

Primary and Secondary Greatness

My experience with my son, my study of perception and my reading of the success literature coalesced to create one of those "Aha!" experiences in life when suddenly things click into place. I was suddenly able to see the powerful impact of the personality ethic and to clearly understand those subtle, often consciously unidentified discrepancies between what I knew to be true -- some things I had been taught many years ago as a child and things that were deep in my own inner sense of value -- and the quick fix philosophies that surrounded me every day. I understood at a deeper level why, as I had worked through the years with people from all walks of life, I had found that the things I was teaching and knew to be effective were often at variance with these popular voices.

I am not suggesting that elements of the personality ethic -- personality growth, communication skill training, and education in the field of influence strategies and positive thinking -- are not beneficial, in fact sometimes essential for success. I believe they are. But these are secondary, not primary traits. Perhaps, in utilizing our human capacity to build on the foundation of generations before us, we have inadvertently become so focused on our own building that we have forgotten the foundation that holds it up; or in reaping for so long where we have not sown, perhaps we have forgotten the need to sow.

If I try to use human influence strategies and tactics of how to get other people to do what I want, to work better, to be more motivated, to like me and each other -- while my character is fundamentally flawed, marked by duplicity and insincerity -- then in the long run, I cannot be successful. My duplicity will breed distrust, and everything I do -- even using so-called good human relations techniques -- will be perceived as manipulative. It simply makes no difference how good the rhetoric is or even how good the intentions are; if there is little or no trust, there is no foundation for permanent success. Only basic goodness gives life to technique.

To focus on technique is like cramming your way through school. You sometimes get by, perhaps even get good grades, but if you don't pay the price day in and day out, you never achieve true mastery of the subjects you study or develop an educated mind.

Did you ever consider how ridiculous it would be to try to cram on a farm -- to forget to plant in the spring, play all summer and then cram in the fall to bring in the harvest? The farm is a natural system. The price must be paid and the process followed. You always reap what you sow; there is no shortcut.

This principle is also true, ultimately, in human behavior, in human relationships. They, too, are natural systems based on the The Law of the Harvest. In the short run, in an artificial social system such as school, you may be able to get by if you learn how to manipulate the man-made rules, to "play the game." In most one-shot or short-lived human interactions, you can use the personality ethic to get by and to make favorable impressions through charm and skill and pretending to be interested in other people's hobbies. You can pick up quick, easy techniques that may work in short-term situations. But secondary traits alone have no permanent worth in long-term relationships. Eventually, if there isn't deep integrity and fundamental character strength, the challenges of life will cause true motives to surface and human relationship failure will replace short-term success.

Many people with secondary greatness -- that is, social recognition for their talents -- lack primary greatness or goodness in their character. Sooner or later, you'll see this in every

Each of us tends to think we see things as they are, that we are objective. But this is not the case. We see the world, not as it is, but as we are -- or, as we are conditioned to see it. When we open our mouths to describe what we see, we in effect describe ourselves, our perceptions, our paradigms. When other people disagree with us, we immediately think something is wrong with them. But, as the demonstration shows, sincere, clearheaded people see things differently, each looking through the unique lens of experience.

This does not mean that there are no facts. In the demonstration, two individuals who initially have been influenced by different conditioning pictures look at the third picture together. They are now both looking at the same identical facts -- black lines and white spaces -- and they would both acknowledge these as facts. But each person's interpretation of these facts represents prior experiences, and the facts have no meaning whatsoever apart from the interpretation.

The more aware we are of our basic paradigms, maps, or assumptions, and the extent to which we have been influenced by our experience, the more we can take responsibility for those paradigms, examine them, test them against reality, listen to others and be open to their perceptions, thereby getting a larger picture and a far more objective view.

The Power of a Paradigm Shift

Perhaps the most important insight to be gained from the perception demonstration is in the area of paradigm shifting, what we might call the "Aha!" experience when someone finally "sees" the composite picture in another way. The more bound a person is by the initial perception, the more powerful the "Aha!" experience is. It's as though a light were suddenly turned on inside.

The term Paradigm Shift was introduced by Thomas Kuhn in his highly influential landmark book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Kuhn shows how almost every significant breakthrough in the field of scientific endeavor is first a break with tradition, with old ways of thinking, with old paradigms.

For Ptolemy, the great Egyptian astronomer, the earth was the center of the universe. But Copernicus created a Paradigm Shift, and a great deal of resistance and persecution as well, by placing the sun at the center. Suddenly, everything took on a different interpretation.

The Newtonian model of physics was a clockwork paradigm and is still the basis of modern engineering. But it was partial, incomplete. The scientific world was revolutionized by the Einsteinian paradigm, the relativity paradigm, which had much higher predictive and explanatory value.

Until the germ theory was developed, a high percentage of women and children died during childbirth, and one could understand why. In military skirmishes, more men were dying from small wounds and diseases than from the major traumas on the front lines. But as soon as the germ theory was developed, a whole new paradigm, a better, improved way of understanding what was happening made dramatic, significant medical improvement possible.

The United States today is the fruit of a Paradigm Shift. The traditional concept of government for centuries had been a monarchy, the divine right of kings. Then a different paradigm was developed -government of the people, by the people, and for the people. And a constitutional democracy was born, unleashing tremendous human energy and

My experience has been that there are times to teach and times not to teach. When relationships are strained and the air charged with emotion, an attempt to teach is often perceived as a form of judgment and rejection. But to take the child alone, quietly, when the relationship is good and to discuss the teaching or the value seems to have much greater impact. It may have been that the emotional maturity to do that was beyond my level of patience and internal control at the time.

Perhaps a sense of possessing needs to come before a sense of genuine sharing. Many people who give mechanically or refuse to give and share in their marriages and families may never have experienced what it means to possess themselves, their own sense of identity and self-worth. Really helping our children grow may involve being patient enough to allow them the sense of possession as well as being wise enough to teach them the value of giving and providing the example ourselves.

