

Personal Growth Concepts™

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Q&A Forum - Review

Job Related Issues, 2006-06

Fellow Q&Aers,

Greetings! A couple of announcements before we get to our Q&A today.

My sister, Anne Pacheco, a breast cancer survivor, has written a book entitled Bright Side of the Road. She has asked me (and I agreed) to share the following web link with anyone who might benefit from reading it, including doctors, nurses, and care-givers, as well as women with breast cancer. Here it is: <http://www.KaleidoSoul.com/brightsidebook.html> Foxfire users, please use this link instead: <http://www.kaleidosoul.com/brightside.html>

Secondly, a friend of mine is actively involved in Operation Military Pride, an organization that sends needed supplies to our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. I suggested (and she agreed) and she has set up a donation basket in our Stratford office with some literature. She will periodically be emptying the basket. Please place your contributions in the basket. If you want to contribute cash, please place it in a plain envelope with the words "Operation Military Pride" on the front and give it to one of our staff. She will convert the cash to needed items and ship them to her contacts in the military. There is a list in the waiting room of suggested items. She has indicated that our troops are particularly in need of lotion (dessert dryness), toiletries like toothpaste, conditioner, shampoo, toothbrushes and foodstuffs that can survive the dessert. She likes to take empty prescription bottles (please remove the labels) and fill them with M&Ms (they melt in your mouth, not in the desert!) You can also find lists of items needed on their website, www.operationmilitarypride.org. Thank you for helping us help them.

Finally, I would like to thank Carole Ann, Anne, and Anna for the bonuses used today. Some of them were shared a couple of years ago with me. There is a super bonus also - I have been meaning to share the long version of the serenity prayer with you for awhile. A special thank you to Beth for recently reminding me of it with her email.

Now..... on to the Q&A..... Peace, John

Q: Hello John, I have a question! I have been in real estate going on 4 years. I know my job. When it comes to new ideas and techniques I am the one that comes up with them. People that have been doing this job for 20+ years come to me with questions a lot. My issue is I'm not focused (I know: it's not hocus pocus, it's focus! focus! focus!). I stop to help everyone at the drop of a dime but when it comes to my side of trying to drum up business I put it off. That means putting food on my table isn't as important to putting it on their table apparently. I shouldn't think like that because I have a 1 yr old son to think of. My broker says I should have no issues making it in this business. But I look at my income and I am really struggling. Another realtor that I am close to says both of them sat down to try to figure out how to get me more

motivated. And like them I don't know what the issue is. I do have tons of distractions that I allow with my girlfriend and her 3 other kids. But I don't feel that is the reason of not being focused. Years ago when I was in construction I had drive - I worked as much as possible and loved it. I got hurt and since then haven't found my rhythm yet. Is it a chemical imbalance or is it laziness in not wanting to work? I can't figure it out and I know I am extremely good at my job. How do I get that drive back besides pushing away the petty distractions?

A: I've got a lot here to give you some input on. First, if you're not focused, there is a small chance you have ADD, which is a chemical imbalance which may be easily remedied with medication. I doubt this is the case since I was told in a training once that ADD never takes a day off and you indicated that, in the past, when you worked in construction, you had the drive and appear to have been focused. This leads me to believe other issues may be present. On a similar note, as a clinician I would want to rule out depression, which may also be a chemical imbalance, and could account for the muting of interest in work that you had enjoyed before. I would also want to rule out codependency, the tendency to put others' needs ahead of yours. Perhaps some re-balancing, putting your needs on par with others' needs would be helpful for you.

A second idea may be procrastination - perhaps you are simply procrastinating "drumming up business." The construction mind- set of "go and build it" does not usually include selling somebody to hire you to build it, unless you were in business for your self. It is easy to see how one could get spoiled and get used to thinking that the business should come to you. Real estate is a different matter - while you may be good at connecting with the customer who is looking to buy or sell, finding them and all that that entails, may not be your cup of tea. Since this may be a part of the job you don't like, you may postpone it, preferring to do the parts of your job you would rather be doing. This is part of the human condition. If this is the case, you may want to read Brian Tracy's recent book, [Eat That Frog: 21 Great Ways To Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time](#). The idea is, if you have to eat a frog, i.e. do something you would prefer not to do, then do it first and get it over with!

Another idea has to do with goal setting and time management. Perhaps when you were in construction, you just went with the flow. It doesn't seem like you have found your way back into your flow yet. Do you have goals? If so, are your goals self-derived or externally imposed? If externally imposed, then there may be some unresolved issues with authority figures (or, as I like to say, "misuse of authority figures,") from your childhood. If self-derived, are they worded in such a way to reflect you or are they what you think they should be? Are they S-M-A-R-T goals, i.e. specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound? How do you have your day set up? Are you managing your time most effectively? How do you handle distractions? Are you able to say no? Are you able to set boundaries and then, "do sentry duty?" to protect them. All the distractions you mentioned in your question can contribute and magnify any of the other issues I am discussing. I know real estate work provides specific challenges in these areas. If you need more input on how to handle them, let me know.

My final question is, is this job a good fit for you? You may just be in the wrong position. As we've discussed before there may be a different position in the field that may be more suitable

for you, like being a housing inspector, either privately or for a town or city. Many people are drawn to real estate because of the potential for high income but there is usually a ramp up time and a lot has to be done with averaging the income to cover the expenses. Other positions may pay less, but more steadily, tap into your wisdom from both the construction and real estate fields and be more satisfying to you in the long run.

