

THOUGHTS FOR THE

good life

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It is that time again when we give thanks for a big Thanksgiving Day meal with our family and friends and for the lives we have created. Don't make the act of giving thanks just an annual event, make it part of your daily thought process and daily conversation. It will enrich your day and your life.



Be well and enjoy,

PUT A COACH ON YOUR TEAM Coaching continues to gain more and more popularity in mainstream circles. It supports people to face challenges in the workplace and in their personal lives. Need to have a tough conversation with someone, but just don't know where to begin? Ready to start something new, but just can't seem to get going? Running a business or department with no one to help sort through the issues of the day? If you are working on any of these or similar issues, coaching would be a huge support. Email or call me for a taste of coaching. I offer half hour complimentary coaching sessions that show how coaching can enhance your life, increase your business success or – as we coaches like to call it – support your BIG AGENDA.

A COACHING TALE

The Gift of Coaching

“Do you think I am a weenie?” a client asked me at the completion of a coaching session. I was surprised by the question because the client is an incredibly accomplished fellow who started and has managed a professional partnership for some thirty years. In my quick response to the intriguing question I realized that, if you are willing, coaching can take you places in which you perceive yourself to be a “weenie.” When coaching is bold and successful, we are treading on things that can be challenging for the client. Where is the client stopping, contemplating action, yet not sure of how to handle a particular situation? Coaching is a place to let your hair down, be yourself at your very core with full knowledge you won't be judged.

Recently, I had a fascinating coaching session with a woman who runs a successful business – a quiet powerhouse. The question we were working on was how she wanted to handle a senior business development guy on her team who wasn't delivering the numbers and it was time to do something about it. She had been stopped from taking action. She used the coaching session to get clear about what and how she wanted to move forward. She acknowledged she didn't like the guy and that had been part of her inaction. In the coaching session we looked at the situation from several different perspectives and brainstormed strategies for the conversation she would have.

The truth is we are all “weenies” in some areas of our lives. The gift of coaching is that it gives us an opportunity to take that part of ourselves out for review, have some discussion and then determine how we want to move forward gracefully.

Newsletter articles draw on actual client experiences. The names are changed to protect client privacy.

a client's experience

“ I find coaching keeps me focused on what's really important in both my business and personal life. It provides an element of accountability and challenge in my professional development that goes way beyond just financial goals. ”

*Greg Bruner
Sr. VP, Client Services
Michael Edwards Direct*

Conflict Is A Good Thing

A successful life and particularly a successful business life must include handling conflict and challenging conversations when required. Why are these conversations so tough for many of us? At the most basic level, we are afraid people won't like us. We worry they won't help us or, worse, they will quit or leave us. In truth, we can build even greater relationships and results when we are willing to have respectful, straight-talking conversation and step past our desire to take the non-confrontational road.

How do we get started if we have avoided real, honest communications for years? Why should we take the risk? The payoff could be a bigger playing field, more success for our endeavors and possibly more internal power along with a stronger supporting team. And that stronger team can happen whether it's your personal life or your world of work.

So, are there conversations you are avoiding? What action are you willing to take? Think about it as an experiment. Just take one step toward honesty this week. As they say, just do it. You will be amazed at how empowering *honesty with respect* can be.

A LESSON FROM W.

This past presidential election season has been extremely intense and certainly divided the country. As we look back over the last several months, I believe there are lessons to be learned from the current president, no matter what you think of Mr. Bush's politics. He remained completely focused on his goal of winning the election. He defined his strategies and as many of the pundits pointed out, he always stayed on message.

How many of us could be served with this type of focused approach to reaching our goals? Our daily lives throw us so many distractions. Is it possible to stay so narrowly focused when we don't have staffs to take care of our every need?

Here's a fun challenge. Give yourself one month with a very specific task or goal to accomplish. Take at least one action every day toward the goal. Increase the daily tasks up to three if your schedule will allow for it. You won't wind up in the White House, but you might just be thrilled with your own house and what you accomplish!

How Well Do You Say NO?

I often give clients the assignment of *saying no with grace and without explanation*. It is not an easy task. However, with practice, it is a muscle that can be greatly strengthened over time. Everyday so much is asked of us that we often forget we have a choice as to how we use our talents and energy.

Can You Define Yourself Without External Measurements?

At the completion of a coaching call we (the client and I) define coaching homework for the client. Sometimes the assignments include “things to do” to move them forward. Other days it might be a question or an awareness to think about as they move through their days for self-discovery, again, in support of moving forward and gaining an understanding of what’s at play in their success or limiting thoughts.

Recently I gave a client the assignment to think about how he defined himself without external measurements. We had been working on what contributed to his personal fulfillment and much of the conversation had been focused on numeric calculations – how much money he was earning, spending, saving and so forth.

I realized as I moved through the next several days, I had taken the homework assignment of defining myself without external parameters on as well and found it not to be an easy task. The most natural places I looked first were in my daily roles – mother, wife and coach. Then I came to the town where I live, the job titles I had held and their corresponding salaries; followed by my cultural labels - Jew, liberal and aging baby boomer. The internal measures were eluding me. As I pushed myself to think about what really brought me my greatest personal fulfillment, I realized much of my sense of self comes from learning about others and myself and then finding ways to connect with others in pursuit of that understanding. I am delighted with a deep and thoughtful conversation. I am personally fulfilled when I find an innovative approach to a challenge or spark a laugh in others from my point of view.

How do you define yourself without the outside measures that we often use to label ourselves? What gives you your greatest personal fulfillment? Take the homework assignment. See where you take yourself.

KOLBE

Better Team Results

I often write about the Kolbe Concept® and how powerful the assessment is for individual coaching clients. In addition to using the Kolbe Concept for individuals, I also work with teams to uncover how the instinctive mental energy on the team can either support or challenge the group to meet its goals and objectives on time. Kolbe is ideal for teams that want to increase their ability to communicate, understand their breakdowns and dramatically increase their results. Anywhere people work interdependently – corporate team, small businesses or non-profit boards – Kolbe can help. Call me and we can talk about the challenges your team is facing and how Kolbe might support your success.

Kolbe is the assessment tool that measures individual's innate problem solving ability. If you are interested in an individual assessment or in learning how Kolbe can support a business team striving to be more successful, call me at 847.242.0351 for more information.

a client's experience

“ The Kolbe Process® that Susan took us through at our staff retreat was beneficial in many ways. It specifically gave each of us an insight into how we approach situations and to what motivates and excites us. This has been invaluable in showing us in management where we should be positioning our talent to get the most effective and efficient productivity. Awesome program I would recommend to any company. ”

Paula Dorian Gray, CFP
President

Dorian-Gray Retirement Planning, Inc.

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