

A Conversation With Myself About Myself

By Micah Reeves

I know I turned the coffee pot off. I'm sure I did. As sure as I fell asleep last night and woke up this morning...I turned the coffee pot off, I think to myself.

There are articles waiting to be written, my son is waiting for attention and lunch to be made. I have to ask myself some questions first though.

How many days must go by before I clean my house? At least one more. There are things you and I have to confront first. When you have answered them satisfactorily then you can continue with your day. "Okay", I say to myself.

Have you been kind today? Not used a bad tone with your son or anyone else? Yes, I could have smiled at my son more so far today but yes I've been kind.

Have you worked hard so far today? No, I just sat down to get some work done. I promise to work hard for the rest of the day though.

Have you been honest with yourself today? Never mind about others right now let's just talk about with yourself. Yes I have, I know when I'm lying and when I'm not.

Have you been humble today? I know this one has you! Did you judge someone already today? Well let's work on that for the rest of it then okay?

This is just some self reflection for you today but not everything you need to look at. You need lots of work, lots of work! "I know", I say to myself, "I know".

Structure would be good. A written list of "To Do" things so I can't forget. That would help. I should do that right now.

"Can I make lunch now?" I ask myself.

"Yes", I respond.

"And turn off the coffee pot."



How To Change Your Attitudes

By Catherine Pulsifer

Your outlook on life, basically your attitude can determine your happiness and success in life. Attitude is a mindset, how you view your world. Do you see the positive or do you focus on the negative? Our perception of the events in our life, and how we regard these events can be attributed to our attitude.

How can you change your attitude?

- when dealing with a situation try and find the good in it. Focus on the good; do not dwell on the negative. Depending on the situation, you sometimes have to look hard to find the good but it is there. By doing this you start changing attitudes to a positive attitude rather than a negative attitude.

- Remember the saying, "you can't change other people, you can only change yourself." So if someone tells you that you have a poor attitude, don't try and convenience them otherwise as you won't change their mind. When someone tells us this we have a tendency to take a defensive attitude, instead focus on how you can change.

Can you change attitudes of other people?

- Again, I would refer to the saying, "you can't change other people, you can only change yourself". You will end up becoming very frustrated if you try and change other people. Remember, you can only change yourself and how you deal with that individual.

The story below is a story of attitude. The individual in this story could have easily developed a "poor me" attitude, but instead he chose to focus on what he can do, his attitude reflects what a positive outlook on life can be like.

"Now I look beyond what I can't do and focus on what I CAN."

Robert M. Hensel

Too often in life, we focus on the things we cannot do.

Sometimes we cannot do things because of financial limitations, health limitations, family limitations, educational limitations, and so on.

Sometimes, we end up limiting ourselves from achieving success in reaching our goals. We end up having a negative attitude which limits our ability to achieve success and happiness in our life.

Through the Internet, I have recently met an individual whom I found to be very inspiring. He has a positive attitude, he focuses on what he can do. To name a few of his accomplishments:

- he has set a world record, and is in the Guinness Book of World Records
- he is an international poet with over 900 publications
- he is an advocate for the disabled
- he is the founder of Beyond Limitations Week
- he is an Ambassador for the Harvey Ball World



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Smile Foundation.

- he has created his own website, <http://wheelierecord.tripod.com/index.html>
and the list could go on!

The individual is Robert M. Hensel. You see, Robert was born spina bifida; a disability that affects your sense of balance and also has an impact on your kidneys.

Robert could have easily used his disability to limit his achievements, yet he has accomplished more than many. His attitude and outlook on life is one that, for me, is inspiring!

To quote Robert, "I have learned that limitations open doors that have been closed, showing other ways to meet our needs."

Let Robert be a reminder for changing attitudes. Use his motto of not focusing on what you can't do, but,

Focusing on what you can do!



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**A Motivational Story with Wisdom -
The Emperor and The Seed**
By Author Unknown

An emperor in the Far East was growing old and knew it was time to choose his successor. Instead of choosing one of his assistants or his children, he decided something different. He called young people in the kingdom together one day. He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next emperor. I have decided to choose one of you."

The kids were shocked! But the emperor continued. "I am going to give each one of you a seed today. One very special seed. I want you to plant the seed, water it and come back here after one year from today with what you have grown from this one seed. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next emperor!"

