

The Truth About You: Five Keys to Enhancing Self-Esteem

by Laura Davis

One of the wonderful things about getting older that few people talk about is becoming more “comfortable in your own skin.” With life experience, most of us become more aware of our strengths as well as our limitations. By the time we reach a certain age, we’ve experienced successes and failures. If we’ve reflected upon and learned from our experiences, we have gained wisdom. We know we can get through challenging times and create joy in our lives regardless of the circumstances.

This has been the truth for me. Personally, I would not want to be an adolescent again. Do you remember what it was like to be a teenager? I remember feeling shy and uncertain. When I was 15, my father was promoted and we moved to a small town in New York State. The move was in the middle of my sophomore year in the midst of a snowy winter. I remember walking into a new classroom with all eyes upon me, checking out and evaluating “the new girl.” This experience could be daunting for even the most confident young girl.

As I attempted to acclimate to my new environment, I found I would look around at others to see where I fit in. As a teenager, I would assess myself, my looks, and my accomplishments, then compare myself to others in my class, in women’s magazines, and on T.V. Did I measure up? What would it take for me to be happy, for me to be one of the “charmed ones?” Then, as now, societal messages streamed at me to be prettier, to be smarter, to be cuter, and to of course use the product the advertisers were promoting at the time. While “benchmarking” may be useful in business or sports, it’s not always helpful in developing character and personality. Although I had the inner wisdom even then to understand that “racket,” I was still influenced by it.

At about the same age, I remember coming across a book that first introduced to me a different way of evaluating my worth. The book was a collection of short stories published by American Girl magazine called “Stories to Live By.” One of the stories was about a popular young girl who hung out with the right kids, had a good-looking and athletic boyfriend, and wore the most beautiful, stylish clothes. And yet, she was as miserable as any teenage girl could be.

As the story unfolded, she began to be true to herself. She realized that she didn’t like the other “cool” kids who were often cruel and shallow to those who didn’t fit in, nor did she really care for her boyfriend. Instead, she preferred the “nerdier” guy who listened to her dreams and interests and who remembered to ask about what was important to her. She also preferred reading and studying things that weren’t “cool,” rather than going to parties and being what everyone expected her to be. Gradually, she found the courage to use her own guidance as her compass and to be authentic in the face of risking ridicule and having to forge new friendships.

The story had a powerful impact on the life path I have chosen. As a coach, a large part of my relationship with a client is to guide them in being authentic in their life. We access their own wisdom in discerning what is right for them and what is not. Looking to others for approval is always a losing proposition. So is trying to be something you’re not. When Picasso was asked if he considered Van Gogh his favorite painter because he was the best, he replied, “No. Because he is Van Gogh. He is not always good, but he is always Van Gogh.” And so it is with each of us. We can be our best in terms of ourselves only.

Many people have lost touch with their inner wisdom and their own true values. What we need to remember is that within each of us is all of the wisdom we’ll ever need to solve any kind of problem we may be experiencing. Robert Browning in Paracelsus elegantly said, “Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise from outward things, whate’er you may believe...and, to know, rather consists in opening out a way whence the imprisoned splendour may escape, than in effecting entry for a light supposed to be without.”

Reconnecting with this light takes courage. Having someone else tell you what you should be and what you should do seems

easier than it is to discover it for yourself. Meanwhile, it takes a lot of unlearning to be all of who we really are.

Many clients who come for coaching have some potential in their lives that they feel they are not currently expressing. There is a gap between where they are and where they want to be. In truth, there is perfection in where they are. More often, it's a question of removing what's in the way of them expressing their greatness. They must first be able to conceive of the possibility of a different way of being.

