

December 2009

Personal Excellence

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The Magazine of Personal Leadership

Lance Secretan
Consultant

Take Positive
Action

**Exercise
Courage**

**Unlearn
And Then Dream**

**Stretch Yourself
Increase Your Boundaries**



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December 2009

The Magazine of Life Leadership

INSPIRATIONAL • COURAGE

Exercise Courage

You will benefit in 12 ways.

by Sandra Ford Walston

COURAGE IS ABOUT ACTING FROM YOUR HEART and spirit—from the center of *your* being—the true identity hidden beneath the false self of the ego. By delving into the heart and spirit of your true identity, you begin to recognize your innate courage as well as the ego's insidious control mechanisms, which capitalize on fear and insecurity. As you recognize the fears that the ego uses to justify its self-importance, you undermine the ego's power to dominate your life and begin to manifest your true identity. You discover the personal truth within your being and recognize courage as the key to spiritual truth.

Fear paralyzes the heart.

What percentage of your life is filled with regrets? Regrets represent times when you allow fearful insecurities to undermine the courageous choice. Recognizing regrets, you can cultivate courage and trust that *going for it* is better than *dying without it*. This is the difference between heart and mind. Learning to stay centered in the present may not banish fear or blame, but you will diminish the tendencies that keep you stuck in fear. Fear blocks and paralyzes the heart; therefore, fear blocks courage. Slowing down puts you in touch with reality—your own issues—releasing you from inner tyranny of fear-based habits and scripts, uncovering a deep set of self-actuating principles. In *The Gift of Change*, Marianne Williamson writes: "We are lifted from weak to strong; we are lifted from lack to abundance; we are lifted from pain to peace; we are lifted from fear to love. None of this happens in an instant, but

over time, through the daily process of living."

Many contemplative practices can help initiate this transformative process—sacred reading, chanting, Tai Chi, hiking, a silent retreat. Any choice that moves you beyond words and thoughts and into the inner silence of the heart enables the fears created by the ego to dissipate. "Within each experience of pain or negativity is the opportunity to challenge the perception that lies behind it, the fear that lies

behind it, and to choose to learn with wisdom. The fear will not vanish immediately, but it will disintegrate as you work with courage. When fear ceases to scare you, it cannot stay," says Gary Zukav in *The Seat of the Soul*. The stillness found in contemplation provides a maturity to your inner experience thereby accelerating your spiritual courage.

Courage cradles your actions.

Fear is a man-made creation—just like slavery, apartheid, and poverty. The dualistic concept of *fear versus courage* keeps you stuck within the mental limitations of ego. When you claim your courage, you begin to experience the heart and spirit truth that transcends the duality of the mind. In recognizing transcendent truth, you begin to see that fear is simply an illusion used by the ego to maintain its position of control, and this recognition dissolves fear, allowing love to fill your heart. This is the experience of "dying to self."

As courage consciousness matures in your life, you'll notice huge shifts in your perspective about fear. You will find courage cradles your actions, allowing you to validate the choice of courage consciousness over attach-



INSIDE

BARRY EISEN <i>Take Positive Action</i>	3	JOE CALA <i>Bad Company</i>	8	JOAN MARQUES <i>Real Progress</i>	12
KEVIN EIKENBERRY <i>Success in the Stairway</i>	4	DEBRA FINE <i>'Tis the Season</i>	8	ROB BREZSNY <i>You're a Star</i>	13
MELISSA MCCREERY <i>Stretch Yourself</i>	4	KENNETH NOWACK <i>Success Scorecard</i>	9	MARGARET WHEATLEY <i>Selfless Service</i>	14
JOHN TOWNSEND <i>Your Whole Brain</i>	5	DOUG DAVIN AND DIANA MORRIS <i>Reframing the Quest</i>	10	FRANK SONNENBERG <i>Integrity: Vote Yes</i>	14
PETER A. ARTHUR-SMITH <i>Option Solving</i>	6	COLETTE YOUNG <i>Spouse Partner</i>	10	RON HOLLAND <i>Wake-up Calls</i>	15
BOB DAVIES <i>Think, Feel, Act</i>	6	LANCE SECRETAN <i>Unlearn and then Dream</i>	11	CHRISTINE KLOSER <i>Simplification</i>	16
SANDRA DAWSON <i>Stress and Anxiety?</i>	7	KATE STEINBACHER <i>Risk Quotient</i>	12	KEN SHELTON <i>Morning Light</i>	16

ments that trigger life's unwanted fears. Soon, with an inner gaze, you discover that there is courage in the midst of fear. It is found in the simplicity of being quietly centered in God's light, and that takes courage! In the Bible (Ezra 10:4), we read: "Rise up; This matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it."

Courage Bestows 12 Benefits

When you can act with courage in your life and work, you experience 12 benefits:

- **Courage enables you to spread your wings and be all that you can be.** When you are driven by courage-fueled energy, you magnify your spirit's fulfillment. Courage is an antitoxin that you can apply to setbacks, hurts or duties. Courage gives you permission to express your individuality and stop others from clipping your wings!

- **Courage empowers you to exit bad situations quickly.** Your *courage mindset* enables you to embrace the courage opportunities you face. You're no stranger to your courage. You may feel unjustly punished when you stand in your courage, but courage provides the inner strength to rise above the "victim" mindset. Your actions become consistently balanced with your courage consciousness.

- **Courage sustains you to design a life of few regrets.** Your courage-centeredness defines your intentions. Each step is an achievement. When you leave this life, you want to be able to say and feel in your heart, "I have no regrets. I faced my challenges with faith and courage." When you remain deeply consistent with your intentions, you can reach for the rainbow!

- **Courage requires you to hold yourself 100 percent accountable for your choices.** You can design your life mosaic and live in the vibration of your true Self. With courage, humility and gratitude merge to dissipate all illusions of self-importance.

- **Courage competencies expand as you step up the ladder called life.** Stepping up reinforces your reservoir of courage, which sustains you until you're ready to take the next exciting step. That next step may be asking for a tough project—or simply changing your hair color or style. Is your range of courage expanding? Note this Chinese proverb: "He who hesitates before each step spends his life on one leg." *Living in courage* is economical—it cuts out myriad missteps.

- **Courage differentiates you, defining your "brand value."** The driver behind courage is the meaningfulness of your life. These qualities are portrayed through your convictions. Your courage enables you to reflect. Using reflection, you can learn to be more present to the truth of your personal branding distinction. What is your brand value? Herein lies the courage paradox: stay pre-

sent, and you will do what is best for you!

- **Courage guides you to focus on best results.** Combining intention with action, courage arms you for success. The power of your spirit illuminates the steps that correlate your success quotient with your courage quotient. Be willing to sacrifice the external world to find your internal world. It takes courage to design your personal blueprint.

- **Courage is a friend during times of uncertainty or difficult transitions.** You need not run from yourself. Your courage permits you to be innately motivated. In courage, your life expresses your heart's core, reflecting the root meaning of the word *courage*: "heart and spirit." Does your life express your heart, your core, your courage? With courage, you can say an absolute "yes" to whatever happens in your life.

- **Courage enables you to declare your intent and develop your success.** Your self-esteem supports you during demanding times. Hard decisions come alive in the



questions, not the answers. Questions inspire actions. See events as opportunities rather than sources of anxiety. Wisdom often dawns in the midst of pain, providing words of encouragement that should be shared with others. Success is not elusive, and courage is not a barrier to a happy life.

Both are venues for your light to shine. What is your definition of success?

- **Courage propels you to reinvent yourself as often as needed.** Conformity is a courage killer. Focus on your accomplishments and maintain a tough measure of accountability. Self-discipline thwarts any mediocrity that might keep you stuck or in anguish. Are you powerfully passionate about who you are? Nothing is more valuable than deepening your sense of who you are. Self-reflection is the key to self-fulfillment.

- **Courage allows you to stand in your dignity.** You don't need to manipulate situations. You know that storms will enter your life, but they offer opportunities for an honest assessment of your vulnerabilities. How frequently do you witness a *mea culpa*? Courage supports you to delve beyond your ego's old behavioral scripts to uncover emotional pain and rewrite those scripts. Only *you* can stop the suffering created by your ego.

- **Courage advances your voice.** When you confront an uncomfortable truth, the essence of your authentic courage comes to light, and you claim this energy. In Latin, *virtue* means *energy*. Is courage your unsung hero? Courage is the gift that lifts your spirit. **PE**



Sandra Ford Walston, *The Courage Expert*, innovator of *StuckThinking™* is a consultant, speaker, trainer, coach and author of *COURAGE*. Visit www.walstoncourage.com, call 303-696-1010, or email swalston@walstoncourage.com.

ACTION: Exercise your courage today.

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Executive Excellence Publishing
Ken Shelton, CEO, Editor-in-Chief
Mary Birdsall, Asst. Editor
Aubrey Hanks, Circulation Manager
Hector Montero, Business Manager
Jeff Snyder, Sales

Marketing Offices:
Leadership Excellence
1806 North 1120 West
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1-877-250-1983
1-801-375-4060

Contributing Editors
Bob Davies, Michelle Gall, Judith Glaser, Joan Marques, Brian Tracy, Denis Waitley

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Take Positive Action

Show up, pay attention, and act.



by Barry Eisen

HAVE YOU EVER FELT STUCK?

Yes, you know what to do, you know you can do it well, but you just can't seem to get out of your own way. Paralysis by analysis has destroyed the best of intentions and cost the most brilliant their success.

Have you ever seen yourself passed by someone with a fraction of your ability, talent, and caring—and then noticed that their accomplishments exceed yours only because they are *there*. While you were thinking about getting into action, they were *there*—being *in action*.

The world is filled with talented, well-intended people. Who moves the world while creating their own world are those who not only plan, but **show up, pay attention, and take action** in the first appropriate moment.

Never leave the site of a great idea without doing something to move toward its fruition.

Certainly the planning and the execution of a plan are two separate things. In spite of distractions you face (and often use as excuses for self-sabotage), by directing your attention to the goal—that why, that plan—you can keep fully on track and in action.

