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Personal Excellence

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CHARACTER • VALUES

Be Good and Great Remember five core values.

by Jeffrey R. Immelt

LIFE HAS ITS UPS AND DOWNS. TRUST ME. I've been criticized by the best of them—from The Wall Street Journal to Fortune magazine. You might think that when you are CEO that people would be nice to you. Instead you're only a bigger target.

You can't predict the future, so don't waste any time worrying about it. The challenge you must accept, now, is to make yourself better everyday. The era we live in belongs to people who believe in themselves, but are focused on needs of others. I call it being great and good. Great in the sense of competing to be your best, and good in the sense of building trust through compassion, humanity, and love. And if you commit to being both great and good, you will succeed anywhere.

Five Core Values

I graduated from Dartmouth as a 22-year old with nothing but a good education and a sense of confidence. But I learned five values there that helped me build a life where I could do my best without ever losing a sense for the person I wanted to be.

1. Commit to learn everyday. You need to have an incredible thirst for knowledge. Learn from the work you do and from the people you admire. Learn by hurting and failing, and don't take things at face value. Dig deep to discover the truth for yourself. I've made it a point to learn about the world. In fact, I spend 25 percent of my time outside the United States. And over the last 20 years, I've visited and studied China. Most people in the United

States are negative about China because they see it as a threat. But I never trusted what other people said about China. I wanted to learn it on my own. What I see are great people who want what you and I want. And with them we built a \$5 billion business from the ground up. Your desire to learn things on your own terms is a key to success. Dartmouth gave me a thirst for learning. Learning is the key to self-confidence,

and self-confidence is the foundation for change.

2. Work hard with passion and courage. Life is a marathon of contribution. You must work hard to accomplish something. But hard work over the long haul takes happiness. Find your passion and get good at it. Competence is a rare commodity in this day and age; and when you work with teams of passionate people, you can solve any problem. I became chairman of GE four



days before September 11, 2001—what timing! In addition to the human tragedy, I saw planes with our engines hit buildings we insured, covered by a network I owned. To be honest, I was a bit afraid for GE and our country. In a crisis, leaders must get to work. We took care of our people—giving \$10 million to the Twin Towers fund. And, we got up the next day and invested in the future. We worked around the clock for months, and today we are a better company. But I learned a lot about the power of teams, the power of hope, and the power of confidence. You must have courage. I had no idea where my journey would take me when I left college, but I knew I would go at full-speed. Have the

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passion to live your dreams.

3. Be a giver. Chances are that you were a valedictorian, team captain, or club president in school. So, you'll be in positions where people look to you for leadership. In the past, being great meant you had lead by giving orders. Today it means you can just lead by giving. And the best thing you can give as a leader is a reason to trust. People want to trust. They're hungry for it. But they're selective. They'll only give it to a motivator, communicator, teacher—a real person. Someone who in good times and bad always does the right thing. I spend about 40 percent of my time on people, and despite what you see from Donald Trump on "The Apprentice," I spend very little time firing people. Most times I'm teaching, helping people to be their best. Good leaders don't tell people what to do, they give teams capability and inspiration. I've learned that there will never be success without friendship.

4. Have confidence. Have confidence in your ability to tackle the world's toughest problems. The world needs heroes today, so don't take the easy or predictable path. Dartmouth gave me a sense that I could make a difference. Today I'm committed to improving health-care and to finding treatments for Alzheimer's disease. GE has invested billions, and I believe the technology exists to find therapies that give people hope. Can you imagine how we'll feel when we solve this problem? And I'm confident we will. But there are many jobs we must work on together. You can help to improve the quality of education in this country. We've fallen behind on global competitiveness; and as both parents and educators, we can do better. We must reduce our dependence on oil, or there will be serious shortages. Use your brains and determination to drive conservation and find alternative sources of energy. And give back to the institutions that made a difference in your life. When the call comes, answer it.

5. Be an optimist. It's easy to be a cynic today. People don't want to trust any institution. There are many reasons to expect the worst. But cynicism is corrosive because it creates excuses. I'm not CEO of GE because I've had a perfect career. Ten years ago I was going through a tough patch. My boss, Jack Welch, said to me, "You know, Jeff, I love you, but if you don't improve I'm going to fire you." That really got my attention. But I was never afraid of failure. I realized that I was responsible for my own success and that every day offers a new beginning. I was confident in my ability to improve. So opti-



mism is a choice. It's a way of living—a way of moving through the world. I've hired thousands of people, and I hire people as much on attitude as potential. There is nothing less appealing than people with a chip on their shoulder. And there's nothing more appealing than a can-do attitude. A sense of humor and the ability to laugh at yourself go a long way in the board room, the operating room, at home, and in life.

If you go forward and build on your values, you can live a life that will be both great and good. In my day, I was a frequently serious student, a decent football player, and had fun. I learned a lot in the classroom, and I learned a lot about myself. And I knew that college was the beginning, not the end. For the last 25 years, I've had a career that's been both interesting and fun. Today I'm the 9th chairman in the 125-year history of GE. I run a \$150 billion company with 300,000 wonderful people. GE is the most valuable com-

pany in the world and a leader in life-changing technology. I work for investors, and I have a vast responsibility to perform for them. I have a powerful job, but I've never wanted to be powerful. I want to be a different leader, judged by what I do—not by how much money I make. I want to create a company that's powered by ideas, values, and people.

I've worked hard to get where I am, but I've also been lucky. Every time I cross the Connecticut River bridge, I think of my parents. Their sacrifice and vision for a great education has allowed me to lead the company where my father worked for 38 years. I'm nobody special, but I'm okay with who I am; and I don't really want to be anybody else. I'm a son, a husband, a father, and a business leader; I'm loyal to my friends, and I love my family. I am, and always will be, an optimist. But the great part about life is that sometimes ordinary people like you and me get a chance to do extraordinary things.

If you're wondering about the future, I want you to know that there are some amazing days ahead. Ultimately you define your own success. Whether you're a doctor, lawyer, parent, or teacher, make five choices: keep learning; live and work with passion and courage; give of yourself to earn the trust of others; take on one of the world's toughest problems; and be an optimist. Commit to being both great and good in a world where the journey truly counts. **PE**



Jeffrey R. Immelt is chairman and CEO of GE. This article is adapted from his speech at Dartmouth College.

ACTION: Strive to be good and great.



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The Winning Spirit

Timeless principles drive excellence.



by Joe Montana, Tom Mitchell, and Hilleary Hoskinson

MANY OF THE PRINCIPLES AND practices used by athletes and performers also apply to business and life. You can learn to walk, talk, and act with a championship attitude by cultivating a winning spirit.

The winning spirit has three elements:

1. Preparing and performing individually. Bring your best efforts daily with relentless energy and enthusiasm. Prepare effectively, continually improve, recover from mistakes quickly, and honestly evaluate “your game” by using a personal scouting report.

2. Understanding teamwork. Great teams are made up of great individuals. Being a teammate with a positive attitude and an expectation of success can create magical results.

3. Developing the winning spirit. Champions perform in the moment and train themselves to be fully present. They clearly visualize future success. They critically study their shortcomings, yet still walk with confidence and expect to achieve outstanding results.

Developing the winning spirit takes work. There is no magic potion. It requires practice and preparation to produce world-class results. Work on fundamentals consistently.

Sixteen Principles

Let’s look at our 16 principles. The first six are about personal motivation.

1. Know what you want. Clarity is power, and clarity put into action is ultimate power. Such clarity provides a road map and freedom to pursue your goals—also a “filter” for discarding distractions. Get clear about what you want. Money, power, and prestige make things cloudy. These are not issues to be ignored, just taken in context with your most cherished values.

2. Love what you do. Inner commitment, unbridled enthusiasm, and burning passion will lift your performances to a higher level. So, how do you find that passion? Love what you do!

3. Practice with a purpose. Learn to practice with concentration and focus.

Practice requires striving to exceed your own expectations and keeping a consistent practice regimen. Practice time is an opportunity to improve your game. Avoid trying to work on too many areas in one session. Practice with focus, intensity, intelligence, and enjoyment.

4. Strive for excellence. Achieving excellence is about surpassing expectations and reaching for new heights. Being excellent doesn’t always come naturally—it’s a learned skill requiring concentrated effort. You attract to yourself what you focus on. Your power to set a course of action should be part of every goal and plan. If you contemplate the possible, the world becomes a place filled with possibilities and opportunities to find excellence and success.

5. Find the greatness within. Find your unique greatness within and focus your desire and motivation into daily practices. There is great power in sincerely striving for excellence and having the inner confidence to know you have what it takes to get the job done.

6. Fail fast and move on. The winning spirit embraces failure as a teacher. Everyone makes mistakes, loses contests, and experiences defeat. Committing errors is how you learn to get better. Failure is part of success. Take your setbacks in stride, retaining enthusiasm to grow beyond comfort zones.

Winning Teams

Principles 7 through 11 are about teamwork.

7. Cultivate the right attitude. A positive, confident, and caring attitude lies at the heart of the winning spirit. Renew your enthusiasm for life by focusing on all that is good.