How does one begin to recognize all of who they are to create a truly fulfilling life? I'm going to outline five essential keys that will get you started on this journey to authentic wholeness. These are the keys to self-esteem on a fundamental, character level:

- separate your worth from externals
- change self-limiting thoughts and self-talk
- use your emotions to identify limited thinking
- examine your beliefs and mental models
- imagine yourself as you want to be

Separate Your Worth from Externals

There is a concept in psychology called "The Social Mirror." The concept is a metaphor for the way we see ourselves based upon the perceptions, opinions, and paradigms that others reflect back to us through their words and behavior. We form images and judgements of ourselves (for example, "I'm not a creative person" or "I'm not good at math") based upon how others see us. Because others may not be seeing us clearly, or are projecting their own weaknesses onto us, and because by definition, the social mirror is a reflection of our past behavior, it is often inaccurate and limiting. In actuality, our world mirrors back to us our beliefs about ourselves. If we can learn to own our core strengths, believe in our capabilities, and have a strong vision of who we are, we can change how others see and treat us. When we do this, the process becomes a positive, rather than a negative feedback loop.

Rather than relying on the views of others or the social mirror as the reflection of your worth, separate your worth from anything external to yourself. Externals can take different forms in our culture. In addition to the self-image we adopt based upon other

peoples' perspectives, our Western culture often ties our worth to what we do or achieve, how much money or what kind of possessions we have, and even to the circumstances and events that occur in our lives. Things such as money, looks, performance, and achievements may increase our social worth, but each of us has inherent worth that is infinite and unchanging.

If our worth is tied to or depends upon anything external to us, then our self-esteem rises and falls along with those externals. That is a very conditional way to live. Instead, I suggest shifting to the recognition that your essential, spiritual self or who you really are at your core is fundamentally right and whole. Being proud of our unique strengths and talents and taking pleasure in expressing them is perfectly appropriate.

While a talent expressed is a way to experience our worth, not expressing a talent doesn't mean that we are any less worthy. Likewise, it's wonderful to feel loved by others and it's a wonderful way to feel our worthiness. But if no one loves us at this moment, we are in no way less of a person. When we forget what powerful, spiritual beings we all are naturally, we use externals to fill a sense of lack. We all know people who are constantly seeking approval, control, or security or who have become cynical because they have forgotten who they really are.

What can we do to recognize and affirm our self-worth and have a healthy self-concept or high self-esteem independent of these external factors? First, learn to separate your behavior and your uncomfortable feelings from who you really are. In English we say, "I am angry," while other languages express angry emotions by saying the equivalent of "I have anger." This is an important distinction. If who you really are is not your emotions or your behavior, and your feelings and actions are things that you experience, then you are free to change feelings and behavior without threatening your identity.

For example, let's say that a wonderful job that you wanted and didn't get was offered to someone else. If you can see that not getting the job may have been the result of not having the appropriate skills, experience, or training, then you are appropriately separating the situation from your value as an individual. However, if you tell yourself that you're a person who never gets what she or he wants or that somehow you're just not

good enough, then you are limiting yourself and your choices unnecessarily. This is a self-destructive choice of thoughts that can lead to lowered self-esteem.

Change Self-Limiting Thoughts and Self-Talk

What we say when we talk to ourselves is an important thing to become conscious of throughout the day. All of us have conversations going on in our heads literally all of the time. Our self-talk can be in spoken words or in unspoken thoughts. Self-talk can take the form of feelings, impressions, and even physical cues such as a “gut feeling” or a racing heartbeat. Most of our self-talk is so habitual we aren’t even aware of it. At times, our self-talk comes in feelings that can’t quite be put into words. However, it is a different voice than the voice of our intuition. I’ve noticed my own self-talk can be like white noise or chatter. The voice of my intuition is more still and calm. True intuition is always helpful and accurate, while self-talk may or may not be.

Regardless of the form our self-talk or internal conversation takes, it is a reflection of our perceptions and beliefs. Perceptions are the ways in which we see things, based on how we think they “should” be. Likewise, we think things “should” be a certain way based upon our beliefs and values. In effect, our beliefs act as filters or lenses on the world. If we have on rose-colored glasses, everything looks pink. If our lenses are blue, well, everything looks blue to us.

