

Cheerleaders and Foggers

Libby Roderick is an Alaskan singer and songwriter who wrote "How Could Anyone?" The first line asks how anyone could ever tell you that you were anything less than beautiful. It's the ultimate post-it to put on your mirror, or YouTube to bookmark, because it ends with "How could anyone fail to notice that your loving is a miracle?"

Bumper sticker philosophy can help me get out the door with a positive feeling, but I also need to know there are pockets of positive energy 'out there' that will help keep my ambition clear and goals in sight.

I need to be around positive people. If want to feel happy and confident, I may need to limit the time I spend with the people that give negative messages—parents, unhappy people, jealous people, even over-stimulation with negative news reports.

Activity:

This is a simple activity called Cheerleaders/Foggers. I believe folks can sometimes be divided into two categories—the cheerleaders and the foggers.

Cheerleaders are just that: positive, energetic, believing in win-win ideas, support me/us kind of people. When I say, "I am going back to school," They say, "Wow, that's great!"

When say, "I am dreaming of owning a place in Cape May," they sigh and say, "Ahh" or "Hey, I know a realtor there."

When I share that I am thinking of writing a book, they respond with "Finally, you're such a great storyteller."

And then...there are the foggers. Foggers don't give a clear picture of life. Visualize a foggy day, it's hard to see ahead of you. Or after taking shower, the mirror is all steamed up and foggy and you can't see a clear reflection. That's what foggers are like. They don't reflect an accurate positive picture. Most foggers are not trying to hurt us or put us down; they are merely using life to try to ward off **their own** fears.

When I say I am going back to school, my fogger associate says, "Aren't you going to be embarrassed with all those younger kids?" I realize today this is about her and not me. She might feel embarrassed, but I am not.

When I foolishly share my Cape May dream with a fogger, they might say, "Oh, it's too expensive there."

Stay with positive people. When I call a cheerleader with good news, their response affirms the belief in the possibilities of abundance, and joy is easier to attain/accept.

Action: Get ready to make two lists—Cheerleaders and Foggers. Divide paper in half draw line down middle—cheerleaders on the left side, foggers on the right. Write names, those people who leave you feeling drained, wrong, not enough = fogger. Those who you feel comfortable with, seem to be mostly happy, content, calm = cheerleaders.

You may find someone rates a spot on both lists. This tells you what you can **and** cannot share with them. i.e. my colleague is a cheerleader when it comes to writing, but soothes her own writing anxiety with potato chips, dip, and ice cream. A foggy solution for me.

Your list may include people in your present and past. A memory of their cheering (hugs, compliments, positive remarks/fogging (putdowns, harsh treatment) may still be with you. Cheerleaders are often public role models.

Do not censor. "Oh, but that's my best friend, how could she be fogger?" Be realistic and honest. This is not criticism; it is more an accurate reporting—all people are not perfect!!!

How to use the lists- Post in a **private** place. Carry it with you.

1. Look at it objectively. How often do I see my cheerleaders? Do not share dreams, wishes, resentments, and secrets with foggers.

2. For two weeks, check the people on the list that you see.

More cheerleaders? More foggers?

3. Plan to spend time with one cheerleader a day—email, phone, see, connect on fb.

4. Plan ways to eliminate fogger contact—go late to a party, leave early.

5. Take some time to pray or send good wishes to the fogger you are detaching from.

6. If you have the energy, be a cheerleader for a fogger. Have compassionate excuse, "It's always so interesting to see you, I need to go."

7. If you have caller id, use it, and do not pick up the phone.

8. Begin to say no with a regretful tone to foggers. "I wish I could help you, but I have to say no."

9. Begin to be more of a cheerleader for yourself.

10. Be on the lookout for cheerleaders.