The Way We See the Problem is the Problem

People are intrigued when they see good things happening in the lives of individuals, families, and organizations that are based on solid principles. They admire such personal strength and maturity, such family unity and teamwork, such adaptive synergistic organizational culture.

And their immediate request is very revealing of their basic paradigm. "How do you do it? Teach me the techniques." What they're really saying is, "Give me some quick fix advice or solution that will relieve the pain in my own situation."

They will find people who will meet their wants and teach them things; and for a short time, skills and techniques may appear to work. They may eliminate some of the cosmetic or acute problems through social aspirin and band-aids.

But the underlying chronic condition remains, and eventually new acute symptoms will appear. The more people are into quick fix and focus on the acute problems and pain, the more they avoid approach committed to the underlying chronic condition.

The way we see the problem is the problem.

Look again at some of the concerns that introduced this chapter, and at the impact of personality ethic thinking. I've taken course after course on effective management training. I expect a lot out of my employees and I work hard to be friendly toward them and to treat them right. But I don't feel any loyalty from them. I think if I were home sick for a day, they'd spend most of their time gabbing at the water fountain. Why can't I train them to be independent and responsible -- or find employees who can be?

The personality ethic tells me I could take some kind of dramatic action -- shake things up, make heads roll -- that would make my employees shape up and appreciate what they have. Or that I could find some motivational training program that would get them committed. Or even that I could hire new people that would do a better job.

But is it possible that under that apparently disloyal behavior, these employees question whether I really act in their best interest? Do they feel like I'm treating them as mechanical objects? Is there some truth to that?

Deep inside, is that really the way I see them? Is there a chance the way I look at the people who work for me is part of the problem?

As Eleanor Roosevelt observed, "No one can hurt you without your consent." In the words of Gandhi, "They cannot take away our self respect if we do not give it to them." It is our willing permission, our consent to what happens to us, that hurts us far more than what happens to us in the first place.

I admit this is very hard to accept emotionally, especially if we have had years and years of explaining our misery in the name of circumstance or someone else's behavior. But until a person can say deeply and honestly, "I am what I am today because of the choices I made yesterday," that person cannot say, "I choose otherwise."

Once in Sacramento when I was speaking on the subject of Proactivity, a woman in the audience stood up in the middle of my presentation and started talking excitedly. It was a large audience, and as a number of people turned to look at her, she suddenly became aware of what she was doing, grew embarrassed and sat back down. But she seemed to find it difficult to restrain herself and started talking to the people around her. She seemed so happy.

I could hardly wait for a break to find out what had happened. When it finally came, I immediately went to her and asked if she would be willing to share her experience.

"You just can't imagine what's happened to me!" she exclaimed. "I'm a full-time nurse to the most miserable, ungrateful man you can possibly imagine. Nothing I do is good enough for him. He never expresses appreciation; he hardly even acknowledges me. He constantly harps at me and finds fault with everything I do. This man has made my life miserable and I often take my frustration out on my family. The other nurses feel the same way. We almost pray for his demise."

"And for you to have the gall to stand up there and suggest that nothing can hurt me, that no one can hurt me without my consent, and that I have chosen my own emotional life of being miserable - well, there was just no way I could buy into that."

"But I kept thinking about it. I really went inside myself and began to ask, 'Do I have the power to choose my response?'"

"When I finally realized that I do have that power, when I swallowed that bitter pill and realized that I had chosen to be miserable, I also realized that I could choose not to be miserable."

"At that moment I stood up. I felt as though I was being let out of San Quentin. I wanted to yell to the whole world, 'I am free! I am let out of prison! No longer am I going to be controlled by the treatment of some person.'"

It's not what happens to us, but our response to what happens to us that hurts us. Of course, things can hurt us physically or economically and can cause sorrow. But our character, our basic identity, does not have to be hurt at all. In fact, our most difficult experiences become the crucibles that forge our character and develop the internal powers, the freedom to handle difficult circumstances in the future and to inspire others to do so as well.

Frankl is one of many who have been able to develop the personal freedom in difficult circumstances to lift and inspire others. The autobiographical accounts of Vietnam prisoners of war provide additional persuasive testimony of the transforming power of

One of my favorite stories is one in the Old Testament, part of the fundamental fabric of the Judeo-Christian tradition. It's the story of Joseph, who was sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers at the age of 17. Can you imagine how easy it would have been for him to languish in self-pity as a servant of Potiphar, to focus on the weaknesses of his brothers and his captors and on all he didn't have? But Joseph was proactive. He worked on be. And within a short period of time, he was running Potiphar's household. He was in charge of all that Potiphar had because the trust was so high.

Then the day came when Joseph was caught in a difficult situation and refused to compromise his integrity. As a result, he was unjustly imprisoned for 13 years. But again he was proactive. He worked on the inner circle, on being instead of having, and soon he was running the prison and eventually the entire nation of Egypt, second only to the Pharaoh.

I know this idea is a dramatic Paradigm Shift for many people. It is so much easier to blame other people, conditioning, or conditions for our own stagnant situation. But we are responsible -- "response-able" -- to control our lives and to powerfully influence our circumstances by working on be, on what we are.

If I have a problem in my marriage, what do I really gain by continually confessing my wife's sins? By saying I'm not responsible, I make myself a powerless victim; I immobilize myself in a negative situation. I also diminish my ability to influence her -- my nagging, accusing, critical attitude only makes her feel validated in her own weakness. My criticism is worse than the conduct I want to correct. My ability to positively impact the situation withers and dies.

If I really want to improve my situation, I can work on the one thing over which I have control -- myself. I can stop trying to shape up my wife and work on my own weaknesses. I can focus on being a great marriage partner, a source of unconditional love and support. Hopefully my wife will feel the power of proactive example and respond in kind. But whether she does or doesn't, the most positive way I can influence my situation is to work on myself, on my being.

