

Before you claim to be offended and skip over this article altogether, I'm not talking about that piece of your anatomy you're afraid looks too big in those jeans. I'm talking about something much more important to you!

Your big BUT is that 'thing', that thing that continues to get in the way of achieving your goals and dreams. Have you ever said something like, "I want to quit smoking, *but...*" or "I want to get a different job, *but...*"? How about "I wish I could [insert dream here], *but...*"? Seeing a pattern?

Your big BUT is typically driven by your fears. You may have a fear of failure or fear of what others will think of you, fear of being embarrassed, fear of losing something, and the list goes on and on. Fears are not the enemy. They are very real things that need to be addressed. But (pun intended) we are not talking about the fear of spiders or fear of flying here. We're talking about an innate fear that is prohibiting you from reasonably assessing your current situation and attaining a desire.

Marianne Williamson wrote in her book *A Return to Love*, "*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. ... We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world.*"

Do you remember when you were eight years old and your whole world was about school books, lunchboxes, being with your friends, playing 'kick the can' outside (for those of us over 40) and never thinking a thing beyond the next moment? I hope you have similar warm, comforting memories from your childhood.

Do you remember the first time you were rejected, embarrassed or failed at something miserably? How about the first time you got caught doing something you weren't supposed to do, or had to own up to something you did that didn't put you in a very good light? Now how do you feel? More than likely, you've gone from feeling really good about those fond memories, to feeling pretty badly about those negative memories, right? What changed? In reality, nothing changed...except your thoughts.

Our minds can be both the best friend and worst enemy we ever had. It can be full of what I call 'mind trash' that gives us a million reasons why we can't achieve something or it can be full of positive affirmations supporting every dream we will ever have.

Where does 'mind trash' come from? It develops in each of us over time with each disappointment we get over, each perceived failure we turn into a learning experience, each criticism we use for our growth and each challenge we overcome. We are rewarded for choking down that experience and foraging on. The fear comes in to play the next time...the next time when you're just a little more reserved, a little more hesitant to put your heart out there, a little more quiet.

What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail? Wait...read that line again.

Imagine...for a moment...if you had no barriers at all—what would you be doing different than you are today, would you be someone different altogether?

Your BIG BUT...

By: Lynn Zettler
LifeAction Coaching, Inc.
www.lifeaction-coaching.com

For some of you the answer may be NOTHING. I applaud you. This is validation that you are living the life of your dreams.

For others, take a few minutes, think about what you would do and write it down. Remember—no barriers allowed. Write down the dream and don't worry about the barriers just yet. How would your life be different? What would you be doing? Where would you be living? Would you be in the same relationship? Would you be in the same job?

After you have the vision of what your dream is, let's look at the perceived barriers. Consider what could get in your way of going after this dream. Is it money, time, family responsibilities, aging parents, children, your job? What is *it* exactly? Whatever *it* is...is your big BUT. So, what is YOUR big BUT?

Once you know what your big BUT is you can take it a step further. Examining your big BUT is a call to action to break down perceived barriers to goals, dreams and aspirations. It's a route of discovery to learn where your inhibitions come from, what is really holding you back and what you can do to overcome. I challenge my clients to examine their big BUT and determine if it really is that *big*. Is it something that *can* be overcome? Is there some small thing they can do to point them in the direction of their dream without letting their big BUT get in the way?

I certainly don't mean to insinuate that people don't have real situations in their lives that can get in the way and I'm not suggesting that you leave your spouse and family to live on a beach somewhere drinking from tall glasses garnished with umbrellas. That's called v-a-c-a-t-i-o-n. What I'm talking about is taking the time to live *intentionally* and explore all of your options, instead of automatically assuming that your long held belief system is always true and there are no other possibilities.

It's your turn. Finish this sentence, WITHOUT a BUT...

More than anything in the world I want...