8. Lead by example. Exceptional leadership requires integrity and respect. You must teach by your actions,

follow your own advice, and do whatever you would ask of others.

9. Build trust and consideration. Developing championship behaviors and attitudes are not a substitute for sound strategy and process, but rather an important complement.

10. Remember the “I” in “Team.” Challenge the notion that there is no “I” in team. Each person has a role to play. The team relies on each individual for something—a skill, talent, attitude, vision, perspective. Clearly define your unique role and contribution.

11. Welcome pressure. With practice and preparation, pressure situations can bring out the best in you. Learn to be confident in your preparation, and to welcome those events as opportunities to shine. The optimal attitude is “I love the pressure—bring it on!”

Keeping the Spirit Alive

The final five principles are about keeping the Winning Spirit alive.

12. Perform in the moment. Since all great performances occur in the present, train yourself to “be in the moment.” Remind yourself, “Right here is the best place, and right now is the only time.”

13. Visualize success. There is a link between visualization, positive self-talk, and excellent results. Practice these important drills.

14. Find a coach and an inner circle. Find trusted sources of honest feedback—feedback that has your own best interest at its core.

15. Walk like a champ. No matter how hard you work, there are no guarantees that you will win at everything. Your personal victory depends on how you judge your effort, rather than the official results or others’ expectations.

16. Appreciate. Developing an attitude of appreciation for all that is good and right in your life is key to a happy and successful life. When you appreciate, you are lifted from anxiety and fear and enjoy the present moment.

The principles of performance have powerful applications. Our 16 principles are time-tested and proven tools for bringing out the Winning Spirit in you. **PE**

Joe Montana, Tom Mitchell, and Hilleary Hoskinson are co-founders of MVP Performance Institute. Joe and Tom are co-authors of The Winning Spirit—Sixteen Timeless Principles that Drive Performance Excellence (Random House 2006). www.mvpperformance.com

ACTION: Think like a champion.

Self-Leadership

Learn from an ant and elephant.



by Vince Poscente

HOW WILL YOU CREATE meaningful change in your life? How can you learn to lead yourself and reach your potential? How can you capitalize on your talents, challenge the habits that hinder your growth, and manage the negative emotions that keep you from realizing your goals? These questions can all be answered by learning how an ant communicates with an elephant.

Your mind is separated into conscious and subconscious thought. Your “ant” is the intentional part of the brain—it houses your critical, analytical thoughts. Your “elephant,” however, is the instinctual, impulsive part of the brain—it houses emotions and memories and even guides the body to perform its vital functions. You likely know your conscious mind—or ant—rather well, but often overlook the power of your elephantine subconscious mind.

Imagine a tiny ant on the back of a massive elephant. No matter how diligently that ant marches east, if the elephant travels west, the ant will go west.

Similarly, you will recede from your goals if your conscious and subconscious minds are not aligned. What elephant-like aspects of your personality hold you back from meeting a challenge? How do your emotions get in the way of your ability to act and communicate effectively? What does it mean to commit to realizing a goal?

Elephant-like habits keep you shy of your goal. So, confront the behaviors and routines that keep you stuck. Refashion deep-seated beliefs, attitudes, and truths so that they support your efforts. Conquer your hidden fears by making an emotional investment in your vision. Ask yourself: “Who’s in control—the ant or the elephant?”

The Five Cs

These five Cs will create impact:

1. Clarity of vision. First, clarify your vision. After identifying your goal, discover why it is so important to you. Know why you want to achieve it. The journey has to mean something to you; otherwise, there is no reason to work at realizing it. Without a clear vision and an emotional

connection to the goal, you won’t achieve it. Harness the inspirational power of your emotions, dreams, and desires.

2. Commitment. Commit to nurturing positive thoughts. Cultivate beliefs, attitudes, and truths that are in sync with your goal. Envision the goal often. Ironically, in a world of instant gratification, profound change still comes slowly. When you are trying to inspire change, you are correcting a lifetime of behavior. Be patient; stay the course; frustration is natural. If you commit to the vision, you will achieve it in time.

3. Consistency. Your goal should have an emotional buzz and clear objective. Use gold dots as a reminders of your goal. Gold dots keep your dominant thoughts aligned and on target. Repeat these thoughts often and you will create a truth. You will paint a reality that will eventually happen.

4. Confidence. Negative patterns erode your confidence; and without confidence, you won’t stay the course

and realize your objective. Stop negative thoughts immediately and replace them with a detailed reminder of your goal. You will eventually eliminate negativity and strengthen confidence.

5. Control. You can’t control your environment, but you can control what you bring to your environment. Set routines prior to anything that requires peak performance. For example, set a routine that keeps stress in check and aligns your efforts with your goals. By imagining how well you will handle any stressful situation, you will influence how well you perform in any situation.

Self-leadership has one goal: unite the powerful forces of thought to reach peak performance. By pointing the ant and the elephant in the same direction, you will enjoy better results. **PE**

Vince Poscente is a strategist and the author of The Ant and The Elephant: Leadership for the Self, from which this article is based. www.beinvincible.com, vince@beinvincible.com.

ACTION: Apply the power of thought.

Success in Two Steps

Use what you already have.



by Mark Victor Hansen

YOU WERE BORN WITH natural talents. You only need to discover what they are and use them to the best of your abilities. Your amazing gifts are meant to be shared with the world. Your job is to find out what those talents are and master them. When you focus most of your time and energy on your natural talents, you will reap phenomenal rewards.

Celebrating your natural talents should be easy; however, many people find it exhausting and fight their natural talents. Perhaps their parents don’t approve of their artistic ability to paint or sculpt, because they want them to be a successful doctor or lawyer. Maybe someone’s gift won’t bring the kind of wealth they desire. Sometimes people are simply afraid to pursue their passion.

These are all excuses. And all the excuses in the world won’t destroy talent. It will be there, waiting for you to

fight through fear and “what ifs” until you realize what you should have been doing your entire life. You have been given natural talents for a reason—to use them to the betterment of the planet and those who inhabit it.

When you engage in an activity in which you are naturally talented, you feel energized, excited, and optimistic? That’s a sign that these are the things you should focus on. For example, when I speak to people about fulfilling their dreams, my body is filled with energy.

Your job is to find out what makes you buzz and begin to perfect it. Discover your brilliance in life and practice, practice, practice. You must hone your natural abilities to perfect them—



concentrate on your strengths, not your weaknesses. Look at the world’s greatest athletes. They practice what they are naturally good at—and what they love to do—every day. You don’t see Michael Jordan trying to decipher a strand of DNA. If he were talented in that area, that’s what he would be doing. He sticks to what he does best—being a brilliant athlete and businessman—and reaps astounding rewards.

There are only two steps to success—discover your brilliance and perfect it. Doing this will allow you to receive the wealth you deserve. **PE**

Mark Victor Hansen is co-author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul Series. www.chickensoup.com

ACTION: Identify what makes you buzz.

The Anger Diet

Rid yourself of anger.



by Brenda Shoshanna

ANGER IS A SERIOUS problem for one in every five people. Road rage, workplace violence, domestic abuse, and even addiction are just a few of its many expressions. The reason such so many people are on antidepressants, overweight, and involved in difficult relationships can be directly traced to the effects of anger, particularly the hidden kind.

Anger has many faces. It appears in various forms and creates different consequences. Overt anger is the simplest to deal with and understand. When we or someone we know is openly angry, we know what we are up against and can address it directly. Most anger, however, lurks beneath the surface. It may be manifest in hidden ways—as depression, anxiety, apathy, hopelessness, and in myriad other forms.

You may fear external enemies; however, the worse enemy you face is the anger that resides within you, the terror it causes, and the ways this poison affects your life.

It is one thing to be told to forgive one another. It is another to know how to do this. Even though you may want to forgive, anger can be ruthless in the course it takes, attacking and disrupting your body, mind, and spirits. However, you can take many specific steps to root this toxin out of your life. As you do, the results will be reflected not only in your mental and emotional well-being, but also in your environment and physical health. When anger is rooted out, love and forgiveness arise naturally and your life and relationships become all they are meant to be.

Four Forms of Anger

The first step in rooting anger out of your life is to become aware of it—recognize anger for what it is, be aware that it is appearing, and notice the devastation it creates. When anger remains camouflaged, it holds you in its grip and easily erodes the quality of your life. By recognizing the 24 forms of anger, you will shine a flashlight on the poison within. Then we can choose to

eliminate each one of these forms of anger, one a day. There are many wonderful antidotes that we can take. Instead of allowing anger to take hold, we simply replace it with a life-giving, constructive, healing response.

Let's look at just four of the 24 forms of anger (all 24 are detailed in *The Anger Diet*), how they affect your life, and ways you can eliminate anger.

1. *Straightforward anger—attack.*

This anger is clear-cut, easy to recognize. The anger comes right out. Many regret it afterwards, feeling they couldn't control themselves. This kind of anger has a life of its own; it rises like a



flash storm and can easily turn into verbal, emotional, or physical abuse.