There are so many ways to work in the Circle of Influence -- to be a better listener, to be a more loving marriage partner, to be a better student, to be a more cooperative and dedicated employee. Sometimes the most proactive thing we can do is to be happy, just to genuinely smile. Happiness, like unhappiness, is a proactive choice. There are things, like the weather, that our Circle of Influence will never include. But as proactive people, we can carry our own physical or social weather with us. We can be happy and accept those things that at present we can't control, while we focus our efforts on the things that we can.

The Other End of the Stick

Before we totally shift our life focus to our Circle of Influence, we need to consider two things in our Circle of Concern that merit deeper thought -- consequences and mistakes.

While we are free to choose our actions, we are not free to choose the consequences of those actions. Consequences are governed by natural law. They are out in the Circle of Concern. We can decide to step in front of a fast-moving train, but we cannot decide what will happen when the train hits us.

Knowing that we are responsible -- "response-able" -- is fundamental to effectiveness and to every other habit of effectiveness we will discuss.

Application Suggestions

1. For a full day, listen to your language and to the language of the people around you. How often do you use and hear reactive phrases such as "If only," "I can't," or "I have to"
2. Identify an experience you might encounter in the near future where, based on past experience, you would probably behave reactively. Review the situation in the context of your Circle of Influence. How could you respond proactively? Take several moments and create the experience vividly in your mind, picturing yourself responding in a proactive manner. Remind yourself of the gap between stimulus and response. Make a commitment to yourself to exercise your freedom to choose.
3. Select a problem from your work or personal life that is frustrating to you. Determine whether it is a direct, indirect, or no control problem. Identify the first step you can take in your Circle of Influence to solve it and then take that step.
4. Try the 30-day test of proactivity. Be aware of the change in your Circle of Influence.

Preview from Notesale.co.uk
Page 53 of 219

Because we already live with many scripts that have been handed to us, the process of writing our own script is actually more a process of "rescripting," or Paradigm Shifting -- of changing some of the basic paradigms that we already have. As we recognize the ineffective scripts, the incorrect or incomplete paradigms within us, we can proactively begin to rescript ourselves.

I think one of the most inspiring accounts of the rescripting process comes from the autobiography of Anwar Sadat, past president of Egypt. Sadat had been reared, nurtured, and deeply scripted in a hatred for Israel. He would make the statement on national television, "I will never shake the hand of an Israeli as long as they occupy one inch of Arab soil. Never, never, never!" And huge crowds all around the country would chant, "Never, never, never!" He marshaled the energy and unified the will of the whole country in that script.

The script was very independent and nationalistic, and it aroused deep emotions in the people. But it was also very foolish, and Sadat knew it. It ignored the perilous, highly interdependent reality of the situation.

So he rescripted himself. It was a process he had learned when he was a young man imprisoned in Cell 54, a solitary cell in Cairo Central Prison, as a result of his involvement in a conspiracy plot against King Farouk. He learned to withdraw from his own mind and look at it to see if the scripts were appropriate and wise. He learned how to vacate his own mind and, through a deep personal process of meditation, to work with his own scriptures, his own form of prayer, and rescript himself.

He records that he was almost loath to leave his prison cell because it was there that he realized that real success is success with self. It's not in having things, but in having mastery, having victory over self.

For a period of time during Nasser's administration Sadat was relegated to a position of relative insignificance. Everyone felt that his spirit was broken, but it wasn't. They were projecting their own home movies on him. They didn't understand him. He was biding his time.

And when that time came, when he became president of Egypt and confronted the political realities, he rescripted himself toward Israel. He visited the Knesset in Jerusalem and opened up one of the most precedent-breaking peace movements in the history of the world, a bold initiative that eventually brought about the Camp David Accord.

Sadat was able to use his self-awareness, his imagination, and his conscience to exercise personal leadership, to change an essential paradigm, to change the way he saw the situation. He worked in the center of his Circle of Influence. And from that rescripting, that change in paradigm, flowed changes in behavior and attitude that affected millions of lives in the wider Circle of Concern.

In developing our own self-awareness many of us discover ineffective scripts, deeply embedded habits that are totally unworthy of us, totally incongruent with the things we really value in life. Habit 2 says we don't have to live with those scripts. We are responsible to use our imagination and creativity to write new ones that are more effective, more congruent with our deepest values and with the correct principles that give our values meaning.

Suppose, for example, that I am highly over reactive to my children. Suppose that whenever they begin to do something I feel is inappropriate, I sense an immediate

so-called mental and emotional illnesses are really symptoms of an underlying sense of meaninglessness or emptiness. Logotherapy eliminates that emptiness by helping the individual to detect his unique meaning, his mission in life.

Once you have that sense of mission, you have the essence of your own proactivity. You have the vision and the values which direct your life. You have the basic direction from which you set your long- and short-term goals. You have the power of a written constitution based on correct principles, against which every decision concerning the most effective use of your time, your talents, and your energies can be effectively measured.

At the Center

In order to write a personal mission statement, we must begin at the very center of our Circle of Influence, that center comprised of our most basic Our paradigms, the lens through which we see the world.

It is here that we deal with our vision and our values. It is here that we use our endowment of self-awareness to examine our maps and, if we value correct principles, to make certain that our maps accurately describe the territory, that our paradigms are based on principles and reality. It is here that we use our endowment of conscience as a compass to help us detect our own unique talents and areas of contribution. It is here that we use our endowment of imagination to mentally create the end we desire, giving direction and purpose to our beginnings and providing the substance of a written personal constitution.

It is also here that our focused efforts achieve the greatest results. As we work within the very center of our Circle of Influence, we expand it. This is the most-leverage PC work, significantly impacting the effectiveness of every aspect of our lives.

