

Personal Excellence

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The Magazine of Personal Leadership

Kerul Kassel
Author and Coach

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Good Fortune**

**Where
Is God?**

**Declutter
Your Life**

**Elite
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January 2008

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January 2008

The Magazine of Life Leadership

SPIRITUAL • PRAYER

Where Is God?

When prayers aren't answered.

by John Welshons

WHERE IS GOD WHEN TRAGEDY STRIKES? When events happen that break our hearts? When people inflict cruelty and suffering on us? Where was God on 9/11 or when Hurricane Katrina struck or when the Tsunami swept 250,000 people to their deaths?

These and similar questions form the basis of nearly every quest for spiritual understanding, and every crisis in faith. I've heard these questions from parents who have lost children, from heartbroken widows, from distraught victims of random violence, from people who have experienced injuries, from confused people of faith, and from cynical non-believers.

If God is everywhere, in everything, and in everyone, why do we so often feel so disconnected from God? Why would an all-loving, all-powerful God leave us unprotected from danger? Most spiritual teachings offer few answers to these questions—nor do they prepare us well for life's inevitable difficulties.

In some sense, this is a cultural problem. Our culture gravitates toward spiritual teachings that support our system of values. We want to maximize pleasure, minimize pain. But, ironically, the more we seek pleasure, the less happy we become. The more material wealth we attain, the higher our depression, anxiety, despair, drug and alcohol addiction.

We often think of God as a kind of cosmic vending machine—put in a prayer and get what we want. Or, we think of God as someone who looks like us, thinks like us, experiences the same emotions, and holds the same values.

There is really only one substance or ener-

gy in the universe—light. And there's only one light. Everything we perceive as a distinct form is a pattern of that one light. That one light is the essence of your being, and the essence of all Creation. Enlightened or awakened consciousness is awareness of the Source of everything, the interconnectedness of everything.

The most efficient means for awakening to the One Light is by deepening your capacity to love. Love—real, spiritual love, Divine Love—

is the expression of oneness in form. Not loving with the expectation of reward, but loving purely for the sake of loving. Pure Love doesn't seek anything in return. Spiritual awakening involves deepening your ability to love, expanding your awareness, and unfolding your true nature—your highest state of being. Your highest state is Love. The main thing you seek in life is love. Love is within you—infinite, unbound-

ed, Eternal Love. Love is the expression of the One Light. And God is Love. Every moment of happiness you ever experience is a glimpse of your soul—a glimpse of the Love within you.

No loss, disappointment, injury, or illness—in and of itself—can take away your inherent ability to be happy and loving, and to know God, although you can argue with the realities of life, and lose awareness of your inner Light.

Suffering is part of life. But if you let it do its work on you, it can open you to new spiritual awareness and enlightenment. The process can be painful at times. But ultimately you recognize that God—Love—truly is everywhere.

Praying for something—and not getting it—is something we all experience, and yet dis-



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belief often arises as a result of prayers not being answered.

The power of attraction, creative visualization, and positive affirmation all use prayer and positive thinking as means of getting what we want. But ultimately we *really* need a profound transformation of the heart. The highest spiritual teachings are about cultivating love, compassion, and wisdom; alleviating suffering; and treating other people as brothers and sisters—not about satisfying all our desires. They're about learning how to live in peace and harmony in this world, where people and events rarely behave the way we want them to, and learning how to be a person who contributes to the well-being of everyone—not just "me." That's why—from the spiritual point of view—it is not helpful to offer teachings that just *increase* desire. They tend to perpetuate selfishness, not cultivate compassion and generosity.

My life has been profoundly affected by experiences of miraculously answered prayers—including a miraculous healing from polio in 1953 when I was three years old. Yet I've also had times when no matter what I prayed for, none of my prayers seemed to be answered. Yet, when I reflect on my life, I can see that the times when prayers weren't answered—when I didn't get what I wanted—turned out to be fertile times of spiritual growth. Thwarted desire can lead us to a closer relationship with God, the Creator, or the Divine. Of course, it's your choice as to whether or not you want to let it do that.

Don't think that you've been abandoned or that there is no God or that God is cruel just because what you pray for doesn't happen. These life experiences can guide you to deeper spiritual growth. On the road to happiness, you may have to *do* something to find it within yourself—to stay connected to God, to the Spirit, to the Divine, and to experience love and inner peace, no matter what happens to you or your loved ones.

The response you get to your prayers won't always be the one you hope for, but you shouldn't use prayer as a measure of your spiritual success or advancement—or proof of God's love for you. Unanswered prayer may be a great gift. If your parents gave you everything you wanted as a child, you might have some major problems. If my mother had given me all the ice cream and candy I wanted, or let me drop out of school at 16, which I wanted to do, I would have had a very different life. Her wisdom caused her to say, "no." She could see a bigger picture. Similarly, God might say "no" to steer you around pitfalls which you can't see.

Life inevitably involves suffering. If you have a body, you will experience physical

pain. If you have a heart, you will experience emotional pain. If you don't get what you want, you will suffer. But even when you *do* get what you want, you will experience suffering because whatever you get will change, decay, and ultimately die.

Happiness is your natural state and true nature. What inhibits your ability to be happy are not external conditions, but all of the chatter in your mind—the desirous, analytical, fearful, judgmental thoughts. When you are busy judging, desiring, analyzing, fearing, and wanting things to be different, there is no open space for clarity or quietness. Your true, eternal nature gets crowded out by your incessant thinking, desiring, analyzing, and judging. And when your desires are thwarted, your mind fills with angry, frustrated, sad, victimized thoughts.

Happiness never comes from fulfillment of desire. It comes from unveiling the infinite love, peace, and joy within you—the God within you. Getting what you want may

give you a taste of that, a little rush, a cheap high. But then you get addicted to having your desires fulfilled because the only way you know to achieve happiness is through cheap highs.

I know that healing through prayer is possible! I have seen it in my own life. But, it doesn't always happen. And I don't think a healing that has been prayed for which doesn't happen is a reliable indicator of that person's worthiness in the eyes and heart of God. Many people get closer to God when they go through an illness, injury, or loss. So, when your prayer isn't answered, try to be patient and ask what it has to teach you.

God functions in Eternal time. Just know that the effects of your prayer may appear slowly. And don't be so anxious to understand "why?" In many cases, there really are no answers. Ultimately, there is just your experience, and your reaction to it. Because, how can you know what God intends? How can you or I understand why we don't get what we want in an Infinite universe? The more helpful question is, "How do I use this experience to go deeper into love, to be a better person, a more loving and peaceful person." Love is the greatest healer and the only thing that will bring you happiness. The deeper and purer your Love, the deeper and purer your connection with God. Real happiness lies in expanding the Love in your heart to the point that your thoughts of *I*, *my*, *me*, and *mine* fall away, and you focus your awareness more on *us* and *we*—on the bigger picture, the larger universe. PE



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ACTION: *Pray with an open heart.*



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Time for Change

It's not all the same.



by Janice Presser

DOING ANYTHING INVOLVES spending time—and time is your most precious asset. Every success involves good time management; many failures can be attributed to poor time management, so it's the first thing you think about.

Time is the great equalizer. Rich or poor we all get the same 24 hours each day. Some of us have more time-consuming obligations, but we do not all use time the same way. You can learn to get the most out of those hours without making a list, prioritizing, and all the other tasks you associate with good time management—and may dislike.

Three Options

First, realize that there are three ways of using time: *Dark Time*, *Light Time* and *Fluorescent Time*. Each of us has a preference for Dark or Light Time.

You use Dark Time when you send a communication to someone who is not receiving it at the same time. Think of sending a letter or even an email as an example of Dark Time.

You use Light Time when you are face to face with someone in conversation. The sender and receiver are in the same place. They are action-oriented and can get things done. There is immediate follow-through to ensure that what was planned actually happens.

You use Fluorescent Time when you are unaware of how you are using time. I call it *fluorescent* because it can give you a headache just like you can get from a flickering fluorescent light. When you are in *Fluorescent Time*, you don't focus on planning or doing or following up, so you are ineffective. You are often focused not on the past, present or future but either on a "what is about to happen" fantasy (wishful thinking) or on what you believe "should" have happened. It allows neither for real planning based on real projections nor for real time action based on what is happening.

Dark Time allows you to work on an article or vision plan and stop, hours later, feeling more refreshed. If you're interrupted while you're working, being forced out of Dark Time and into Light Time, it's fine as long as you can

later return to what you were doing. But if someone always interrupts you with what you consider to be trivial matters, you'll see them as an intrusion who doesn't respect you or your work. In Dark Time, the clock is irrelevant. When you are absorbed in Dark Time or Light Time, you are unaware of the passage of time. That is when you can do the most and best work.

You need people near you who prefer Light Time, or you may forget that it's time for dinner or that other people are waiting for you to leave the office. You need to be sensitive to their preference too, or they'll see you as a tyrant who has no respect for their limited time. They've always got more on their to-do list and are always hungry for time. If you waste their time or fail to honor their schedules, you'll frustrate



them. Sometimes you wish that you could just drag them into Dark Time with you, but even if you could, you would lose their expertise in dealing with Light Time issues like following up on details to make sure that the visions actually get planned out, executed, and followed up.

Example of Partnering

Suppose you need to get your act together for a speaking engagement. Your thinking has evolved, and you want to ensure it all comes across right. You also need to plan for what will happen in your absence. And then there's your wardrobe. Does it project the image you want? How can you manage your time to get this all done? You need to change your presentation, your management plan (temporarily), and your image (pack the items that fit you and the situation). You start by using your best resources—the people on your team who use time like you and the people who don't.

