

full tilt living newsletter

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Are you a sports fan? Do you track your team's stats, live for the latest scores, find heaven in a home game? No? Then you, my friend, must be free of the point-filled life. Hmmm. Tell me another story. Because we all keep score. Heard the story about the monks in Tibet and their wet blanket game? They park themselves out on a ledge or side of a mountain or at least out in the cold wrapped in a wet blanket, and see who, through sheer meditation, can dry their blanket first.

And if you don't believe that story, I have another one for you, which I have witnessed first hand.

I admit to not having spent time hanging out with Tibetan monks in cold and windy places. Where I have been is in the not so unusual grade school class observing (that's what you do if you're in a classroom and you aren't a.) the teacher or b.) the student) this motivational method (which is what you have if you are a teacher) that a very astute teacher came up with. Colored chips. Round plastic things with no markings on them. Every time a student gave a correct answer they received, yes indeed, a chip. And man did those kids covet their stacks of chips. I asked their teacher after class what their chips got them. Nothing other than possession of little round plastic things for the day.

I'm not saying keeping score is necessarily a bad thing. I'm saying we're going to find a way to do it, for good or evil. As in, keeping score in a ball game is good and keeping score in a relationship is very extremely frowned upon. So why not take this thing we are so inherently fascinated with and put it to work in a good way? Let's give *ourselves* points. Stack them up like chips and count them out at the end of the week. Then give ourselves well-deserved atta-girls/boys.

You'll believe it once you do it--how very energized this makes you feel. Charged up and sort of glowing inside. Like James Brown. SO good--SO good! Dah--dah--dah--DAH--dah! UM! Well, he does it better than I do.

There is a bit of a science to this points thing. You'll most likely get the most benefit if you've selected a "what for." Here are some possible "what fors" to choose from:

- Seeing the other side.
- Asking your body what *it* wants before you choose what to eat.
- Counting, just to five, before you say anything when you feel your temperature rising.
- Speaking your true feelings, even when it doesn't feel safe.
- Finishing anything (not to include the ice-cream carton, bag of cookies, pack of cigarettes.)
- Trusting your instincts.
- Taking the stairs.
- Making the hard phone call.
- Failing to give advice and listening instead.
- Getting up/going to bed on time.
- Thanking, being thankful, accepting thanks.
- Doing your meditation practice.
- Following your health care professional's advice.

A few suggestions--

Choose three or so "what fors" per week. Life isn't that short for you to feel that you've got to accomplish your entire list in one week.

It may be that you'd like to stay with your selected "action items" for a month or so.

If you're not getting that James Brown feeling at your weekly review session, re-fresh your list.

Discover your favorite way to keep score. You may like putting things in writing, or doing one of those cute arm pumps when you've scored or even give yourself a chip (need I say plastic poker, not tortilla?)

You may have noticed that there are no winners and losers with this keeping score game. This game doesn't need to point to the winner, just as it needs no loser. You may think that there is no fun in keeping score without the winning and losing. This is a new game. It's fun is free of naming failure, does not have to pay the price of causing loss to win. It just celebrates. You, the shining, successful one. The believe-it-to-be-true you.

And know I'm behind you all the way.