Whatever is at the center of our life will be the source of our security, guidance, wisdom, and power. Security represents your sense of worth, your identity, your emotional anchorage, your self-esteem, your basic personal strength or lack of it.

Guidance means your source of direction in life. Encompassed by your map, your internal frame of reference that interprets for you what is happening out there, are standards or principles or implicit criteria that govern moment-by-moment decision-making and doing.

Wisdom is your perspective on life, your sense of balance, your understanding of how the various parts and principles apply and relate to each other. It embraces judgment, discernment, comprehension. It is a gestalt or oneness, an integrated wholeness.

Power is the faculty or capacity to act, the strength and potency to accomplish something. It is the vital energy to make choices and decisions. It also includes the capacity to overcome deeply embedded habits and to cultivate higher, more effective ones.

These four factors -- security, guidance, wisdom, and power -- are interdependent. Security and clear guidance bring true wisdom, and wisdom becomes the spark or catalyst to release and direct power. When these four factors are present together, harmonized and enlivened by each other, they create the great force of a noble personality, a balanced character, a beautifully integrated individual.

When we are dependent on the person with whom we are in conflict, both need and conflict are compounded. Love-hate overreactions, fight-or-flight tendencies, withdrawal, aggressiveness, bitterness, resentment, and cold competition are some of the usual results. When these occur, we tend to fall even further back on background tendencies and habits in an effort to justify and defend our own behavior and we attack our spouse's.

Inevitably, anytime we are too vulnerable we feel the need to protect ourselves from further wounds. So we resort to sarcasm, cutting humor, criticism -- anything that will keep from exposing the tenderness within. Each partner tends to wait on the initiative of the other for love, only to be disappointed but also confirmed as to the rightness of the accusations made.

There is only phantom security in such a relationship when all appears to be going well. Guidance is based on the emotion of the moment. Wisdom and power are lost in the counterdependent negative interactions.

Family Centeredness. Another common center is the family. This, too, may seem to be natural and proper. As an area of focus and deep investment, it provides great opportunities for deep relationships, for loving, for sharing, for much that makes life worthwhile. But as a center, it ironically destroys the very elements necessary to family success.

People who are family-centered get their sense of security or personal worth from the family tradition and culture or the family reputation. Thus, they become vulnerable to any changes in that tradition or culture and to any influences that would affect that reputation.

Family-centered parents do not have the emotional freedom, the power, to raise their children with their ultimate welfare truly in mind. If they derive their own security from the family, they need to be popular with their children may override the importance of a long-term investment in their children's growth and development. Or they may be focused on the proper and correct behavior of the moment. Any behavior that they consider improper threatens their security. They become upset, guided by the emotions of the moment, spontaneously reacting to the immediate concern rather than the long-term growth and development of the child. They may overreact and punish out of bad temper. They tend to love their children conditionally, making them emotionally dependent or counterdependent and rebellious.

Money Centeredness. Another logical and extremely common center to people's lives is making money. Economic security is basic to one's opportunity to do much in any other dimension. In a hierarchy or continuum of needs, physical survival and financial security comes first. Other needs are not even activated until that basic need is satisfied, at least minimally.

Most of us face economic worries. Many forces in the wider culture can and do act upon our economic situation, causing or threatening such disruption that we often experience concern and worry that may not always rise to the conscious surface.

Sometimes there are apparently noble reasons given for making money, such as the desire to take care of one's family. And these things are important. But to focus on money-making as a center will bring about its own undoing.

But if these techniques become part of the personality ethic and are severed from a base of character and principles, they can be misused and abused in serving other centers, primarily the self center.

Affirmation and visualization are forms of programming, and we must be certain that we do not submit ourselves to any programming that is not in harmony with our basic center or that comes from sources centered on money-making, self interest, or anything other than correct principles.

The imagination can be used to achieve the fleeting success that comes when a person is focused on material gain or on "what's in it for me." But I believe the higher use of imagination is in harmony with the use of conscience to transcend self and create a life of contribution based on unique purpose and on the principles that govern interdependent reality.

Identifying Roles and Goals

Of course, the logical/verbal left brain becomes important also as you attempt to capture your right-brain images, feelings, and pictures in the words of a written mission statement. Just as breathing exercises help integrate body and mind, writing is a kind of psycho-neural muscular activity which helps bridge and integrate the conscious and subconscious minds. Writing distills, crystallizes, and clarifies thought and helps break the whole into parts.

We each have a number of different roles in our lives -- different areas or capacities in which we have responsibility. I may, for example, have a role as an individual, a husband, a father, a teacher, a church member, and a businessman. And each of these roles is important.

One of the major problems that arises when people work to become more effective in life is that they don't think broadly enough. They lose the sense of proportion, the balance, the natural ecology necessary for effective living. They may get consumed by work and neglect personal health. In the name of professional success, they may neglect the most precious relationships in their lives.

You may find that your mission statement will be much more balanced, much easier to work with, if you break it down into the specific role areas of your life and the goals you want to accomplish in each area. Look at your professional role. You might be a salesperson, or a manager, or a product developer. What are you about in that area? What are the values that should guide you? Think of your personal roles -- husband, wife, father, mother, neighbor, friend. What are you about in those roles? What's important to you? Think of community roles -- the political area, public service, volunteer organizations.

One executive has used the idea of roles and goals to create the following mission statement:

My mission is to live with integrity and to make a difference in the lives of others.

To fulfill this mission:

I have charity: I seek out and love the one -- each one -- regardless of his situation.

I sacrifice: I devote my time, talents, and resources to my mission.

with the bath water," reverting to first- or second-generation techniques to preserve relationships, to meet human needs, and to enjoy spontaneous moments on a daily basis.

But there is an emerging fourth generation that is different in kind. It recognizes that "time management" is really a misnomer -- the challenge is not to manage time, but to manage ourselves. Satisfaction is a function of expectation as well as realization. And expectation (and satisfaction) lie in our Circle of Influence.