In common language, other words we might use to describe perceptions include attitudes, perspectives, opinions, points of view, etc. Whatever we call them, they influence how we interpret an event or situation in our life. So, when something happens or someone says something to us, it does not cause our reaction. Our response is up to us. However, the event or person triggers an interpretation of what happened based upon our perceptions. Our perceptions then influence our self-talk or the story we tell ourselves about what happened.

Depending on the nature of the story we tell ourselves, we are going to have an emotional or feeling response. This feeling may be good or bad, positive or negative. How we feel about it then influences our behavior. For example, I used to feel nervous

and uncomfortable when speaking in front of a group. I'm sure this is a feeling a few of us can relate to. When I felt nervous, the self-talk that was often going on in my head was that I am not making sense and that everyone will know I don't know what I'm talking about.

Obviously, holding that belief about me, and feeling the feeling those thoughts produced affected my behavior and performance. When I was telling myself that no one was going to understand me, I'm sure I wasn't expressing myself very clearly. I've since learned to change my self-talk by focusing on my audience and not on my self-consciousness. If I hadn't recognized my negative self-talk and done something to change it, I probably would have stopped speaking in front of groups. I wouldn't have gained the experience and practice to become a better speaker.

The good news is, once we become aware of our own self-limiting thoughts and self-talk, we can redirect the outcome of this cycle at any point in the process. One simple quick coaching tip is to learn the Stop/Challenge/Focus technique. This technique is adapted from Larry Wilson, the founder of The Wilson Learning Corporation and Pecos River Learning Centers. Here is how it works. As you catch yourself about to habitually react to a situation negatively, just stop, and take a deep breath. You catch yourself in the moment, and mentally interrupt your own internal dialogue. In neuro-linguistic programming terms, you create a pattern interrupt by breaking the flow and direction of the negative energy.

Next, ask yourself, "If I act on this negative self-talk, what is likely to happen?" Keep asking: "What am I telling myself about this situation and how is that making me feel? Is there a better way to look at this situation? How can I reach for a better feeling or thought about it?" Often, a situation is not as bad as it seems initially, but we "awfulize" it and exaggerate its dire consequences to ourselves and to others.

Instead, we can redirect or pivot from our original line of thinking and redirect our focus. Which brings us to the last part of the Stop/Challenge/Focus technique: focusing on what you now want. You can facilitate this focus by asking yourself the following questions: "What do I want to happen? What do I want my behavior to be? What do I need to tell myself so that I can achieve it?"

Once the focus of our attention has shifted to what we want, we are then in the position of bringing it into physical reality. Now we can focus on reprogramming our minds with more empowering beliefs and self-concepts that directly impact our ability to be successful and fulfilled in life. There are many techniques and resources that can assist you in this reprogramming, such as the Silva method, creative visualization, neuro-linguistic programming, spiritual mind treatment, affirmations, the Sedona Method, and countless others. A coach can help you decide what's best for you given your current beliefs and personal preferences.

Use Your Emotions to Identify Limited Thinking

Being aware of our self-limiting thoughts and self-talk does not mean that we must be constantly worried about the thoughts we think. We don't want to be ever vigilant about never thinking a negative thought. Since it would be almost impossible to monitor all of the thoughts and impressions that occur to us in any given day, it is fortunate that we come equipped with another tool to help us discern the quality of our self-talk. That tool is our awareness of negative emotion. The problem is, most of us are so used to feeling a little bit overwhelmed or a little bit unhappy or a little bit depressed that we may have forgotten what it feels like to feel good.

The good news is we can train ourselves to become more aware of what we are feeling. This is vitally important. A less-than-positive emotion is an alarm or signal to alert us that we're focusing on a limiting belief about ourselves and our ability to handle a particular circumstance or situation. The signal is useful in letting us know that we're coming from a fearful and not an empowered position.