One boy named Ling was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his mother the story. She helped him get a pot and planting soil, and he planted the seed and watered it carefully. Every day he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other youths began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Ling kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. 3 weeks, 4 weeks, 5 weeks went by. Still nothing. By now, others were talking about their plants but Ling didn't have a plant, and he felt like a failure. Six months went by, still nothing in Ling's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed.

Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Ling didn't say anything to his friends, however. He just kept waiting for his seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the youths of the kingdom brought their plants to the emperor for inspection. Ling told his mother that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But honest about what happened, Ling felt sick to his stomach, but he knew his mother was right. He took his empty pot to the palace. When Ling arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other youths. They were beautiful in all shapes and sizes. Ling put his empty pot on the floor and many of the other kinds laughed at him. A few felt sorry for him and just said, "Hey nice try."

When the emperor arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted the young people. Ling just tried to hide in the back. "What great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the emperor. "Today, one of you will be appointed the next emperor!" All of a sudden, the emperor spotted Ling at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered his guards to bring him to the front. Ling was terrified. "The emperor knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me killed!"

When Ling got to the front, the Emperor asked his name. "My name is Ling," he replied. All the kids were laughing and making fun of him. The emperor asked everyone to quiet down. He looked at Ling, and then announced to the crowd, "Behold your new emperor! His name is Ling!" Ling couldn't believe it. Ling couldn't even grow his seed. How could he be the new emperor?



Then the emperor said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone here a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds, which would not grow. All of you, except Ling, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Ling was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new emperor!"

If you plant honesty, you will reap trust.
If you plant goodness, you will reap friends.
If you plant humility, you will reap greatness.
If you plant perseverance, you will reap victory.
If you plant consideration, you will reap harmony.
If you plant hard work, you will reap success.
If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation.
If you plant openness, you will reap intimacy.
If you plant patience, you will reap improvements.
If you plant faith, you will reap miracles.

But

If you plant dishonesty, you will reap distrust.
If you plant selfishness, you will reap loneliness.
If you plant pride, you will reap destruction.
If you plant envy, you will reap trouble.
If you plant laziness, you will reap stagnation.
If you plant bitterness, you will reap isolation.
If you plant greed, you will reap loss.
If you plant gossip, you will reap enemies.
If you plant worries, you will reap wrinkles.
If you plant sin, you will reap guilt.

So be careful what you plant now, It will determine what you will reap tomorrow, The seeds you now scatter, Will make life worse or better, your life or the ones who will come after. Yes, someday, you will enjoy the fruits, or you will pay for the choices you plant today.



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An Inspirational Story, Motivational Story
To Make Rainbows You Need
By Catherine Pulsifer, © 2007

For as long as I can remember, my aunt had stained glass hanging in her window. She had pieces from all over the world, each one hand crafted by a stained glass artist.

She loved them all, but there was one piece that hung in her kitchen window and she often referred to it as her "motivational stained glass". She told me that she hung this particular piece in her kitchen window where she would see it every day.

The stained glass piece, which she was referring to, was a rainbow. And on the rainbow someone had written the saying:

"Remember, to make rainbows you need sun and rain."

The motivational stained glass piece was one of the smaller pieces of her wonderful collection, and was not particularly well done. I asked her why she kept it there. She said it gave her motivation on days when life presented challenges. It reminded her that we need to have some bad times to appreciate the good times. And, on the days when life was good, it always reminded her that life doesn't get any better than this.

I was at our local farmers market and found a stained glass rainbow similar to the one my aunt had hanging in her window. The one I bought did not have the saying on it, but every time I look at it I can remember my aunts words and the saying

"To make rainbows you need sun and rain".



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The Secret of Happiness

by Steve Brunkhorst

The old man shuffled slowly into the restaurant. With head tilted, and shoulders bent forward, he leaned on his trusty cane with each unhurried step.

His tattered cloth jacket, patched trousers, worn out shoes, and warm personality made him stand out from the usual Saturday morning breakfast crowd. Unforgettable were his pale blue eyes that sparkled like diamonds, large rosy cheeks, and thin lips held in a tight, steady smile.

