

# Postcards from Professional Paradise



## Your Passport to Professional Paradise

### *Are You Awake?*

My eyes popped open and the clock said "2:57". This was the third night in a row that I was seeing a "2" on the clock.

*Are you awake too?*

I think many of you are. I see those posts on Facebook in the wee hours of the night and I'm hearing from folks that they are lying awake at night with what I call "*Fly-Away Thinking*".



Fly Away Thinking is the self made "tornado" in your brain that takes innocuous circumstances and turns them into whirling dervishes of fear, anxiety and frustration. It's the out-of-control, ever-faster-spinning spiral of negative thoughts that causes volatile emotions and sleepless nights. Sleepless nights lead to cranky days, lack of focus and bags under your eyes.

So what's a Fly-Away Thinker to do?

**SHIFT!**

I know some of you are thinking; "Now she wants us to *SHIFT* in our sleep?" The short answer is "yes". And, technically, you're not sleeping and you would like to be so this might just be a helpful idea. You see the *SHIFT* process works for creating Personal *and* Professional Paradise.

With the Thanksgiving holiday just behind us and several holidays fast approaching, you might be spending some vacation time with friends and family and a little *SHIFT* to Personal Paradise might just be the ticket to restful nights. Here's how it works.

#### **S: Stop and breathe**

Sometimes I stop here. I simply focus on my breathing. *In and out; In and out; In and out* (are you getting sleepy just reading this?). When you are lying in bed awake, stop and breathe.

#### **H: Harness your harmful knee-jerk reactions**

Nocturnal harmful knee-jerk reactions often include beating yourself up over something that happened that day or imagining the worst for an upcoming project, meeting or proposal. Step 1 is recognizing that this is a knee-jerk reaction. Consciously decide to harness the reaction. Keep moving to the next step.

#### **I: Identify and manage your negative emotions**

Most folks talk of worry, fear and anxiety as the Big 3 negative emotions of the night. I concur. Somehow, the quiet,

dark environment is like a Petri dish for negative emotions. What's real and what's made up? Are your knee jerk reactions messing with your emotions? Remember; keep breathing - *In and out; In and out; In and out.*

### **F: Find new options**

Getting up to clean is not a good option. Others in your house will not appreciate your diligence with the vacuum going at 3:30a. Some options that work for me are 1) gratitude - I think about things I'm grateful for; 2) visioning my ideal future - I think about how well the project, meeting or proposal will go - I envision the great outcomes; 3) Keep breathing - *In and out; In and out; In and out.*

### **T: Take one positive action**

Hopefully you are nodding off to sleep by now (when you *SHIFT* at night, that is). The most positive action at this point is giving yourself permission to let the Fly-Away Thinking move on and go back to sleep. Breathe: *In and out; In and out; In and out*

So as you approach the end of the year, the holidays and the excitement of 2010 (and you know it will be exciting) - **SHIFT to Personal Paradise** and sweet dreams!

Signing off from Professional Paradise-



Vicki Hess, RN, MS, [Certified Speaking Professional](#)  
[www.VickiHess.com](http://www.VickiHess.com)

Tel: 410-560-7212

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