in this case it can be very helpful to enlist the help of a metaphor so we can view this trend from a slightly more objective distance. It's kind of like if you take a book or even this screen and put it an inch from your nose you can't read the writing but once you pull it away the words become more clear. And as with everything in life I think injecting a little creativity and fun always helps the process when dealing with the tough stuff. I used this exact exercise to get some clarity with my "late" trend and the results were quite revealing.

Step One:

Think of one unwanted situation, circumstance, or relationship that continues to show up in your life. It's a good idea to close your eyes to really give your mind and your body the opportunity to feel what comes up for you when you think about this issue. OK, assuming your eyes are open again...name the first animal that comes to mind.

I got monkey



Step Two

Describe this animal in as much detail as you can

- *flying around the trees*
- *silly, fun, playful*
- *free*
- *cheeky*
- *throwing food*
- *unafraid*
- *wild*
- *curious*
- *dangerous*
- *hanging*

Step Three:

I believe we are constantly being sent messages in our life. They aren't always obvious and definitely not always from another person. Sometimes it can be a rainy day (do you need to get out from under a cloud?), a chronic pain in your neck (are you wearing the weight of the world on your shoulders?), or a spot on your carpet that won't come out (do you have a dirty secret you can't let go of?). Maybe in this case they are coming from an animal...if this animal were sending you messages about your negative life trend what might they be?

- *flying around and being too busy you don't allow yourself enough time to get where you need to go. Slow down!*
- *it's pretty cheeky to send the message that your time is more important than someone else's. Is it?*
- *when you're late you miss out on FUN!*
- *driving too fast to make appointments is Dangerous!*
- *being on time gives you an opportunity to just hang out.*

Step Four:

Now imagine who you are without this negative life trend continuing to show up. You have allowed these messages to really sink in and you can see clearly who you are without them. Are you taking better care of yourself? Are you more confident? Do you have more time for people you love spending time with? Are you less stressed?... Now, what animal are you?...



Turtle... time to slow down and get where I need to be safely with shell intact. But of course, still winning the race.

I might suggest you have a little fun with your new animal...maybe get a little figurine you keep on your nightstand or a photo as your screensaver. A gentle reminder of who you are today, and like the bodysuit, some trends just need to end.