Rather than focusing on things and time, fourth-generation expectations focus on preserving and enhancing relationships and accomplishing results -- in short, on maintaining the P/PC Balance.

Quadrant II

The essential focus of the fourth generation of management can be captured in the Time Management Matrix diagrammed on the next page. Basically, we spend time in one of four ways.

As you see, the two factors that define an activity are urgent and important. Urgent means it requires immediate attention. It's "Now!" Urgent things act on us. A ringing phone is urgent. Most people can't stand the thought of just allowing the phone to ring. You could spend hours preparing materials, you could get all dressed up and travel to a person's office to discuss a particular issue, but if the phone were to ring while you were there, it would generally take precedence over your personal visit.

If you were to phone someone, there aren't many people who would say, "I'll get to you in 15 minutes; just hold." But those same people would probably let you wait in an office for at least that long while they completed a telephone conversation with someone else.

Urgent matters are usually visible. They press on us; they insist on action. They're often popular with others. They're usually right in front of us. And often they are pleasant, easy, fun to do. But so often they are unimportant!

Importance, on the other hand, has to do with results. If something is important, it contributes to your mission, your values, your high priority goals.

We react to urgent matters. Important matters that are not urgent require more initiative, more proactivity. We must act to seize opportunity, to make things happen. If we don't practice Habit 2, if we don't have a clear idea of what is important, of the results we desire in our lives, we are easily diverted into responding to the urgent.

Look for a moment at the four quadrants in the Time Management Matrix. Quadrant I is both urgent and important. It deals with significant results that require immediate attention. We usually call the activities in Quadrant I "crises" or "problems." We all have some Quadrant I activities in our lives. But Quadrant I consumes many people. They are crisis managers, problem-minded people, the deadline-driven producers.

As long as you focus on Quadrant I, it keeps getting bigger and bigger until it dominates you. It's like the pounding surf. A huge problem comes and knocks you down and you're wiped out. You struggle back up only to face another one that knocks you down and slams you to the ground.

of it. I feel honored by it. For a number of reasons, I won't be participating myself, but I want you to know how much I appreciate your invitation."

Sandra was ready for anything but a pleasant "no." She turned to me and sighed, "I wish I'd said that."

I don't mean to imply that you shouldn't be involved in significant service projects. Those things are important. But you have to decide what your highest priorities are and have the courage --pleasantly, smiling, no apologetically -- to say "no" to other things. And the way you do that is by having a bigger "yes" burning inside. The enemy of the "best" is often the "good."

Keep in mind that you are always saying "no" to something. If it isn't to the apparent, urgent things in your life, it is probably to the more fundamental, highly important things. Even when the urgent is good, the good can keep you from your best, keep you from your unique contributions, if you let it.

When I was Director of University Relations at a large university, I hired a very talented, proactive, creative writer. One day, after he had been on the job for a few months, I went into his office and asked him to work on some urgent matters that were pressing on me.

He said, "Stephen, I'll do whatever you want me to do. Just let me share with you my situation."

Then he took me over to his wall board, where he had listed over two dozen projects he was working on, together with performance criteria and deadline dates that had been clearly negotiated before. He was highly disciplined, which is why I went to see him in the first place. "If you want to get something done, give it to a busy man."

Then he said, "Stephen, to do the jobs that you want done right would take several days. Which of these projects would you like me to delay or cancel to satisfy your request?"

Well, I didn't want to take the responsibility for that. I didn't want to put a cog in the wheel of one of the most productive people on the staff just because I happened to be managing by crisis at the time. The jobs I wanted done were urgent, but not important. So I went and found another crisis manager and gave the job to him.

We say "yes" or "no" to things daily, usually many times a day. A center of correct principles and a focus on our personal mission empowers us with wisdom to make those judgments effectively.

As I work with different groups, I tell them that the essence of effective time and life management is to organize and execute around balanced priorities. Then I ask this question: if you were to fault yourself in one of three areas, which would it be:

- (1) the inability to prioritize;
- (2) the inability or desire to organize around those priorities; or
- (3) the lack of discipline to execute around them, to stay with your priorities and organization?

Most people say their main fault is a lack of discipline. On deeper thought, I believe that is not the case. The basic problem is that their priorities have not become deeply planted in their hearts and minds. They haven't really internalized Habit 2.

"You, Dad?"

"No, not me. You're the boss. You boss yourself. How do you like Mom and Dad nagging you all the time?"

"I don't."

"We don't like doing it either. It sometimes causes a bad feeling doesn't it? So you boss yourself. Now, guess who your helper is."

"Who?"

"I am," I said. "You boss me."

"I do?"

"That's right. But my time to help is limited. Sometimes I'm away. But when I'm here, you tell me how I can help. I'll do anything you want me to do."

"Okay!"

"Now guess who judges you."

"Who?"

"You judge yourself."

"I do?"

"That's right. Twice a week the two of us will walk around the yard and you can show me how it's coming. How are you going to judge?"

"Green and clean."

"Right!"

I trained him with those two words for two weeks before I felt he was ready to take the job. Finally, the big day came.

"Is it a deal, Son?"

"It's a deal."

"What's the job?"

"Green and clean."

"What's green?"

He looked at our yard, which was beginning to look better. Then he pointed next door. "That's the color of his yard."

"What's clean?"

Preview from Notesale.co.uk
Page 109 of 219

"No messes."

"Who's the boss?"

"I am."

"Who's your helper?"

"You are, when you have time."

"Who's the judge?"

"I am. We'll walk around two times a week and I can show you how it's coming."

"And what will we look for?"

"Green and clean."

At that time I didn't mention an allowance. But I wouldn't hesitate to attach an allowance to such a stewardship.

Two weeks and two words. I thought he was ready.

