

COLOR YOURSELF HAPPY: TAPPING INTO YOUR TRUE COLORS TO FEEL GOOD WHEN YOU'RE FEELING BAD

By Janice Whiting, M.S.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.... And how you see it has a lot to do with your personality.

Can your personality impact how you react to these unpredictable times of economic downturns, shifts in the economy, and loss of security?

Does your personality determine your reaction to these uncertain times?



The resounding answer to these questions is YES! Your personality does affect how you react. So how can you tap into your personality style and feel better during these uncertain times?

To help us understand what makes us feel bad let's take a look at the True Colors styles and what stresses each of them during tough times and what can they tap into to feel better.

What stresses an Orange out during uncertain times?

The feeling of options being eliminated, from job opportunities to no extra money, to not feeling like they can have fun, stresses an orange out.

“Wealth is the ability to fully express life”
– Henry David Thoreau

So what can you do about it?

Tapping into your Orange to feel good –

Laughter... We all laugh but tapping into the orange in us can really get us feeling good. Try this, just start laughing. Even if you don't want to, get a good belly full and let it go. The next thing you know you will be laughing at yourself, releasing all of those

wonderful endorphins that help us feel better. Tapping into this makes you realize how good it feels and gets you “wanting this feeling.” It all starts with the old adage, “laughter as the best medicine.” Oranges have the unique ability to have fun and lots of it. Your pains can be laughed at, your disappointments are laughable, even our own self is laughable if we really stop and think about it.

To help with finding your fun Oranges, find free fun things to do and get going. Get outside and get walking, riding bikes, grab a ball and go to the park. Hose off that old basketball hoop on the side of the house and get playing. You will help release stress and get some exercise. Have fun with family and friends and squeeze the fun out of every moment. No matter what the economy is doing, free is always there. Be it dancing, music, singing, jogging, getting out those old games in the closet and have a good bout with a friendly competition, all of these types of activities will create moments of stress free fun. As a “flaming” orange myself we have created the “Cheap and Fun” jar and whenever we have an idea that is cheap (better if free) and fun we write it down on a slip and stick it in the jar. When we are looking for something fun to do it becomes a game to pull out an idea and off we go into a new adventure. We are always on a quest for ways we can have a fun night out without spending lots of dough so we make a game of seeing how cheaply we can go out: be it \$.50 pool game at the local dive joint to discovering the best happy hour with lots of good free food. One of our local hangouts actually has a potluck on Thursday night and if you bring something you can eat for FREE. With three kids to entertain we are always looking for the best bang for our buck when it comes to free concerts in the park, to half price day at the local community swimming pool (friends that live in communities with a free swimming pool is better). Just remember if you open your thoughts to new ways of fun you will find it everywhere. But you have to start looking.



Oranges, get your options open, look for opportunities everywhere, and anywhere, diversify your life. Ask yourself: What else can I do to make money? Is it time for a career change? What industry is booming right now? See it all as a new adventure with new rules (you have to figure out) and new choices for you and your family. Focus on the options you have (not the ones you don't) in any given situation. Think creatively and find ways to make your life better.

What stresses a Green out during uncertain times?

Lack of control over the situation, and the lack of quality information about what is going on.

What can you do about it?

Tapping into your Green to feel good –

“Wealth is the product of man’s capability to think”
– Ayn Rand

Greens know that their mind is the best tool they own. If used properly this powerful tool can help them uncover how to make the best of the situation. Because it is what accepts and declares something as negative or bad, our mind is the main cause of our stress. Therefore, if mind itself is the main reason we are stressed during uncertain times then it is the mind we need to manage.

To get into your green, focus on the big picture of the situation and get yourself informed. If we approach what we are hearing and reading with logic and examine the facts, (If we truly look at what is going on) and ask some good questions, we might arrive at a different conclusion.

For example: We hear that the mortgage crisis in the country is the culprit for all the other bad that has followed. Did you know that 92% of all mortgages are paid on time? So, there are only 8% of mortgages in the entire country that are delinquent. So, how big is the problem?

We were told that our economy was the worst and slowest since the depression. Our gross national product for the last quarter of 2008 was down 3.8%. Did you know that in 1982 the GNP was down more than 6% for the entire year?

To help greens get back to happy, tap into your curious green side and do some research on the facts. Fill up your blank page with new knowledge. The more you know the more you can take control of the situation by identifying more choices that you may not have known. Many of us are afraid to open our retirement statement and, it seems like every time we pick up a magazine or newspaper there is an article like the one in the New York Times (October, 2009) about the sinking 401K retirement plans. When you read and hear this type of information ask yourself, what are the new rules? Decide that it is time to do some research. David, could not even open his statements for his retirement account until we got clear what was really bugging him. It boiled down to a lack



of information and knowledge about retirement planning. Instead of burying his head in the sand he decided to take this opportunity to research alternative retirement options such as annuities and using life insurance as retirement vehicles. And guess what, he found that these economic times were the best thing that could have happened. Because of his research he and his wife diversified their retirement into other options that they would have never known about. As a result, they can see their money doubling from what they thought they would have at retirement.

Greens; take this time to learn the truth and do your research. Be sure and ask questions and don't necessarily believe what you are told. The truth is out there. You just need to search for it. In fact, you may find a better way!

What stresses a Blue out during uncertain times?

