

WHAT IS THE WORLD TEACHING US?

Mother Nature is talking to us and the question is, “are we listening?” We have seen an epidemic of major disasters beginning with the Tsunami, and extending through devastating hurricanes and earthquakes. These disasters lead one to wonder what is happening to the world?

According to recent emails some are hypothesizing the disasters signal the return of Jesus Christ. Others are hypothesizing that we’re destroying the balance of our environment through abuse and global warming and the universe is responding accordingly. Perhaps Mother Nature is doing the same as all living creatures—our systems fight back when something interferes with our physical or emotional balance.

I certainly can’t answer “what is happening to the world,” but the one truism that all of us are being shown is that life is fragile and life, as we know it, can be swept away in a matter of seconds. Read on.

Combine these natural disasters with the individual disasters about which we learn. A young husband and father dying with Lou Gehrig’s disease. A thirty-two year old father and husband is now a paraplegic as the result of a car accident. A mother lost her 18 year old daughter to methamphetamine. And the list goes on.

Yes, life is fragile. So what is the lesson being taught by all these events? As trite as it may seem the lessons to be learned are to “count your blessings” and “don’t sweat the small stuff.” Every morning I take getting out of bed for granted and sometimes frustrated by my aching back. The young father mentioned in the preceding paragraph would enjoy simply “getting out of bed” again. I take the simple blessings in life for granted without fully realizing the significance of their importance — until, that is, I’m reminded when life’s tragedies have taken these blessings away from others. I have often wondered, “why them and not me” while hoping I continue to be spared from experiencing such personal devastation.

The student is ready. I don’t need any more of life’s tragedies to remind me about the many blessings that I have. I am strengthening my optimistic outlook and the expectation that life will bring forth abundance. I do believe that we become what we most think about and I’m guilty of worrying about the small things in my business life that ultimately sabotage my personal happiness. I am committed to count my many blessings every day, because I don’t know where they will be tomorrow.

As I was thinking about this article, I received an email characterizing the world’s population shrunk to one hundred people. I can not attest to the validity of the few gems of information I am about to share with you, but the degree to which they are true, certainly provides food for thought to count our blessings.

- If you live in a good house, have plenty to eat and can read, you are a member of a very select group. Adding a computer to this list puts you in a very elite group.
- If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, then you are more fortunate than the million who will not survive this week.
- If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.
- If you can attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are fortunate, because more than three billion people in the world can't.
- If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

THROW YOUR HEART OVER THE BAR

You have to be strong to weather the storm of negative information that bombards you each and every day. Just consider some of the sources.

Business failures. Research shows that 90% of the individuals who start their own business quit within 18 months. Not only that, but the research I read concluded that only a small percent of those who succeed ultimately make over \$50,000 per year. If I had read that book before I started my business, I may also have been one of those casualties.

Stupid people. Many people will spontaneously tell you that it's ridiculous for you to strive to achieve your dream. Unfortunately, these soothsayers are often believed more readily than believing in yourself. That fact is simply amazing, because how could they know what is better for you than you do?

Rejection. It matters not what you do, you're not going to be successful 100% of the time. Remember the eagle is a skilled hunter and is only successful 10% of the time. Success is achieved by quickly getting through the failures. In spite of knowing that intellectually, we often fail to remember that emotionally and personalize the failures.

Negativity. The news is a constant flow of "what is wrong" in this world.

Parents. Many of us have a crippled parental learning history in which parents abused us emotionally and/or physically.

Learning history. For whatever reason, many of us have learned a host of insecurities that generate a flow of thoughts which creates a negative internal environment. Often this internal environment produces immense emotional pain.

When you consider all the negativity pounding us, it is no wonder so many people are willing to accept the status quo and decide to be one of life's victims, i.e., life is not going to get any better.

Your heart holds the answer. A story is told about the young athlete who watched many high jumpers fail to clear the bar at the new height. Watching everyone fail was beginning to take its toll and he admitted his fear of likewise being a failure to the coach who quickly gave him the sage advice. *"Throw your heart over the bar and your body will follow."*

I think you will agree the coach provided excellent advice. When you throw your heart at what you want to achieve your total existence becomes saturated with achieving your goal. That, in turn, creates a tremendous amount of passion and positive energy, which allows your self-confidence to blossom.