Invite your *Dark Time partner* to work with you via email to polish the presentation. You may spend some face time on the problems, but it will probably be over a meal and most of the con-

versation won't be on the topic. It will be more like a Dark Time sync operation, since you will both have been thinking about the problem, in the background and probably in your sleep.

Invite your *Light Time partner* to figure out how to handle the details of whatever might come up in your absence that might need attention.

That leaves you with the one thing you have to do yourself, and it needs to be done in your less-favored style. You need to do a quick evaluation, make a few decisions, and carry them through. To stay in Light Time, put your deep thoughts on hold, eschew Fluorescent time, and go for reality. People will focus more on what you say than on what you wear, so stop worrying. The evaluation and decision making is over in five minutes, the quick list is penciled, and you can return to your real work in Dark Time.

Five Tips for Managing Time

Here are five more ways to apply time management to yourself and team:

1. Do whatever it takes to keep people out of Fluorescent Time. Being transparent and sharing the realities of the business will keep people on a transparent, realistic work path. Misleading people with empty promises and meaningless platitudes demotivates people.

2. Learn what style you prefer. If you have a strong preference for one or the other, you'll try to avoid the one you don't like. No one can get much done by going back and forth between Dark Time and Light time, between planning and execution.

3. Recognize the danger signs. If you are so busy putting out fires and responding to crises, you are ignoring Dark Time issues. However, if you are totally laid back, focused entirely on the bright future, always planning but never getting anything finished, you are ignoring Light Time Issues.

4. In times of great stress, such as personal crisis, use time management aids. Make lists, prioritize what you can and can't do, get some extra help and, above all, don't be afraid to ask for help.

5. It's how you use that time that counts. Every person—from the rich and powerful to the poor and helpless—has the same amount of time in a day. It's how you use that time that counts. Odd moments, like odd change, adds up to a great fortune. PE

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ACTION: Know your time style preference.

Negative Thoughts

Use them to prevent disasters.



by Craig Price

THEY SAY THAT, WITH A POSITIVE attitude, you can do anything. Is that true? I know that, no matter how hard I work and how positive I am, I can never be Miss America. Why? Well, for one, there is an age limit. For another, I'm married. And, of course, I'm not a woman.

You need to look at the reasons for your goal. Knowing why you want a goal enables you to find other ways of reaching it. This is where negative thinking comes in. For example, why would you want to be Miss America? I can think of three reasons: 1) you need scholarship money, and the Miss America program is a great way to get scholarships (but you don't need to be Miss America to get one); 2) you have a social agenda to promote, and the platform or celebrity of being Miss America might help (but, again, you don't need to be Miss America to do that); and 3) you want people to think you're pretty (but, you don't need to be Miss America).

So, having a positive attitude won't get you everything you want (although it may be helpful). Positivity isn't the end-all/be-all to success. Why eliminate negativity entirely from your life when it is such a good tool. It's like saying, "Build a house, but you can't use a tape measure." Negativity is just a tool.

Negative thinking allows you to plan. You can identify problems before they happen so you can avoid them. Why does a football team have a backup quarterback? Wouldn't positive suggest that the starting quarterback will be fine? That he'll go all season without getting hurt? So, why bother having a backup? Computers are proof that negative thinking has a major part to play in our lives: You have antivirus software on your computer. Why? Positive thinking tells us everything will be fine. But common sense and negative thinking say that bad things happen to computers every day: viruses, crashes, power surges, hackers and identity thieves. We try to be as proactive as possible to protect ourselves from harm, so we get the firewalls, the hard-drive backups, and the surge protectors. Why wear seatbelts? Positive thinking tells us that we'll be fine if we just have a good attitude. Negative thinking allows us to

look at the dangers of driving and to do something about it. Airbags, seatbelts and speed limits are all negative-based things that are good for us.

Negativity can work for you if you:

- **Keep an open mind.** Be open to both the positive and negative aspects of your life. If you can see the value in positive thoughts, you can see value in negative thoughts. Since you are conditioned to believe that negative thoughts are bad, you may need some practice.
- **Look for the why.** If you can see the reasons why you want the goal, you can often find other avenues to it. You tend to see unfamiliar things through a warped perspective. You get caught up how you think a goal should be obtained when you don't really know. If you knew, you'd have done it by now!
- **Maintain a balance.** Negativity is not

an all-or-nothing approach. Use the proper dose of negativity with your positive attitude. The combination can be powerful. "Hope for the best, prepare for the worst" is the right balance. No one wants to help, work for, work with, or be near a 100 percent negative person. But a person who avoids problems, thinks ahead, and understands that the world isn't perfect is the one who succeeds.

You can either use negativity to your advantage or be a victim of it. So look at your negative thoughts. Find the kernel of truth in them and use it to move forward. Being negative can be a positive, if you use negativity intelligently. **PE**

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ACTION: Use negativity to your advantage.

MENTAL • WISDOM

Wise Up!

Re-gain your brain.



by Dale Anderson

YOU MAY BELIEVE THAT you are born with a certain number of brain cells, and that those cells die off as you age; however, you can generate new brain cells, and branch them out and make new pathways in your thought and learning processes at any age. Being mentally sharp isn't reserved for youth.

The act of building brain power is called "neurobics" (aerobics for your brain), and you can do neurobics anywhere in minutes a day.

Apply Three Principles

Apply these three neurobics principles daily:

1. **Act happy.** Method actors try to replicate real-life emotional conditions under which the character operates to create a life-like performance. You can bring a little theatre into your life by acting happy. Acting happy has a chemistry that is measurable with T-cells, gamma globulins, serotonin, endorphins, melatonin, and cortisol. We can even scan the brain and see what the emotional map of the brain looks like, because a physiology goes with the emotions. We can see what anger, sadness, or happiness looks like. Acting happy (smiling and laughing) activates positive chemicals in the brain that keep you alert and healthy.



2. **Sharpen your senses.** Doing simple exercises can refresh your senses and keep your memory strong. You might brush your teeth with the opposite hand. Eat a new food. Get dressed with your eyes closed. Wear earplugs for one hour. Sit outside with your eyes closed and identify sounds and smells. Balance on one foot and then on the other while doing a task. Read out loud or listen to someone read. Try to guess the denomination of coins by feeling them. Welcome novel and challenging encounters. Such activities help your brain make new pathways. When you use both the left and right spheres of your brain, you add dendrites onto the branches of the brain cells, enabling more new connections.

3. **Make physical connections.** When you're alone, you tend to do things the same old way. You rarely exercise your brain and make new neural connections. You can connect with others through a club, association, church, or group activity. Simply being in a crowd, such as a sporting event, enables you to connect. Growing plants is a way to connect, as it brings you closer to nature. Pets, especially dogs, are a wonderful way to connect. Teaching and mentoring foster long-lasting connections. Any celebration or ritual brings connection into your life.

Make fun neurobic activities part of your daily routine. Give your brain the tools to feel young and vital. **PE**

Dale Anderson practiced medicine for nearly 50 years and now coordinates the ACT NOW project; he is the author of Never Act Your Age. Call 651-484-5162 or visit www.acthappy.com.

ACTION: Exercise your brain.

Serving Others

You then achieve success.



by James R. Fisher, Jr.

IN HIS ESSAY ON *HUMAN Understanding* (1671), John Locke explains: *No man knows what strength of parts he has until he has set his mind to work and applied the thoughts vigorously to his business; for it holds in the struggles of the mind, as in those of war, that to think we shall conquer is to conquer.* Locke believed that our experience of the world is filtered through ideas, which we create to cope with it. He insisted that ideas are not absolute representations of our knowledge because our biases—or the filters of our senses—color our knowledge.

And in *Path of the Master* (1939), Julian Johnson states: *No one can understand his own interests, until he has some comprehension of the universe of which he is an integral part, and with every part of which he is somehow related.*

The basis of empathetic understanding is love. Without love, the possession of all knowledge is for naught, as Paul describes: *Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; love never faileth; and now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*

If these remarks make you uncomfortable, it comes to you naturally from your social conditioning that separates your spiritual side from your material side, as if your soul has no body, and your body has no soul. Those by nature spiritually bent are seen as *unworldly*, whereas those of a material inclination are considered *worldly*. Yet, for you to be fully human, both must be a part of your nature. Only through *wholeness* can you truly understand yourself and others—and effectively serve others.

Empathetic understanding involves reason as well as love. But it is not mechanistic reasoning—not a short-cut of the mind to compute what you are

getting for what you are giving. Unfortunately, people hardly ever behave, as you would have them behave. Even so, there is a strong urge to categorize people, to pigeonhole them into comprehensible little boxes.

To get through life without constantly being anxious, you must understand others *from their perspective*, not yours. Love gives you the patience to do this. If you listen with your whole body, not just your mind, *people will tell you what you need to know to serve them.* Try to feel what a person is saying beyond the words to what they are trying to communicate. What they are saying may be an exaggeration of what they are feeling but is offered up to overcompensate for their frustration. All they need is an audience, and you happen to be it.

Others may try to divert you by verbal inventions (boldface lying), histrionics (playacting), or put you on the defensive when they believe you can see through them. It could be a psychodrama played out to win

sympathy for their point of view, or a request for permission to rant to restore their equilibrium. Others are attracted to you when you give them permission to be themselves, warts and all. Whatever people do, they are telling you something about where they are, and how they are, at that moment.