It was Saturday. And he did nothing. Sunday...nothing. Monday...nothing. As I pulled out of the driveway on my way to work on Tuesday, I looked at the yellow, cluttered yard and the hot July sun on its way up. "Surely he'll do a body," I thought. I could rationalize Saturday because that was the day we made the agreement. I could rationalize Sunday; Sunday was for other things. But I couldn't rationalize Monday. And now it was Tuesday. Certainly he'd do it today. It was summertime. What else did he have to do?

All day I could hardly wait to return home to see what happened. As I rounded the corner I was met with the same picture I left that morning. And there was my son at the park across the street playing. This was not acceptable. I was upset and disillusioned by his performance after two weeks of training and all those commitments. We had a lot of effort, pride, and money invested in the yard and I could see it going down the drain. Besides, my neighbor's yard was manicured and beautiful, and the situation was beginning to get embarrassing.

I was ready to go back to gofer delegation. Son, you get over here and pick up this garbage right now or else! I knew I could get the golden egg that way. But what about the goose? What would happen to his internal commitment?

So I faked a smile and yelled across the street, "Hi, Son. How's it going?"

"Fine!" he returned.

"How's the yard coming?" I knew the minute I said it I had broken our agreement. That's not the way we had set up an accounting. That's not what we had agreed.

"How's the yard coming?" I knew the minute I said it I had broken our agreement. That's not the way we had set up an accounting. That's not what we had agreed.

So he felt justified in breaking it, too. "Fine, Dad."

I bit my tongue and waited until after dinner. Then I said, "Son, let's do as we agreed. Let's walk around the yard together and you can show me how it's going in your stewardship."

As we started out the door, his chin began to quiver. Tears welled up in his eyes and, by the time we got out to the middle of the yard, he was whimpering.

"It's so hard, Dad!"

What's so hard? I thought to myself. You haven't done a single thing! But I knew what was hard -- self management, self-supervision. So I said, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Would you, Dad?" he sniffed

"What was our agreement?"

"You said you'd help me if you had time."

"I have time."

So he ran into the house and came back with two sacks. He handed me one. "Will you pick that stuff up?" He pointed to the garbage from Saturday night's barbecue. "It makes me sick!"

So I did. I did exactly what he asked me to do. And that was when he signed the agreement in his heart. It became his yard, his stewardship.

He only asked for help two or three more times that entire summer. He took care of that yard. He kept it greener and cleaner than it had ever been under my stewardship. He even reprimanded his brothers and sisters if they left so much as a gum wrapper on the lawn.

Trust is the highest form of human motivation. It brings out the very best in people. But it takes time and patience, and it doesn't preclude the necessity to train and develop people so that their competency can rise to the level of that trust.

I am convinced that if stewardship delegation is done correctly, both parties will benefit and ultimately much more work will get done in much less time. I believe that a family that is well organized, whose time has been spent effectively delegating on a one-to-one basis, can organize the work so that everyone can do everything in about an hour a day. But that takes the internal capacity to want to manage, not just produce. The focus is on effectiveness, not efficiency.

Certainly you can pick up that room better than a child, but the key is that you want to empower the child to do it. It takes time. You have to get involved in the training and development. It takes time, but how valuable that time is downstream! It saves you so much in the long run.

This approach involves an entirely new paradigm of delegation. In effect, it changes the nature of the relationship: The steward becomes his own boss, governed by a conscience that contains the commitment to agreed upon desired results. But it also releases his creative energies toward doing whatever is necessary in harmony with correct principles to achieve those desired results.

"Well, you'd like to take a screwdriver and just open up your wife's head and rewire that attitude of hers really fast, wouldn't you?"

"Sure, I'd like her to change," he exclaimed. "I don't think it's right for her to constantly grill me like she does."

"My friend," I said, "you can't talk your way out of problems you behave yourself into."

We're dealing with a very dramatic and very fundamental Paradigm Shift here. You may try to lubricate your social interactions with personality techniques and skills, but in the process, you may truncate the vital character base. You can't have the fruits without the roots. It's the principle of sequencing: Private Victory precedes Public Victory. Self-mastery and self-discipline are the foundation of good relationships with others.

Some people say that you have to like yourself before you can like others. I think that idea has merit, but if you don't know yourself, if you don't control yourself, if you don't have mastery over yourself, it's very hard to like yourself, except in some short-term, psych-up, superficial way. Real self-respect comes from dominion over self, from true independence. And that's the focus of Habits 1, 2, and 3. Independence is an achievement. Interdependence is a choice only independent people can make. Unless we are willing to achieve real independence, it's foolish to try to develop human-relations skills. We might try. We might even have some degree of success when the sun is shining. But when the difficult times come -- and they will -- we won't have the foundation to keep things together.

The most important ingredient we put into any relationship is not what we say or what we do, but what we are. And if our words and our actions come from superficial human-relations techniques (the personality ethic) rather than from our own inner core (the character ethic), others will sense that duplicity. We simply won't be able to create and sustain the foundation necessary for effective interdependence.

The techniques and skills that really make a difference in human interaction are the ones that almost naturally flow from a truly independent character. So the place to begin building any relationship is inside ourselves, inside our Circle of Influence, our own character. As we become independent -- proactive, centered in correct principles, value driven and able to organize and execute around the priorities in our life with integrity -- we then can choose to become interdependent -- capable of building rich, enduring, highly productive relationships with other people.

As we look at the terrain ahead, we see that we're entering a whole new dimension. Interdependence opens up worlds of possibilities for deep, rich, meaningful associations, for geometrically increased productivity, for serving, for contributing, for learning, for growing. But it is also where we feel the greatest pain, the greatest frustration, the greatest roadblocks to happiness and success. And we're very aware of that pain because it is acute.

We can often live for years with the chronic pain of our lack of vision, leadership or management in our personal lives. We feel vaguely uneasy and uncomfortable and occasionally take steps to ease the pain, at least for a time. But the pain is chronic, we get used to it, we learn to live with it.