The disharmony and conflict that the people they love and care about are feeling. It seems like everyone is either unhappy or scared or knows of someone who is. From experiencing a lay-off themselves to just hearing about all the people that have lost their livelihood, homes, and jobs, affects a blue and creates stress.

What can you do about it?

Tapping into your Blue to feel good –

“It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich according to what he is, not according to what he has.”
- Henry Ward Beecher

Blues, it's ok to care, to be stressed and have emotions... like you didn't know this. Use your blue to do a little catharting... let it all out... don't' hide your feelings. Catharsis is a feeling of mental release and purification brought about by an intense emotional experience. Getting to a stress-free state needs cathartic techniques that can force out all the repressed feeling inside. Crying is often part of the healing process - just because someone is crying or upset it doesn't mean that they are "broken" or falling apart, so it's ok to let it out and care.

Blues give yourself the good stuff. Make sure the information you are consuming is the right kind of information. This is not to say you should ignore reality but you need to feed yourself with good stuff. If you are unable to tune out the negative, and many of us are, just turn it off. Turn off the 5 o'clock news, skip the articles that sound like a downer and don't' spend time at the watercooler with those who can't seem do anything but

complain. Instead find books, web pages, magazines that empower you. Kathy, a true blue, got me reading a book called the Vortex that shares with its audience the power of our mind and how to focus on what we do want, not what we don't (it's not as easy as it sounds). Now, I'm not strong on the blue side but I tell you this book really got me feeling better and thinking better. If you are not into exploring the metaphysical you can still tap into the power of the mind by looking for things you can do to improve the situation of your neighbors, friends and family. If you look, there is always someone who is in a situation that seems worse than yours. It's amazing how looking outside of ourselves and working to help someone else will change our thoughts and feelings about our own situation. Volunteer with local programs, they need you now more than ever due to budget cuts. Make it a friends and family activity so you get some of those wonderful endorphins flowing within your own community. This will also tighten your bonds and open communication with ones you love.

Instead of focusing on the negative in the world, on what you don't have or the negative of the situation, make a gratitude list. Write down everything in your life you are grateful for: health, health of family members, friends, a home, a car, a job, food on the table, the unconditional love of a pet. No matter what it is, by really tapping into what you are grateful for in your life you start to put it all into perspective. Tape this list on your



refrigerator and start shifting you and your families' focus off of what may be going wrong onto what is going right. Focus on what you do have, not what is missing or disappearing. Studies have shown that when people come together and align their thinking powerful things happen. Such as the fact that documented large group meditations have significantly positively impacted social events such lowering crime rates. Blues; to quote Carl Jung, "What you resist persists." By focusing your thoughts on the positive and what you do want you can

contribute to bringing harmony back to the world.

What stresses a Gold out during uncertain times?

Lack of control and uncertainty of the future, everything that you have planned may be in jeopardy.

What can you do about it?

Tapping into your Gold to feel good –

Tapping into your gold will help you get a handle on your situation. Take a hard cold look at your finances and make a plan of action

“It is great wealth to a soul to live frugally with a contented mind.”

- Lucretius

One of the things that make Gold's unhappy during times like this is the feeling that all the time, planning, and sacrificing they have done to get here is not working anymore. People are experiencing a lot of unknowns and, “the rules have changed.” Because for Gold's, knowing and following the rules is important and it now feels like they are spinning out of control. A good way to get back in control is to get clear about what is really going on. So make a list of what is known. Write down what you spend, no matter how painful it is. Know where you are and what you need to survive. First take a look at the facts. Make a list of everything, yes I mean everything, you spend money on. Make a note if it is hard (cannot be changed) or soft (can be changed). This will help you make better decisions.

Next prioritize that list, put expenditures into A,B,C priority categories. A – cannot be changed no matter what, B – some flexibility, C- can and really should have been changed years ago! So for example an A has to be spent, such as a mortgage. B's can be evaluated (cell phone, cable, food costs). C's are nice if we had the resources but if we let it go nothing will be put in jeopardy except maybe a little comfort or convenience. Post this list for everyone to see (or at least make sure everyone understands the situation) and work as a family to make a plan. Ask everyone to help out and identify how you can unite as a family to make ends meet and to have some fun (see the orange section for some free fun ideas).

Lisa decided to take the time to write down what her family was spending their hard earned cash on. After taking a look at their situation they, making it a new family tradition, decided to be more conscious of how they were spending money. Then, based on the new rules of the economy, started making a new plan. Everyone started thinking before they made a purchase. They looked for the best deals and searched for new ways to make purchases for less than retail such as Ebay or looking on Craig's list for deals on kids sporting equipment. They had the whole family looking for savings in every part of their life. By taking the time to identify and list what really needed to be spent Lisa was amazed at



how much more in control she felt. She then could make a new plan to make it through the tough times and as a result her family will be ready and prepared for the good times ahead.

No matter what True Colors style we resonate with we can learn from each personality to help us refocus our energy toward a happy, joyful state. I don't know who originally said this but I have heard it over and over in my life, "Energy flows where attention goes." During these tough economic times it is more important than ever to pay attention to where we are putting our energy and focus. By becoming very aware of our thoughts and actions that contribute to our unhappiness we can then tap into our True Colors style to find the right mindset that will reduce stress and...

COLOR YOURSELF HAPPY.

Henry Ford said, "Whether you think you can or you can't, either way you are right."

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