Focusing on the goal, being vigilant and committed to reaching that goal with a **No Matter What, Whatever It Takes** attitude enables you to replace those distractions and excuses with the action to make your dreams realities. It's simple: **You go where you look.**

Dream, Plan, Execute

Having met many talented students, athletes, and business people, I can attest that the most successful not only begin their journey with a clearly defined plan to create it, but they also continue to execute that plan with great focused attention and consistent action.

Behind, under, and around that plan is your dream or goal. Your having a clear reason, a purpose, a why to reach your goal, along with that clear plan, helps keep a positive focus on decisions with which you'll be faced and choices you'll need to make. The most successful develop the habit to choose to take action now. To repeatedly answer your

inner mind's question, "Shall I make the call now or later?" with a clear "now," helps fulfill the promise that 50 percent of success is simply showing up.

Three Simple Steps

In keeping with the KISS (Keep It Simple Sweetie or Stupid) principle, I offer the following three steps:

1. Show up. Follow through with the priorities on your To-Do list as if you were happy to do them. Most people talk themselves out of doing things rather than into doing them. Instead of focusing on ALL the work to do, the calls to make, the people to deal with, etc., stay in the simplicity of the current



moment. Half the battle is showing up. Most people don't even show up—and that gives you the competitive edge. Most business comes down to doing the numbers. Nothing sexy, just the numbers. Even a blind hog can find an acorn once in a while. Start a task with energy, a smile, good posture, a positive attitude and the momentum of presence begins opening doors.

2. Pay attention. Attend to your options and choose carefully in line with your goal. Communication is said to be approximately 90 percent non-verbal. How well do you listen and pay attention? Can you get your ego out of the way long enough to hear another person's story? Do you ask interested and interesting questions? What is really being said? No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care. Ask, pause to hear, address the issue with care. Your memory, your patience, your attractiveness (your ability to attract) increase. Most people are fragile, including even and in particular, those who display harsh exteriors.

Most posturing comes from fear. Relax and tune into your instincts. Don't make everything a struggle. Surrender to each moment and allow your higher self to observe your experience. Let your strength flow within it.

3. Take positive action. To be in the moment and empathetic—and yet not to initiate action, promote the next step, or ask for the order—is an exercise in futility. You showed up. You paid attention. Here is where you ask for the referral or order, set the next appointment date. This can be for a social get together, your child's next step, a travel plan, a review of parties' next work, whatever small step is next in the plan. If fear holds you back from taking decisive action, ask yourself questions such as, "If I already were a great decision-maker, what would I do and how would I do it? What would my physiology be? What would my voice, posture, tone be?" Also consider "What is the worst thing that could happen if I get a rejection or the answer I don't want?"

Reality is: then you'd know and could make your next decision based on the reality, not the imaginings, of the now. Evaluate the risk/reward ratio, and learn to make decisions and act on them with confidence.

You develop confidence by creating victories. Don't over-think situations. Execute instead of analyze. Learn to weigh the facts and make decisions more quickly by practicing decisiveness. "No" keeps doors of opportunity and interest closed.

Outside Your Comfort Zone

Learn to say "yes" to opportunities that will stimulate, educate, and engage you, even and especially if this takes you out of your comfort zone. After all, your comfort zone is where you've been; and, unless that will satisfy you for a lifetime, you want to get out and stay out of your comfort zone.

All of your dreams and goals are little steps outside of your comfort zone. Baby steps will do. You decide the size of the step and the direction.

Teaching is said to be waking up information the learner already knows. I hope this message is timely in that it stimulates you to do some things differently and better than had you not read this article. Kahlil Gibran said, "To know, yet not to do, is to not really know." Go do!

PE

Barry Eisen is founder and president of Developmental Excelerations. Call 818-769-4300, email barryeisen@roadrunner.com, or visit www.barryeisen.com.

ACTION: Move beyond your comfort zone.

Success in the Stairway

You can take a sure path to the top.



by Kevin Eikenberry

IMAGINE WALKING INTO A 20-story office building, knowing that your meeting is on the top floor. You walk into the building and immediately search for the elevators. To your surprise, and disappointment, some elevators show *out of order* signs, and the rest are currently being worked on by a team of repairmen.

You ask one of the repairmen how to get to your meeting on the 20th floor, and he points to a door and says with a shrug, "You'll have to take the stairs."

While this may have never happened to you, metaphorically, this is your life! You want to reach the top of your career, the top of the pay scale, the pinnacle of success. You want to not only do well, but find shortcuts or elevators to the top.

While you know your success in any endeavor, personal or professional, requires some effort, wouldn't you like to make it as painless and easy as possible (which is why you consistently look for the elevator or the fast track)?

There are no "overnight" successes. Great success comes from "taking the stairs" and moving toward your goals one step at a time.

As you start to walk up the stairs to your meeting, you realize that while you would have rather ridden, there are some advantages to the stairway. You are getting exercise, building your stamina, gaining a new perspective, creating a new experience, and as you climb the last flight of stairs, you realize the pride that comes from the effort!

All of these things are true for the effort you put into life. The efforts you expend create exactly these same benefits: exercise, stamina, perspective, experience, and pride.

What are some ways you can make the most of your effort, improving your odds of reaching the top floor quickly?

Five Ways to Use Energy

There are five ways you can use your effort intelligently to make your path to the top straighter and more direct—even if you do have to walk:

1. Informed effort—find the correct stairway. You may believe that to create great results, you must work hard. Effort is required, but the effort doesn't have to be hard. More important than hard work is *informed* effort. Are you

doing things the way other successful people have done them? Are you learning the things that will minimize your effort? Make your effort more informed, and you will make your job easier.

2. Continual effort—keep walking. Getting into the stairway is great, but you won't reach the top unless you keep walking. You must make continual effort. What did you do last week to move toward your success? What about yesterday? What have you done (or will you do) to create greater success today?

3. Reframe effort—does it have to be work? If you always think about your work being hard, it will be hard. Does your work have to be so hard? Could it be more enjoyable and rewarding? Once you create a new frame of reference for effort, you make climbing the steps to your success so much easier.

4. Collaborative effort—why not climb together? Find others to travel with you. When people feel part of something larger than themselves, they'll be more disciplined and effective. Who could mentor you or work with you or support you? Who can you mentor or help?

5. Enthusiastic effort—enjoy the trip. Choose to enjoy the stairs. The fact is the elevator is broken—the walk is real and necessary. Why not find the positive and enjoy the experience? When you enjoy a task, it goes faster and easier—and you are likely more productive.

Effort is required, but how you view that effort will determine the *speed* and *ease* with which you climb to the top. **PE**

Kevin Eikenberry is author, speaker, trainer, consultant, and Chief Potential Officer of The Kevin Eikenberry Group. Visit www.kevineikenberry.com.

ACTION: Take the stairway to the top.

PHYSICAL • STRETCH

Stretch Yourself

Create your best body and life.



by Melissa McCreery

AS MY BODY AGES, I GROW aware of the power of stretching. At some point, it became a necessary part of any workout. In my twenties, I could dash-and-go, but now, if I skip the post-exercise stretch, I notice it. I lose flexibility, I don't feel as good, and my workouts are not as effective. Post-workout stretching is non-negotiable.

Deliberate stretching in other areas—challenging your vision of who you are and how you define yourself—is also important. For most people, early adulthood is naturally about stretching—growing, developing, finding careers, connecting with relationships, creating families. You learn and grow by the curves life throws at you daily.

As you age, life becomes more predictable and settled—fewer new things, more maintenance and responsibility. Stretching your mind and body and stretching your actions might not happen automatically. Or, you may tell yourself that you are *too busy to stretch*.

If you don't stretch, you grow stiff and more confined in how you see yourself and your options. Daily stretching does your body and mind good.

"Do one thing everyday that scares you," advised Eleanor Roosevelt. This doesn't mean jumping into something

terrifying. Stretching is meant to be a gentle act, but you do want to stretch. Don't let anxiety stop you—it indicates that you're addressing something that you care about, that you're invested in the outcome and on the right track.

Slow and steady wins the race. Slow, deliberate, gentle, and consistent are qualities that make stretching powerful. It's not meant to be sudden or jerky. Stretch the boundaries of your comfort zone consistently—a little bit daily. Stretching happens in increments. Sometimes life happens in dramatic leaps, but usually, the new habits, learning, and confidence happen by taking things one step—or inch—at a time. Don't worry about what it will take to get to your final goal—just focus on the stretch you are taking in the moment.

Stretching happens in both your thoughts and actions.

Often, stretching means moving outside of your comfort zone—such as trying an activity you've never tried

before. Stretching also has a powerful mental component. The mental stretch is almost always the first step.

If you don't know where you want to go, you aren't likely to end up there. Dreaming helps you define and map out the direction of your life. If you don't think and dream about where and how you want to stretch, what you'd like to achieve, or what's on your "bucket list," life tends to stay full of the same-old-same-old. **PE**

Melissa McCreery, PhD, ACC, is a Psychologist, ICF Certified Life Coach, emotional eating expert, and the founder of www.TooMuchOnHerPlate.com.

ACTION: Start stretching yourself.



Your Whole Brain

Cultivate the creative right side.



by John Townsend

HAVE YOU EVER HAD THE experience of interviewing someone for a position and not listen to yourself? The individual looks good in all the objective metrics—resume, core competencies, recommendations, intelligence—and so there’s no real reason to have any hesitation about hiring him. Except something inside you is guarded or reserved. The person *simply doesn’t seem right*. However, you override the internal voice and go ahead with the hire. Within a few weeks or months, you discover what you were telling yourself that you were ignoring: the individual has some character problem, or is irresponsible, causes team and culture problems, and the like. The override was a mistake.

This incident illustrates a point: it is important for you to pay attention to the other side of your brain—the *right side*. You likely have extensive training and experience in analytic functions: judgment, observation, decision-making, and evaluation of data and trends—using the left side of the brain. The right side of your mind has to do with more subjective processing of information.

In these difficult times, you need to develop yourself as a productive asset to the highest degree that you can. Reality, whether it be financial or emotional, is reality. Reality reigns. Your best scenario is when the objective and the subjective agree, then you come close to what is real and actual. The more you are able to lead others from *both sides*, the more equipped you are to succeed.