When we touch a hot stove it hurts and we pull our hand away quickly. The pain alerts us that touching the hot stove is harmful to our welfare so we stop doing it. In the same vein, our negative emotions alert us that we're focusing on a limiting thought about ourselves or our lives that is impeding our ability to be effective. Since we can't stop thinking a thought, when we catch ourselves focused on a negative thought, we must replace it with a more positive one. We must focus on our vision and on what we desire to create out of the situation.

One story that really drives this point home is that of the Great Wallenda. The Wallenda family was renowned for their spectacular circus act comprised of acrobatics and tightrope walking. In particular, Karl Wallenda, the patriarch of the family, performed many death-defying tightrope feats walking high above the ground between tall buildings and even over Niagara Falls without a net.

He eventually fell to his death in his 70's while tightrope walking between two tall buildings in Puerto Rico. Since he had been so successful in the past in even more threatening situations, people wondered why he died when he did and under those circumstances. When asked "why now?" his widow replied, "All of his life Karl focused on success and on getting to the other side. He knew he could do it. But in the last year of his life, he started to focus on 'not falling.' He started to wonder if he could fail."

This story illustrates that the power of our attention and awareness is not to be underestimated. If our circumstances are not as we would like them to be, we can use the situations we find ourselves in to discover our beliefs. Once we know what our beliefs are, we can change them so that our results are in accordance with our desires.

Examine Your Beliefs and Mental Models

Everything depends upon your attitude about yourself. And your attitude about yourself comes from the beliefs you've accepted are the truth about you. Henry Ford said, "Whether you think you can or think you can't—you are right." A dramatic example of how we often mentally accept unreal limitations can be found in how elephants are trained for the circus.

A baby elephant is first chained to a post with a heavy metal chain. If the baby elephant tries to go beyond a certain point, the chain painfully binds its leg and keeps it from moving further. Soon, the baby elephant doesn't venture as far and the trainer replaces the chain with a strong rope. If the elephant attempts to go beyond the predetermined point, again it is restrained since the rope will painfully chafe its leg. Before long, the baby elephant has grown into an adult and can be held in check within the area by a thin string around its leg. The elephant has been conditioned to believe that it will be hurt if it ventures outside of its comfort zone.

Certainly, this is a false belief, as a fully-grown elephant can easily break a thin string to be able to move fully and to be free.

While you might say, “that’s just for elephants,” how often do we accept false beliefs about ourselves because of our experience with some circumstance or event? While it may seem as though the circumstances or events we find ourselves in are limiting us, it is really our beliefs about the circumstances that matter. To take it a step further, while it may seem as though the circumstances and events that occur in your life are a result of some outer cause, all that you experience is a result of your state of consciousness. Completely accepting the idea that your beliefs form your experiences is necessary. Blaming others or circumstances and events might be easier in the short run, but then you remain a victim of these things forever. Accepting personal responsibility for changing your beliefs gives you hope and power.

So, where do we begin if we have a desire to create different results in our lives? First, we need to recognize our beliefs so that we can choose to keep or to change them. If we don’t know what they are, it’s difficult to work with them. So, awareness of the beliefs that serve us and awareness of the beliefs that limit us is the first step. Fortunately, our beliefs are not deeply buried in our subconscious awaiting excavation. They are just habits of thought (thoughts we keep thinking). But because they are so habitual, they may go undetected.

For example, in working with a coaching client about issues of abundance and financial health, I posed the question, “What’s getting in the way of your achieving abundant financial success?” She immediately replied, “I’m afraid that all of my friends will be jealous of me.” I replied, “That’s an interesting belief.” She looked at me as though I’d awakened her to a whole new reality. She exclaimed, “My goodness you’re right! It never occurred to me that my fear is just a belief and that I can change it, and therefore my reality if I want to!”

There are many tools and techniques available to change beliefs, as I mentioned earlier when referencing changing self-limiting thoughts and self-talk. What you’re doing is changing your belief systems and increasing your level of understanding. You are looking at the situation from a “higher” point of view. Ultimately, the process can be as simple as discarding those beliefs that are

not bringing you the results you want and replacing them with new ones.