Every journey of success is filled with pot holes and other obstacles that will test your endurance to succeed. When that happens it's time to follow the sage advice offered by one of our ski instructors that I've shared with you in a previous article, *"keep your eyes locked onto where you want to go, because your body follows your eyes."* Keeping focused on achieving your goal continues to create the high level of positive energy and self-confidence to provide the necessary shield of armor to deflect the arrows of adversity that are shot your way.

Benefits through adversity. Another shield in our armor of protection is to consider the personal growth achieved through facing adversities. The minefield of disappointments is actually a testing ground to determine if we've got what it takes to be successful and if we're willing to learn the necessary skills to keep our eyes locked onto our vision as we maneuver. I'm always reminded of the words of Catherine Ponder who said, *"Failure is success trying to be born in a different way."*

In closing, remember there is always plenty of room at the top and the infamous words of Norman Vincent Peale who said, *"We never quit until we accept the image of defeat."*

MEMO

I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying 2006.

Leadership Development. The **TeamMax® Interpersonal Skills** leadership development process has been very well received. This five-week course focuses on integrating the following values into your workplace: accountability, communication, trust, respect, cooperation/teamwork, positive attitude, integrity, and innovation. I also show you the 7-Step Behavioral Process that can literally change your life. When you combine this content with measuring the behavior change with our MBC Software®, you've got a powerful accountability tool that can literally help you make long-term behavioral changes.

2005 Client Satisfaction. Speaking of MBC Software®, I've completed my 2005 client satisfaction survey using the MBC Software®. **I want to thank my 2005 clients who participated in this measurement process. Thank you for helping me to improve my service delivery.**

Those who participated in the survey can use their username and password to access the reports. I would like for you to see the data, so call me and I'll give you a username and password so you can view the reports. The bottom line is that the results look very good. Listed below are the major themes associated with the comments:

- **The most frustrating thing about working with me.** Nothing or scheduling.
- **What I like best about working with Larry.** Eager to help people, dependability, ability to relate to the people and the results achieved.
- **My recommendation for Larry to improve is...** . Don't know, and spend more time with leaders.
- **Others.** I would recommend Larry, information is presented so it can be understood, improved working relationships and the process is practical, but work is required to make the process work.



Recommended Books

I advocate reading/listening to material that challenges your thinking. I've got a book for you that will do that—**The Art of Demotivation** by E. L. Kerstin. He's on the opposite end of the people continuum from our work. I don't know if you will enjoy this book or not.

Jerry Wilson recommended **Endurance** by Alfred Lansing. This is not a book to read before going to sleep. It will keep you on your toes. It's a historical perspective of the hardships endured by an explorer. You'll enjoy it.

Super Performance by Dave Gurrera is an easy read. He supports the same principles that we use in our TeamMax® teambuilding. So you know I would like it, right?



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Reminders. Let me know if you would like to visit the results of the client satisfaction survey. And, call me about the **TeamMax® Interpersonal Skills** leadership development course.

Thoughts to think about...

“Nothing saps the human spirit more than the feeling of hopelessness.”

-Unknown

“Success has always been easy to measure. It is the distance between one’s origins and one’s final achievement.”

-Michael Korda

“If a person had done their best, what else is there?”

-George Patton

“Success is the maximum utilization of the ability that you have.”

-Zig Ziglar

“Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside of them was superior to circumstance.”

-Bruce Barton

“Courage is the capacity to confront what can be imagined.”

-Leo Rosten

“Obstacles will look large or small relative to the size of your dream.”

-Larry Cole



“Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage.”

-Richard Lovelace

“Nothing is impossible to a willing heart.”

-John Heywood

“If only you care enough for a result, you will almost certainly attain it.”

-William James

“I do the very best I know how—the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing so until the end.”

-Abraham Lincoln