People with empathetic understanding process a great deal of information: *The name of a person, place, or thing.* A person has a personality (person), geographic (place) and demographic (thing) profile, which if understood correctly leads to insight, intuition and integration of this information into understanding where the person is coming from. Surprisingly, most people will candidly give such detail data if given the chance. It takes listening with the third ear, or the *thinking level*. The first ear is the *hearing level*, or the muddled noise we call “talking.” The second ear is the *listening level* in which we hear what the person is saying, but fail to register the message. This allows others to state their minds, project their self-image, share their emotional state,



and convey their intentions. Without calibrating these *mood swings*, you might as well be somewhere else because you would fail to understand.

Four Keys to Understanding

Confidence comes from interaction. You can't expect to have confidence without working hard to understand others, because in understanding them you better understand yourself. It takes time and experience to comprehend the implicit message behind all the verbal noise of conversation. Yet most conversation is taken at face value instead of being decoded to understand what the person is trying to say, but can't say it directly. Rarely, if ever, do we say exactly what we mean. Being understanding, and understandable, has this foundation:

- **You are born a self-centered egotist.** And since your ego is fragile, you will do just about anything to protect it. This makes meaningful exchange difficult.
- **You are more interested in yourself than anyone else.** You invariably try to turn conversations around to what you think, feel, and value. Failing that, you become bored, stop listening, or excuse yourself from the conversation.
- **Every person you meet wants to feel important.** Treat people with respect, whatever their station. Respect returns tenfold. If you are condescending in manner, they will see you as an adversary. Show you care, and the balance will fall in your direction.
- **You crave the approval of others so that you may give yourself permission to approve of yourself.** Self-hating is a cultural conditioning that's like a chronic disease, and can only be mollified by constant attention. The hardest person to win your approval and make friends with is yourself. Everyone suffers this handicap, and they're grateful when you relieve them of it by sincerely complimenting them for who and what they are.

When your interaction with others is not motivated by love, it is manipulation. Enabling others to be comfortable as themselves requires you to see what they need and understand what they want from you, and then, within practical limits, assist them to that end. Manipulation rises from the belief that you know best what someone else needs. Enabling demonstrates behaviorally that you have their best interests at heart.

Lacking empathetic understanding, you can't see past your own needs or put your life and problems in perspective. **PE**

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ACTION: Serve by seeking first to understand.

Responsible Relationships

Of personal leadership.



by Dennis W. Neder

SO MANY PEOPLE HOOK UP with partners who are (or become) unhealthy for them, then find that they can't break it off—sometimes through neglect or apathy, through convincing by their friends or family, through concern of how they will look, or out of fear of being alone.

A relationship should break up when it no longer provides benefit to one or both partners. If you aren't getting what you want or need from being with someone, or if you recognize that your partner isn't getting what they want or need, it's time to move on.

You may think, "Isn't that selfish—what about the person you're dumping?" I say, "How can it be good for someone to stay with a person who doesn't want to be with him or her?" How low does your self-esteem (and self-respect) have to be to want to do this? It is healthier to find the relationship that works for you, that gives you what you need and meets your relationship goals, than to apathetically cling to something unfulfilling. Life is too short for this, and you deserve better.

How do you know when to break off your relationship? Here are 10 signs to watch for. Most people encounter some of these things periodically. However if you experience several of them consistently, it may be time to move on:

10. You no longer look forward to spending time alone with your partner. If talking to your partner seems like a chore and if spending time alone with your partner seems like a prison sentence, you may be up for a parole.

9. You begin comparing your partner to others, and they seem more appealing to you. We all find others attractive. If, however, you are comparing specific traits against things your partner can't change, re-evaluate your relationship.

8. You criticize or micro-manage your partner. If you're always concerned that she wears too much make-up or that he can't dress fashionably, look at yourself. People who are in love tend to look beyond minor annoyances to the bigger picture. If you're can't do this, you may want to work on your exit plan.

7. You start trying to change your partner. If you are trying to convert your partner from the person you fell in love with, it may be time to bolt.

6. You re-connect with ex-friends or lovers. It's okay to send an ex-girlfriend a birthday card, but not to take her out for dinner "just to catch up". Be honest about your motivations. Are you looking for approval or an ego-boost? Have you forgotten why you broke up?

5. His or her jokes are no longer funny. People in love see their partner as humorous and engaging, not rate how funny something is or isn't.

4. You're doing all the giving or getting. Relationships are about mutual benefit. If one partner is benefiting over the other, the relationship isn't healthy.

3. You constantly find ways to include others in your activities. This indicates

you don't look forward to being alone with your partner. You need time with friends, but you also need private time.

2. Your friends no longer like being around you when you're with your partner. Your friends don't have to dislike your partner, perhaps they don't like what affect your partner has on you!

1. You no longer feel good about yourself. When you first hooked up with your partner, you felt great about yourself. You were optimistic and enthusiastic. If you no longer feel this way, with no mitigating reason, examine your relationship.

Learn what it means to be a *responsible partner* in your relationships. **PE**

Dennis W. Neder is the author of *Being a Man in a Woman's World* and has appeared on hundreds of radio and TV programs. Visit www.beingaman.com.

ACTION: Cultivate responsible relationships.

SERVICE • YOUTH

Serve Youth

Be models and mentors.



by Laura Bush

I'M DELIGHTED SO MANY OF you are accepting my invitation to help America's youth by working in your neighborhoods and communities to help them build self-respect and successful lives.

As First Lady, I've visited with many young people and with the adults who care for them. I've been to countless schools, met with mentors and Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and visited sports programs, debate programs, reading programs, and gang intervention programs.

We now have an online, interactive *Community Guide* to help you learn more about challenges facing youth in your community. You can see which neighborhoods have the most youth-related problems, and what resources are available to address them.

The guide helps you find youth initiatives that reduce substance abuse, gang activity, and other challenges. We're trying to make *Helping America's Youth* more local so that we can work directly with community leaders to address challenges facing their youth.

Drugs, gangs, predators on the Internet, and violence are just some of the negative influences. And as teens face these challenges, they often have fewer people to turn to for help. More

children are raised in single-parent families, most often without a father. Millions of children have one or both of their parents in prison. Many boys and girls spend more time alone or with peers than they do with family.

We have a special obligation to our Hispanic and Native American youth. I've visited programs that provide these youth with mentors, after-school support, recreation, fellowship, college planning, and cultural education.

Gang violence is another serious challenge. The CeaseFire program in Chicago mobilizes communities to address the conditions that lead to violence. CeaseFire sends Outreach Workers—often former gang members—onto the streets, where they teach young people what normal standards of behavior are. CeaseFire encourages adults—especially clergy—to serve as role models, and encourages young gang members to get, and keep, legitimate jobs.

We need to show our love for our children and teens, and help them succeed. To ensure that every child is surrounded with positive influences, more adults must dedicate themselves to serving young people.

I encourage all young men who father children to be the father for them that you wanted to have.

Care about youth in your community. Invest in their lives, and be a role model. They need you in their lives. **PE**

Laura Bush is First Lady of The United States of America. This article is adapted from her remarks on *Helping America's Youth*. Visit www.helpingamericasyouth.gov.

ACTION: Serve youth in your community.



Unrequited Love

It's a self-inflicted wound.



by Osho

IF YOU LOVE A PERSON, BUT HE or she never responds to you, what can you do? Yes, your ego is hurt—as if you are supposed to have some special power over certain people who you find attractive. Just because you love, does somebody else have to love you? You can offer yourself, but the other has to decide. You might take the initiative; but if the other person does not like you, that does not mean that you are nobody—it simply means something was not fitting between you two.

Compassion Is Not Love

Suppose a woman rejects you, and you are suffering. I say, it is good that she denied you. If out of politeness, respect, or compassion she had agreed to you, you would have been in far more trouble. Compassion can never become love. When compassion enters, passion disappears. And you are asking for compassion. That's why you can't allow the wound to heal. Once the wound is healed, she won't show compassion for you. You can't get down from your cross! You have to hang there, and go on shouting "Look how much I am suffering!" You are trying to create a situation in the woman's heart so that she starts feeling guilty and thinks that she is responsible for your suffering. That's why you can't allow the wound to heal. This is not love. This is ego.

You are afraid to knock at another door because you have been rejected once, so you are afraid you may be rejected again. You are hesitant, and so you go on knocking on the same door. And your knocking on the same door will only create nausea in the woman. You will be a nuisance. She can't love you, so you become more of a nuisance.

This is your life—don't waste it. This life is precious—don't let it go down the drain. Love can still flower, as long as you avoid foolish obsessions! The point is that love should happen! And once it starts happening and your heart starts flowing, it is even possible that the woman may become interested in you. People only become interested in people who are happy, who are flowing, who are blooming. If you start

blooming, there is a possibility. I say *possibility*, not *certainty*. If you start blooming, the woman may start thinking of you. She may start feeling that she missed an opportunity and even start knocking on your door.

But that is possible only when you are happy. Now you are a wound! Nobody loves a wound. If somebody does love a wound, beware—that person is neurotic. Escape, because if the person loves the wound, he will never allow the wound to heal. He will go on creating bigger wounds in you, because he loves wounds.

This is a vast world with millions of beautiful people. Why get obsessed with one person? True love is never obsessed with the person—the devo-



tion is toward love itself.