One simple technique is to “act as if” the new belief, and therefore the desired result, is already true for you. For most of us, it just doesn’t seem logical to accept on faith that simply imagining successful results can actually move you toward them. We’re often too impatient to wait for the cumulative results of “acting-as-if” to take effect. Some people give up immediately because they analyze too much and try to figure out how it works. That’s why it’s helpful to suspend disbelief for awhile and to just experiment. Building a new self-image generally doesn’t happen overnight, but rather is a cumulative process. Trust that in time, your new reality will catch up to your desire.

In effect, you build bridges between your old and new beliefs as your reality shifts around you. In the meantime, you will often be in the situation of telling yourself that something is true although physical data contradicts it. For example, you may say, “I am abundant and never want for anything,” while your desk is piled high with unpaid bills. You must realize that you are the one who produced the physical evidence of lack that still faces you through your beliefs. The good news is that as you alter that belief about yourself, the physical evidence will gradually begin to “prove” your new belief as faithfully as it did your old one.

Imagine Yourself As You Want to Be

In his classic work *Psycho-Cybernetics*, Maxwell Maltz said, “Creative imagination is not something reserved for the poets, the philosophers, or the inventors. For imagination sets the goal or ‘picture’ that our automatic mechanism works on. We act, or fail to act, not because of ‘will’ as is so commonly believed, but because of imagination.” In fact, I’m sure many of us can attest to the ineffectiveness of using willpower to change our behaviors and self-image to improve our self-esteem. The list of unfulfilled New Year’s resolutions is frustratingly long for most of us. Yet, there is another way to change our beliefs, and therefore our feelings and behaviors. The way is through creative visualization and imagination.

Fortunately, our brain doesn’t know or care whether what we think about is real or imaginary. Test this for yourself by vividly

imagining yourself biting into a sour lemon. You are likely to be salivating and puckering your lips in response to this imaginary fruit just as you would if you were really eating it. Since we've already established that what we focus on and think about becomes true for us, we can create a new mental image of how we'd like things to be and have it take shape in physical reality.

The classic research on this was done with basketball players attempting to make free throw shots. The researchers formed three groups of players with very equal skills and capabilities. A control group changed nothing over a 21-day period. The second group practiced shooting free throws for 21 days. The third group never touched a basketball and yet visualized themselves making free throws successfully in the theater of their imaginations. Remarkably, the latter two groups each improved by about 24 percent, while the control group stayed the same. Later they found that the visualizers' success could be further increased if they engaged all of their senses, imagining seeing the ball swoosh through the hoop, hearing the sound the ball makes when it goes in, feeling the emotions of success when they made the shot, etc.

How can this be so and why is it important to visualize success in terms of images and feelings instead of just willpower or determination? And how does this relate to self-esteem or self-image? The word image forms the root of the word imagination. When you use your imagination, the part of the brain that is engaged is your right brain. Most of us have heard generalizations about split-brain research that can be useful in understanding how this works at a high level. The right brain allows us to think holistically, spatially, and imaginatively while the left brain is logical, sequential, and analytical. To become whole and fully functioning, we want to integrate both right and left-brain functioning to be all of who we are. However, our culture and training largely favors left-brain functioning.

Yet, if we try to change our self-image solely through the verbal, logical, left side of the brain, it's not going to work very well. That's not the left brain's job. While no part of the brain has ever been identified with "the mind" and consciousness is certainly not limited to the brain's functioning alone, there is a correlation between the right brain and the spiritual creative experience that is so hard to put into words.

Another way to explain this is to think about the left brain as generally working with the conscious mind, while the right brain tends to work with the subconscious mind. So, since the way you think and act is intimately bound to your self-image, you're not going to change your self-image and improve your self-esteem by working with the part of your brain that deals in words alone—your left brain. This is an error that many people make in attempting to change beliefs. They might utter the right words, but the image is not fully developed in the person's imagination.