Pushing away petty distractions may need to defer to you finding successful ways of separating yourself temporarily from them so you can concentrate on other, more important tasks. Things like focusing, refocusing on what the goal of the hour is and like not routinely taking personal calls when you are "on track" with your work goals. Getting your drive back -- I think it is there but has been dormant. When you get the conditions right, I believe it will be back. In the meantime, work on the big plan, work on improving the conditions and work on drumming up the business for your self.

I hope my ideas have provided some starting points for your thinking on these matters. I apologize for the long wait in replying to your question and trust that you will provide me some feedback in the near future.

Quote: "Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work." - Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC)

Bonus 1

Last week I took my children to a restaurant. My six-year-old son asked if he could say grace. As we bowed our heads he said, "God is good. God is great. Thank you for the food, and I would even thank you more if mom gets us ice cream for dessert. And Liberty and justice for all! Amen!"

Along with the laughter from the other customers nearby I heard a woman remark, "That's what's wrong with this country. Kids today don't even know how to pray. Asking God for ice cream! Why, I never!"

Hearing this, my son burst into tears and asked me, "Did I do it wrong? Is God mad at me?"

As I held him and assured him that he had done a terrific job and God was certainly not mad at him, an elderly gentle man approached the table.

He winked at my son and said, "I happen to know that God thought that was a great prayer." "Really?" my son asked "Cross my heart." Then in a theatrical whisper he added (indicating the woman whose remark had started this whole thing), "Too bad she never asks God for ice cream. A little ice cream is good for the soul sometimes."

Naturally, I bought my kid's ice cream at the end of the meal. My son stared at his for a moment and then did something I will remember the rest of my life. He picked up his sundae and without a word walked over and placed it in front of the woman. With a big smile he told her, "Here, this is for you. Ice cream is good for the soul sometimes and my soul is good already."

Bonus 2

Subject: Story about Dot Com

An old, bearded shepherd, with a crooked staff, walks up to a stone pulpit and says . . . And lo it came to pass that the trader by the name of Abraham Com did take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot. And Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she had been called Amazon Dot Com.

And she said unto Abraham, her husband, "Why doth thou travel far, from town to town, with thy goods when thou can trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

And Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load, but simply said, "How, Dear?"

And Dot replied, "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between to send messages saying what you have for sale and they will reply telling you which hath the best price. And the sale can be made on the drums and delivery by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)".

Abraham thought long and decided he would let Dot have her way with the drums.

And the drums rang out and were an immediate success. Abraham sold all the goods he had, at the top price, without ever moving from his tent.

But his success did arouse envy. A man named Maccabia did secret himself inside Abraham's drum and was accused of insider trading.

And the young did take to Dot Com's trading as doth the greedy horsefly to camel dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Siderites, or NERDS for short.

And lo the land was so feverish with joy at the new riches and the deafening sound of drums, that no one noticed that the real riches were going to the drum maker, one Brother William of Gates, who bought up every drum company in the land. And indeed did insist on making drums that would only work if you bought Brother Gates' drumsticks.

And Dot did say, "Oh, Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others".

And as Abraham looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or as it came to be known, "eBay", he said, "We need a name of a service that reflects what we are".

And Dot replied, "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner Operators".

"Whoopee!", said Abraham.

"No, YAHOO!", said Dot Com.

Bonus 3

Brother Miller's Stand

During the waning years of the depression in a small Southeastern Idaho community, I used to stop by Brother Miller's roadside stand for farm-fresh produce as the season made it available. Food and money were still extremely scarce and bartering was used, extensively. One particular day Brother Miller was bagging some early potatoes for me. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily appraising a basket of freshly picked green peas. I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes.

Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Brother Miller and the ragged boy next to me.

"Hello Barry, how are you today?" "H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya'. Jus' admirin' them peas.

Sure look good."

"They are good, Barry. How's your Mom?"

"Fine. Gittin' stronger alla' time."

"Good. Anything I can help you with?" "No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas."

"Would you like to take some home?"

"No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with."

"Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?"

"All I got's my prize marble here."

"Is that right? Let me see it."

"Here 'tis. She's a dandy."

"I can see that. Hmmmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?"

"Not 'zackley but, almost."

"Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble."

"Sure will. Thanks, Mr. Miller."

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me. With a smile she said:

"There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes or whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, perhaps."

I left the stand, smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Utah but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys and their bartering. Several years went by each more rapid than the previous one.

Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Brother Miller had died. They were having his viewing that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them.

Upon our arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could. Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts... very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing smiling and composed, by her husband's casket.

Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket. Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary, awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and mentioned the story she had told me about the marbles. Eyes glistening she took my hand and led me to the casket. "Those three young men, that just left, were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim "traded" them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about the color or size... they came to pay their debt. We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world," she confided, "but, right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man

in Idaho."

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three, magnificently shiny, red marbles.

xtra bonus, as promised:

SERENITY PRAYER
by Reinhold Niebuhr

God, grant me the
Serenity to accept the things
I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can and the
Wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship
As the pathway to peace.

Taking, as He did,
This sinful world as it is
not as I would have it.

Trusting that He will make
all things right
If I surrender to His will.

That I may be reasonably happy
in this life,
And supremely happy
With Him forever in the next.

End of bonuses

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