Here are the subjective abilities you can develop, and how to do that.

Intuition. Intuition is knowing without knowing how you know. Intuition is your “gut response.” Science is still discovering the breakdowns of intuition, but somehow the mind is able to instantly process information and come to a conclusion which has a very high hit rate. The most successful and high-caliber leaders listen to their intuition

about a person or a situation at least as much as, or even more than, they do their objective abilities.

So how can you develop your intuition? I have two suggestions. First, intuition seems to be correlated with experience. That is, a radiologist will make a diagnosis on an x-ray of your leg bone in an instant because he has looked at thousands of x-rays. The better you know something, the better you train the intuition. So be a person who intentionally drills down on core competencies and expertise. Be a leader who can not only lead, but also has a deep skill set. Secondly, take time to listen to yourself when you are thinking about a situation. Ask yourself, not only *what do I think?* But *what is my gut telling me?* Simply giving yourself that attention and permission will help you pay attention to what is important.

Emotional attunement. Highly validated these days, the ability to understand what you are feeling is vital for the leader. Emotions have a primary role or function for us. They serve as a signal about something going on that we need to pay attention to. In the same way that the warning light on your car’s dashboard tells you that your oil levels are low, emotions alert you about something significant.



Anxiety, for example, is telling you that something potentially dangerous is ahead. You may need to avoid it, but you must not ignore it. For example, I was on a board that was facing a large financial commitment for the organization. The numbers looked promising, but a couple of the members said, “I’m anxious about this, beyond my normal anxiety.” They weren’t afraid to be afraid. Their concern caused the rest of us to be more careful in our due diligence. Ultimately, we walked away from the deal, and it proved to be the right decision.

Another key emotion is anger. When you are frustrated or angry, often you need to face and solve a problem. Your anger gives you the energy to have courage and do the hard thing. For example, I was coaching one executive

who had an “anger issue” with one of his direct reports, a manager. He wanted to get rid of the angry feelings, because he saw them as a problem. However, the manager tended to blame and excuse his poor performances, never taking ownership of his mistakes, and therefore never changing his behavior. This attitude would make any normal person angry. So, the manager was shifted to another position (and ultimately left). The exec’s “anger problem” went away, because it wasn’t a problem. His anger was his friend, a signal that something was awry.

Here are two to-dos: first, begin to ask yourself “How do I feel about this situation or person?” That is, be focused on your emotions. Attunement increases to the level you pay attention to it. Secondly, have some “feeling conversations” with a friend or two who is familiar with that world: your spouse, an attuned colleague, your coach. Being with a person who is comfortable with emotional language will help you pick up nuances you may be missing.

Creativity. During these times, creativity is a prized ability. When the old paradigms are no longer working, new ones must come in from all sectors of work: sales, marketing, accounting, administration, and HR. Creativity is simply rearranging elements in a way that provides a new solution or opportunity. That is, when you look at your resources—your people, competition, mission, and finances—in different ways and different combinations, you’re more likely to gain a result that works better than the old way. Even if you make many mistakes, it’s better than continuing what is no longer working, because you are learning every time.

How can you develop your own creativity? While there are gifted people with innate ability, you can develop that capacity for yourself. I suggest that you establish a creativity context for yourself. Make some intentional time in writing down all the pieces of the puzzle: the problem, the resources, the people involved, the opportunities. You might put each of these on a different 3x5 card. Then rearrange them as if you would a set of cards, randomly. Look for new patterns and new connections and see if a different approach arises.

Don’t operate with “half a brain.” Be a whole person, and a whole leader. You will notice the results. **PE**

John Townsend is a psychologist, author of 20 books, and a business and leadership consultant and coach. His latest book is Leadership Beyond Reason. Visit www.drjohnstownsend.com.

ACTION: Cultivate your creativity.

Option Solving

It's not problem solving.



by Peter A. Arthur-Smith

YOU LIKELY SPEND MUCH time problem-solving. Usually, you analyze issues based on “how” rather than “what,” and become bogged down in process.

How often have you spent two hours debating a problem and come away with no real resolution? How often have you participated in a meeting where two or three participants dominated, and you left without solving anything? How often have you been part of a team that goes nowhere, because members can't resolve key issues?

Such futility is due to the way that you've been taught to solve problems. “The significant problems we have cannot be solved by the same thinking that created them—we must learn to see the world anew,” noted Albert Einstein.

There is both an *intuitive* and *rational* side to your mind, but you are conditioned to use your rational side more when solving problems. However, your intuitive mind is infinitely more powerful. Your intuitive skills have been honed from the day you were born, whereas your rational thinking has been trained from your more formative years. When it comes to making judgments, your intuition (governed by your right-brain) is more likely to make the right call rather than relying on your rational side (left-brain). Perhaps that's why people with strong logical skills often miss the boat on social and environmental sensitivities when they call the shots. *The left-brain can't tell truth from fiction.*

Option-solving enables you to utilize your powerful intuitions to identify all options open to you for resolving a situation. You can best explore these options by asking, *What?*, thus opening your mind to all possibilities. By asking, “What is going right in this situation?” and “What alternatives do we have that would make it go even better?” you draw on your intuitive, creative juices.

In option solving, you need to agree up front that, whatever options emerge, no-one should ask *How?* prematurely. This kills positive creativity. It switches off intuition and brings you back to rational, process-based thinking.

Brainstorm options until you have at least five worthwhile ones on the table. You can then use your intuition

by asking, “What option seems to make the most sense here?” Collective wisdom of a group will likely choose the optimum option.

With *option-solving*, don't expect a 100 percent solution. If the issue is complex, a 60 to 70 percent option is okay. When you implement a 60 to 70 percent option, an 80 to 90 percent option may become apparent. Once you discern the *optimum option* (albeit a 60 percent one), you can then address the *How?* Even so, you should seek the optimum outcome within another optimum-option, and keep going until the full *How?* is revealed. Such an approach takes full advantage of your intuitive skills.

Option-solving has many benefits:

- It draws on the mind's intuitive intelligence for making the right call, rather than rely on your inept rational skills.

MENTAL • INTENTION

Think, Feel, Act

Do you control your choices?



by Bob Davies

ARE YOU IN CONTROL OF your choices? Science says, only in part. Your brain has specific cortical circuits that when triggered are associated with sensations that arise in the course of wanting to initiate and carry out a voluntary action. Once these circuits are connected and their molecular and synaptic signatures identified, they constitute the neuronal correlates of consciousness for intention and action.

How you feel affects how you think, which affects what you do and the way that you think affects how you feel which affects what you do—it works both ways. Your thinking impacts your physiology, and your physiology impacts your thinking—and both orient what actions you take.

The question remains: Are you in control of how you think, feel, and act? This much we know: *Your behavior is wired for survival!* Since your survival may hinge on your ability to instantly recognize danger and initiate an avoidance response long before you are conscious of the threat, your brain is programmed for pattern recognition and action. This also conserves energy.

Here is an example of both *conservation of energy* and *pattern recognition*.



- It encourages positive creativity and avoids the depressing “what's wrong” approach of problem solving.
- People support optimum solutions, even if they don't fully agree, because of they've considered other possible options.
- It's time-efficient. There is little time devoted to the *How?*
- It reveals the most insightful *How?*
- You are not blind-sided by aiming to find 100 percent solutions.
- It builds momentum by proceeding with doable solutions (even 60 percent solutions) rather than not moving at all.

You can access a new level of thinking in the way you make decisions—and it's much more creative and fun! **PE**

Peter A. Arthur-Smith is a founding partner of Leadership Solutions, and author of Smart Decisions. Email peter@leadershipsolutions.com or call 212-332-8907.

ACTION: Try option solving today.

- What is 12 divided by 1/2? Most people will conserve energy, recognize a pattern, and say 6. Incorrect. It is 24.

This is called a *cognitive miser*—you recognize a pattern and jump to a conclusion. It's easy, conserves energy, and initiates survival action. What you gain in speed, you lose in accuracy. We are cognitive misers—you tend to act first and figure it out later.

What controls this choice? It's a *genetically programmed*, pattern recognition that saves time and creates action, for survival! Your choices are governed by the *law of human performance*. You are coded to avoid the highest level of perceived pain. You recognize patterns and react, then analyze. You can't

change your genetic coding and patterns of predisposed behavior, you can direct it with *behavioral contracting*. How? Make a *commitment*, then place a *painful consequence for non-performance*. Make a penalty that will be enforced if you don't meet the commitment. You're already wired to avoid pain,

to see patterns of opportunity for avoiding your highest level of perceived pain. You'll “see” opportunities to avoid the penalty that would never be available to you had you not participated with a behavioral contract.

Make a commitment, put a consequence for non-performance on the task, have someone hold you accountable, and watch how creatively you avoid the pain and do the activity! **PE**

Bob Davies is a master certified coach. Visit www.bobdavies.com, email info@bobdavies.com, or call 949-830-9192.

ACTION: Try behavioral contracting.

Stress and Anxiety?

If you feel it, choose happiness.



by Sandra Dawson

WHEN YOU FEEL ANXIOUS, you may not have a way to calm down, and may be terrified that your anxiety will trigger a panic attack. You can learn to heal your overactive nervous system that is causing your anxiety and panic attacks.

When you do, you will feel joy and happiness in all situations—except any that truly threaten your safety. The reason you feel anxiety is because something you are seeing, hearing, smelling, or feeling in that moment reminds you of a past trauma. You are reliving that past trauma, even if the current situation you are in is safe.

By learning to release all of the stuck activation in your nervous system, your life will no longer be full of stress and anxiety! Your body will be calmly alert.

Here's a technique you can practice to feel calm and relaxed in a minute: Turn your head from left to right, making a 180-degree turn. While you turn your head, look at objects in the space you're in. Notice everything. As you observe details, say to yourself, "I'm safe" once for each turn of your head. Next, turn your head from right to left. Observe your surroundings again, and say, "I'm safe." Turn your head four times.

You'll be pleasantly surprised how you feel. This technique can calm your body in anxiety-producing situations.

Love and nurture yourself. Happiness is an important state of being. Everyone wants to be happy, because it *feels good*. But not everyone learns how to achieve this happiness state of being.