But when we have problems in our interactions with other people, we're very aware of acute pain -- it's often intense, and we want it to go away.

Six Major Deposits

Let me suggest six major deposits that build the Emotional Bank Account

Understanding the Individual

Really seeking to understand another person is probably one of the most important deposits you can make, and it is the key to every other deposit. You simply don't know what constitutes a deposit to another person until you understand that individual. What might be a deposit for you -- going for a walk to talk things over, going out for ice cream together, working on a common project -- might not be perceived by someone else as a deposit at all. It might even be perceived as a withdrawal, if it doesn't touch the person's deep interests or needs.

One person's mission is another person's minutia. To make a deposit, what is important to another person must be as important to you as the other person is to you. You may be working on a high priority project when your six-year-old child interrupts with something that seems trivial to you, but it may be very important from his point of view. It takes Habit 2 to recognize and recommit yourself to the value of that person and Habit 3 to subordinate your schedule to that human priority. By accepting the value he places on what he has to say, you show an understanding of him that makes a great deposit.

I have a friend whose son developed an avid interest in baseball. My friend wasn't interested in baseball at all. But one summer, he took his son to see every major league team play one game. The trip took over six weeks and cost a great deal of money, but it became a powerful bonding experience in their relationship.

My friend was asked on his return, "Do you like baseball that much?"

"No," he replied, "but I like my son that much."

I have another friend, a college professor, who had a terrible relationship with his teenage son. This man's entire life was essentially academic, and he felt his son was totally wasting his life by working with his hands instead of working to develop his mind. As a result, he was almost constantly on the boy's back, and, in moments of regret, he would try to make deposits that just didn't work. The boy perceived the gestures as new forms of rejection, comparison, and judgment, and they precipitated huge withdrawals. The relationship was turning sour, and it was breaking the father's heart.

One day I shared with him this principle of making what is important to the other person as important to you as the other person is to you. He took it deeply to heart. He engaged his son in a project to build a miniature Wall of China around their home. It was a consuming project, and they worked side by side on it for over a year and a half.

Through that bonding experience, the son moved through that phase in his life and into an increased desire to develop his mind. But the real benefit was what happened to the relationship. Instead of a sore spot, it became a source of joy and strength to both father and son.

"What's wrong, honey? What is it?"

He turned back, and I could sense he was feeling some embarrassment for the tears and his quivering lips and chin

"Daddy, if I were cold, would you put your coat around me too?"

Of all the events of that special night out together, the most important was a little act of kindness -- a momentary, unconscious showing of love to his little brother.

What a powerful, personal lesson that experience was to me then and is even now. People are very tender, very sensitive inside. I don't believe age or experience makes much difference. Inside, even within the most toughened and calloused exteriors, are the tender feelings and emotions of the heart.

Keeping Commitments

Keeping a commitment or a promise is a major deposit; breaking one is a major withdrawal. In fact, there's probably not a more massive withdrawal than to make a promise that's important to someone and then not to come through. The next time a promise is made, they won't believe it. People tend to build their hopes around promises, particularly promises about their basic livelihood.

I've tried to adopt a philosophy as a parent never to make a promise I don't keep. I therefore try to make them very carefully, very sparingly, and to be aware of as many variables and contingencies as possible so that something doesn't suddenly come up to keep me from fulfilling it.

Occasionally, despite all my effort, the unexpected does come up, creating a situation where it would be unwise or impossible to keep a promise I've made. But I value that promise. I either keep it anyway, or explain the situation thoroughly to the person involved and ask to be released from the promise.

I believe that if you cultivate the habit of always keeping the promises you make, you build bridges of trust that span the gaps of understanding between you and your child. Then, when your child wants to do something you don't want him to do, and out of your maturity you can see consequences that the child cannot see, you can say, "Son, if you do this, I promise you that this will be the result." If that child has cultivated trust in your word, in your promises, he will act on your counsel.

Clarifying Expectations

Imagine the difficulty you might encounter if you and your boss had different assumptions regarding whose role it was to create your job description.

"When am I going to get my job description?" you might ask.

"I've been waiting for you to bring one to me so that we could discuss it," your boss might reply.

"I thought defining my job was your role."

"That's not my role at all. Don't you remember? Right from the first, I said that how you do in the job largely depends on you."

you are honest and open and kind with them. You care enough to confront. And to be trusted, it is said, is greater than to be loved. In the long run, I am convinced, to be trusted will be also mean to be loved.

When my son Joshua was quite young, he would frequently ask me a soul-searching question. Whenever I overreacted to someone else or was the least bit impatient or unkind, he was so vulnerable and so honest and our relationship was so good that he would simply look me in the eye and say, "Dad, do you love me?" If he thought I was breaking a basic principle of life toward someone else, he wondered if I wouldn't break it with him.

As a teacher, as well as a parent, I have found that the key to the ninety-nine is the one -- particularly the one that is testing the patience and the good humor of the many. It is the love and the discipline of the one student, the one child, that communicates love for the others. It's how you treat the one that reveals how you regard the ninety-nine, because everyone is ultimately a one.

Integrity also means avoiding any communication that is deceptive, full of guile, or beneath the dignity of people. "A lie is any communication with intent to deceive," according to one definition of the word. Whether we communicate with words or behavior, if we have integrity, our intent cannot be to deceive.

Apologizing Sincerely When You Make a Withdrawal

When we make withdrawals from the Emotional Bank Account, we need to apologize and we need to do it sincerely. Great deposits come in the sincere words

"I was wrong."

"That was unkind of me."

"I showed you no respect."

"I gave you no dignity, and I'm deeply sorry."

"I embarrassed you in front of your friends and I had no call to do that. Even though I wanted to make a point, I never should have done it. I apologize."