There are specific steps you can take to dissolve this anger. *You can choose to see things differently. You can choose to make a different response.* It takes only a moment to escalate a situation; and in that same moment, the trouble can be de-escalated. You must stop in the middle of automatic anger that arises and take charge of what is going on. You can and must decide that you will not let anger rule. You have the right and responsibility to choose how you will respond. Stop in the middle of a situation in which you either feel angry or are being attacked. Expand your vistas. Rather than respond in a knee-jerk manner, say to yourself, *"Like me, this person has suffered. Like me, this person wants to be happy, like me this person experiences loneliness and loss."* As you do this, you recognize the similarities and

common humanity you share, rather than focusing on the differences. For a moment, allow the person to be right. You have time to be right later. Ask yourself, what is more important to you, to be "right" or to be free of anger? Choose compassion and see how you feel. See how the other feels as well. Watch new vistas open in your life.

2. *Hypocrisy.* You are angry, but you hide it beneath a smile and present a false persona, pretending to be someone you're not. Although you think you are fooling others, you are losing yourself and your own self-respect.

When you notice yourself pretending, lying, exaggerating or deceiving, stop. Tell the truth at that moment. Be the truth. If you do not know what the truth is, be silent and become aware what the deepest truth is for you. This does not mean pouring out negativity or blaming the other. It means taking responsibility for what is real and true for you. (This will not only restore good will, it will connect you with what is most meaningful in your life.)

3. *Depression*, ranging from mild to severe, is anger and rage turned against oneself. It comes from not identifying or appropriately expressing the anger you are feeling.

Make friends with yourself today. When you are depressed, you are rejecting, hating, and blaming yourself. Undo this false state of mind. Find five things you admire and respect about who you are. Focus on sharing your good qualities with another. In depression you are only absorbed with yourself. A wonderful antidote is to become absorbed with how you can reach out to and help another.

4. *Passive aggression.* This is a form of anger expressed not by what you do but by what you do not do. You refuse to give the others what they ask for, want or need. You thus anger others while making it seem as though they are the ones who are overly demanding. This is a way of expressing anger without taking responsibility for it, and blaming the other for what you set in motion.

Solution

As you root anger out of your life and find meaningful substitutions, not only your life but the lives of your loved ones, friends, and acquaintances will be lifted and enhanced. Try the full anger diet and see. PE

Brenda Shoshanna, Ph.D., psychologist and therapist, offers counseling, talks, and workshops. She is the author of *The Anger Diet*. www.brendashoshanna.com, www.theangerdiet.com

ACTION: Give up one form of anger a day.

Relieve Stress

Take these three steps.



by Bruce Cryer, Rollin McCraty,
and Doc Childre

STRESS USUALLY REFERS TO OUR INTERNAL Sreaction (fear, anxiety, surging heart rate and blood pressure, fast breathing, or muscle tension) to negative, threatening, or worrisome situations—a looming performance report, a dismissive colleague, or rush-hour traffic. Over time, negative stress can depress you, burn you out, make you sick, or even kill you.

Of course, many people know the negative impact of cumulative stress and do their best to counteract it. Some people take advantage of exercise classes or massage; others attend stress management seminars; many others take a vacation every year. The problem is that company cultures and the stress in people's private lives work against such approaches.

Stop the Chain Reaction

To stop a stressful chain reaction, you need to practice a technique we call "Quick Coherence." The heart is a primary generator of rhythm in your body, influencing brain processes that control your nervous system, cognitive function and emotion. Quick Coherence, a powerful emotion refocusing technique, connects you with your heart power to help you release stress, balance your emotions, and feel better fast. Practicing Quick Coherence will help you find a feeling of ease and inner harmony that will be reflected in your heart rhythms. More coherent heart rhythms facilitate brain function, allowing you more access to your own higher intelligence, so that you can improve your focus, creativity, intuition and high-level decision-making. Here's how it works.

Step 1: Heart Focus. Gently focus your attention in the area of your heart. If you like, you can put your hand over your heart to help. If your mind wanders just keep shifting your attention back to the area of your heart.

Step 2: Heart Breathing. As you focus on the area of your heart, pretend your breath is flowing in and out

through that area. This helps your mind and energy to stay focused in the heart area and your respiration and heart rhythms to synchronize. Breathe slowly and gently, in through your heart (to a count of 5 or 6), and slowly and easily out through your heart (to a count of 5 or 6). Do this until your breathing feels smooth and balanced, not forced.

Step 3: Heart Feeling. Continue to breathe through the area of your heart. As you do so, recall a positive feeling, a time when you felt good inside, and try to re-experience it. This could be a feeling of appreciation or care towards a special person or a pet, a place you enjoy or an activity that was fun. Allow yourself to feel this feeling of appreciation or care. If you can't feel anything it's

okay, just try to find a sincere attitude of appreciation or care. Once you've found a positive feeling or attitude, you can sustain it by continuing your heart focus, heart breathing and heart feeling.

Quick Coherence works not so much because of the breathing step, but because you are engaging a positive emotion, and then focusing on and holding that feeling or emotion. This is what produces the most significant shift in ones heart rhythms. PE

Bruce Cryer is CEO and Rollin McCraty is the executive VP of HeartMath, a human performance training firm; HeartMath founder Doc Childre is the CEO of Quantum Intech. This article is adapted with permission from their article "Pull the Plug on Stress" in Harvard Business Review. www.heartmath.com

ACTION: Practice quick coherence.

Intelligent Optimism

You can develop it.



by Eileen McDargh

TODAY'S WORLD SEEMS to leave little room for optimism. News stories lead when they bleed. We hear of critical food shortages, daily gang deaths, the profiteering from child pornography, climatic disasters prompted by global warming, and rising health care costs. With such negativity, no wonder depression afflicts so many people!

But wait! There is hope. Not cock-eyed optimism but rather intelligent optimism—optimism that does not deny reality, but rather fashions a happy life amid such difficulties. Optimism can be learned. Consider these basic steps:

1. Focus on what you can control. Don't get carried away by circumstances you cannot change. You can't change global warming but you can control your energy consumption. You can't stop downsizing, but you can arm yourself with marketable skills.

2. Reframe the event so that you are not a victim. There is always another way to view a situation. The flight cancellation that caused me to miss (and forfeit) a major engagement was not "planned" to "get" me. It just was. My choice is to figure out what I can do to

help the current client and what I will put in the place of the cancelled work.

3. Think "enough." When we concentrate on what we don't have, we miss all the many things we do have. If you are reading this article, you do have enough power, intelligence, and time.

4. Cultivate optimistic responses. Optimism will never grow unless it is nourished. We all have days when negativity can take over. And, sometimes, that is a wise response because it keeps us grounded in reality. Just make sure it is reality and not the imagination making extraordinary leaps into conjecture. Weed out that conjecture. Ask what you can do to see a result that gives you

a sense of power. If you don't cultivate such intelligent optimism, being aware of reality and willing to find options, then you might "stare so long at the closed door you fail to see the one that is opening."

5. Remember the power of generations. Children of depressed parents are more

prone to depression. Children of optimists are more prone to be optimists. What do you choose to pass along? Even if your parents were negative, you can break the cycle by freeze-framing a situation, listening to the negative self talk, and then giving yourself a different message.

Intelligent optimists know that change and chaos will pass. In the meantime, they take whatever action they can within their sphere of influence and then settle back. It is enough. PE

Eileen McDargh is an international speaker, author, and seminar leader. Call 949-496-8640 or visit www.TheResilientSpirit.com

ACTION: Be an intelligent optimist.

Soul Exercise

Start exercising today.



by Bernie S. Siegel

WHY BOTHER TO EXERCISE at all? What is the point of doing anything?

You already have too much to do and death and difficulties are inevitable, so why fight them? Why bother to do anything? After all, you are a human *being*, not a human *doing*?

Yes, you are a human being; but if you do not do something meaningful, your life becomes meaningless. On the other hand, if you are simply a human doing, your acts have no meaning. When you lose your identity and become the doing, and live a role and not an authentic life, the real you dies.

So, what is it you are here to do? What makes your life meaningful? What makes you human, despite your divine origin, is your freedom to choose what you do. Free will gives your actions meaning and makes your acts of love and kindness significant.

When you exercise your free will and attain inner strength and wisdom, your actions take on significance. Life becomes a school, and you become a teacher and co-creator. You are here to do the work that is necessary to carry on creation. What you do is important, but doing can't become significant without meaning.

By exercising your body and soul and enhancing your ability to live and love with enthusiasm, despite difficulties, you become a role model for life and living. To become competent, you must do one thing very well through practice and exercise. A competent coach can help you to win your gold medals.

Seven Exercises

Here are seven exercises to try:

1. Learn from loss. Loss comes with the passage of time. But as one woman with cancer, who was about to lose a part of her body, wrote, "Do we perhaps shed things as we go through life that other features may be enhanced?" Just as a master gardener prunes plants and trees, you may need to give up some things if you are to survive and thrive. Loss can be a teacher as long as you focus on what you have left and not on what you have lost.