The way to form a bridge between your old beliefs and your new physical reality is to use your imagination to form a mental picture or image of the desired physical result. Aristotle said, "The soul never thinks without a picture." Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." The writer Emmet Fox also wrote about the importance of vision and imagination with the concept of "the mental equivalent." The phrase "the mental equivalent" refers to the fact that everything that exists in the material world is just the concrete expression of a mental equivalent that you hold in consciousness. In other words, everything is created in mind first as an idea.

Think about it this way. Before building a home, an architect starts with a blueprint. Before painting a picture, the artist has an idea of the image and the feeling state he or she wants to create for the person looking at it. In the same way, a mental blueprint and image is where we need to start if we are going to have a bigger idea of who we are and can be. The most effective way to do this is to consistently use your imagination to visualize and picture you as you'd like to be. Even more important, you must find the feeling place or emotional equivalent and think and feel from the desired state as if it already is "true" in physical reality. Since whatever enters your life and therefore affects your belief in yourself is just the material expression of some belief in your own mind, the key to a better you and a better life, as Emmet Fox said, is to "Change your mind and keep it changed."

So, how do we do this? Let's say you are a salesperson and your goal is to make a sale to a particular client. You can spend just 15 to 20 minutes a day rehearsing this success in your mind in order to develop a mental equivalent. However, the mental equivalent is not just seeing yourself outside of yourself succeeding at your

goal. Instead, you want to get to the underlying desire that you feel this goal would bring to you and feel that as if it is already so. For instance, making the sale might lead to a greater sense of security and a sense of satisfaction in pleasing your client or customer, etc. You want to identify the essence of the feeling state you think achieving this goal would bring to you and imagine it as being so now. You engage all of your senses and experience it fully as if it were really happening. So in this example, you might see your client smiling broadly, saying how pleased they are, feel them excitedly shaking your hand, smell the congratulatory flowers your colleagues have sent you once you get back to the office, and so on.

The metaphysical teacher Neville Goddard expressed this idea beautifully by saying that the key to changing your self-image is to “assume the feeling of the wish fulfilled.” That is the secret to forming a true mental equivalent that takes shape in physical reality. While that may sound unscientific to some, modern physics is discovering what the ancient mystics have known for eons: that thoughts are things and the thoughts that we think most often set up vibrational frequencies that attract circumstances and events of similar frequency to us. In other words, our thoughts are a form of magnetic energy and what we think and feel sets up a force field of sorts that attracts to us like situations and experiences. It’s a similar principle to how a tuning fork works. If you strike a tuning fork calibrated to high C in a room filled with tuning forks calibrated to various pitches, only the ones calibrated to the same frequency as the high C you struck will sound. This is true regardless of how far away the forks are from one another.

The same principle is at work when we notice how people seem to have recurrent problems. The person with money problems always has money problems. The person with relationship problems always has relationship problems. As we already established, beliefs, conscious or not, are creating these circumstances and conditions. And using our imagination to create a vision of who we want to be can create miraculous events.

To recap, you engage your right brain, which is in tune with the spiritual realm, by using your imagination to:

- 1) see yourself as you want to be as if it is happening now

- 2) engage all of your senses fully
- 3) get underneath your desire and conjure up the feeling place of what your desired outcome would bring to you
- 4) release your need to figure out the details of how and when it will come. Allow it to take shape and get out of the way.

To increase our self-esteem and to live a more fulfilling life, it really is as simple as recognizing the truth about ourselves and our self-imposed limitations. Neville summed it up by saying, "To reach a higher level of being, you must assume a higher concept of yourself. If you will not imagine yourself as other than you are, then you remain as you are."

You've now been introduced to some of the keys to begin this journey for yourself. Separating your worth from the world of externals and becoming aware of your self-limiting thoughts and self-talk is the beginning. Once you are aware, use your emotions as signals to alert you to discover and to examine your beliefs. If your beliefs are creating the results you want, give yourself the credit! If you'd like to change the results you are getting, you can change your beliefs to be in alignment with your desires. Finally, using some of the tools and techniques I've outlined briefly here, use your imagination to create a vision of who you want to be.

