



## Your New Life: Inspiration for Personal and Professional Fulfilment

April, 2009

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### La Vita Nuova April News: Celebrating Spring And New Beginnings!

Welcome to our April newsletter, celebrating Spring and new beginnings! And a warm welcome to all our new subscribers this month; it's good to have you with us. Please forward this newsletter to any interested friends or colleagues, using the button at the end to preserve formatting--this feature is now working!

This issue we're celebrating Spring, new beginnings and possibilities, starting with a delightfully uplifting poem by one of my favourite writers, e.e. cummings. We're exploring the connection between charismatic, powerful leadership and personal development, and inviting readers to join with friends, colleagues, or work teams to ask La Vita Nuova to create a bespoke coaching programme or inspirational retreat to help you spring forward this year...

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it useful. Let me know your thoughts and questions, as well as any requests for future articles.

With warm wishes for sunny days,

*Nicola*

### **i thank You God for most this amazing by e.e. cummings**

i thank You God for most this amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today, and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay

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great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any--lifted from the no  
of all nothing--human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

This poem celebrates the spring, new beginnings, new life (La Vita Nuova!), and it conveys a spiritual, even mystical experience of "this amazing day."

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Cummings mixes up senses ("tasting, touching, hearing, seeing"), word order, punctuation to create a wonderfully joyful picture of spring and new life, so that we as readers share the new experience of what he is talking about by having our expectations startled. The new life isn't just a seasonal rebirth, but a personal one too... and it involves not just happiness and enjoyment, but a fundamentally new vision of the limitless beauty and possibilities of life.

The poem explores a magical awakening to the true essence of things, almost as if something had been unblocked in the speaker so he can see clearly. This new clarity reminds me of an email I received recently from a coaching client who recently left her position in a bank due to job cuts. She wrote that one of her most surprising discoveries was how much her senses had reawakened. She was hearing sounds like birdsong and noticing beautiful developments all around her in the natural world, like blossoms opening and buds growing that she had previously been oblivious to in the rush of her working day.

Cummings is inviting us to say yes to the yes and the infinite, to open our senses to the truth beyond our typically superficially limited and closed way of seeing... "the eyes of my eyes are opened," he says. And the poem is full of soaring positive energy with words like "leaping," "wings," "lifted," encouraging us to lift our thoughts and feelings to greet the "sun's birthday" and "the birth day of life"; note how he repeats the word birthday in different forms to accentuate the newness and possibility of spring.

As readers, we're reminded to be open to new beginnings and to the natural beauty all around us, and to be grateful above all, to slow down our pace and appreciate the opportunities for happiness and joy in "this amazing day."

My invitation and challenge to you today is to open the eyes of your eyes and take some time to notice, enjoy, and be inspired by the new energy within you and around you, all the possibilities for growth and development before you...

## Leadership and Personal Development: Be The Change You Want To See

One of my lovely executive coaching clients was recently

invited to give a presentation on leadership and personal development to his international board of directors. Colleagues were aware of our coaching work and impressed with his own personal development and leadership, both of which are exemplary and, mutually inspiring. So, what does it take to be an inspirational, motivational, effective, charismatic, powerful leader? This is the first in a series of articles on the role of personal development in leadership.

Strong leaders are essential for business success, never more so than in the current challenging climate. As a leader, you need to command respect, have presence and gravitas, combine strategy with emotional intelligence, make people naturally want to follow you, inspire your team to excellence.

Gandhi famously advised us "to be the change you want to see in the world." I believe that leaders need to model, exemplify....essentially be what they are asking for in their teams and companies, and that this takes advanced personal development.

Self-understanding is fundamental. You need to understand yourself, your personality and what you need to be to deliver your best, and to understand and maximise how you come across to others.

Essentially, excellent leaders need to be authentic and to convey this congruence and alignment between thoughts, words, and actions in everything they do. Otherwise you get a jarring dissonance and disconnect that undermines your ability to lead effectively. As one of my executive coaching clients, Maria Horn, HR Director for Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants puts it (and she is a shining example of the power of personal development for leadership), " you can't be authentic if you don't know who you are."

Integrity and authenticity are about wholeness, really, a state where your actions are aligned with both your individual values and the shared values of the company.

Here are some aspects of how my executive coaching programmes help executives to develop into their leadership potential:

- understanding your personality and how you can deliver your own unique brand of leadership
- understanding the impact you have on others and how to maximise this
- raising your energy so that work and life become mutually energising rather than draining
- identifying your needs and getting them met to raise your energy and effectiveness
- identifying and leveraging your strengths to create brilliant results
- understanding your values and leading with them to inspire others
- creating clarity and alignment internally and

externally to reach optimum performance

- being exceptional not just in your business strategy, but in how you motivate and inspire your team to stretch into their potential and work together to deliver their best

Personal development, approached with a systematic and structured framework, is, I believe, a precondition for brilliant, powerful leaders who need to embody the change they want to create, and the results they want to see...

## CREATING Bespoke Group Coaching Programmes

We would be delighted to create a bespoke group coaching programme for your company, team, or group of friends, whether that's a residential weekend at our beautiful venue...



or one of your choice, a day coaching workshop at Home House in central London, or even a year-long telephone coaching programme focused on your particular personal or professional goals.



Let's discuss the best option that will allow you to spring forward this year. Contact me to set up a time to explore and identify the right coaching/training programme for you: [nicola@la-vita-nuova.com](mailto:nicola@la-vita-nuova.com)

## UPDATE on what Nicola is doing


Having an active, fun-filled last several weeks, with highlights including...

- celebrating a family birthday in March with style and serenading!
- getting a guided tour of Westminster Abbey for alumni of Westminster School (I was one of the first girls who attended the sixth-form there, vastly outnumbered by the boys!)
- enjoying art... Fujio Akai at a new exhibition of his work in London, and Botticelli...
- attending a poetry reading at the Bath Literature Festival, with one of my favourite poets, the very funny Wendy Cope
- continuing work on my garden which is now almost at

the planting stage

- getting my son into his favourite secondary school, with an award!
- attending a fun film evening at a film club organised by some new friends, where I saw, for the first time, "Once Upon A Time In The West"!
- organising the next Spiritual Retreat in June for the UK Master Certified Coaches
- preparing to teach "Buff It Up" for Coach U next month
- joining the Athena networking group in Mayfair and enjoying connecting with an impressive group of business women.

Until next month, enjoy your inner spring,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicola". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.