2. Live with humor. Life is difficult,

but it can become intolerable if you lose your sense of humor. I know from experience how easy it is to focus on what is troubling you versus what heals and sustains you. Make the effort to see through the darkness and find the light. As Helen Keller said, "If you face the sunshine, you do not see the shadows." Humor takes courage. You must have self-esteem and not worry about what others think of you. When you act like a clown, you will meet other clowns and children of all ages. Keep a journal of what makes you laugh. Reread it daily. It's never too early to prepare to die laughing. So start accumulating material and giving yourself things to laugh about.

3. Find inspiration and meaning. Life is about more than impressing the neighbors and having more than the next guy. Who and what are you working for? What do you hope to achieve in your life? If you are to live an inspired life, you need to find a sense of meaning in your work and service. The in-



spired have nothing to fear. As Maude says in the movie *Harold and Maude*, "Reach out, take a chance, get hurt even. Play as well as you can. Live. Otherwise you've got nothing to talk about." What action would make your life complete and allow you to die in peace, knowing you did what you came or were sent to do? If you want to be immortal, display love. Your body will perish, but your love will last.

4. Adjust your attitude. Don't do things to not die—it doesn't work, and you will be upset about the time you waste trying to avoid dying. Do not seek to be normal or average at anything. As Carl Jung said, "Being normal is only a satisfactory result for the inadequate." Enjoy the day. Don't let what you think might happen destroy your life with fear and worry about what may never be. Your attitude is what creates your life—no matter what your circumstances. Love makes you blind to faults so you can heal relationships.

Please, do not lose your life to the wishes of others. Live your life and save your true self.

5. Listen to healthy sounds. Sounds create the rhythms you live by. Sound-effects can lead to healing or disease. The words you repeat to yourself become the script of your life. What voices do you keep hearing? Do the messages cure you—or kill you? You can edit the voices of your past. You must believe in your intrinsic value and divine nature. You control only one thing—your thoughts. You can control how you think and react and thus establish rhythm in your life. Find your rhythm. Listen to what is going on inside your mind and body. Listen to the wisdom of the ages. Silence your intellect, put aside your fears and just listen. Go out and let nature surround you. Listen to the healing sounds of water, wind, birds, and animals. Let nature bring peace and wisdom to your senses.

6. Visualize natural, healthy, healing images. Practice communicating with yourself through dreams and symbols. Images are the universal language. When your body communicates through dream images, ponder the true meaning of the dream and receive its therapeutic wisdom. The body also responds to images. Picture a pleasant scene or recall a humorous event, and your body will respond. Act as if you are the person you want to be.

7. Live in the moment. Today is the only day you have. What will you decide to do with it? You can whine and make excuses, or you can appreciate the moment. When you are unable to be creative or even experience things due to physical problems, you still can have an attitude which creates the day.

You can blame your past and the people in it. You can blame those presently in your life for ruining it, or you can take responsibility for the day and enjoy it. Since you are mortal and your time is limited, don't give your power away to others and let them decide if you are having a nice day. When you transcend material desires and pray to be a divine messenger, your life is changed.

What would it take to make today your rebirthday? Decide what you will see today before you get out of bed and search until you find it. Make today the best day of your life. Either change your life or change your attitude. **PE**

Bernie Siegel is the author of several books, including 101 Exercises for the Soul: A Divine Workout Plan for Body, Mind, and Spirit (New World Library), from which this article is adapted. www.ecap-online.org.

ACTION: Focus on living for deeper meaning.

The Zen of Stress

Is stress positive or negative?



by KRS Edstrom

DO YOU LOVE OR HATE stress? Stress haters are goal-oriented, serious, and happiest without pressure. Stress lovers thrive on spontaneity and excitement and love the thrill of the deadline. They view problems as challenges, and pressure seems to fuel their motivation. Some people like solving problems so much they consider problem-solving to be their creative outlet. If they aren't working under pressure, they get bored. They like things to be interesting, exciting, and even stressful. They are happiest when they are involved. In fact, a lack of stimulus, or boredom, represents more of a stressor to them than high-pressure transactions. They are energetic when they are engaged, fatigued when they are bored. Even in retirement, they remain very active. They seem to thrive on stress. They experience stress, for the most part, as positive.

While reacting positively to stress may not be a natural response for you, with practice, you can learn to view stress in much the same way. The first step is to become familiar with the different types of stress.

Negative Stress

There are two types of negative stress:

1. Cognitive stress. You are aware of being under stress and you resist it. You have no stress-reducing skills, so fear wraps around the stress, causing a snowball effect, creating more stress. You have to first recognize stress before you can take care of it.

2. Non-cognitive stress. With non-cognitive stress, you are not aware of being stressed. You are out of touch with your body and its reactions. You don't know when enough is enough, and you keep pushing yourself. Small stressors are ignored, and yet small annoyances—like getting stuck in traffic or gaining a few pounds—often have a greater impact on your health than large-scale traumas, especially when the pressure is high.

Non-cognitive stress tends to sneak up from behind and hit you over the head with a heart attack or crippling back pain.

The solution? Pay attention to the slow muscle tension build-up that signals stress. Become aware of your body. Are you clenching your jaw, tensing your shoulders and back, or breathing shallowly? Take a moment to relax your body, take a few deep breaths, or stretch at your desk. Just 15 minutes a day of a relaxation technique can help. If you can't seem to tell if your body is relaxed or not, you might want to try biofeedback to learn how to release tension.

Positive Stress

People who work in a positive stress mode are immersed in their work. They might work fast but usually don't feel rushed. They have an inner quietness and seem to see and feel things at a

slower pace. What some perceive as negative stress, they experience as positive.

How can you do this? With a technique I call *Visual Slow Down*. For example, suppose you are so stressed that things seem to be moving in triple speed—cars racing by, hectic office pace, and so forth. You simply pick one object (like one racing car), concentrate on it, and slow it down with your eyes. You should soon see a slower world in front of you versus one stressful blur. You can still hurry, but you needn't get tangled up in the race. Just watch it, and slow it down. **PE**

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ACTION: Work in a positive stress mode.

PROFESSIONAL • TRAITS

Be Professional

Cultivate two qualities.



by Dave Kahle

ARE YOU PROFESSIONAL? Is your work professional? What exactly does it mean to be professional and what can you do to become more professional?

A professional is a person who is worthy of the high standards of a profession, vocation, or occupation requiring advanced training and involving mental as well as physical work. The word *standards* implies that professionals behave in ways that set them apart. And the word *high* implies that they do these things better.

To behave consistently in ways that are better than the average—to achieve high standards—is not easy. It requires that you persistently and positively change and grow.

Your profession likely fills the largest part of your waking hours; however, you need not work excessive hours to the detriment of your family. It's not about the quantity; it's about the quality. To live life fully, you need to use your time more effectively.

To allow time to pass you by is to waste much of your life. To coast through, oblivious to the challenges to become more of what you can become, is to squander rich opportunities for personal growth. To be less than serious about your occupation is a shame.



Two Indicators

If you are serious about your work, your attitude will show itself in the way that you behave. You act in two ways that show your commitment:

1. You want to do better in everything you do. You'll exhibit a never-ending quest to improve your performance in every variable, every project, every transaction, every relationship, and every detail. I call this "personal discontent." Your status quo is never acceptable. That's not to say that you can't celebrate and enjoy your success. You certainly should. But after you've congratulated yourself for your excellent performance, take a deep breath, and recommit to doing it better next time.

2. You seek opportunities and relationships that challenge you to grow. You distinguish yourself by your dedication to personal growth. It's one thing to be discontent; it's another to do something about it. And, while you may be discontent about your circumstances, you realize that your skills, attitudes, and behaviors shape your circumstances. So, the solution to changing your circumstances is, ultimately, to change yourself. Seek guidance and direction from your mentors. Implement the ideas and skills you gain from training. Always be reading something that prompts you to grow. Try something different, to stretch out of your comfort zone, knowing that the stretch will cause you to build capabilities. **PE**

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ACTION: Check your commitment.

Radical Careering

Is your career worth loving?



by Sally Hogshead

CAREERING ISN'T ABOUT working harder or making more money. It's the rewarding process of transforming your current self into your ultimate self. Careerists become the most valuable people in their organizations because they live according to what's possible, instead of being confined by what is reality.

Making your career worth loving is essential because your work demands so much of you that you must demand every bit as much in return. Here are just 12 of the 100 truths outlined in my book *Radical Careering* that will get you on the careering path.

1. Quality of work. Quality of life. Quality of compensation. Pick one. Is your priority to be a star in your job? Or go home at 5 p.m.? Or have a wheelbarrow full of stock options? Once you prioritize, your job satisfaction depends on finding a company with the same priorities. If you're dedicated to exceptional performance, but your company is only dedicated to short-term profits, you and your company do not share the same goals. You're an artisan in a widget factory.