So don't go on playing with your wound. You must allow it to heal, and the only way for it to heal is to fall in love with somebody else. Only love heals, because love is a healing energy. Love is therapy. Fall in love, and the wound will be healed. But you have much investment in the wound; you don't want it to heal, that's why you won't fall in love with somebody else. The wound has become your prestige, your ego trip. You think it is love, but it is nothing. You don't love this woman at all; otherwise, you won't think of making her guilty. If you really love her, you want her to be happy. You will simply disappear from her world and help her to forget you so that she can live her life without any interference from you. But that will heal your wound, and you will no longer be a martyr, and you will not be such a "great lover." You are not interested in

love; you are interested in being a "great lover," and that is the ego trip.

Real Relationships Are Difficult

You can go on living with your fiction. Real women are difficult, as real men are. You are alone, and it is your fiction, you can paint it the way you want. Your woman will never become old; only real women become old. Your woman is a fiction. She will never nag you, or fight you, or be jealous. You can do whatever you want, she will not hinder you. She will allow you total freedom. Now, no real woman can do that, so you get fed up with the real woman, or the real man. With the unreal, there is no problem.

Now you are in a non-problematic relationship. You can enjoy it forever. But this is not a relationship—this is neurosis. It is like a madman who is talking with somebody who is not there. You will go on talking with your woman, and doing things for the woman, and you will go on hoping. And your life will be slipping by through your hands.

Be more alert. It is your life. You owe yourself a few joys, a few celebrations. And the real celebration is always in reality. It cannot be only in dreams. You are creating this situation. That woman may have forgotten about you. She may not remember you at all. It is you who are creating the situation for yourself.

You need great courage to get out of it. People think that they "fall in love" because the person is beautiful. Just the contrary: you see the person as beautiful because you have fallen in love. If somebody asks "Why have you fallen in love with this man or this woman?" you say, "She is beautiful, that's why." But the truth is just the opposite. You have fallen in love; hence, she looks beautiful. Love creates beauty.

Start falling in love again. Be a little foolish. Try it once again. And if you succeed in love, you can then go beyond love. You can only go beyond love when you have gone through it. You are struggling below love. It is far better to move into love and struggle there. You grow out of authentic, real experiences of love. When you go beyond love, a totally different kind of awareness arises. It is no more a longing for love. It is a state of love: you share your being. Love becomes your state of being. You *are* love, not loving. **PE**

Osho is the author of Emotional Wellness (Harmony), Intimacy—Trusting Oneself and the Other (Griffin), The Book of Understanding (Harmony) and Being in Love (Harmony). Visit www.osho.com.

ACTION: Create authentic relationships.

Conflict Evolution

Seek a meeting of the minds.



by Robert C. Kausen

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN hostile conflict and constructive disagreement is in the tone or quality of thinking—the intensity and degree of ill will. We all construct our private world of beliefs, values, opinions, and thoughts. When challenged, the intensity with which you defend your worldview depends on how much you value the issue and how well you understand the role of your thinking in creating your personal reality. If you identify closely with your personal world, you have a strong view of what is right and wrong. If you see your personal thinking with some perspective, you tend to be open to another person's thinking and view.

Healthy differences in viewpoint can deepen *everyone's* understanding. But whether discussion becomes polarized in heated emotions or moves toward a wiser perspective for everyone, depends largely on how well you transform conflict into a constructive force—primarily through respectful listening. *People tend to not listen until they feel listened to and understood. To understand people, you must listen respectfully, without a position.* You must try to understand before you seek to be understood.

When the tone of the discussion changes to conflict with ill feeling, you need to intervene. The people doing the arguing are seldom doing the listening. In fact, often no one is listening—everybody's talking. At this point, listening becomes your main job. And you need to guide the listening by asking questions and *listening* to the responses. You will need a firm hand to avert other parties jumping in and arguing. Usually you need to say, "We'll get to your side of this in a minute, but first I want to understand what he is saying here." You pursue deep listening until the speaker feels understood. Then, you go to the other side and do the same thing.

Such impartial, nonjudgmental inquiry enables people to see something about their own thinking and positions. The deeper you listen, the more obvious becomes the speaker's thinking: his assumptions, definitions, perceptions, predispositions, possible blind spots, and impact on others. Through skillful listening, you help people see their own

thinking more clearly. They then begin to connect with common threads that may lead to a wiser solution. Powerful listening can ignite a new synergy.

While it takes time to *listen* in depth, it saves time in the long run, since you don't need to correct misperceptions or personal agendas. *Consensus is not about getting everyone to agree but about getting to the point where every person feels listened to and understood—and can live with the final decision.* In a spirit of mutual respect, you can build on areas of agreement.

Working from Agreement

To guide people toward a meeting of the minds, list the areas of agreement and get concurrence. If even one person does not agree, you need to listen more. People begin to see that they are in accord on major issues and just need to

work out some minor differences. The spirit of cooperation and mutual respect will propel discussion toward a meeting of the minds. You can approach remaining areas of disagreement in the spirit of creative cooperation: "How can we resolve this so that all parties feel okay about it?" One or two items may fall into the category of "agree to disagree." But no ill will or hard feelings remain. Everyone sees that the other position is viable, and *everyone walks away willing to live with the decision.* People can then devote their energies to matters at hand. The key is to ensure that everyone feels respectfully understood and heard. **PE**

Robert C. Kausen is President of Life Education. This article is adapted from his new book *We've Got To Start Meeting Like This! How to Get Better Results with Fewer Meetings.* Visit www.life-education.com.

ACTION: Learn to work from agreement.

SOCIAL • GRACE

Lose Gracefully

It's vital to your success.



by Hale Dwoskin

NOBODY LIKES TO LOSE, YET in every competition (or perceived competition), someone will. Perhaps it's the next promotion at work, or the next game or contest. Even small things, like who gets the last piece of pizza, have an air of winning and losing to them.

If you see yourself as the "loser" in any situation, you are presented with a choice. You can either be a sore loser, or you can lose gracefully.

Sore vs. Gracious Losers

Sore losers get angry. They blame their loss on the opponent, refusing to take responsibility for their own actions. Sore losers hold on to resentment, and may internalize their failure, leading to low self-esteem or even depression.

Graceful losers congratulate their opponent, embrace their failure, and get to work on figuring out where they went wrong. Graceful losers do not take failure personally, but they do accept responsibility. They learn from the loss, then apply what they've learned so that next time, they may win.

You will fail at some point; however, what you do with the failure makes all the difference. Losing gracefully is the first step to moving forward, past the loss. In fact, graceful losers are hardly

impacted by the loss, as they know another opportunity awaits them.

Perhaps the biggest risk of being a sore loser is this loss of hope for the future. Sore losers are stuck on the loss. Fresh opportunity often passes them by because of their poor attitude.

Making lemonade out of life's lemons is not easy, but it's worth living life by.

Losing Gracefully

How can you lose gracefully when you really want to win? By realizing that *you can never really lose.* In fact, once you learn how to *release the feelings* you have about losing—the anger, embarrassment, and resentment—you will always feel successful. When you *feel* successful, you *act* successful; then you can be successful. As you let go of feelings that cause the sensation of loss, you discover that you never really lose anything. Objects in your life may change, but who you are at the core is changeless.

As you release the fears you have about winning and losing, you more easily accept what happens. When you lose, you can do so gracefully; when you win, you can be a gracious winner.

By releasing, you identify more with the changeless and allow the comings and goings of your life to simply happen as they do. This gives great relief, and it also allows you to be present with and for the new opportunities that are here every moment. **PE**

Hale Dwoskin is the Best-Selling author of *The Sedona Method*, and CEO of Sedona Training Associates. Visit www.Sedona.com.

ACTION: Learn to be a gracious loser.



Elite Performance

Try behavioral contracting.



by Bob Davies

ONE CENTURY AGO, ALBERT Einstein said that the essence of his theory of relativity is that we are all equal, meaning we all have the same access to the laws of physics, and that motion is the key to everything that happens!

The natural state of motion is that we move at a straight line at a constant speed (law of inertia). A push or a pull is required only to change motion.

Back in the 1700s, Isaac Newton developed his three laws of motion: 1) an object moves uniformly, straight line, constant speed, unless acted upon by a force (law of inertia); 2) a larger force produces a larger acceleration; 3) forces come in pairs—if A pushes B, then B pushes on A in an equal amount (equal and opposite reaction).

This means that you live in a cause-and-effect world. You have access to abundance if you follow the principles of performance that give you the highest probability of achieving the results that you seek. Universal principles and laws apply to everyone; and if you live in harmony with them and use them to your benefit, you will experience predictable positive results.

My Personal Story

I grew up in poverty. I was raised in a single-parent household, and I'm the only person in my immediate family to graduate from high school. My older brother and younger sister were involved with drugs and never graduated. I got lucky. I was involved with sports, and my coach held me accountable to set and achieve goals! He challenged me to decide what I wanted, what was important to me, what I would need to do to have what I wanted, and what I would commit to do now!

These early training experiences became a template that I followed to break through the grasp of low self-image and poverty and claim the abundance and prosperity that is present for everyone—including you.

According to the laws of physics, any body in motion will remain in

motion unless acted on by an external force. I believe that the natural state for all people is prosperity, health, and abundance. Everyone would have this in their lives, except they are acted upon with distracting pushes and pulls—competing priorities, interruptions, negative attitudes, and stress.

The Art of Intervention

The result of these pushes and pulls is mediocrity for most people. Sadly, it has become abnormal to experience excellence and elite performance—unless there is a meaningful weekly intervention (accountability).

The key intervention is behavioral contracting. You are in a constant state of recognition of the highest level of perceived pain and then avoidance. And unless you have an intervention, you will work up to your comfort zone, and then avoid—and justify your avoidance with rationalization. Again, the key intervention is weekly behavioral contracting.