Just like the young girl in "Stories to Live By," I'm learning to value myself regardless of how I "stack up" to others. Sometimes, I do still compare myself to others, but these days, it happens less and less. I certainly am not free of self-limiting thoughts and self-talk, but now I catch myself in the act and do my best to Stop/Challenge/Focus.

Now I just do my best to tune into how I'm feeling throughout the day. If I'm feeling anything less than good, I'm focused on a negative thought that has probably become a habit of thought, which is all a belief really is. So, if that belief isn't working in my favor and getting me the results I want, I have the power to change it. That's my cue to refocus on what I want and to imagine myself as I want to be. Acting "as if" it already is does wonders for my self-image.

About Laura Davis



Laura A. Davis & Associates, Inc. is a leadership training and coaching firm that assists individuals and organizations in growing through change by developing people and organizational capabilities. Prior to becoming an executive coach and facilitator, Laura held both line and staff marketing management positions for Exxon, Equifax, and United Parcel Service. The breadth of her experience includes new product development, marketing research, product management, and sales training. After a successful marketing management career, she started her own leadership training and coaching practice.

In addition to her solid business experience, she possesses a unique talent for seeing “the big picture” and for simplifying complex problems to their essential elements. She has designed and delivered workshops focused on culture change through the development of facilitative leadership and coaching skills for managers. She has also facilitated numerous transformational change initiatives through “soft skills” training and follow-up coaching. Laura’s primary areas of expertise include leadership development, team effectiveness, change management, interpersonal communication skills, and personal and organizational transformation. Her focus is on the development of transformational leadership and team skills using accelerated learning techniques to foster open communication, trust, teamwork, innovation, and creativity. Accelerated Learning focuses on mental models or individual belief systems and how they affect individual and organizational success.

Clients learn to create and sustain supportive relationships, systems for continuous learning and change, and methods for tapping into their personal passions to bring energy and focus into their lives and work. Clients learn how to bring all of who they are into their daily activities to achieve greater balance, joy, creativity, and fulfillment in all areas of life. These aspirations and goals are accomplished through interactive and experiential skills training and individual and team coaching.

Laura is a Master Certified Coach (M.C.C.) through the International Coach Federation. She is affiliated with The Forum Corporation/FT Knowledge as a Senior Facilitator and Executive Coach, as well as several other highly regarded firms that offer assessments, training, coaching, and consulting services. She has a B.A. degree in Sociology with Honors from the University of Delaware. She earned her Masters in Business Administration from Emory University on scholarship. She has been an Adjunct Professor in the Business Studies Program at Mercer University in Douglasville, Georgia. Laura has also received recognition as a “Who’s Who in America” conferee.

Laura has conducted numerous training seminars and workshops with multicultural audiences at all levels of an organization throughout the country. She has also trained audiences in Korea and Japa for one of the largest global hotel management companies in the world. She has been a speaker at professional coaching conferences and professional associations throughout the U.S. Her partial client list with client quotes is accessible on her website.

Laura is a certified facilitator and distributor of Inscape Publishing Company’s (formerly Carlson Learning Company) learning resources. Instrumented learning profiles and the seminars designed around them are powerful learning tools. These programs allow people to simplify complex issues and help them to discover and capitalize on their strengths, to value their differences, and to collaborate successfully.

Likewise, Laura A. Davis & Associates, Inc. utilizes a variety of other validated assessments and learning tools to help individuals understand themselves and others in greater depth in order to appreciate and build upon their uniqueness. These include Personal Profile System, The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment, 360 Degree Assessments including Insight 20/20, The Highlands Ability Battery (THAB), The Managerial Assessment of Proficiency and EXCEL Training Program, TotalView Assessment, DecideX , MindMaps, DISCOVERY by PMI Shares, Inc., and Change Management Toolkit.

For more information on any of these assessments and learning tools, or to contact Laura, send an email to coachlad@bellsouth.net, call her at (404) 327-6330, or visit her website at www.lauraadavis.com.