2. Aspire to be the dumbest person in the room. Working with smart people is the single most important criteria for evaluating your current or potential job. What do you do if you're surrounded by myopic clients, apathetic coworkers, or wussy management? Find motivating people to collaborate with, people smarter than you. Read articles and books by industry stars to expand your point of view. Plug into people outside your office by attending classes, workshops, and anything else that will expand your knowledge and skill base.

3. Live in verbs. Action is the only way to come from a place of strength. Having a meeting about a breakthrough client strategy, or emailing about plans for a terrific management retreat all means nothing if the idea never comes alive. Spend less energy talking about what could or should get done and more on getting it done. Figure out what's stopping you, then deal with it.

4. You can be comfortable, or outstanding, but not both. What lives out-

side your comfort zone? Better results? A more fulfilling career? A more powerful place in the world? Something bigger than yourself? Once you decide, the question becomes: Are you willing to go outside your comfort zone to get it? If it's true that 90 percent of success is just showing up, the other 10 percent is kicking yourself in gear to get going. Progress doesn't happen in the comfort zone. Sometimes you have to go over the top to get to the other side.

5. Wounds heal. Scars fade. Glory is forever. To kick it into high gear, you have to be a little unreasonable.



Exceptional results don't happen within standard parameters. Being in the top percentile in your industry comes with commensurate effort. Careerists are empowered to make our own decisions about our future. Being unreasonable is scary, and that's okay. Only in moving through the fear can you realize your best self.

6. Portable equity is the only form of job security today. In any job, you generate two forms of equity: portable equity and trapped equity. Portable equity is the reputation you earn. People you meet. Skills you learn. Accomplishments you acquire. Trapped equity is your batting average on the company softball team. The time you spend unjamming the printer. Those bagels you bring in for the office. Portable equity moves with you to your next job. Trapped equity stays behind. Portable equity is all that really matters. Focus on where you're going as much as what you're doing. By investing in yourself, you earn more

money and kudos. And, you earn more control over your career, and more options for your life. Portable equity is currency, literally and figuratively—it allows you to do what you love.

7. Results + reputation + network = your market value. In most careers, income is generated by three things: the work you do, the people you know, and the brand you've created for yourself. Boost these three factors, and not only will employers get in line to woo you, your current employer will try all the harder to keep you.

8. Build, don't maintain. There are two kinds of people: builders and maintainers. Builders are most comfortable creating, changing, growing, and developing. *Maintainers* prefer to preserve the existing state of affairs. Both personality types are necessary in an organization, but leaders are builders. If you're not moving forward, you're moving back.

9. Expect people to say you can't make it. Careerists have high aspirations, and clock-watchers will drag you down. But don't let anyone cram you into a smaller, less ambitious reality. When someone says you can't do something, learn everything you can from their reasoning. Then tell them to turn around and get back to darned socks.

10. Jump, and a net will appear. It's impossible to be successful when you cling to obsolete situations out of fear. Only when you put yourself out there wholeheartedly can the best opportunities present themselves. What's your lifelong passion? If you've done your homework and decided what you want to do, then clearly and rationally start building your net.

11. Expressing your truest self is the ultimate competitive advantage. Traditional culture induces mind-numbing homogeneity. Success requires fitting in. But fitting in is boring, and frankly, beneath you. Being a careerist means being the biggest, best version of yourself. Never dumb yourself down, or think less interesting thoughts.

12. Make your memoirs worth reading. A career that makes you fulfilled and proud isn't the most important piece of your life. But it is an essential piece. To kill time in an uninspiring job and then one day look back on a lifetime of meaningless effort is tragic. Leave no part of your life un-lived, no opportunity squandered, no talent wasted, and no aspiration unfulfilled. PE

Sally Hogshead is the author of Radical Careering: 100 Truths to Jumpstart Your Job, Your Career, and Your Life (Penguin), from which this article is based. www.sallyhogshead.com

ACTION: Build your professional value.

Ask Tough Questions

Reach new heights.



by Graham Alexander

FIND THAT MANY PROBLEMS cascade from failing to ask the right questions in the first place—tough questions such as: What’s life all about for you? Who are you? Who do others say you are? What would you do differently if you only had one year to live?

I invite you to ask four questions:

1. Am I inspired by my work? You need meaning in your life. Yet, most mission statements have little or no motivational impact—nothing that gets you up in the morning. I encourage you to create enlivening stories and myths that communicate your mission, vision, direction, values and goals. Know your ultimate goal or mission, play well your part, and contribute far beyond your compensation. Select times in your life when you felt successful and satisfied. Describe these experiences. Write a personal mission statement that expresses your passion and connects what you do to making the world a better place.

2. Am I focused on what is most important? If you try to accomplish too much, you may lose focus on the key aspects of your life or business. You don’t need to saddle yourself with exhausting action lists; confuse working long, hard hours with achieving results; or neglect a sensible work-life balance. Don’t get bogged down in minutiae. Concentrate on actions that leverage and satisfy you. Focus your attention, time and energy on the key things that will move you forward. Formulate an inspiring vision, an excellent strategy, and an execution plan. Identify the few areas for which you are responsible, and cut items from your to-do list that fall outside those categories.

3. Do I feel on top of things or am I drowning? Is your agenda doable? Have you filled your agenda with too many meetings and items that could and should be delegated to other people? Start tracking where your time goes. Be aware of what you need to perform your best. Where is your time leaking away? Get clear on three things you can

do that will contribute the most—and do them. Otherwise, your time, energy, and resources will be diluted.

4. How much quality time do I spend with my loved ones? Many people believe that if they work longer, they’ll be more successful. Once they get addicted to operating in this fashion, vital parts of their lives atrophy from neglect—family life, friendships, spirituality, recreation, and their bodies. Are you operating under this delusion? Do you tell yourself, “When I finish this project, then I’ll spend more time with my family?”

Those nearest and dearest to you know that’s a myth, irrespective of the promises you make and the goals you set. Ironically, the higher your position, the more your work-life balance is out of whack. You tend to resign from your

other roles in life. When you run into difficulties at home, you just want to bury yourself at the office.

You don’t intend to leave a string of broken promises behind you. However, you may sit in the middle of a maelstrom where dozens of additional to-do items come your way daily.

I encourage you to create personal ground rules. Once you state your priorities, identify the disconnects. For example, if spending more time with your children rates high on your priority list, make daily decisions that show that you are living your priorities. **PE**

Graham Alexander is author of Tales from the Top (Nelson Business), upon which this article is based, and is an executive coach and catalyst for change. www.alexandercorporation.com.

ACTION: Answer these tough questions.

PROFESSIONAL • CAREER

Your Perfect Career

Find it with these seven steps.



by Margot B. Weinstein

YOU CAN FIND YOUR talents and learn how to use them to become triumphant in your dream careers.

Career planning is the exciting process of finding your *ideal* career based upon assessing your interests, personal traits, personality, values, skills, aptitudes, work style, and work environment preferences. People who work in a career that supports their intrinsic interests are happier and more successful and fulfilled.

Career planning is ideal for changing careers, selecting a field of study or major, and beginning a new career.

Start by taking some career tests to assess your values, interests, motivational traits, personal work style, personality, skills, and aptitudes. Gather data and get meaningful feedback to ensure that you will find a career you will love, and in which you will succeed.

Your planning process should utilize various types of career tests, and activities. To examine your skills, you might take a personality inventory, values inventory, skills inventory, or career inventory. Use career planning and testing to help find your perfect career.

The Seven-Step Process

By following my seven-step process,

you will have a blueprint for success.

1. Organize your schedule, your time, and your space. This will help you get ready to focus your energy on what you want and deserve.

2. Examine your talents. Next examine your talents and your values.

3. Learn about your field. Now find places where you can gather information about careers, and jobs.

4. Educate yourself in your field. Get all the education you can—workshops, seminars, courses, or degrees—so that you can be successful.

5. Start a career plan.

Whether you are planning to open your own business or work for someone else, once you have completed the above steps, you need to sit down and write a plan to move forward by using the basic principles.

6. Put your plan into action. At this point, you

need to learn the skills to put your plan into action and challenge yourself to go after what you want. The best way to do this is to leverage each job into your perfect career.

7. Work hard to leverage each job to create a perfect career. I believe in the saying that “success is 97 percent perspiration and 3 percent talent;” so hard work is always a key part of becoming successful. Determination and hard work really does pay off.

Finding the perfect career is not a pipe dream. Learn how the seven-step process can help you find and become successful in your dream career. **PE**

Margot Weinstein is CEO of MW Leadership Consultants and the author of 7 Steps to Find Your Perfect Career. www.drMargotWeinstein.com

ACTION: Find passion for what you do.

Purpose and Passion

Align them well and succeed.



by Richard Chang

REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I read *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and came across the passage where Alice and the Cheshire Cat were discussing the course she will follow. Alice comments that she doesn't really care where she goes, as long as she gets somewhere.

I thought how odd it would be for people to go through life like Alice went through her fantasy world, never knowing where they might end up. But I later realized many of us do just that. We take things as they come, often making decisions based primarily on momentary concerns with little regard for present meaning or future impact. We end up somewhere, but probably not where we would be if we were given a choice.