Something changes in your focus when you make a specific declaration of what actions you will take in a short period of time, seven days. But that's not enough. You need to have accountability to take the committed actions. Accountability enables you to navigate the normal but distracting pushes and pulls that occur daily.

Specific Declarations + Accountability = Elite Performance. Accountability is a check-in with an enforceable consequence for non performance. It's not enough just to say what you will do. You avoid the highest level of perceived pain, and justify the avoidance with rationalization. An outside source must check in with you to see if you actually do what you say you will do. And, beyond the check-in, you need to have a negative, painful consequence that will be enforced for non-performance!

Don't Fight Human Nature

Rather than fight against the certainty that your brain will find the highest level of perceived pain and then compel you to avoid and rationalize, you

need embrace this natural law by creating the highest level of pain in the negative consequence. This way, your brain will focus on avoiding the consequence by doing what you said you would do!

As long as you are careful with what you commit to, this principle will enable you to overcome the distractions, and keep your momentum of activity and accomplishment. This keeps you focused on getting things done, rather than on the reasons why you can't.

My coaching program is a system of weekly decision-making and accountability. You decide what you will commit to do over the next seven days, then you place a consequence or fine on each promise that will be enforced if you don't accomplish the task! The results are you get more done! You learn to get **MAD—make a decision** on what you want, what you need to do to have what you want, and then be held accountable and pay a consequence for non-performance. *You will the join the ranks of elite performance.*

Again, you and I tend to avoid anything that you perceive as difficult or painful, and seek anything that you perceive as pleasure or comfort.

For example, for years I had a problem with my weight. I kept using willpower to eat less, but my resolution would never last long. The compelling forces of avoiding pain and seeking comfort are far more powerful than great intentions and willpower. Human nature will always win! So, I thought of a way to get human nature to work for me. Since I am always driven to avoid pain and to seek comfort, I associated *pain* with overeating and junk-food binging and *comfort* with healthy eating. I told five people that if I go into the mini-bar on my next trip, I would pay each of them \$250. That's \$1,250! Now, where is the pain! I linked pain to the behavior I wanted to avoid, and pleasure to the action I wanted to have! The five people held me accountable.

I invite you to try this and promise you that you'll take the action you commit to, as long as you link the not doing it to pain, and the taking of the action to comfort. In many cases, the avoidance of the pain becomes the comfort. So, commit to another person, put a fine on it, and enjoy your week! Do this for just one activity every week, and you'll be impressed with what you accomplish by the end of the month!

PE

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ACTION: Follow the elite performance formula.

Snap Back Effect

Match your image with goal.



by Steve McCann

YOU ARE AMBITIOUS, ALWAYS wanting to improve at what you do. You believe that you can do almost anything that you put your mind to do. You are a goal-setter and have a genuine desire to excel. With the best of intentions, you try to change some undesirable routines, habits, and behaviors, but you seem to fall back into old patterns.

At work, you have a collection of daily planners and electronic organizers—tools you have tried but abandoned. At home, you store exercise equipment. You go to development programs and motivational seminars where presenters suggest that you get up one hour earlier and read or exercise. But after three days, you give up.

You are a great starter but not so great as a finisher. You are living out a familiar pattern: you decide that you want to make some changes so you set some new goals, create a new routine, and start with the best of intentions to make the new behavior stick. Yet, soon you stop the new behaviors and go back to familiar routines. This experience is called *The Snap Back Effect*.

To profit from this effect, you need to understand that you behave according to a picture or portrait that you create about yourself—your self-image.

Dr. Maxwell Maltz was a pioneer in self-image psychology. In *Psycho-Cybernetics*, he compares self-image to a rubber band. In its normal shape and size, it represents your current self-image. However, when you stretch it as far as you can, you stretch the band beyond its normal limits. He likens this to when you try to perform beyond your self-image through new routines and behaviors. When you perform at levels above your current self-image, you can't sustain the new behaviors because they're inconsistent with the picture you have of yourself. Your self-image snaps you back to your old behaviors. If you act from an image that you create about yourself that is inconsistent with the new behaviors you seek, you will keep snapping back, regardless of how detailed your plan of action—unless you change your self-picture.

To change the picture you have of yourself, you need to feed new infor-

mation to your subconscious mind where your self-image resides and your habits and beliefs are stored.

Whenever thought is aligned with feeling, it instructs your subconscious mind. By adding mental pictures that coincide with these thoughts/feelings, your subconscious mind reproduces in you the mindset and discipline that leads to the fulfillment of your desire or goal. Once you create a self-belief, it is held in your self-image and becomes the rule of your actions. So all you need to do is raise your self-image to match the new goal or habit you desire.

Here's how. You clarify a few things in your life that you really want to

change. You decide on one or two things that have the biggest payoffs. You write these down and then add pictures of you succeeding with these intentions. Each day you pre-play these goals as if they're already achieved. You align your thoughts on each goal with the positive feelings you'd have if the goals were achieved. By adding mental picturing, you see yourself reaching each goal. You invest a few minutes daily in visualization. You combine pictured thought with feeling—all to the same purpose. **PE**

Steve McCann is CEO of McCann Research and author of *The Snap Back Effect*. Visit www.makingchangesimple.com.

ACTION: Raise your self-image to meet your goal.

PHYSICAL • WEIGHT

Doomed to Be Fat?

No! Embrace healthy choices.



by Tanya Barham

FIVE PEOPLE SENT ME A *New York Times* article "Genes Take Charge, Diets Fall by the Wayside." It highlights a study showing that people who have "fat genes" have a harder time losing weight, and when they do they are not likely to keep it off. It's easy to read too much into one study and think, "Nothing I do will matter anyway."

With diabetes, cancers and heart disease on the rise nationally, the importance of getting and staying fit goes beyond just appearance to quality of life. People who are healthy spend less of their lives with limitations, pain, and disability. Even those who suffer from disease benefit from physical activity and better health. So instead of lamenting crushed aspirations of being *America's Next Top Model*, rejoice in your ability to fully enjoy the many aspects of your life that are enhanced by good health.

"Fat Genes" vs. Lifestyle

It's true. The deck is not stacked in favor of people who have "obese genes," but how many people truly have these genes? And when is obesity a precursor for serious health risks, or simply a body type that doesn't fit with prevailing norms for beauty?

The questions can get specific, technical, and deep; but when we take a step back, we can't deny that the way we choose to live still makes an impact.

As a mere 5 percent of the world's

population, Americans drink 33 percent of all pop consumed. Sugar accounts for 16 percent of an American's daily caloric intake, due in large part to more processed foods whose ingredients are out of our control. Like many refined foods, sugar is calorie rich and nutrient poor. The American diet is trending toward more calories and less nutrition.

Given demographic shifts in obesity, it is harder to tell for whom obesity is a natural state and for whom it is a result of complex environmental factors. How do we know whether obesi-

ty is attributable to heritage or a result of urban design, car culture, and the fact that 60 percent of Americans don't get 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise per day (and half of these people are mostly sedentary)?

So, is obesity the problem, or unhealthy behavior associated with obesity? It might be some combination of both. With all of the talk about obesity, we forget that healthy movement, good nutrition, and *managing stress* benefits everyone. Some of us just have to work harder because we encounter greater challenges.

If you are tempted to give up, please hear this: Yes, it is harder for some of us. No, you might never look like a runway model. Yes, you might have to be much more vigilant to maintain progress. Yes, you might backslide faster if you veer from your goals. But will you be better off if you exercise, eat nutritiously, and rest well? Yes!

Regardless of your genetics, remember that enjoying life with as much strength, ability, and vigor as you have always beats the alternative. **PE**

Tanya Barham is CEO of Recess, a wellness company. Call 503-282-5560 or visit www.recessfitness.com.

ACTION: Embrace good health at any size.



Social Currency

Know what you can offer.



by Keith Ferrazzi

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE much to offer?

I'm shocked, and a bit saddened, by the number of people who ask me this question when I explain to them that to build strong relationships—the kind of relationships that will consistently grow your sales, boost your career, or pack your social calendar—you have to give, give, give, and not keep score.

You need to realize that you have “enough” social currency to succeed in life. Everybody has a *currency* to give—or some capacity to help somebody else fulfill their mission or vision of themselves in some way. Trust me on this point: I've seen some pretty low thresholds for what counts as currency.

What Counts as Currency?

A sense of humor can be a currency. If you can make people laugh, you help them have a good time, and they are more willing to do business or hang out with you. Sometimes just being empathetic or a good listener is a strong social currency in the right situation or culture.

I'm confident that you possess social currencies much stronger and more abundant than these simple examples. You just need to know how to find them.

For some time in my life, I struggled to find my social currencies. As a rookie consultant at Deloitte, straight after graduating from business school, I had a rough time. My first annual performance review was not sparkling. But, my supervisors and mentors knew that what I lacked in Excel wizardry (the skill set I was hired for), I more than made up for with my strategic insight and talent for building relationships with senior clients. So they created a new job for me, and I made a lot more money for all of us using my unique currency.

Marketable Skills

Since then, while I have made my living using my marketing and sales skills, I've always been aware of my biggest currency. No, it's not my amazing wit and absolutely stunning good looks. It is my capacity to contribute to the success of people in my network by introducing

them to other people in my network for mutual gain. It happens every day.

Your most valuable currencies may be things that you do that seem as natural as breathing—natural to you, but to others, these social skills are a real rarity! If you know how to dance, for example, that's a currency. Can you get someone upgraded at airlines and hotels? That's a currency, too. Perhaps it's something else. No matter what it is, you can find it by simply thinking of what others can gain from you in social or professional situations.

