

*We are what we think  
All that we are arises  
With our thoughts.  
With our thoughts,  
We make our world.  
The Buddah*

## **What Fish Bowl Do You Live In? By Dr. Georgina Cannon**

Everything starts with a thought. When we are very young, we learn about the world around us and ourselves by the input we receive, both verbally and non verbally. This information goes into our subconscious mind, un-edited.

So, if from the moment you were born, you learned, either through being told, or through intimation, that people who had freckles were smarter than those who don't. Your parents behaved that way, the school behaved that way, and occasionally you heard disparaging remarks about 'unfreckled people' You would take it for granted, unquestionally as the truth. And it would become your truth. That truth would become your believe, your thought, your behaviour and the actions which control your life.

Translate that into some of the things your parents, or your environment really suggested to you as a child. Finding these things isn't always easy. Our truths are often invisible... like a fish in water, we often don't know we inhabit that space until we're taken out of it.

Are any of these your 'truths' Do any of these ring true for you?

- If you don't put on a coat you'll catch a cold.
- If you work hard you'll be successful.
- Women aren't good at math.
- You are what you do.
- You're not as smart as your brother/sister, but you're very kind.
- An artist never makes enough money to live on
- If you can't do a thing well, don't do it at all.

That last one really rankles with me. I've always loved music and always wanted to sing. But since the time I could open my mouth to make sound, I was told, in no uncertain terms, that I was tone deaf, just like my father, and shouldn't sing. Even at school, when I asked to go into the grade 2 school choir, I was told that if I wanted to be in the choir, I would have to stand at the back and just open and close my mouth, without making a sound. How's that for building strong self esteem? By the way, I've also heard of a kindergarden school choir which was broken into "Larks" and "Crows". Someone wasn't thinking straight here!

One day, a few years ago while singing along to the Mommas and Poppas in the car –with no one to hear me – I realised how much I really loved to sing and maybe I could learn how! So I looked around for a voice coach, and with great trepidation, made an appointment. Three weeks later, sitting opposite a smile so warm it didn't feel too threatening to let her hear my voice. From out of the depth of the past, came a song I thought I'd forgotten, The Skye Boat Song.

"Speed bonnie boat like a bird on the wing.....": my voice cracked and crackled from lack of use, and my breath struggled to make the phrase. But I sang. And she was still smiling.

"Georgina", she asked "Do you like your speaking voice?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact I do. I make a living from my speaking voice" I answered.

"Well, my dear, you have one voice box. And if this voice box can produce a speaking voice you like, it can produce a singing voice you like."

She then explained that children's singing ability develops differently, some children develop rhythm first, and some develop tone first. I was obviously a rhythm kid. Who knew?! All those years of not singing...

Am I Diana Krall? No. But do I enjoy singing, and sing whenever I feel like it (and it's appropriate!) absolutely!

So what 'fish bowl' are you in? What paradigm is your 'truth' that isn't really true?