He stopped, turned with his whole body, and winked at a little girl seated by the door. She flashed a big grin right back at him. A young waitress named Mary watched him shuffle toward a table by the window.

Mary ran over to him, and said, "Here, Sir. Let me give you a hand with that chair."

Without saying a word, he smiled and nodded a thank you. She pulled the chair away from the table. Steadying him with one arm, she helped him move in front of the chair, and get comfortably seated. Then she scooted the table up close to him, and leaned his cane against the table where he could reach it.

In a soft, clear voice he said, "Thank you, Miss. And bless you for your kind gestures."

"You're welcome, Sir." She replied. "And my name is Mary. I'll be back in a moment, and if you need anything at all in the mean time, just wave at me!"

After he had finished a hearty meal of pancakes, bacon, and hot lemon tea, Mary brought him the change from his ticket. He left it lay. She helped him up from his chair, and out from behind the table. She handed him his cane, and walked with him to the front door.

Holding the door open for him, she said, "Come back and see us, Sir!"

He turned with his whole body, winked a smile, and nodded a thank you. "You are very kind." he said softly.

When Mary went to clean his table, she almost fainted. Under his plate she found a business card, and a note scribbled on a napkin. Under the napkin was a one hundred dollar bill.

The note on the napkin read...

"Dear Mary, I respect you very much, and you respect yourself too. It shows by the way you treat others. You have found the secret of happiness. Your kind gestures will shine through those who meet you."

The man she had waited on was the owner of the restaurant where she worked. This was the first time that she, or any of his employees had ever seen him in person.

Note: This story is based on actual events experienced by a friend from St. Paul, Minnesota. The note is the exact wording on the napkin that she has kept in her scrap book for fifteen years.



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The Greeting Card That Woke Me Up

by Byron Pulsifer

Life is easy, change is easy, and everything is easy. If only this was true. How often have we looked at successful people in almost any walk of life and wished we could have what they have. It seems so easy for them. Well, nothing is as easy as it seems. But, what makes the difference; what has made other people's success look easy?

Not too long ago, I was faced with what appeared to be a brick wall. After leaving a corporate environment for greener pastures, I found that the other side wasn't any greener, nor did there seem to be any grass at all. No matter what I attempted to do, I was invariably knocked back to square one. So, I started another business venture, again to be knocked back to square one.

I began to doubt my own confidence; maybe I had made a fatal error. Maybe, I should go back to what I did before. At least, it seemed to be a much more secure and safer environment. As I contemplated my future, I received a card in the mail from a friend of mine who knew how I was struggling. The card read: *"Persistence; persistence prevails when all else fails"*.

I sat there reading that card, once, twice, three times. What did these words mean for me? Were these words just that; words, nothing more? When you're faced with an uncertain future, when all you try seems to go nowhere, maybe there was more truth to these words than I realized.

Maybe, I hadn't found the right recipe for success. On the other hand, maybe I had given up too soon. Ever heard the expression 'back up and re-load'. Well, if you haven't, it meant to me that I should start again but this time internalizing the words "persistence prevails when all else fails".

To make a long story short, I did persevere; persistence paid off with a good dose of patience realizing that a new beginning doesn't emerge to success overnight. After all, in my former corporate career, I had invested years of education and training to become successful. Why should it be any different when I started a new business venture?

Failure is the incapacity to learn from your mistakes. Success is the capacity to learn, to persist, to persevere in order to reach your goal. Life can be filled with failures, but only those who don't persevere adopt failure as the way it has to be.



The Mouse Trap

by Author Unknown

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package.

What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered - he was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap. Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning. There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!" The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!" The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone.

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house -- like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer's wife did not get well; she died. So many people came for her funeral; the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

The next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember -- when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk. We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage and help one another.



Struggle a Little - Then Fly!

By Author Unknown

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly, that he brought home.

One day a small opening appeared he sat and watched the butterfly for several hours. It struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily, but, it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. He continued to watch the butterfly, he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and the body would contract. Neither happened!

In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It was never able to fly.

The man acted with well-intentioned kindness but he didn't understand the consequences. The restricting cocoon and the struggle required to get through the tiny opening, were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If we were to go through life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as we could have been and we could never fly

***So the next time you are faced with an obstacle,
a challenge, or a problem, remember the butterfly.
Struggle a little - then fly!***



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