From Lost to Found

Here are two stories of how a couple young guys' currencies went from lost to found.

Chinese MBA student. I was conducting a training session called *Relationships for Revenue and Career Growth* for first-year students at the Yale School of Management. When I



started discussing social currency, one international student said in broken English, “What kind of currency do I have for my classmates? I can barely even speak English.”

I asked him, “Where are you from?” “China,” he said.

“Wow,” I said, “you come from China, the biggest future market on the planet, where everyone from Fortune 500 executives to garage-startup entrepreneurs need to know how to do business or miss a huge opportunity. And still, you claim you don't have a currency? What are you thinking?”

Of course, he wasn't thinking. But once he thought about his currency in terms of what *others* could gain from him, he got the point—and he applied it.

Next thing I heard, he was putting together a spring trip home to China to visit a whole slew of companies and people he knew there. He invited classmates who were interested, of course, but he also called recruiters (people he wanted to hire him!) and let them know that if they had anyone wanting to go on the trip, he would welcome them.

What an amazing currency he has! Especially for someone who “had nothing to offer”—nothing to offer except insight and connections into a market everyone covets.

Surfer dude. Last August, I was in Los Angeles, speaking to an audience of 500 people, when another young man claimed he didn't have a currency. After probing just a bit, I learned that he loves to surf. I asked the audience, “How many of you want to learn how to surf?”

Now remember, this was in Los Angeles. At least 85 percent of the people there raised their hands. Now, I wasn't really sure what athletic prowess or swimming abilities those individuals had, but the response was promising.

I turned to the guy and asked, “How often do you surf?”

“Every day,” he said.

“Are you willing to take one morning out of your week to teach surfing to the first three people who call you?” Of course he was, and the currency connection was that simple.

Maybe he'll only teach surfing once a month because relatively few people take us up on our offers, but at least he's exercising his currency with a small group. And the currency could, I suspect, turn into a small business. Who knows? Not bad for someone who didn't have anything to offer—except years of experience doing something everyone wishes they could do.

Here's the bottom line. For you to get to know the people who can make you successful, they've got to want to get to know you. And that might mean digging deep and finding out what you can do to make them more successful. So, no matter what's on the line, be it your company's sales or your own career, you've got to find and use your social currency if you're going to build relationships for success.

Action Challenge

To find your social currency, or discover additional ones, try answering these questions: What things do you say about yourself and your interests that excite or intrigue people you meet? When did you help make someone else a success at something? Of the times you were able to give, which worked the best and which felt the best? How can you purposely incorporate those currencies into your social, sales, or networking plans?

PE

Keith Ferrazzi is CEO of FerrazziGreenlight and author of *Never Eat Alone*. Visit www.KeithFerrazzi.com.

ACTION: Use your social currency in your career.

Declutter Life

You feel and look better.



by Kerul Kassel

WHY DO YOU ACCUMULATE so much stuff? Today stuff is so cheap, plentiful, available, and unavoidable that it's normal to have clutter. Don't berate yourself for having too much stuff, since that doesn't motivate you to deal with it.

If paper clutter is piled up, remember that print-outs take up more room on paper than they do on your hard drive or a disk. Besides, you can find them faster on the Internet than in some paper pile. You won't ever look at 80 percent of the paper that accumulates after it's filed, stacked, or piled up. So, be judicious about what you print out or subscribe to, and recycle everything you can before you accept or open it, especially mail and email. Use your email program's auto-preview feature.

What effect does clutter have on you? Clutter reduces focus, energy, effectiveness, efficiency, and a professional image. It leads to feeling overwhelmed, it negatively affects your relationships with others, it adds extra baggage you don't need, it may badly impact your credit report if bills are paid late, and you may miss out on fun. You also feel embarrassment, shame, and even guilt.

Being aware of the effects of clutter might motivate you; but keeping your eye on what freedom from clutter will do for you is inspirational. You'll be more organized, productive, peaceful, efficient, professional and focused on what needs to get done, and feel comfortable inviting people into your office and friends and family into your home.

Invest 10 Minutes a Day

Is it worth 10 minutes a day to be organized and prevent clutter from taking over your life. Every day, devote 10 minutes at a consistent time—before or after a TV show, during commercials, before bed, just when you get home from work—to put items away, deal with pending items, and read stuff you're meaning to get to. Or do it twice a day for five minutes each time, and make it a habit to conquer clutter.

Put things away as soon as you're done with them. Everything should have a location or "home" where it belongs. Stock multiples of the same

item in different places for convenience: scissors, pads of paper, pens, telephones, important phone numbers, business cards, even cash, for instance.

Create staging areas for items in transit from one location to another, such as the bottom and top of the stairs, by the back door, or outside of a room. As you pass by, take the items and put them away. It won't take more than 90 seconds to put things in their "homes."

If you put one thing in, take one thing out. This practice prevents crammed closets, bulging file cabinets, overstuffed drawers, spilling-over bookcases, even jammed pantries. When you put something away, remove an item that is never used or expired, and move it out of your life. "One in, six out" is great activity once in a while.

Break down projects: You feel over-

whelmed when facing massive clutter. So, list the areas that bother you most, and break those areas down into tasks.

Schedule short blocks of time: 30 to 45 minutes. Schedule clean-up on a certain day at a specific time, and follow through. Don't work longer than your schedule permits. When done, schedule the next time you'll work on the tasks.

Curb the impulse to buy or bring in. Before you purchase new things, ask: Do I really need it? Will I really use it? Do I already have it? Do I have room for it? Do I really love it? Resist impulses to buy, accept, or keep other things, as they only contribute to clutter and stress. **PE**

Kerul Kassel is the author of Stop Procrastinating Now and Productive Procrastination and founder of New Leaf Systems. Email Kerul@newleafsystems.com.

ACTION: Declutter your life.

Making Time

Avoid overworking.



by Karla Brandau

BECAUSE OF THUNDERSTORMS in Atlanta, my flight from Dallas to Atlanta had been delayed twice. On the third attempt, we were boarding, and I felt hopeful of getting off the ground. My hopes faded fast when a tired flight attendant announced that if we were not permitted to take off in the next 15 minutes, the crew would exceed their 16-hour work day, and we would taxi back to the terminal and await another flight.

As it turned out, we were not given permission to take off, the crew's time expired, and as we taxied back to the terminal I kept thinking, "But we were right there, ready to take off. How could 90 minutes more matter?"

Just as airlines are concerned about overworked pilots and flight attendants, employers should care about overworked employees. Why? Errors, accidents, and low productivity.

Our culture sends mixed signals about long work hours. We have a pity party over how hard we work, and yet reward people for going the extra mile.

Employees who are overworked are more likely to exhibit anxiety, make mistakes, harbor angry feelings about their boss for expecting them to work

such long hours, and resent coworkers who don't pull their share of the load. Half of employees who feel overworked report that their health is poor, and 21 percent of employees who are overworked experience symptoms of clinical depression.

What can you do to feel less overworked and leave work on time to pursue your personal life? Learn time management and goal-setting principles. Make an effort to grease the wheels of productivity, and not be the stick that gets caught in the tire spokes, catapulting the rider from the trail.

Using time efficiently is both an individual and an organizational issue. On the organizational side, you can reduce the feeling of being overworked by discouraging the practice of eating at the desk and working through lunch, taking appropriate vacation time, having flexible work hours, and encouraging non-interrupt zones in the day when you can focus.

To encourage efficiency, set clear goals with built-in deadlines, make a daily "to do" list, ensure equipment works properly, keep proper supplies on hand, and be trained in the use of software packages that assist workflow. Such practices help you to leverage your time to be more efficient and effective. You'll feel as if you have an extra hour every day. **PE**

Karla Brandau is CEO of Karla Brandau & Associates. Call 770-923-0883 or visit www.KarlaBrandau.com.

ACTION: Avoid overworking.

Manage Your Finances

Avoid post-spending spree regrets.



by Eric Tyson

VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS bring images, sensations, and experiences we cherish—the fragrance of home-cooked meals and the sounds and sights. But for many of us, there are a few not-so-joyous sights (a purse overflowing with credit card receipts) and sounds (the cashing! of the cash registers marking our escalating debt). These negatives can outweigh all that we love about vacations and holidays, especially when we consider the financial consequences.

Many people already owe money going into vacations and holidays, so a shopping spree adds insult to injury. Even though our coffers are depleted, few of us temper our vacation and holiday spending. Whether it's because we honor the gift-giving tradition, feel a sense of obligation, or believe that vacations and holidays entitle us to have more fun than usual, we seem to turn a blind eye to the bank-busting reality of all that spending.

You *don't* have to join in the spending frenzy. Using 10 tips, you can have a wonderful holiday or memorable vacation *and* avoid financial hangovers.

1. Find an alternative to gift-giving. Many people feel obligated to give gifts during vacations and holidays, either because it's a tradition or because they are thinking of their friends and relatives. But you can trade this tradition for one that is even more meaningful. Instead of exchanging gifts, you might pool your money and go on an outing. You'll want to get your kids something, but set strict spending limits. Instead of piling up the toys, let each child choose an outing or event that she gets to spend with you one-on-one. They'll treasure the time you spend together.

2. If you must buy gifts, cut expenses elsewhere. Perhaps you'd rather dine out less, go to fewer movies, or forego a new pair of shoes. You need to make cuts in the budget to afford gifts. Keeping other spending under control when shopping can be a challenge, but just recall the importance of not overspending. When it comes time to pass out those presents, you can do it without grimacing as you think about the damage done to your bank account.

