

Michael Framberger profile

By Stan Thompson

Two years ago, at age 51, Michael Framberger found himself mired in an emotion-draining slump of despair. To reclaim his passion for living, he took life-altering steps. No fireworks or marching bands heralded the transformation, however. A fresh bounce in his step tells it all.

Turned on by his triumph, Framberger now makes it his business to motivate others who may be at wits end with their own situations — people ranging from homemakers to CEOs, anxious to make significant improvements in their lives. He's created Michael G. Framberger Seminars, and written a book entitled *Get Happy, Get Healthy, Be Wealthy — It's Your Choice*.

Framberger insists he doesn't wave a magic wand. "All the helpful information is out there," he explains. "I know where it is, and how to apply it. There's more than knowing what to do; it's getting it done. That requires a well-developed plan of action."

Unlike motivational gurus who market to fill auditoriums, Framberger limits gatherings to 30 or 40 people, "small enough for me to have personal contact," he explains. He also targets underserved areas that aren't exposed to big name programs. Framberger guides attendees in creating 52-week planning/goal guides that he later shepherds like a personal trainer. Each Saturday morning, he e-mails participants to review their progress, and to offer moral support. "Saturdays are best," he explains, "because Monday starts the week, and people still have the rest of the day and Sunday to catch up."

Framberger could be milking cows instead of uplifting lives. Born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, he comes from a long line of farmers, and had earmarked his parent's dairy business for his future. After he earned a degree in dairy husbandry at Cal Poly, and married his sweetheart, Connie, the milk market nosedived. When Framberger was recruited by a large insurance agency to work with farmers and ranchers in estate planning, the couple settled in the San Luis Obispo area. That led to the establishment of his own insurance agency. His wife, Connie, joined the agency in 1988. Framberger left in 1993 to become regional sales manager for Blue Cross. Connie continues to operate Framberger Employee Benefits and Insurance Services.

At Blue Cross, Framberger achieved the epitome of success. He became a top producer, twice earning the honor of Regional Sales Manager of the Year. He also was at his peak physically, competing in triathlons.

Framberger even managed to squeeze in sessions over a hot stove to win local cooking contests. In 1991, he was declared Sweepstakes Winner of *The Tribune's* Album of Recipes Contest for his entry, Greek Lamb in Phyllo. The culinary wizard had taken up cooking as a 10-year-old. He was so fussy about how he wanted food cooked that his exasperated mother finally told him to cook it himself.

A couple of years ago, Framberger's cookie crumbled. "Personally, things were not going well," he recalls, "and I was dealing with family issues and major illnesses that robbed me of time and energy. I was overweight, and had just turned 50. I was not a happy person. I lost passion in everything."

Searching to regain the high ground, Framberger attended a seminar by David Allen, a popular motivational consultant, trainer, and author of the book, *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*. As Framberger recalls, "I took notes, read the handouts and ended up boasting that I was going to get out of my slump and achieve new sales momentum through the end of the year.

"I set out with a bold plan," he continues, "but it was doomed. Working 14-hour days, I got exhausted and didn't have the time or organizational skills to accomplish my goals. I seriously considered quitting and pursuing something that required less time and would permit me to work on the personal side of my life. But I liked my job and the people I worked with."

Framberger took a Maui vacation, vowing to "resolve the conflicts before I return." He took along his briefcase, which he'd forgotten contained the motivational seminar notes and handouts he'd tucked away months earlier. After discovering them, "I saw what I'd missed the first time," Framberger says. "This was a system that might work for me. It was simply but highly structured, and logical. It not only promised I'd get more done, but it would also relieve stress that had been plaguing me. It seemed too good to be true."

After returning home, Framberger immediately attended another David Allen seminar. "It was an epiphany for me," he says. "After the initial mind sweep — writing down everything that was on my mind — I felt as though the albatross had been removed from around my neck."

He listed what had been nagging him, which included "everything that I had wanted to do but hadn't. I wrote down my dreams and future

aspirations, business goals, and a list of long-overdue travel plans and adventures. I wrote a vision of completing a short course triathlon, and training in a gym for weight loss and physical appearance.” He also drafted a plan to spend more time with his wife, daughter and parents. “That alone,” he says, “made it all worth the effort.”

Despite his exhilaration, Framberger felt gnawing uncertainty. “I was still stinging from the failure of the earlier plan.”

The seminar taught him how to execute goals by breaking each down into step-by-step projects, and how to reorganize office space, “which in my case,” explains Framberger, “includes my car. I left the seminar with a new level of vitality. The ball was now in my court.

“Within 18 months I had my best year in the 23 years I’ve been in the insurance business.” He was named Regional Sales Manager of the Year for an unprecedented third time. “Even though I work 10- to 12-hour days, my level of energy is up, my stress level is down. I’ve skied over the Sierra Nevada from east to west, climbed Mt. Whitney with our daughter, Nicole, and took her on a multi-night backcountry ski/snow camping trip. I’m a better father. I’ve been going to yoga classes with Connie for more than a year. I write down everything she asks me to do and follow through with it. Our communication has improved dramatically. I’m a better husband.”

Tackling his weight and appearance issue, Framberger rearranged his schedule to permit a serious exercise program, and even entered a bodybuilding contest. He didn’t win a trophy, but brushes that off. “The important thing,” he explains, “is what happened to me. I lost 16 pounds, took seven inches off my waist, lowered my cholesterol and blood pressure, and dropped body fat. I look more fit than I have in my entire life. I’m a better me.

“We all make choices in life. My challenge is to establish a new mantra. Get back that good feeling of accomplishing something. Get back that passion.”

Note: Upcoming Michael Framberger seminars are scheduled for Oct. 8 in Santa Barbara, Oct. 15 in Visalia, and Oct. 22 in Pismo Beach. Check his website for details and registration: www.gethappy-gethealthy-bewwealthy.com.