Why? Some people believe that happiness is a choice. Such misinformation causes many well-intentioned people to fail at being happy. If you believe that happiness is a choice, you'll be stuck with the consequences: You think you have chosen happiness; but when you are upset with a decision you make, you are puzzled, because you are not happy. When this happens, you'll start to believe *happiness isn't possible for you*.

Not true! Happiness is within your grasp. *Happiness is the result of choices that you make in life.* It results when you choose to take care of your needs. When you know your needs and fulfill them, you have the delightful result of happi-

ness. Happiness itself is not a choice. Fulfilling your needs is the real choice to focus on, and happiness will follow.

Thus, happiness is the result of the choices you make! For example, suppose that you want to buy a luxury car. After buying the car, you don't feel happy. Why? The car meets your needs of comfort, safety, and space. But were these your motivations to purchase the car? No! You wanted to feel important. You weren't aware of your need for importance, however, and now you are disappointed. And you are wondering why.

What happened is that you focused on being happy about your car, instead of focusing on your true needs. Happiness eludes you every time you do this.

If you discover your true needs when you make purchases, you'll increase your chances of feeling happy. You will be in a better position to correctly match your needs with the needs that such a purchase can reasonably fulfill. You also may need to discover what's going on in your unconscious mind. Don't hesitate to seek as much help as you need—the benefits outweigh the cost!

A luxury car is not designed to repair wounded self-esteem, unless it prompts you to change a belief about yourself. Wounded self-esteem is a belief system that develops through negative interactions with people. Changing your negative beliefs requires being aware of the wounding interactions, and re-experiencing the feelings that those interactions caused for you. Buying a car doesn't bring you into this state of awareness or help you make psychological changes.

Again, if you want to feel happy, you must fulfill your needs—whatever those needs are. To be happy, you need to work on changing your negative belief. Your personal growth goal will be to decide, "I am important." This is a possible outcome for you to achieve, but it will require you to look inward. Some of your needs can be met by seeking things outside of yourself. Most of your needs will be met by

looking inward. To change beliefs or to increase your self-esteem and self-love, most of your efforts will focus inward, if you truly want to grow personally.

I know you do, and I want to help you. Why? What drives me? I lost the parent lottery. My mother was verbally abusive, and my father threatened my life for 18 years. Yet today I am one of the happiest people you will ever meet.

You can have true love or find true love or have success in everything you do in life—if you give yourself permission to *love yourself 100 percent*. Success in your relationships is only possible if you love yourself. If you don't learn how to love yourself, you'll be stuck in dysfunctional patterns of relating in your relationships, and success in life will remain a mystery to you.

Don't let yourself be stuck any more.



When you love yourself, you let your real self shine: Who are you? What is your purpose? What do you love to do? What are your talents? What do you admire and respect about yourself? Nothing should be blocking you from shining in your true light. Give yourself the gift of self-love.

You can remove all obstacles in your way of becoming

your real self and learn to freely express your real self in all situations and in your love relationship. How?

Start by reprogramming your unconscious mind to believe you deserve to love and accept yourself 100 percent, starting now. There is no reason—other than some false, negative beliefs you have, that could be blocking you now—from giving yourself permission to learn how to love yourself 100 percent.

Write down any false negative beliefs you have in your journal. Analyze your false negative beliefs until you understand how you arrived at your false conclusions about yourself. Then forgive yourself. Recognize that you were taught to not value yourself by parents or caregivers who also lost the parent lottery. Take your power back.

Say "no thank you" to your false beliefs, and decide that you are okay, lovable, special, unique, creative, brilliant, competent, witty, wise, and beautiful or handsome. Love yourself 100 percent, unconditionally. You can have true love and success in life when you give yourself the gift of self-love. **PE**

Sandra Dawson is author of How to Fall Madly in Love with Yourself. Visit www.FallMadlyinLovewithYourself.com or email Sandra@fallmadlyinlovewithyourself.com.

ACTION: Choose your emotional response.

Bad Company

It can ruin good habits.



by Joe Cala

ARISTOTLE SAID, “YOU ARE what you repeatedly do; therefore, excellence is not an act—it is a habit!” A habit is something you form due to daily practice. Depending on what you practice, habits can be either good or bad. If you dedicate more time and effort to some habits, they will grow stronger, have a larger appetite, and desire more attention. The larger the appetite, the more it seeks to be fed. The more it gains power to rule your life. *The more it rules your life, the more you lose having a habit—in reality, the habit has you.*

If you want your children to have good manners, you must develop them through the daily investment of example, time, consistency, and energy. When your child receives a gift, for example, you might remind the child to “say thank you.” The child then says, “Thank you.” The child gives you the gift back, and you say, “Thank you.” You then tell the child to say, “You’re welcome!”

You are enforcing a practiced response by influencing the child to say certain things. These practices are done with the hopes of developing good manners in your child. You continue this practice for months, until it becomes a habit—then you no longer have to remind the child to do it any more. It is now a natural response.

Now just because the habit is formed, enforced, and a natural response in the child’s life doesn’t mean the habit is there to stay for life. In fact, the good habit can be influenced to change. Just as the good habit came through the influence of the parent, the habit can be changed in the same way. Remember: “Bad company corrupts and ruins good habits.” So, be careful of who you hang out with. Whom you associate with will rub off on you and affect your manners, character, and speech. Your company will influence your habits. Your habits will influence your character. Your character will influence your reputation. Your reputation will influence your life. Good company promotes good habits, good character, good reputation, a good life. Bad company promotes bad habits, bad character, bad reputation, bad life.

You’ve worked so hard on develop-

ing good habits. You’ve invested your time, energy, money, and efforts into building good character and reputation.

Protect yourself from bad company destroying your good habits in three ways:

1. Don’t hang around the wrong people! Don’t associate with people who are always complaining and negative. They will ruin what you work to build. It’s easier to look at the bad side of things. It takes discipline to look at the good and achieve good results. If someone can get you to ruin your reputation, they can effectively ruin your life.

2. Hate what is bad! Detest with horror the results and consequences of living a life that exhibits bad habits. You need to be like *Teflon*—the material used on cookware for the purpose of keeping the food from sticking to the pan. You need to be *Teflon* to the bad

ways and bad habits that try to stick to you. They should slide right off of you.

3. Hold onto the good! Push away the bad ways and habits of life and embrace the good ways and habits. Let the good habits and ways of living stick to you like crazy glue. Don’t be overcome by bad habits; rather, overcome bad habits with good ones! You have the power to change your life and the influence to change your world! Never hold back the good that is in your hands. Good people who have good habits need to step out and stand up for what is good. Your goodness is so good that it can change your life and the lives of others. **PE**

Joe Cala is an author, minister, seminar leader, and founder of Joe Cala Ministries. Call 732-504-7475, email revjoecala@aol.com or www.calaministries.org.

ACTION: *Be seen in good company.*

SOCIAL • MINGLING

‘Tis the Season

Make the most of mingling.



by Debra Fine

DESPITE LIMITED BUDGETS and uncertain economy, the season for tasty treats, gift giving, and parties is here. Occasions to make connections, enjoy face-to-face interactions, and improve networking skills are upon you. You may be ready to get into the holiday spirit, but are your conversation skills ready—or are they rusty?

Mingling among mistletoe and menorahs can be a challenge, but you can reduce your anxiety if you maximize your merrymaking conversation skills. Here are six ways to turn your next holiday event into a social success:

1. Break your silence and the ice. Before entering a room, take a deep breath. If you don’t feel confident, act as if you do. Survey the scene and find a target. You can introduce yourself by using basic questions or comments. Try, “How do you know the host/hostess?” or “What have you planned for the holiday season?” or “I love your outfit!”

2. Try to be comfortable—and show it. Nervous body language—twisting your hair, slouching shoulders, and hand rubbing—can make others feel uncomfortable and anxious. Be aware of your body language during your chat. Remember, it’s supposed a fun time of year, so relax. This is a party!



3. Don’t steal the show, but be a showstopper. Nobody likes a Grinch, so make witty jokes, tell riveting stories, and be personable, also giving others the chance to speak. If someone is monopolizing a conversation, wait for a pause, and then make a comment to steer the discussion in a new direction. Try to include all guests in the conversation by asking, “What do you think?” You’ll make a great impression, be remembered in a positive way, and keep the festivities enjoyable.

4. Be prepared. Before entering an event, think of at least three conversation topics. Remind yourself of what you know about fellow attendees: their hobbies, careers, or interests. If you encounter an uncomfortable silence, you can use these conversation points.

5. Mingle and move on, making a graceful exit. Interact with several people. To remove yourself from conversation, you might ask for a referral: “Do you know anyone here

who has a ‘green’ business?” To move on, you might say, “I need to catch up with colleagues. It was nice meeting you.” Or include them as you move: “I’m getting dessert, would you join me?”

6. Follow up with your new friends on what you promise. If you tell them you’ll send them a recipe, do it. Send emails to learn more about them.

You should enjoy yourself at parties and help others do the same, but also enhance your success by networking. **PE**

Debra Fine is a speaker and author of The Fine Art of Small Talk and The Fine Art of the Big Talk (Hyperion). Visit www.DebraFine.com.

ACTION: *Leverage your networking abilities.*

Success Scorecard

Measure how successful you are.



by Kenneth Nowack

IT'S COMMON IN COACHING to discuss performance, effectiveness, and success.

Many people evaluate work and career achievements as the key benchmark of success. How do you define success in both yourself and others?

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *success* as the attainment of wealth, favor, eminence or outcome/result. You may have to shift your thinking from defining this concept too narrowly (only in terms of career accomplishments) or in an unbalanced manner to expand the way you conceptualize *success*.

Success Scorecard Domains

The *Personal Success Scorecard* conceptualizes *success* as having four overlapping pillars or domains.

1. Achievement/Career. *Key question: What have I done that I am most proud of in my work or career?* Professional achievement has five core elements: 1) identifying and deploying your signature strengths; 2) clarifying personal, career, and professional goals; 3) maintaining healthy lifestyle practices (managing energy and not time); 4) defining meaningful achievement of work and life activities; and 5) identifying markers of professional accomplishment.