You do have a choice. Your first choice is to live with passion and follow your heart. Only by letting passion into your life will you achieve your potential and find fulfillment. You also must decide what passion means to you and where you want it to lead you. And, you must have a purpose in pursuing it. You may have discovered your passion, but you can't follow it because you don't take the time to clarify what role it should play in your life. Passion without purpose is meaningless. Your passion must be regulated wisely and carefully channeled. Your purpose is the conduit through which you harness your passion and positively use it. By establishing a purpose for your passion, you determine how, when, and where you will use it.

Deciding how you want to use your passion is an uplifting choice. It's like finding a treasure and deciding how you and the world will benefit from it. Will it make you rich, or will you spread your new wealth to others? Will you use it to increase your knowledge, improve your community, or help others? Will it simplify your life or complicate it? Will it move you away from your current setting or tie you closer to it?

Two Considerations

Look at your life and consider: "What is my purpose? What do I foresee my greatest possible accomplish-

ments in life as being?" Or, "Given my life as it is now, how can my passion help me achieve this greater purpose? What other purposes will it serve?"

1. Big Purpose. Your life mission—your Big Purpose—is your reason for being and your justification for living. Your Big Purpose, like your passion, stems from your heart. The two are closely linked. They work in tandem. You may be so intimately connected to your passion that it defines your Big Purpose. Most people, however, are pulled in conflicting directions by circumstance and the influence of others, self-doubt, and other forces. Your passion is the most powerful tool you possess in fulfilling your Big Purpose. Those who successfully integrate pas-



sion into their lives—passioners—understand this relationship and usually bridge the gap between passion and purpose. Your purpose emanates from your heart, just as passion does. When your life is out of sync with your passion, the purpose that accompanies it is irrelevant. You must have a sense of where you are now, what you hope to accomplish, what you are willing to sacrifice, and what you hope to gain. Only when you feel comfortable with this can you begin to work passion into your life and benefit from it.

2. Key profit areas. Before you incorporate passion into your life, consider also the smaller, equally important purposes you hope to fulfill in various aspects of your life. Implicit in any vision of your future must be a regard for your emotional, physical, and spiritual state; the nature of your relation-

ships with others at home, work, and in social settings; your intellectual growth; your financial condition; and your role as a member of society. These are key profit areas. Profit is any result you are seeking in building a better life. There may be one thing you value or want most, but you likely hope to achieve many things: good health, strong relationships, financial security, or the respect of colleagues. Your expectations in each key profit area are critical to building a successful, passion-filled life. The choices that you make must reinforce rather than compromise your objectives. If you succeed in one area at the expense of another, you have not gained much.

Aligning Passion and Purpose

How do you see your passion factoring into your life? How can it help you achieve what you want? Will it be relevant to your professional life? Could it help you in your relationships with your friends and family? Will it affect your spiritual well-being? Could you use it to earn a living? Could it help you feel better about yourself?

As you ask these questions, look for possibilities rather than limitations. Think creatively. Look for ways in which your passion could come into play. If, for example, you have a passion for cooking, consider new ways to use that passion. You might volunteer in the community, involve your children in preparing meals together or baking gifts for friends and neighbors, fulfill your entrepreneurial dream by opening a restaurant, starting a catering business, or publishing a cookbook.

For each passion you name, list all the purposes you believe it might serve. Then think about which of them you are prepared to accept and pursue. What role in your life do you think you are prepared to give this passion? Are you ready to work it into your career? Can you see yourself pursuing it full-time, part-time, or only on occasion? Are you willing to make sacrifices to pursue it? Will it require you to make dramatic changes or can you follow it without altering your current situation?

By answering these questions, you gain a sense of the task that lies before you. The purpose you define will determine the direction your passion will take. This direction can change as your purpose and priorities change, but it provides a starting point. **PE**

Richard Chang is CEO of Richard Chang Associates, a performance-improvement firm, and the author of The Passion Plan and The Passion Plan at Work (Jossey-Bass/Wiley). www.richardchangassociates.com

ACTION: Connect your passion and purpose.

Live Your Best Life

Develop yourself and serve others.



by Joel Osteen

I WANT YOU TO LIVE AT YOUR full potential. Here are four steps you can take to live your life to the fullest:

1. Choose to be happy. Happiness is an attitude. Make a decision every day to be happy. Many people focus on what they don't have instead of what they do have. They focus on what's wrong instead of what's right. I believe that all of us can be happy right where we are. We can say, "I'm in a tough situation, but I'm going to make the most of it." Don't wait to be happy one day. Every day you live negative and discouraged, that's a day you waste. I'm not going to waste life just because I don't get my way.

2. Live to give. The spirit of Christianity is having an attitude and lifestyle of giving. If you'll make it your business to make somebody else's day, God will make your day. Most unhappiness is selfishness—being focused on your problems or thinking about how you might get ahead in your career. You need to focus more on others.

3. Find strength through adversity. I believe that God won't let something come into your life unless He's going to use it for your good. In your struggles, learn to say, "God will make something good out of this. This is a tough time, but I will believe and trust. I may not see a turnaround for a year or more, but I believe it will happen." In the darkest hour, God always opens up a new door. So, stop thinking about your faults and weaknesses, all the mistakes you made last week. Stop dwelling on what you've done wrong and start dwelling on what you've done right. You may not be all you're supposed to be, but we all make mistakes. Just learn to be quick to repent and do better next time.

4. Let go of the negative things in your past. You can't receive the new things God wants for you if you won't let go of the old. I talk with so many people who have been through a bitter divorce, and they want to live their life angry. Maybe it wasn't their fault; somebody hurt them. I tell them, "Dragging the negative things of yesterday into today will only ruin today. You choose to be angry, and over time

anger becomes a habit. It's who you become, because you think you have to be angry." People are hungry for hope and encouragement. Eagles fly as high as 20,000 feet. If you want to get rid of your past, you've got to come up higher. Don't ever sink down to anger and argue with God. Don't try to pay somebody back. Be the bigger person. Overlook faults, and walk in love.

What I preach every week is how I try to live. I'm tempted, as we all are. But you have to resist and keep your

mind and thoughts pure. You've got to pray to not enter into temptation when you are tempted. Guard what you watch on TV and movies. Don't let dirty images or negative thoughts into your mind. Guard what you allow to come into your mind and heart. PE

Joel Osteen is the author of the number one New York Times best-seller, Your Best Life Now. He is senior pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. This article has been adapted from his interview with Larry King on CNN Larry King Live.

ACTION: Control your emotions.

CHARACTER • EFFORT

The Slight Edge

Make the extra effort.



by Bryan Golden

THOMAS JEFFERSON SAID, "I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work the more I have of it." The slight edge principle is that a little more effort will produce a lot more results. Doing just a little extra, or going a little further, can give you a slight edge. For example, being two minutes early, rather than two minutes late, can make the difference in a job interview.

Often very little separates first, second, and third place winners. Yet, there is a world of difference in the benefits. In a horse race, mere inches can separate the winner. In a foot race, the winner can be hundredths of a second ahead of second place. A candidate will win an election if he or she has only one more vote than the runner-up.

The slight edge is gained by action, not necessarily innate abilities. Ironically, gifted people are not the ones who usually achieve the slight edge. Those who put in the extra effort do. Desire is not enough; you must take action. Action involves doing more than is required or expected. This requires effort and work, but there is no other way. Thomas Edison once said that genius is one percent inspiration and ninety nine percent perspiration.

Any business that provides its customers with more than their money's worth will always be popular. You are, in effect, an independent enterprise. You sell your time and services to your employer. If you have a business, you

sell products or services to the public.

Acquiring a slight edge means gaining a competitive advantage. There are two types of competition. You compete against yourself, for example, when you are in school and striving for good grades. You compete against others when you apply for a job, want a promotion, or operate your own business. Consider yourself your primary competition. To keep up, you have to continually learn, grow, change and improve. If you stop pursuing self-development, you will stagnate, your slight edge will vanish, and life will pass you by. The headlines are filled

with examples of people and businesses who developed a slight edge and then, thinking they had "made it," rested on their laurels. In short order they were displaced by those who kept going.

Many try to get by doing as little as possible. They cut corners at every opportunity. They do only

what is expected. Be different. Do what others don't. Be a little early. Stay a little late. Know what needs to be done, and do it, without being asked. Increase your knowledge, skills, and expertise. Take initiative. Provide more than you are being paid for, and your compensation will grow. Service precedes rewards. Because of the benefits that will ensue, it is more effective to do what's necessary to gain a slight edge.

A common complaint is "Why put in extra effort when it's not appreciated?" If you put in extra effort, it will be appreciated—if not in your current situation, then in another to which it will lead. To acquire a slight edge, give more than is required, and you will receive more than you expected. PE

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ACTION: Gain a slight edge.



Financial Alchemy

It's your money relationship.



by Morgana Rae

YOUR CURRENT FINANCIAL situation is a direct reflection of your inner relationship with money. If you don't like your finances, something needs to change in your relationship. This is where alchemy comes in. Alchemy is the art of transformation. With roots in ancient Egypt and classical Greece, alchemy comes from a time when there was no distinction between science and magic.