3. Set a budget and keep tabs on what you are spending. When shopping, your new best friends should be your checkbook register, credit card statements, and your receipts. It's easy to get into a spending rhythm on vacation and holidays. You need to record every purchase you make and ensure you don't go over budget. When you add up your spending, you may be shocked at the total. Having and sticking to a budget will keep your impulse spending from getting out of hand and help you hone in on best-priced items.

4. Plan what you'll buy, and don't get extras! Along with your budget, you'll want to take a list of what you want to buy. Don't go shopping for a gift until you know exactly what you



are going to buy. It's easy to go in with no plan, see something you like, and get it simply because you have no idea what else to get for the person. The list will help you squelch the desire to buy unnecessary knickknacks.

5. Set a good example for your kids. If your kids see you spending irresponsibly during vacations and holidays, they learn bad lessons. It's easy for the "gimmie" attitude or materialistic urge to get out of control. After all, kids are bombarded with constant ads. You might involve them in donating to a local charity, participating in a program for underprivileged kids, or volunteering at a soup kitchen.

6. Watch out for deals that seem too good to be true. Retailers run specials to induce you to buy now, and during holidays companies prey on deal-seeking, cash-strapped consumers: "If you buy now, you don't have to pay a thing for a year, and you even get free delivery." Such "push" marketing makes it harder for you to say *no*. Remember: free financing for a year is a cost to the

dealer, and if you forgo it, you should receive a lower price. Read the fine print on any deal before buying. It can be hard to say *no* once you get to the store.

7. Leave the plastic at home. You will spend more on gifts when you charge everything, thinking you can pay it off after the holidays. This creates a never-ending cycle of consumer debt and financial stress. Use your budget to figure out how you can purchase the gifts without putting them on your credit card. If you are so cash-strapped that you can't avoid charging gifts, you may want to sit down with friends and family and propose a limit to how much gifts can cost this year. They'll likely view this reprieve from gift-buying as a gift in its own right.

8. Invest in your kids' financial futures. It may not seem as exciting to your kids as a new iPod, but a contribution to their financial well-being will be appreciated long after expensive "toys" are obsolete. Have the grandparents contribute to a college tuition fund or savings account. Or make one of your gifts a stock fund portfolio that can start accruing now. Also make them aware of the budgets and tools you are using to keep your spending in check.

9. Give the gift of time to your kids. Vacations and holidays offer great opportunities for you to show your kids how much you love and care for them. For example, you can make time with them each week to watch a film or TV show, go on a walk, visit your neighbors, give back to others in need, or visit a local retirement home. Such activities cost next to nothing, and they are fun for the kids and for you!

10. Remember that meaningful gifts don't necessarily have a big price tag. Sure, it might be nice to give your mom a new TV, but there are other things that will be even more meaningful and enjoyable for her—like a photo album with candid shots of the grandkids or something they made for her themselves. If you are looking to give a gift that means something and that will keep its value for years, you are better off looking for nonmaterial gifts.

By keeping your spending under control, you can have a great vacation or holiday and avoid the sick feeling that occurs when you start getting credit card bills. Achieve a happy balance of spending and saving. That's a great gift for you and the people you love. **PE**

Eric Tyson is the author of Personal Finance For Dummies (Wiley), and Let's Get Real About Money! (FT Press). Visit ftpress.com.

ACTION: Avoid irresponsible spending sprees.

Create a Will

Decide on your assets.



by Cindy Dicciani

THE PURPOSE OF A WILL IS TO pass on assets to certain people or organizations. The will can have limits on the use of your assets, name the person or executor who will manage your final affairs, and name a guardian for underage children.

Never underestimate the importance of a will. If you or a spouse should die without a will, state law will decide who gets what, who handles everything, and who cares for your children. The wishes for your family and personal belongings will not be yours. Your will is a place for you to collect your remaining thoughts and possessions.

To write a will, you must be at least 18 years of age and in sound mind and body. Draft your will with a qualified attorney who practices in the state you live in. You also need three witnesses, your signature, and notarization.

Keep your will in a safe place (not a safety deposit box), and ensure your attorney has a copy. I suggest that you set up a file in your desk called "If I Die" and put all of your important documents in there, including your will.

Giving direction. When drafting your will, be clear and give positive direction. Any ambiguities will be resolved based on your supposed intent. Your will should: 1) specify what should go to whom, in what time frame and under what specific conditions; 2) name a guardian for underage or incapacitated children; and 3) name an executor to carry out your wishes.

What goes into a will? Anything can go into your will, whether it has monetary or sentimental value. Solely-owned assets will be distributed by a will; assets that you own with someone else—your spouse, a partner, or child—will be distributed in the manner that they're titled. So, a jointly-owned home with right of survivorship or transfer on death will move to the other person on the title. Create a separate provision to give away personal property; otherwise, some assets will be sold to cover expenses. You can also require people to do certain things before receiving an asset.

Who can receive your assets? You can name anyone to receive whatever you want. You also need to name contingent beneficiaries—the people or organiza-

tions that will receive your assets if the primary beneficiary is deceased or disclaims the assets left to them.

There are four types of legacies: 1) specific property, such as your home or ruby ring; 2) general gifts of money; 3) gifts of money from specific sources—for example, "upon the sale of my home, a gift of \$100,000 to my daughter;" and 4) gifts of whatever remains after all expenses are paid. This often occurs when there was prior death expenses, hospitalizations, or nursing home bills.

Contesting a will occurs when your heirs file an objection with the probate court. Usually you can't cut children or a spouse out of the will entirely. When people are dissatisfied with the assets

left to them, this leads to bad feelings and damaged relationships. So, leave assets with clear and concise instructions.

Maintaining privacy. Since a will is of public record, you may want to attach a separate memo that won't be made public and spell out intentions or special directions for your executor to follow. You can also include last wishes to be carried out by the executor.

Changing your mind and amending your will should be done when you experience important changes in life. **PE**

Cindy Dicciani is a Certified Senior Investment Advisor with Leigh Baldwin & Company and affiliated with Ortner, O'Brien & Ortner Advisory Group. Email Cindy@taxlegalfinancial.com.

ACTION: Create or update your will.

FINANCIAL • DEBT

Stay Out of Debt

It's difficult, but still doable.



by Augie Ortega

STAYING OUT OF DEBT CAN be hard to avoid, but it is not impossible if you

avoid temptation and apply a few financial fundamentals to your personal spending habits.

Many people are caught up in a spiral of consumer debt that is often hard to escape. With rare exception, we all have some type of debt—be it a mortgage, car loan, or credit-card payments.

The good news is that you can avoid debt and with discipline eventually escape from the debt trap.

Follow Seven Tips

If you are looking to avoid debt or reduce your debt, follow these seven financial tips:

1. Live within your means. If you are spending more than you are bringing in, it will catch up with you in the form of consumer debt.

2. Identify, set, and seek to achieve financial goals. It's shocking to me how many people never even set financial goals—don't be one of them.

3. Pay with cash whenever possible. Simply doing this one thing will go a long way to keep you out of debt.

4. Monitor your spending habits. Set up a monthly budget that accurately reflects your monthly expenses and what you normally spend on discretionary items such as entertainment,

magazine subscriptions, cell phones, and credit card payments. Determine what you exactly spend money on and where you can cut costs. Avoid spending too much on items that are wants, not needs.

5. Have three months worth of living expenses saved for unforeseen expenses or emergencies. You then do not have to use credit cards. If you can't avoid using credit cards for these situations, keep one on hand that requires you to pay it off each month.

6. Avoid unsecured short-term loans, such as loans that accrue interest on a weekly basis. Vehicle title loans should not to be considered a first option either. For instance, if you

cannot repay the loan, you could jeopardize obtaining clear title to your vehicle. These types of loans tend to put you in a never-ending spiral of paying the interest only and not the principal.

7. Watch your spending during holidays and vacations. Avoid the over-spending spree by setting a budget and sticking to it.

Do not charge your holiday purchases.

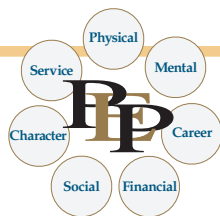


Rewards Are Worth It

Staying out of debt takes self-discipline, but the rewards are well worth the effort. If you find yourself in debt, these seven tips still apply to you. Following them will enable you to stay free of debt or rid yourself of the debt you have and go on to achieve financial freedom. **PE**

Augie Ortega is Vice President of JK Harris Advisors. Visit www.jkharrisadvisors.com or call 843-576-2255. www.jkharris.com.

ACTION: Achieve financial freedom.



GOAL GETTERS



Is money the answer to your problems? People have differing views of money. Some hold a doctrine of poverty, others of wealth; some talk about giving money, others talk about getting it. I try to deliver a healthy view of money—not as a guide to getting rich but as a guide to increasing wealth. *Riches* is about something you have. *Wealth* is about someone you are. Wealth and riches differ in the attitudes of a person: a rich person can lose everything and become poor, and a wealthy person can lose everything and, in two years, gain it all back. Wealth is not about how much stuff you have but about what is in your heart. Many people who get rich by winning the lottery or receiving a large inheritance end up in more debt because they don't know how to faithfully use money. Wealthy people work for what they have. They save money and spend it wisely. They give money not out of a compulsion to get back, but out of a desire to touch and change lives.

—John King, *International Men's Network*, www.imnonline.org.