Nobody accomplishes success in their profession or career without hard work and deliberate practice. For example, researchers studying the diaries of 24 elite figure skaters found that the best skaters spent 68 percent of their practice doing hard jumps and routines compared to those who were less successful (they spent 48 percent of their time doing the same difficult things).

Having raw talent is wonderful, but it's *what you do with it* that matters most. Expert performance requires about 10 years, or 10,000 to 20,000 hours of *deliberate practice*. Success in this domain requires devoted time, seeking ongoing feedback, and practicing the behaviors until you become *unconsciously competent*.

Career success is meaningless unless you remain physically healthy in the face of challenges. Develop practices of emotional, physical, and psychological renewal. Resilient people manage their lifestyles to maximize their energy and avoid burnout. Get adequate rest/sleep,

as this is associated with immune protectiveness and peak performance.

Adhere to a regular schedule of physical activities that encompasses a diversity of cardiovascular, strength, and flexibility to promote brain elasticity and stress management. And deploy *physical and mental relaxation strategies* to reverse the stress-response and energize you for the challenges you face.

2. Relationships. *Key question: Who provides me with the instrumental, emotional, and informational support that I use and value?* Relationships have five elements: 1) avoiding emotional vampires and toxic relationships; 2) being candid, authentic, open, and honest; 3) giving back to community, family, friends; 4) creating new relationships



and fostering growth in current ones; and 5) maximizing positive social exchanges with meaningful others.

Your relationships are associated with your productivity, engagement, physical health, and psychological well-being. The *quality* of your relationships profoundly impacts your life expectancy and well-being. It's easy to ignore this domain until you realize the vital role that key partners, family members, and friends play in your life.

Identify your social network to see the number and type of relationships. List the harmonious and the draining ones. Identify those that provide you with feedforward and perspective, and expend energy to strengthen at least one key relationship. Consider writing a "letter of gratitude" to a key mentor, friend, or family member.

3. Happiness/spiritual well-being. *Key question: What activities bring me the most pleasure, mindfulness, and contentment?* Happiness/spiritual well-being has five core elements: 1) feelings of pleasure and positive emotions and

the absence of negative emotionality; 2) a sense of closure and forgiveness with past events, successes, and failures; 3) contentment and acceptance of our current work and life situation; 4) optimism for the future; and 5) gratitude giving for what we have in life.

Your happiness "set point" is partly genetically determined (50 percent) but it can be affected by life situations (10 percent) and behaviors and activities (40 percent). In the face of challenges and celebrations, you tend to fall back to your natural happiness set point.

Do you want to increase your happiness? By deploying *signature strengths*, giving gratitude, forgiving others, and reflecting on the one thing each day that makes you truly blessed will increase your level of well-being and happiness. Indeed, you can strive to focus your emotions and thoughts to be more in the moment and to treasure your blessings, despite setbacks.

4. Legacy/Meaning. *Key question: What are my core values and reasons for living?* This domain has three elements: 1) defining and deploying core values; 2) defining and acting on your spiritual or religious feelings and behaviors; and 3) defining and acting on your personal mission and meaning in life.

Legacy/Meaning is about clarifying *what* you can do and leaving behind *what* has meaning for you. Be clear about how you want to be seen and remembered and the type of person you want to become. Develop a personal vision that clarifies your definition of noble purpose in life (contributions and impact), passions (things you are most committed to in life), your calling (activities and things you are drawn to in order to fulfill a purpose) and legacy (what remains or will continue as a result of your life).

Applying the Success Scorecard

The *Personal Success Scorecard* requires that you: 1) define objectives and metrics for each domain; 2) reflect weekly on the progress of each goal; 3) involve key stakeholders, friends, and family members to support your objectives; and 4) periodically evaluate each domain. The *Scorecard* helps you effectively manage your energy and time each day, look at life success from a *balanced* perspective, more fully define personal success, and set personal objectives and metrics in each domain. Today is the first day of the rest of your lifestyle. PE

Kenneth Nowack is a psychologist with Envisia Learning. Email ken@envisialearning.com or visit www.envisialearning.com.

ACTION: Use the *Personal Success Scorecard*.

Reframe the Quest

Prime your brain to expect success.



by Doug
Davin and
Diana Morris

TWO PEOPLE BEGIN SEPARATE CONSULTING practices. Each loses a contract. The first consultant takes her former client to lunch to find out why, learns how she can improve her business, and builds a strong bridge to the client who later sends her referrals. The second blames the loss on poor chemistry and never discovers the real reason. *Long term, who succeeds? Who founders?*

Two people are scheduled to interview for a desirable position. One plans the interview, researching the position and company, and arrives early, feeling fresh, positive, and prepared. The other decides chances are slim he'll get the job and "wings it." *Who gets called back?*

Two people receive average ratings on performance reviews. One accepts the feedback as valuable advice and uses it to set new goals and improve job performance. The other resents the feedback, views it as negative, is discouraged, and shares his frustration. *Who succeeds? Who stagnates?*

You know the answers. You know what happens to the woman who thinks believes she lost the client because of poor chemistry. She finds everything a struggle. Clients come and go, her business struggles, and there is little joy in her work. You can also guess what happens to the person who doesn't prepare for the interview, and the person who is demotivated by a performance review.

You also know what happens to their positive counterparts. They advance, grow, and press on to greater rewards.

Look for a *common theme* in the lives of successful people: they never stop thinking, asking future-focused questions that anticipate success and lead to positive action: "Now that I know what's expected of me, what steps can I take to improve performance?"

Activate Your Success

As you reframe the quest—*What steps could I take now to set a positive result in motion?*—you prime your brain to expect success and live the language of hope.

The questions you ask are a frame you draw around the future you're creating. Ask yourself negative, uninspiring questions like, "Where does Joe get the

nerve to talk to my manager that way about me?" "Isn't this the third time a client tried to cheat me out of my fees?" and "Why would Joan exclude me from that meeting?" and the frame fills with negative, uninspiring ideas. That's what these questions set you up to expect.

Upbeat questions that focus on building a better future draw a different frame: "How can I build a stronger relationship with Joe so he comes directly to me with feedback?" "How can I improve communication with my clients?" "What can I do to ensure Joan includes me?"

Listen for the language of possibility: "How can I build . . . ?" "How can I improve . . . ?" "How can I strengthen . . . ?"

Watching your language is even more valuable in a conflict when emotions are stirred up and anger prods you to use caustic words and take drastic action.

PROFESSIONAL • PARTNER

Spouse Partner

It's a source of power.



by Colette Young

YOU ARE WELL AWARE OF the pressures of your work life—but you may forget that the high-pressure lifestyle greatly impacts your spouse, as well.

The way your spouse feels about your job can provide either a strong wind beneath your wings, or a terrible weight on your shoulders. Your spouse has a major impact on your effectiveness at work, and plays a major role in your success—or failure.

How can you ensure that both of you are on the same page, with a single objective and a commitment to move ahead to achieve joint goals?

In my experience as an executive spouse and mentor, I find that the most successful partnerships adhere to four critical principles:

1. Remember, you're in it together.

You and your spouse are partners in this journey, and you're in it for the long haul. Relationships hit bumps when one or both partners forget about the big picture, feel blindsided by stresses associated with work, or feel that their needs are taking a backseat to their spouse's. Both spouses need to recognize that a climb up the ladder is not easy—sacrifices are required. You and your spouse need to map out the long-term plan, discuss challenges that will arise, and commit to the entire journey.



Emotional wisdom gives you the vision and grit to think about the future you want to create and tame your tongue so it works for you, not against you.

Reframing also applies to your general word choice, helping you express negative situations in empowering, future-focused terms—*frame* from: "I just can't get along with them" to *reframe*: "I'm determined to improve the relationship."

Phrases in reframed statements signal future-focused thinking. The *Frame* and *Reframe* describe the same situation, but in different terms. Both statements are correct, but the *Frame* statements keep you trapped in negative energy, while the *Reframe* statements open your mind to possibilities and keep you hopeful. **PE**

Doug Davin and Diana Morris are authors and coaches. Visit www.breakthroughskills.com or call 877-312-5400.

ACTION: Practice reframing situations.

2. Be accountable to each other and to yourself. Acknowledge your feelings and needs, and those of your spouse, and talk about them to ensure both of your needs are heard and met. Often, finding a solution can mean compromising or creating common ground.

3. Be flexible. If you are promoted, both you and your spouse will have to adapt. With increased pressure, you may look to your spouse for more support. The executive spouse may have less time or focus with the busier husband or wife, and need to find his or her own path. A promotion that includes a move to a new city, or country, is a major challenge. Family issues

are cited as a major reason for the failure of relocations, especially foreign ones where pressures quickly mount. An executive spouse may need to seek new friends, or consider a career change. The executive may need to leave his or her work at the office, and focus more on the spouse when they're both home.

4. Provide unwavering support. Both spouses need to provide the support necessary to ensure each partner is fulfilled and content. Publicly recognize the other spouse's efforts. Acknowledgments reinforce the *power of two* and set a great example for other people who are building their spouse team.

The home is where this starts. Small, everyday gestures of consideration build a strong team and lay the groundwork for unwavering support. **PE**

Colette Young is president of ExecuMate, providing coaching, seminars and mentoring. Call 214-883-2598 or email colette.young@execumate.net.

ACTION: Form a strong partnership.

Unlearn and then Dream

It's a precondition of financial success.



by Lance Secretan

EACH WINTER, I RUN A *Leadership Summit* in which we enable skiers of intermediate ability to overcome their fears so that they can ski moguls (bumps) in their first half day and double black diamond runs (experts only) by the end of the first day. Many teachers say this is impossible, but we do it all the time.

How can such a breakthrough be achieved so quickly? When people ask me to share the *secret sauce*, I tell them, "You're asking the wrong question: It's not so much about what you need to learn—but what you need to *unlearn*."

When you are frightened, you calcify your attitudes and beliefs—you resort to the familiar and close your mind. New learning is impossible, and effectiveness is impaired. An intermediate skier, facing a 60-degree pitch, will resort to old habits—a *snow plow* (the skis are wedged to slow speed) or *side-slipping* (the skis are angled at 90 degrees to the incline of the slope). Until these old habits are set aside, no learning progress can be made.