Three Rules

Here are three guidelines I adapted from Alchemist tradition:

1. As it is above, so it is below. What shows up in your head is going to show up in your life. You transform your relationship with money from a dead seed into a flowering garden. A seed comes to life as a living, thriving, fruit-flowering plant in the right environment. So, too, your prosperity. The potential for financial abundance is within you. Your relationship with money is like the soil that feeds or starves your economic growth. As long as you have hidden beliefs that cause you to repel money or "protect" yourself from wealth, your garden will not grow.

2. There is no scarcity. A wealthy client once explained to me how he had overcome poverty. "The amount of money out there in play every day is limitless. Money is everywhere," he explained. And it's available in proportion to "how big your funnel is to take it in." He learned to tap into the source. This relationship supported him.

3. Consciousness gives you choice. Even a small change in your relationship consciousness can have a huge impact on your material life. You get what you choose, but first you need to know what you're choosing. I experienced this transformation myself. For years I struggled as a life coach. I had trouble attracting clients who would pay my fee. I avoided discussing money. The subject embarrassed me, and my discomfort made clients uncomfortable too. I was "doing" all the right marketing things—networking, newsletters, sample sessions—and getting nowhere. I was not making a

"grown-up" living. What was in my way? My coach and I took a look at my relationship with money.

Two discoveries popped out: Money didn't feel safe or reliable, and money caused separation. No wonder I wasn't bringing money into my life!

This was not the relationship with money I wanted. And it wasn't the relationship I wanted to model for my clients. So, I created a new paradigm. I fired the biker persona and put a romantic, clean-cut, soft-spoken suitor in his place. I chose a new money "person" to relate to. Whenever I received a check, signed a new client, or came across some unexpected income, I would graciously thank money for the lovely gift. This version of money was invited into my life.

From then on, my income kept growing. I didn't have to look for new clients—they find me. And all I changed was my inner dialogue with money.

How to Change

If you want to improve your financial situation, you must first uncover the beliefs that shape your relationship with money. Respond to these questions: What did you hear about money when you were growing up? What beliefs get between you and prosperity? What have you heard about people with money?

Next, look at how money has shown up in your life and in the lives of those around you. Give money personhood in relationship to you. If money were a person, what would your version of this money "person" be like? Who is money? How do you feel about money? Do you trust money? Does money trust you? How does money operate in your life? How does money feel about you? Is money someone you'd want to have a relationship with if you didn't "have to"?

Now, imagine looking at this relationship between yourself and money from the outside. What shift needs to

happen in this relationship?

Now, as yourself, negotiate with money: Does money have a request for you? Do you have a request for money? What will be different? How do you want to be different in this relationship? What is the next step to making this change real? Money, like any guest, comes where it's invited and appreciated. It rarely comes when it is chased. It can be your partner if you listen to it. The more you care for this relationship, the more money you will attract.

Be a Money Magnet

Here are five ways to attract wealth:

1. Appreciate money. Appreciate even smallest denominations. Think of how good you feel when you are valued for even a small gesture. It's the same with money. Every time you practice receiving and appreciating, you train the universe to send you more.

2. Strengthen your boundaries. Have the courage to say "yes" to what you want and "no" to what you don't want.

Clear the clutter and energy drains in your life. Strong boundaries build your self-esteem and free you to focus on what is important to you. This is very attractive to money.

3. Make a wish list. List 100 things you would buy if money were no object. The items on your list put what you want on your radar. Your mind

will start to discover opportunities to manifest the items on your list.

4. Manage your money. The better you manage what you have, the better you will manage more. Divert a percentage of your income into a wealth-building account, even if you are paying down debt. And set aside something for your favorite charities—nothing builds a sense of abundance like the ability to give to others.

5. Surround yourself with successful people. You take on traits of the people you spend time with. If you want to be financially free, spend your time with financially successful people who share your values. Identify rich people you admire. Pick up their mindsets and practices for wealth building. **PE**

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ACTION: Improve your relationship with money.



True Wealth

It's not just money.



by Dennis T. Jaffe

AS YOU PONDER WHAT YOU will leave to your children, your focus should not just be on the money you give them, but on four other sources of wealth. The homily “rags to riches to rags, in three generations” is based on ample experience. If you have built a business or substantial family wealth, you need to think about providing an inheritance that spans four forms of capital:

1. Spiritual capital. Spiritual capital encompasses the values and principles a family stands for, and forms the foundation for all other forms of capital. It includes how a family defines and lives its values, then weaves in activities to create meaning for the family. It is generated when a family looks beyond money to define its values and is clear about what is being given and what is expected. This is the family legacy that can motivate, inspire, and focus future generations on their paths. A family must meet together and talk about not just what the next generation will “get” but what this means, and how it can be used.

2. Human capital. Human capital is how families develop capable, responsible adults whose values, skills, and motivations enable them to use inheritance wisely. This form of capital cannot arrive in a lump sum, but is developed over many years. Wealthy family members need to develop compassion for those with less and know that wealth is a gift. This simple lesson is complex to teach because it is not taught by declaration, but by thousands of small actions that reinforce the basic message. You develop this by focusing not on entitlement, but by encouraging your children to find a calling (not necessarily work for pay) that they can pursue with passion, and develop their capability to pursue it.

3. Family capital. Inheritance often interferes with maturity and spawns negative feelings and pain. A family has to develop a habit of getting together, and ways to support connection as the third generation of families moves apart. Money can, but should not, be used to control family members and keep adults from being able, or desir-

ing, to be independent. Family capital is strengthened when regular family communication and meetings exist. Families must join to talk for serious, sustained, private discussions of shared concerns. Form a family council to develop clear policies and practices.

4. Social capital. Wealthy families and individuals are part of a wider community. How they express their part in that community is important to the meaning of their wealth. Giving back to the community is one way to develop societal capital. Individual members of a family can make their own decisions about giving, but

wealthy families can organize a family foundation to focus its efforts on serving the community. Various forms of family foundations allow heirs to become involved in how money is used, while helping the groups they care about.

Developing these four types of capital is not an overnight process. It requires careful attention and years of work, starting with broadening awareness, understanding the elements, and then applying them to your family **PE**

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ACTION: Strengthen your family capital.

FINANCIAL • INVESTMENT

Roadblocks to Prosperity

Assess 10 obstacles.



by Sandra Baptist

YOU MAY BE TRYING TO achieve that stage in your life where wealth, health, and success are a daily part of your life. So, what's the problem? Why aren't you living a prosperous life?

Here are my top 10 reasons:

1. Clarity. You don't know what you truly want in life. You have not clarified exactly what you desire and where you want to be in six months, a year, or five years. So, you drift.

2. Path. You may have a goal for your life, yet you do not know how to attain it. You go through the motions daily but never make a decision.

3. Struggle. You try to live a life of happiness, wealth, and success. You are focused on achieving prosperity, but you struggle to attain it. This struggle prevents you from being prosperous.

4. Fear (false evidence appearing real). Fear prevents you from achieving all that you desire. What will your family think? Will your friends still like you? You fear the effects of success.

5. Conditioning. Conditions and people in your life impact the way you think, act, and live. If you see prosperous persons as unhappy, lonely or selfish, you won't seek prosperity.

6. Norms. You simply can't be bothered. You prefer to live each day in a trance, in a numb existence, going along with the status-quo and having no desire to change for the better.

7. Peers. You hesitate to achieve your dreams, goals, or vision because prosperity may mean that you grow beyond your partner, friends, and family.

8. Negativity. Your life is stuck by negativity. You live your life in total lack and shortage and that prevents you from achieving prosperity.

9. Courage. It takes courage to be prosperous. Focus your thoughts toward your vision of true prosperity and hold to that vision.

10. Beliefs. “It can't happen to me. Prosperity is for other people.” Your beliefs can hold you back from your potential and prosperity.



So, What Can You Do?

Focus on five things:

1. Figure out exactly what you want. Know what you want, and what you need to change to get what you want.

2. Cultivate the prosperity mindset. Shift from a mindset of scarcity to prosperity. You are in scarcity when you know how much you don't have or what you didn't do; when you think “not enough.” Start a prosperity journal or gratitude journal. Being grateful enables your desires to flow to you.

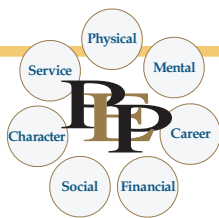
3. Create a clear plan of action. Set your rudder on course and focus on your destination or vision. Creating a powerful living vision as well as *smart* goals to support this vision will propel you forward toward prosperity faster.

4. Use the Law of Attraction. If you're tired of the struggle, use the Law of Attraction to orchestrate everything you need to be, do, and have.

5. Seek Support. With a support partner or a life coach, you can overcome fear, end procrastination, and live your dreams. **PE**

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ACTION: Avoid these 10 roadblocks.