Exercise personal leadership to enrich your work and life. Either unleash more of your unlimited potential and greatness or stay the way you are. You make the choice every day. Wherever you are in your life, now is the time to choose change and personal growth. See this as an exciting time in your life. Personal leadership involves vision, purpose, mission, and values. Inspire yourself to start building personal leadership skills! Improve the way you work and live by achieving more focus, effectiveness, and efficiency. Develop more confidence through improved interpersonal relationships. Experience less stress, exercise more control, and find a better balance in work and life activities. Develop greater happiness, satisfaction with work and life, and become more joyful by mastering such productivity and leadership skills as goal-setting, organization,

planning, managing, delegation, and motivation.

—Joe Farchit, *Leadership Advantage*



Prepare yourself to handle the bad things in life.

Do you ever turn off the evening news because watching it boosts your stress? Global warming, terrorism, home foreclosures, murder, crime, and scandal are the prevailing stories of the day. You're constantly bombarded by bad news. While you can't pretend these problems don't exist, you can protect yourself from feeling overwhelmed by negative events. If you absorb all of this bad news, you weaken your sense of security and balance. To prevent the state of the world from stressing you out, focus on changing the state of *your* world and on touching the lives around you in a positive way. For example, if you seek opportunities to socialize, show compassion toward others. By building bonds with other people, you weave a safety net for yourself. The ability to commiserate and laugh together establishes a healthy foundation for you emotionally. And when you feel anxious about the world-at-large, giving to others can help. Your giving spirit might lead you to talk to someone who looks lonely. Even chance encounters can have a profound impact. Reaching out to others can be a key coping strategy when life gets rough—whether you're dealing with a divorce, death of a loved one, or some other drastic, life-altering event. When you fortify your life, you can better handle adversity. So, figure out who and what matters most in your life and then focus on those areas. This gives you strength, provides an anchor when the storm hits, and gives you a freedom to break down barriers with the people you love. You can talk to your family in a new, more open way. They will sense the honesty of it, and it will change the dynamics of your relationships. It will put history in its proper place—the past.

—Louise Lewis, author, *No Experts Needed*

PersonalCOACH



Expect Good Fortune

Enjoy guilt-free accountability.
by Lee J. Colan

At the start of my career, I asked my boss why, when the rest of us couldn't see daylight, he could see the light at the end of the tunnel—and it was always coming from a rainbow? "Long ago I learned a simple lesson," he said. "*The things you focus on create a magnet for your life.* The more you focus on the positive side of life, the more you will attract the same things." He was correct. Focus on forgiveness, and you will find the world forgiving. Focus on the comedy in life, and your life will be full of laughs. Focus on opportunities, and doors seem to open.

I often hear people say (with envy), "He seems to get all the lucky breaks." I typically respond with a question, "Do you think he is really lucky or just focused on excellence?"

Being "lucky" doesn't have much to do with luck. Most successful people create their own luck. They appear *lucky* because their focus and preparation put them in the right place to make good things happen. The timing is never right unless you are prepared to seize the moment. ***Luck is preparation meeting opportunity.*** You may wonder why some people seem to have all the luck. In general, "lucky" people achieve excellence by focusing on: forgiveness vs. anger, others vs. self, opportunities vs. problems, gratitude vs. envy, abundance vs. scarcity, today vs. yesterday, building up vs. breaking down, humor vs. drama, controllable things vs. uncontrollable things, giving vs. taking.

To check your focus, you can look at how you spend your time. Is it mostly on the positive or negative side? Your answer will tell you if luck is in your future.

Lucky people create, notice and act upon chance opportunities. One way they do this is to remain open to new experiences. When you become aware of something—a problem, trend or opportunity to excel—you tend to see more of that thing. Excellence works the same way. When you focus on excellence, you see more of it in your people, projects, products—it's all around you!

Lucky people expect good fortune. They are certain that the future will be bright. Over time, expecting good luck becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy because it helps you persist in the face of failure and positively shapes your interactions with other people. You take action to improve the situation. **PE**

Lee J. Colan, Ph.D., is an author and speaker and head of The L Group. Call (972) 250-9989 or email Lcolan@theLgroup.com.

ACTION: Focus on excellence.

Love Truth

Live by the light of Christ.



by F. Enzo Busche

YOU ARE THE SPIRIT CHILD OF a Father in Heaven, who is the author and finisher of all truth, and yet you live in relative darkness unless you allow the Light of Christ, or the Spirit of truth, to become your constant and infinite guide.

In life, your agency is tested through the connection of your spirit with the elements of this earth and with natural appetites and passions. Sin is a major cause of misery, and yet you can receive the power to end this misery. The real you—the spirit child of God created in innocence and beauty—is engaged in a fight with the elements of darkness. You are enticed and influenced by seductive and evil forces that fight with fury and cunningness to make you miserable.

Through His love and light, Jesus Christ reaches out to each child of God who yearns for righteousness and truth and who cries for help. The only way to find *truth* is through uncompromising self-education toward self-honesty to see the original, real you, the child of God, in its innocence and potential, in contrast to the influence from the other part of you, “the flesh,” with its selfish, carnal desires and foolishness.

Only in a state of honesty can you see truth completely. Honesty is a gift of the Spirit through which you can feel the force of the truth so powerfully that it penetrates the core of your existence. You come to an honest awareness of your sinful and fallen state, which may cause you to cry aloud, “O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that I may receive forgiveness.”

Then, you strive daily through silent prayer and contemplation to remain in the state of meekness and lowliness of heart—in which condition comes the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which fills you with hope and perfect love. With this enlightened understanding of the deadly battlefield inside of you, you are painfully aware that you can only ask for and receive the help of the Lord, as the God of truth, under the condition of complete and relentless self-honesty.

Without the influence of the divine Light of Christ to bring you awareness, you must fight this war subconsciously; hence, its battlefronts are unknown to you, and you have no chance to win.

Defeats are reflected in your life as expressions of misery, pride, arrogance, cruelty, indecency, and other forms of misbehavior—or as a lack of self-confidence, happiness, joy, faith, or testimony.

There is no salvation without Christ, and Christ can’t be with you unless you pay the price for self-honesty; otherwise, through the influences of your flesh, you establish your own images or perceptions of truth. Self-centered ideas can deceive the spiritual self. Without striving through prayer and contemplation to gain self-awareness and honesty, your intellect can play games of reason—to impress, get gain, intimidate, promote look-alike truth, or manipulate truth with deceit.

You may be ever learning, but never come to know the truth. All learning leads to nothing unless it is centered on

finding the roots of truth. In such striving, you learn how to pray. Enlightened by the Spirit of truth, you can then pray for the ability to endure truth and not to be made angry by it. In the depth of such prayer, you may suddenly see yourself naked in all soberness. Gone are all the little lies of self-defense. You see yourself in your vanities and false hopes for carnal security. You are shocked to see your many deficiencies, your ingratitude. You are now at a sacred place. Few people have courage to enter, because this is that place of pain where true repentance is born—where the conversion, rebirth, rededication, and renewal of the soul happen. **PE**

Elder F. Enzo Busche is a member of the Quorum of the Seventy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

ACTION: *Embrace the Spirit of truth.*

SPIRITUAL • ACCEPTANCE

Accept Thyself

Experience and express.



by Tal Ben-Shahar

WHEN I REALIZED THAT IT was okay for me to feel sad, dispirited, stressed, lonely, or anxious—that it was just fine for me to be human, I became happier.

Allowing yourself to experience negative emotions not only weakens these sentiments, it also intensifies the positive ones. When you accept yourself, when you welcome everything that is human about you, you open up a space within which you can act and feel. If you repress an emotional reaction and refuse to accept it—whether anger or disappointment or joy—you create a knot in the channels that make up your emotional system—the same system that is used for the flow of all

emotions, positive and negative. If you block the flow of one emotion, it affects your ability to experience other emotions. If you do not accept your agitation after making a mistake, you hinder your ability to experience joy when something good happens to you.

At the onset of negative emotions, you have a choice—to stifle and reject or to accept and experience. Closing off the emotional valve to the flow of negative emotions restricts future flow of positive emotions. You can’t deny the free flow of negative emotions and expect to enjoy the free flow of positive emotions. Pain and joy are two sides of

the same coin. You can’t stifle negative emotions while expecting a free flow of positive ones. You have to allow yourself to fully experience your humanity—its sorrows, at times, but also its joys.

To accept yourself is not necessarily to like what you did or to approve of it, but rather to *forgive yourself*. To *forgive*, in Sanskrit, is to *untie*. When you forgive, you untie an emotional knot and unclog the emotional system. When you experience the lows and highs, pain and pleasure, sorrows and joys—you become fully human.

Of course, you must learn to suppress your base instincts and to civilize your uncivilized urges. Your social ties would unravel if your emotions were always exposed. For who among us has not had an indecent feeling

that, if revealed, would endanger a partnership or relationship? Have we not all, in our minds, transgressed the most sacred commandments that hold our society intact? So, you must restrain certain feelings.

There are clear social benefits to concealing some emotions, but there are also side-effects. You might extinguish your anxiety, fear, and anger for the sake of being pleasant—and in the process of getting others to accept you, you reject yourself. So, seek an appropriate channel for the expression of your emotions. You can talk to a friend about your anger and anxiety, write in your journal about your fear or jealousy, and in solitude or with a friend, shed a tear—of sorrow or of joy. **PE**

Tal Ben-Shahar lectures at Harvard on the psychology of leadership. Visit www.speakingmatters.org.

ACTION: *Seek appropriate expressions.*



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