Unlearning is prerequisite for growth. Unlearning is like seeing the world with new eyes. To unlearn, you: 1) admit that an old practice, belief, or attitude is not solving the current problem and that doing more of it won't lead to desired outcomes; 2) open your mind—yield to the view that there are alternatives to the way you've always done it until now; 3) switch from *trying to rationalize the use of your long-favored solution*, to *asking questions about how you can change, learn and grow*; 4) commit to terminating the old way forever; and 5) practice and perfect the new way.

As Satchel Paige said, "It's not what you don't know that hurts you—it's what you know that just ain't so."

Have One Dream

The common, unifying experience among winning teams, great endeavors, and extraordinary achievements is a dream. Yet we rarely talk about dreams. Instead, we create "mission, vision, and values" statements. The stale barrenness of these statements pales in comparison to the inspiring power and passion embedded in a dream.

As a leader, your role is to identify, realize, and sustain a dream. You must ignite the passion in yourself and your colleagues to fuel the achievement of something extraordinary—a bold, daring, audacious, thrilling, exhilarating, rewarding, and inspiring *dream*.

A powerful dream inspires other people to embrace it, make it their own, and make it real. A powerful dream can transcend differences, disagreements, and petty arguments. The dream unites us at a higher level, engages us in a higher purpose.

All great leaders have a dream. In his speech in 1963, Martin Luther King repeated *I have a dream* eight times. It is their ability to articulate their dream that inspires and unites people. Dreams have the power to inspire us, and great



dreams, well executed, are sustainable. When you describe your richly imagined dream, you describe your most extraordinary, outrageous, never-before-achieved aspirations, often secretly held until now, because you have permission to be fearless and imaginative, to think outside the box and be extraordinarily creative. You then come up with some remarkable ideas.

You invite others to believe in the dream, to assume that the dream can be realized, and to put their energies behind that dream and achieve it. As you harness the passion and energy of every person behind that dream, you begin a journey toward peak performance. Competition for resources, ideology, the need for control, or power hampers the creation of an inspiring dream.

Scientific Intelligence® operates on the principle of identifying *permission space* that supports the dream, leading to a sound plan for change. SI yields a clear picture of the energy that constituents

freely contribute to power the dream and identifies the key drivers of success that propel people toward that dream.

Realizing the Dream

How can you create and realize a dream? As a leader, your role is to inspire others. When you do something that is uninspiring or demoralizing, it sucks the passion from the dream and frustrates the people who are trying to achieve the dream. You are directly responsible for inspiring and coaching those who are realizing the dream. So, you must be fully inspired—all of the time—to live your life in a way that inspires others—all of the time. Your role is to inspire everyone, every day, all the time, in every way, in every communication and action so that every decision, communication, feeling, and relationship moves people closer to the realization of the dream. The first act that demoralizes someone who is trying to realize a dream will break the spell, trash the passion, and waste the opportunity.

When you think about what's possible, even if never attained before, and identify it as a dream that you hold dear and seek to realize, and then make the commitment to align the entire team who is serving the customer—and the customer themselves—behind everything necessary to achieve that dream—the dream becomes possible. Identifying the *One Dream®* that gathers and galvanizes the passion of all constituents ignites inspiration.

The magic of having One Dream is remarkable: Committed team members share the rigor of defining the *One Dream*, co-create it, and become champions for realizing the Dream. The team is focused on a richly imagined future that harnesses their energies behind attaining the Dream. Internal and external messaging is simplified and clarified—there is only *One Dream*. Many buzz-words and slogans, tag-lines and marketing themes dissolve in the presence of *One Dream*. Leaders share an inspiring story—*One Dream*—and use it to market, recruit, persuade, inspire, build, grow, and excel. The buzz around the *One Dream* excites and inspires people, creating new opportunities. Where there is no *Permission Space*, there is insufficient energy to propel certain strategies, priorities, or projects, and they should be relegated to a lower priority or dropped altogether, since they don't contribute to realizing the dream. **PE**

Lance Secretan is an author, teacher, coach, mentor, and speaker. Visit www.secretan.com/leadershipsummit, email info@secretan.com or call 519-927-5213.

ACTION: Have a financial dream.

Risk Quotient

Move into a growth zone.



by Kate Steinbacher

YOU MAY NEED TO TAKE CALCULATED risks that move you outside of your comfort zone to discover fresh possibilities.

Have you ever stayed in an unsatisfactory job or relationship because it was “too risky” to make a necessary change? Remember: change does not have to be all-encompassing. Change can occur in steps—you do not have to quit your job or throw away your relationship. Taking any steps can feel risky, but doing so can open doors to success.

If you have an unsatisfactory job, you can evaluate what’s causing the dissatisfaction and assess what is working and what is not. You may discover that you value the company, but the position is too limiting. Change, in this case, may be a matter of discovering avenues to a more responsible position. The answer may not be simple—perhaps more education or training is needed—but you can then plan to make it happen. Suddenly your old job is a stepping-stone to the next level, not an unsatisfying ordeal.

What about an unsatisfactory relationship? The risk may be mustering up the courage to communicate with your partner from a more loving place. You may have to put away your need to be right and be open to being a better listener. You may have to make a pact with your partner to have conversations where you each get time to say your part (lovingly and without blame) and then hear the other. You may both have to give up being defensive, feeling victimized, and create a safe place for you each to speak your mind, in a loving manner. The risk is rejection; but without the risk, there is anger and hurt.

And the day came when the risk it took to remain tight in the bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom. —Anais Nin. Do you want to stay in bud, where it is dark and restrictive, or bloom? To bloom, you must exercise courage and risk failure. The *pain of staying where you are* has to be greater than the *pain of taking a risk*. Take a look at where you are in your job and relationships. What small risks can you take to begin to blossom? Are you ready to step out of your comfort zone?

Is comfort all it is cracked up to be? Think about times in life when you’ve been comfortable with your job, rela-

tionships, and home. There is a sense of security in the status quo, but also a bit of boredom, inactivity, or complacency. Being too comfortable can be detrimental. When you’re comfortable and confident, you often become stale, even lazy. You lose your edge and risk stagnation.

Think about the times and places where you experienced great growth.

These are times and places when you are outside your comfort zone—perhaps learning to be on your own for the first time, struggling to make it, getting and performing a new job. Consider the investment you had to make, and risks you had to take. Looking back at a difficult time, you can see you have grown, learned lessons about yourself, and how you might better move through a difficult place the next time. And, you have enlarged your *field of comfort* or your

comfort zone. You would not choose to put yourself in as painful a place as divorce or job loss, but you now can recognize skills and attitudes you had to develop, that you can use in future situations. Each time you step outside your comfort zone, you are faced with growth and learning—you enlarge your world. You also gain fresh perspective. Even the most feared loss can become a gift.

I challenge you to find your **Growth Zone**, somewhere between comfort and pain. Take some steps outside your comfort zone and embrace the growth and strength it fosters. Take responsibility for a project at work or home that stretches your abilities. Take one step. **PE**

Kate Steinbacher is President of The Coaching Advantage LLC. Visit www.thecoachingadvantage.com.

ACTION: Accept risk and move into a growth zone.

FINANCIAL • PROGRESS

Real Progress

It's what you decide it is.



by Joan Marques

RECENTLY, A FRIEND CALLED me from the Netherlands. He owns a small factory there, and is satisfied with the way his life has played out. While he usually calls to make small talk, he called this time with a special reason. He’d been talking to a mutual friend, and they concluded that I should visit their country with the purpose of exploring options to migrate.

Both friends felt that I could do fabulous things and experience great growth in their country. Just when the story started to sound good to my sense of adventure, my friend made a comment that woke me up from my daze of fascination. He said that after 10 years of running stationary, it would be good for me to get into some real action.

I was stunned, and then asked him what he meant by *running stationary*.

In 10 years I’d earned an MBA, Doctorate in Leadership, wrote six books, over 400 articles, lectured at university courses, gave countless presentations, organized conferences, engaged in a second doctoral study, and co-founded two non-profit organizations and four scholarly journals for which I was the editor and director. But in an unguarded moment, my friend summarized his opinion about all of this—*stationary*.

So, what would *not* have been sta-

tionary? To them, a non-stationary life consisted of running one or more high profile businesses, regularly driving a new car, buying one or more houses, and focusing on financial rather than intellectual or spiritual growth.

Indeed, in the first 20 years of my working life, I focused on gathering as many assets with the intention of retiring early and enjoying life at 40. However, after 19 of those 20 years I realized that merely gathering economical wins was no longer a thrill. So I set out for a more rewarding life: one with few extrinsic incentives, but with tremendous intrinsic satisfaction. No expensive cars, but lots of elated

moments; no impressive mansion, but a tremendous sense of serenity; no glamorous exposure that resulted in a massive bank account, but numerous spirit-lifting works that helped people from all over the world to grow. Less financial luxury but more peace of mind, less selfishness but more connectivity, less limelight but more enlightenment.

You should not downplay making financial progress, but financial gain should not become the all-encompassing priority, because the loss of something far more important comes lurking around the corner: peace of mind and personal gratification. Treading a *golden middle path* is the key to progress.

Others may see your life and progress very differently, but that’s okay because *progress is what you decide it to be*. **PE**

Joan Marques is co-editor of The Workplace and Spirituality and author of The Awakened Leader. Visit www.joanmarques.com or email jmarques01@earthlink.net.

ACTION: Make real progress in life.

You're a Star

A winner and genius.



by Rob Breznsky

YOU'RE A STAR—AND SO AM I. I'm a genius—so are you. Your success encourages my brilliance, and my charisma enhances your power. Your victory doesn't require my defeat, and vice versa. Those are the rules in the New World—unlike those in the Old World, where zero-sum games are the norm, and only one of us can win each time.

In the New World, you don't have to tone down or apologize for your prowess, because you love it when other people shine. You exult in your excellence without regarding it as a sign of inherent superiority. As you ripen your latent aptitude, you inspire the rest of us to claim our *idiosyncratic magnificence*.