GOAL GETTERS



Stardom hasn't changed my work ethic or my approach to my work. I've been very lucky in my life that I have worn many hats. I've done everything from selling ink pens over the telephone to screen-printed T-shirts, worked construction, was a musician for a few years, and a busboy. I've done a lot of different things, and I've had a great deal of luck in the movie business. So I'm somewhat together enough to know that if the ride is going smooth, fun and well and everything is peachy keen this week, then all that could evaporate next week—and then I'm once again that weird guy that does art films, which is okay. So I've always said I've never had any allergy to the idea of commercial success. It was just how I get there that is important to me.

—Johnny Depp, Academy-award winning actor.



I came to Chicago with no expectations. None. The only pressure I felt when I went to the NBA was to prove I deserved to play at that level. And that was easy because it was a step-by-step process: playing hard every day in practice, playing against veteran teammates, making the starting five, then playing against NBA players in games. No one knew what I was capable of scoring, and no one tried to define me by putting a number to those expectations. No one had in mind what would be acceptable for me. After the first year, the expectations came, but by that time I had positive habits. I had built a foundation for my game, so it wasn't a surprise to me. I understood that the reason I was getting attention was because of the work I had put in up to that point, not because of what I had done to meet other people's expectations for me.

—Michael Jordan, former NBA player



The best advice I ever got was my favorite professor at the City College of New York Alois Xavier Schmidt.

A saying of his stayed with me and continues to influence me. He often said, "When everybody knows that something is so, it means that nobody knows nothing." I remembered professor Schmidt's words again 10 years ago, when I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. "Everybody knew" what treatment would be best for me. I thought that perhaps this was another case where common wisdom might be suspect and decided to do my own research, comparing all the known data about various treatment outcomes and coming up with less-than-conventional conclusions. Time and again, professor Schmidt's saying prompted me to think for myself, go back to first principles, and base knowledge on facts and analysis rather than on what "everybody knew."

—Andy Grove, chairman of Intel



Every adventure, quest, and border-crossing requires an inner process of spiritual creation—at least for me. And this spiritual creation is—as in any artistic or industrial enterprise—the basis for later success. Anyone who wants to change something first, must change his point of view and his position, then the positions of his friends and associates. In life, it is more important to move the mountains in our minds than simply to plant a tree or to leave a footprint.

On the way back down a mountain, I sometimes ask myself, "Why don't I just stay home?" But I know that I could not do it. I am inwardly dependent on my expeditions because they have enabled me to draw closer to myself, to see into myself more clearly. The higher I climb, the deeper I see within myself. I see the usefulness of climbing not so much in the further development of the technique, rather in the development of our abilities to extend ourselves. Learning about our limitations is just as important as our claim to be able to do anything.

—Reinhold Messner, the World's Greatest Mountaineer

PersonalCOACH



To-Do Lists

Eliminate them.

by R. James Steffen

I HAVE TOO MUCH TO DO! I NEVER GET everything done! Most professionals share this concern. If you'll spend just five minutes a day faithfully using two simple tools, you can solve a lot of frustration.

First, you need to recognize that on any day you can think up more to do than you can possibly do. Four things limit what you'll be able to accomplish: time, talent, resources, and energy. Only your talent limits what you can think up. Part of your problem may be rooted in your creative talent.

Next, look at how you plan your day. You might make these common mistakes: using an ordinary to-do list, and not estimating how long things take and adjusting accordingly.

Two cures for to-do-list frustration are a *Holding Pen* and *Priority List* . First, create a *Holding Pen* where you list all your to-dos as you think of them. At the start of each day, create a *priority list* by selecting items from the *Holding Pen* —those priorities you can achieve today.

Next, take a minute to estimate how long each item will take, and adjust the list accordingly. Two hints: 1) Things take longer than you believe—plan accordingly; and 2) Build in time for the unexpected.

As you think of more things to do, add them to your *Holding Pen* . Then you are free to get back to the one priority of the moment with vigor. And you won't forget anything because it's captured in your *Holding Pen* .

When you use the *Holding Pen* and *Priority List* , you can expect a triple win:

1. All mental energy focuses on priorities.

The mental or psychic energy that goes into worrying takes away from your focus on the one Most Important Now. With the *Holding Pen* and *Priority List* , this is changed. You accept and are thankful that you have the talent to create more to do in a day than you can do. You focus on the most important.

2. Increased achievement. You achieve more because you do not lose focus worrying about not getting it all done; and by focusing 100 percent of your mental energy, you join the ranks of outstanding achievers.

3. Increased satisfaction. "I got it all done!" Imagine most of your days ending by saying, "I got it all done!" PE

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ACTION: Start a *Holding Pen* and *Priority List* .

Walk, Don't Run

Take the time to slow down.



by Sander A. Flaum and Jonathon A. Flaum

WHY RUN, WHEN YOU CAN WALK? This question might strike you as counterintuitive in a culture where being first and fastest is paramount. Yet after taking a 100-mile, father-son walk, we find this question to be a worthwhile one.

You are defined by the decisions you make every day. Do your decisions reflect a high ethical standard? Or, are you constantly taking the path of least resistance to please others? Your decisions tell others what you are made of.

As you seek to do the right thing in the face of persistent uncertainty, you likely try to reduce your anxiety by burying yourself in information. You feel an obligation to know more before you act. The problem with this information-gathering method is that by the time you run through this drill, all the propositions have changed—and you are faced with new decisions to make. Nothing is static; all is in motion.

The remedy for the non-stop nature of life is to locate a place of stillness within this intense motion. If not, the chaos of the moment can threaten to carry you away from your ground. For example, a big decision comes up. You listen to the views of others and study the scenarios. Finally, you must let go of all those other voices and find your own.

There is no better way to do this than to go for a walk in a quiet place. A long retreat is not needed, nothing formalized, just an hour or so to spend alone and get in touch with what really makes sense at a gut level. This practice develops perspective and gets easier over time. You begin to understand the way your mind works—why you value certain opinions and not others, what biases keep coming up, what blind spots have hindered you, what impedes your progress.

With practice, you become secure in knowing your own mind. You become more adept at making decisions from a place of stillness right in the heat of the motion-filled moment. Even the briefest internal pause in a meeting, or taking a breath on a conference call, can ground

you in the stillness of that walk, where the issues are as clear as the sunlight, and the right thing to do is as available as the leaves on the trees.

By developing the practice of perspective, you can avoid two paradigmatic pitfalls that people who live and work in this age of uncertainty (anxiety) tend to fall into when they are not careful. One pitfall is taking on false bravado. In this posture, you feel so overwhelmed with information, opinion, and uncertainty that you ignore most of it rather than engage it and make decisions based simply on what you want to be true—despite reality. Such a posture can have dire consequences. The other equally dangerous position is that of analysts who are well versed in the arguments but ungrounded in their own positions. This stance has dismal consequences, making it hard to have a focused mission that you can commit to and execute.

You can rise above these hazards by learning to listen well to the voices of others, and heeding your own internal

voice. We find that certain people become great leaders not by the force of their personality nor by the insight they have in hiring great people (though this is very important), but by the nature of their interior character and courage. This is the true wellspring of personal leadership, and we too often forget this in our speed-obsessed culture. Character can't be created quickly. It takes time and nourishment—it takes a walk, not a run.

So as most people are busy fine tuning their "core competencies," remember that what is so valuable about you is something that can't be measured by a stop-watch or any other metric. What makes certain leaders great is their ability to find solid ground to stand on amid uncertainty—the still ground of a person in pursuit of perspective, one who is willing to walk before he talks. **PE**

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ACTION: Ponder your decisions.

MENTAL • DECISIONS

Make Better Decisions

Here are five tips.



by Margaret Benefiel

ABOUT HALF OF ALL personal and managerial decisions fail. How much time, money, reputation, and morale are you losing because of failed decisions? Do you want to improve those odds and reap more rewards? Here are five things you can do right now to make better decisions and make more money:

1. Go in without preconceived notions. Don't make decisions in your head before you have carefully weighed the options.

Going into a decision without preconceived notions encourages practices of nurture and rest that provide perspective and promote good decisions. You might take walks in the woods or listen to music to help you gain perspective, weigh decisions, and let go of preconceived notions.

2. Don't take the easy way out. Commit to discovering underlying issues. Such commitment helps you avoid the

trap of settling for easy answers that turn out to be unworkable.

3. Start with thorough information-gathering. By asking what information is needed, whether it has all been gathered, and whether there are further relevant questions to pursue, you will make better decisions. Leave no stone unturned in gathering information.

4. Maintain a reflective (or prayerful or meditative) approach to decision-making. Reflection and prayer can provide a way to step back and see the whole picture, letting go of ego needs and asking what is best

for you and others involved. By stepping back and praying, you gain new perspective.

5. Make tentative decisions and then watch their outcomes for confirmation.

The decision is not over until the fruits of the decision are weighed against your vision and mission.

There are dozens more ways to achieve more by bringing spirituality into your life and work, but start by following these five decision-making strategies and see how quickly your decisions make more sense! **PE**

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ACTION: Follow these strategies.