Tibetan Buddhist teacher Geshe Chekawa (1220–1295) specialized in *bodhicitta*, seeking enlightenment not for personal gain but as a way to serve others. On his deathbed, he prayed to be sent to hell so that he might alleviate the suffering of lost souls.

As you explore *pronoia*, you'll discover that, like Chekawa, you have a huge capacity to help people. Unlike him, you'll find that expressing your benevolence doesn't require you to go to hell. It may even be unnecessary for you to sacrifice your own joy or practice self-denial. Just the opposite: Being in service to humanity and celebrating your unique power will be synergistic. They will need each other to thrive.

The *Golden Rule* is a decent ethical principle, but it could be better. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" presumes that others enjoy what you enjoy. But that's wrong. There are many things you'd like to have done unto you that others would either despise or be bored by. Here's a new, improved formulation, which we call the **Platinum Rule**: *Do unto others as they would like to have you do unto them.*

This is not just a virtuous way to live—it is also the best way to ensure the success of your selfish goals. The rituals and spells of occult orders purport to be supercharged techniques for imposing your personal will on the chaotic flow of events, but I say that practicing the *Platinum Rule* outstrips all of them as an exercise to enhance

your potency and happiness.

At the heart of the pronoia way of life is an apparent conundrum: *You can have anything you want if you'll just ask for it in an unselfish way.* The trick to making this work is to locate where your deepest ambition coincides with the greatest gift you have to give. Figure out exactly how the universe, by providing you with abundance, can improve the lot of everyone whose life you touch. Seek the fulfillment of your fondest desires in such a way that you become a fount of blessings.

The Bible quotes Christ as follows: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

This approach is as vital to my well-being as getting good food and exercise and sleep. It's self-destructive for me to hate anything, including things that are easy to hate and that I might be naturally inclined to hate. As much harm as Christians have wreaked on our culture, for instance, feeling disgust for them only makes me sick. It



feeds the very "us versus them" thinking that I'm pledged to root out, thereby making me a hypocrite and tainting my integrity. My mental and physical health suffer, and that diminishes my ability to get what I want.

I got an e-mail from a *beauty and truth* fan who calls himself Drek, Agent of the Future. "How come, in the long list of human fears, showing one's true self is never included?" Drek mused. "Compared to the electrifying and terrifying prospect of shedding our protective masks and expressing our raw souls, snakes and death and public speaking really don't seem that scary."

I congratulate Drek for facing his greatest fear. I thought his struggle to reveal his naked beauty was as great a service to humanity as the work of Buddhist teacher Geshe Chekawa.

"To be an altruist, you must first be an egoist." —George Gurdjieff.

"Before you can give yourself away, you must have a self to give." —Isabel Hickey, *Astrology: A Cosmic Science*.

"In a gift-giving society, an individual gains prestige and satisfaction by receiving, then adding to what has been received and passing it on," says Lewis Hyde in his book *The Gift, Imagination, and the Erotic Life of Property*. "In a consumer society," he continues, "prestige and satisfaction are gained through accumulation and acquisition. Nothing is given, nothing is passed on."

Though you have been born and raised in a consumer society, your attraction to pronoia suggests you have the ability to live in a gift-giving society. One of the best ways to change yourself to help create such a society is to expand your capacity for both accepting and bestowing largesse.

Pronoia isn't just a matter of raking in the blessings offered to you by the universal conspiracy, nor is it merely about aiding the conspiracy to disseminate blessings to everyone else. It's a balance of the two.

The Beauty and Truth Lab's youngest practitioner is a teenage poet, Deirdre Vonn. She's modest about her art. She worries she hasn't earned the states of awareness she writes about. "I don't know if I'm really as sensitive and deep as my poetry implies," she confessed once as she handed me a pristine, wrenching poem.

I understand her concern. Am I as consistently generous as my writings might make me appear? Nope. But in the effort to provide delicious and nutritious oracles for my readers, I am constantly pushing to live up to the moral artistry I espouse, becoming in the process a *more interesting and useful person*.

How about you? Is there a gift you can give or service you can provide that will awaken your sleeping endowments? Is there beauty you can bring to life in your environment that will compel you to become more of a charismatic, ingenious star?

"You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself flowers in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men and women are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight, as misers do in gold, and kings in scepters, you never enjoy the world." —Thomas Traherne, *Centuries of Meditation*. PE

Rob Breznsky is an aspiring master of curiosity, perpetrator of sacred uproar, and author of *Pronoia Is the Antidote for Paranoia: All of Creation Is Conspiring to Shower You with Blessings* (North Atlantic Books). Visit www.freevillastrology.com.

ACTION: Practice the Platinum Rule.

Selfless Service

Are we all in this together?



by Margaret Wheatley

ONE COMMON PHRASE today is, “We’re all in this together.” From high-level leaders to school board members to teenagers offering service, this is the mantra of our time. This mantra makes visible what, until lately, has been invisible: community, the web of our interconnections, the safety net of caring that we extend to one another.

Fortunately, more people are discovering that when only persevere through difficulties when we’re truly together. Yet many of us—distracted by stress, anxiety, and busyness—have forgotten the power of community. We don’t have time for each other, and we hastily assign judgments and stereotypes to those we don’t know. Our pressure-cooked lives are driving us farther away from the resource that could most help us—strong relationships with those in our local communities.

I am heartened by the news of workers who support each other’s continued employment by taking decreased hours; by the many foodbanks, shelters, and other forms of care springing up; by the new National Service Act that encourages public service and promotes volunteerism. On one trip to New Orleans, the plane was filled with a church group volunteering a week of service to the rebuilding efforts after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The man sitting next to me said quietly: “I’m going because it’s the right thing to do.”

Let’s hope that America is waking up to both the need and the rewards of being “in this together.” We may even be waking up to the fact that most people want to help others, want to be generous, and care a great deal about the welfare of neighbors and strangers. We can rely on human goodness.

These are the first signs of a major turning toward one another to discover what we might create together, how we might help each other, how we might console and strengthen one another. I, with many colleagues, have worked in Third World communities for many years. These communities in many cultures have taught us that, in spite of the worst circumstances—war, famine, abuse, societal collapse, ecological devastation—people can get through any-

thing as long as we truly are together.

We all need to learn this undeniable truth of human experience. No matter what’s going on around us, if we truly believe that we’re in this together, and we work hard to be there for one another, we can make it through.

To make it through the long journey ahead, we must give up our love of self and *individualism* and embrace *community*.

Here are a few questions about the behaviors that need to change: Can we get over ourselves? Can we stop focusing on our private needs and open to the greater good, to what will benefit many? Can we realize that if the least among us benefit, we all benefit? If they suffer, we suffer. Can we let go of our

need to blame, judge, scapegoat—all the thoughtless and hasty ways we separate from each other? Can we shift from self-interest and self-protection? And do this at work, at home, in public meetings? Can we exchange fear for generosity?

You need to make a choice. Will you choose to engage wholeheartedly with others to create healthier communities, persevering through the frustrations of working together? Or will you withdraw in self-protection? Or will you give up, overwhelmed and exhausted? Daily, you must choose to *be in this together*. PE

Margaret Wheatley is President emerita of The Berkana Institute, a charitable leadership foundation, and author of *Finding Our Way*. Visit www.berkana.org.

ACTION: Offer some selfless service.

SERVICE • INTEGRITY

Integrity: Vote Yes

We must set high standards.



by Frank Sonnenberg

AT TIMES I WORRY ABOUT the future—about my family, business, the economy, and the ethical standards set by elected officials. Politicians spend too much time measuring their words, covering their behinds, or plotting against the opposing party—rather than doing the people’s work. These actions breed cynicism, apathy, and anger.

If we can’t trust our elected officials to do what’s right for our country, we have nothing on which to build a stable way of life. Trust, honesty, and integrity make up the fabric that binds us, separating an orderly, civilized society from chaos and anarchy.

Trust—or lack of it—is inherent in every action we take and affects all we do. Let’s say *Enough* to self-serving behavior, manufactured “truths,” and perpetual discord! The longer these actions continue, the more they become *accepted behavior*. Trust and integrity must be at the heart of our society.

Teachers, clergy, and politicians serve as role models. Our kids emulate their behavior. Maybe a mandatory sentence should be required for unethical or unlawful activity by role models that clouds the morals and judgment of our children. We must demand more accountability from public officials.

Tell the whole truth. While the art of *spin*—a one-sided presentation—may be acceptable, stretching the truth or

outright lying is not. Euphemisms masquerade the truth. How can we trust politicians when they misrepresent or conceal the truth? We respect those who prescribe bitter-tasting medicine if that treatment is needed. When politicians dance around the truth, they lose credibility and the confidence of the American people, damaging the institutions that they swear to serve.

All men are created equal. Discrimination is un-American. This applies to ethnicity, race, age, sexual preference, or gender. When we denigrate people and vilify industries to score points, we open the door to discrimination.

It’s a tough world. Today, families sacrifice every day. Hence, the waste of taxpayer money (pork) is nauseating. We see waste in bailout money, bureaucracy, outdated programs, and inefficient operations. Before taking the easy route by cutting funding, raising taxes, or printing money, politicians need to be better stewards of taxpayer money.

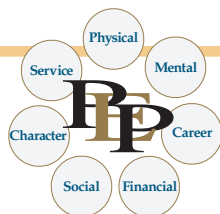
Do unto others. Daily we hear of some politician being accused of adultery, corruption, tax evasion, or bribery. Party leaders should banish members of their party who do not live up to high moral and ethical standards.

People should enter public service to make this a better world—not for personal enrichment or power. To be viewed as givers rather than takers, politicians must report all compensation and benefits, draft strict “conflict-of-interest” laws that prohibit lobbying of former colleagues, and strengthen disclosure rules to prevent special-interest favors from subverting public interest. PE

Frank Sonnenberg is author of *Managing With a Conscience*. Visit www.sonnenbergpartners.com.

ACTION: Serve public interest with integrity.





GOAL GETTERS



Do you have a big enough Why? Once you get clear on *What* you want to achieve, you need to know *Why* you want it. If you have a big goal, you need a big *Why*. Otherwise, you'll lack the determination and resolve to overcome the inevitable challenges you'll encounter in the process of achieving it. Don't be so focused on the *how* that you miss the all-important *why*.

When you invest your precious time and energy into a worthy objective, your *why* must be strong. If you have enough benefits—enough reasons for the goal—you substantially increase your chances for success.

The Universe hangs onto the answers you seek until it's convinced that you are inspired by enough desire. When your desire is equal to the task, you find what you are looking for.

Weak passion, weak answers. Little zeal, little determination. How's your *Why*? If you're not making the progress you think you should be making in achieving your goals, maybe you haven't inspired yourself with enough reasons why you want them.

You may want to lose weight, for example, but fail to achieve it. But what if you *had to lose weight*? What if you were promised a million dollars to lose that extra 20 pounds you're carrying around? You could do it, couldn't you?

Of course you could. And all that changed was the payoff—your *why* got bigger.

So, come up with enough reasons to lose the weight. List them and review them. Do the benefits stir you with strong emotion?

Jim Rohn says, "When the *why* gets stronger, the *how* gets easier." What can you do today to increase your motivation and determination to achieve the goals you've set? Make a good list of why you want each important goal. If you do, and if you review them often, you will be focusing not only on what you want, but why you want it. It works.

—Michael E. Angier, SuccessNet.com



Self-esteem is a disposition to experience yourself as competent to cope with the challenges of life (trust in your self-efficacy) and as worthy of success and happiness. You perceive yourself as someone to whom achievement, success, friendship, love, and self-respect are appropriate. If you feel *inadequate* to face challenges, *unworthy* of love or respect, *unentitled* to happiness, and fear assertive thoughts, wants, or needs—if you lack basic self-trust, self-respect, and self-confidence—your self-esteem deficiency will limit you, no matter what other assets you possess.

—Nathaniel Branden, nathanielbranden.com



Creating something new always requires leadership. To bring an idea into reality, take eight steps:

1. **Determine what you want.**

Start with an image or a vision of something you want, or want to create for yourself and others.

2. **Make the choice to create it, or not.** Determine what's doable and how much you want it. It can be equally powerful to determine that you do not want to do it, and visualize a modified vision.

3. **Articulate and communicate the vision.** Enlist some support and help. Learn to paint your picture vision clearly in words.

4. **Assemble the tools, resources, and team required.** If your vision is big, you'll need help. Hire the best.

5. **Work through obstacles.** These teach you to face your fears and to seek the help you need to transform the obstacle into an opportunity.

6. **Make use of the best skills of others in ways that will get what you both want.** To get the best performance from talent, you must inspire them to do their best work in a way that serves your vision.

7. **Adjust as the shape and character of the dream change.** Nothing is written; everything is re-written. Learn to modify your original vision.

8. **Step back, appreciate what's happening, and enjoy the journey.** Learn to enjoy the creative process. Focus on completion, not perfection.

—David Brownstein, hollywoodcoaching.com

PersonalCOACH



Wake-up Calls

Get back to basics!

by Ron G. Holland

I LEFT SCHOOL AT AGE 14 AND SERVED AN apprenticeship as carpenter. The day I finished, I set up my first motorcycle shop.

After a rocky start, business began to grow. One day a man, Ian Douglas, came into my shop. "I can't believe it! Here you are, a young man, with your own business. What's the secret? Have you read *Think & Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill?"

I told him I hadn't even heard of the book. He promptly bought me a copy. It took me ages to read it because I thought it was an instruction book. Silly me! Every time I was told to do something, I put down the book and carried out the instruction.

For example: Write, *Winners never quit and quitters never win* and place it above your bed. I did this. Write a list of goals. I did this. Set up a mastermind group, share with them your goals, and enroll their help. Well, I announced to the mechanics and salesmen in my shop that they were now my mastermind group. They went out and found other motorcycle shops for sale. Quickly we had seven shops!

Back to Hill's book: *See in your imagination the money you intend to acquire. And see yourself giving merchandise of the same value in return for the money.* I really struggled with visualization. Should I see the money in a big pile of \$100 bills? Should it be in the form of a check? Why should I do this anyway?

For many reasons, I pushed this important step aside. Eventually my shops got into desperate financial difficulties. I was about to go bankrupt. Then I intuitively visualized what I wanted. The harder I tried, the clearer the images became. After three days I could actually see seven shops full of motorcycles. A few days later, a Eureka! popped into my head: *You don't need money! Ask those selling motorcycles to bring them into your shops and sell them on "sale or return" basis. You only pay for the bikes once they are sold, and you keep a big commission!* Soon the bikes and the cash flooded in, and I made my first fortune. For the first time, I equated the practice of visualization with the generation of success ideas!

You can create your own Eureka! and turn them into money. But you must visualize—*visualization and affirmation really work.* You build up a program in the neurons at a cellular level—like software for the brain. Once you impregnate the neurons, you start coming up with ideas, solutions, and Eureka! **PE**

Ron G. Holland is a speaker and author of *Talk & Grow Rich*, *Turbo Success* and *The Eureka! Enigma: 7 Keys to Realizing Your Dreams* (Morgan James). Visit www.eureka-enigma.com.

Simplification

You can expand though it.



by Christine Kloser

IN A WORLD BEING TORN apart from the desire for more, more, more, something incredible is happening. There is a shift underway—from the old, greedy patterns of yesterday to a more simplified and aligned approach to everything.

I was reminded of this again recently as I watched Wayne Dyer's movie *The Shift*. He talked about the "morning and afternoon" of life. He refers to this as a shift of moving away from an ego-based drive for money, acquisitions and external achievements toward a soul-based desire to be of service, and to experience (and be a source of) peace and love.

I know I may sound odd talking about service, peace, and love, but the new business paradigm is based on these very things. I meet so many entrepreneurs who are fed up with all the hype out there about money, money, money. These are the entrepreneurs who are looking and searching to find true meaning in their work, and to become more aligned with who they are here to be, and who they are here to serve—knowing that this is the place where abundance of all kinds flows!

This quest is the most valuable and important quest you can go on. It is only through these deep internal shifts in your consciousness that you can experience the abundance and lasting success you are looking for in your life and work. This is a shift toward simplicity—a shift toward your own energetic expansion, a shift toward surrendering and trusting a higher plan.

I want to share with you three of the most valuable lessons you can apply to expand through simplification.

Know that less is more. I've met with several people who have hit big milestones in their work, who are now questioning and wondering what it's all for. The overhead is high, the stress is high, the ambition is high, but the quality of life and of "being" are low. Contraction has been happening in the very space where expansion is most needed. The solution we see as we compare notes is that the key to growth isn't "bigger is better." The key to the growth we are looking for in terms of fulfillment, satisfaction, ease, openness and grace is simplicity! Scaling back, saying no,

releasing projects, rethinking the "more is better" business model . . . is what's leading me and others I know to more freedom and true soul fulfillment.

Seek ease. I've heard for years that business is supposed to be hard. That I am supposed to be juggling many projects at once, that I am always supposed to be in create and produce mode. I realized how ridiculous it is to keep striving unnecessarily, yet I was doing it. My focus now, as with many of my colleagues and clients, is turned toward the experience of ease. With the help of trusted coaches and colleagues, they helped me see I was trying to do way too much, and they called me on it. They helped me see a huge, soul-fulfilling opportunity that I've been moving away from for years. It was painful to see that I pushed away ease in exchange for work, but I'm glad now that I'm

making some new choices. What new choices do you need to make to bring more ease into your life and work?

Trust. When things get more difficult than you ever thought they could, you need to trust—*trust in a higher plan* as you move forward. Growth can be challenging, but when you acknowledge that a Higher plan exists in supporting, guiding, and leading you, it gets easier. When you trust, you can see the Universe conspiring for your highest good in every moment. It always is!

Embracing these three concepts will help you experience more of everything you're looking for in your life and work. They are great ways to start experiencing more of you! PE

Christine Kloser is author of The Freedom Formula and coaches entrepreneurs. Visit www.TheFreedomFormula.com.

ACTION: Simplify your life.

INSPIRATIONAL • CREATION

Morning Light

It's the time for creation.



by Ken Shelton

HOW WELL DO YOU USE the morning hours—say 6 a.m. till noon? I assure you that by attending to priorities, putting first things first, you can make a difference in the quality—and likely the longevity—of your life.

In Genesis, we read that God created the world in six days, rested on the seventh, taking some degree of pride in His workmanship, declaring it "magnificent and beautiful."

Three Forms of Creation

Morning is prime creative and re-creative time, and your morning creations might be spiritual, physical, and professional.

Spiritual creation. Take some time daily for scriptures, meditation, prayer, visualization, affirmation, planning. Such activity constitutes the spiritual creation of the day, giving you a chance to enhance and exercise faith by imagining and believing in potential realities. Such spiritual creation adds to your authenticity. You then tend to come at people and things from your core of light, truth and goodness—and tap into the wisdom and enlightenment of a higher power.

Physical recreation. Morning is also prime time for exercise and grooming.

You have more energy, renewed from sleep and ready to go. Prepare all you need to get into the exercise mode when you awake. The more you make it an automatic, conditioned response, the more likely you are to do it daily. To sustain the habit of exercise, I find it helpful to add some incentive or reward for meeting my goals, as well as having someone to report to or exercise with. Daily hygiene and grooming are other key elements of physical recreation.

Professional creations. Morning is prime time for priority professional work—especially work that calls for creativity, originality, concentration, discipline, and sustained productivity.

You can get more of what matters done in less time; and over time, you create an impressive body of unique, signature work.

Each morning represents a fresh start, a gift of new day, a fresh clock and prime playing time. The dawn signals the

immense potential of the day for creative work that has never been done before. As long as you have life, you have the chance every morning to make a clean sweep from yesterday's thoughts, attitudes and behaviors and start anew.

Today—this morning—is your time to invest in inspiration and creation. Repent of sin and sloth. Develop a clear plan, and give this day your very best shot. PE

Ken Shelton is editor of Personal Excellence and author of Beyond Counterfeit Leadership. Call 801-375-4060.

ACTION: Use your morning time well.



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Ken Shelton, editor



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