It takes a great deal of character strength to apologize quickly out of one's heart rather than out of pity. A person must possess himself and have a deep sense of security in fundamental principles and values in order to genuinely apologize.

People with little internal security can't do it. It makes them too vulnerable. They feel it makes them appear soft and weak, and they fear that others will take advantage of their weakness. Their security is based on the opinions of other people, and they worry about what others might think. In addition, they usually feel justified in what they did. They rationalize their own wrong in the name of the other person's wrong, and if they apologize at all, it's superficial.

"If you're going to bow, bow low," say Eastern wisdom. "Pay the uttermost farthing," says the Christian ethic. To be a deposit, an apology must be sincere. And it must be perceived as sincere.

"We had developed new software which we sold on a five-year contract to a particular bank. The bank president was excited about it, but his people weren't really behind the decision.

"About a month later, that bank changed presidents. The new president came to me and said, 'I am uncomfortable with these software conversions. I have a mess on my hands. My people are all saying that they can't go through this and I really feel I just can't push it at this point in time.'

"My own company was in deep financial trouble. I knew I had every legal right to enforce the contract. But I had become convinced of the value of the principle of win-win.

"So I told him 'We have a contract. Your bank has secured our products and our services to convert you to this program. But we understand that you're not happy about it. So what we'd like to do is give you back the contract, give you back your deposit, and if you are ever looking for a software solution in the future, come back and see us.'

"I literally walked away from an \$84,000 contract. It was close to financial suicide. But I felt that, in the long run, if the principle were true, it would come back and pay dividends.

"Three months later, the new president called me. 'I'm now going to make changes in my data processing,' he said, 'and I want to do business with you.' He signed a contract for \$240,000."

Anything less than win-win in an interdependent reality is a poor second best that will have impact in the long-term relationship. The cost or the impact needs to be carefully considered. If you can't reach a true win-win, you're very often better off to go for no deal.

Win-Win or No Deal provides tremendous emotional freedom in the family relationship. If family members can't agree on a video that everyone will enjoy, they can simply decide to do something else -- no deal -- rather than having some enjoy the evening at the expense of others.

I have a friend whose family has been involved in singing together for several years. When they were young, she arranged the music, made the costumes, accompanied them on the piano, and directed the performances.

As the children grew older, their taste in music began to change and they wanted to have more say in what they performed and what they wore. They became less responsive to direction.

Because she had years of experience in performing herself and felt closer to the needs of the older people at the rest homes where they planned to perform, she didn't feel that many of the ideas they were suggesting would be appropriate. At the same time, however, she recognized their need to express themselves and to be part of the decision-making process.

So she set up a Win-Win or No Deal. She told them she wanted to arrive at an agreement that everyone felt good about -- or they would simply find other ways to enjoy their talents. As a result, everyone felt free to express his or her feelings and ideas as they

worked to set up a Win-Win Agreement, knowing that whether or not they could agree, there would be no emotional strings.

The Win-Win or No Deal approach is most realistic at the beginning of a business relationship or enterprise. In a continuing business relationship, no deal may not be a viable option, which can create serious problems, especially for family businesses or businesses that are begun initially on the basis of friendship.

In an effort to preserve the relationship, people sometimes go on for years making one compromise after another, thinking win-lose or lose-win even while talking win-win. This creates serious problems for the people and for the business, particularly if the competition operates on win-win and synergy.

Without no deal, many such businesses simply deteriorate and either fail or have to be turned over to professional managers. Experience shows that it is often better in setting up a family business or a business between friends to acknowledge the possibility of no deal downstream and to establish some kind of buy/sell agreement so that the business can prosper without permanently damaging the relationship.

Of course there are some relationships where no deal is not viable. I wouldn't abandon my child or my spouse and go for no deal (it would be better, if necessary, to go for compromise -- a low form of win-win). But in many cases, it is possible to go into negotiation with a full Win-Win or No Deal attitude. And the freedom in the attitude is incredible.

Five Dimensions of Win-Win

Think Win-Win is the habit of interpersonal leadership. It involves the exercise of each of the unique human endowments -- self-awareness, imagination, conscience, and independent will -- in our relationships with others. It involves mutual learning, mutual influence, mutual benefits.

It takes great courage as well as consideration to create these mutual benefits, particularly if we're interacting with others who are deeply scripted in win-los.

That is why this habit involves principles of interpersonal leadership. Effective interpersonal leadership requires the vision, the proactive initiative, and the security, guidance, wisdom, and power that come from principle-centered personal leadership.

The principle of win-win is fundamental to success in all our interactions, and it embraces five interdependent dimensions of life. It begins with character and moves toward relationships, out of which flow agreements. It is nurtured in an environment where structure and systems are based on win-win. And it involves process; we cannot achieve win-win ends with win-lose or lose-win means.

The following diagram shows how these five dimensions relate to each other.

Now let's consider each of the five dimensions in turn.

Character

Character is the foundation of win-win, and everything else builds on that foundation. There are three character traits essential to the win-win paradigm.

High courage and consideration are both essential to win-win. It is the balance that is the mark of real maturity. If I have it, I can listen, I can empathically understand, but I can also courageously confront.

ABUNDANCE MENTALITY TM.

The third character trait essential to win-win is the Abundance Mentality, the paradigm that there is plenty out there for everybody.

Most people are deeply scripted in what I call the Scarcity Mentality. They see life as having only so much, as though there were only one pie out there. And if someone were to get a big piece of the pie, it would mean less for everybody else. The Scarcity Mentality is the zero-sum paradigm of life.

People with a Scarcity Mentality have a very difficult time sharing recognition and credit, power or profit -- even with those who help in the production. They also have a very hard time being genuinely happy for the successes of other people -- even, and sometimes especially, members of their own family or close friends and associates. It's almost as if something is being taken from them when someone else receives special recognition or windfall gain or has remarkable success or achievement.

Although they might verbally express happiness for others' success, inwardly they are eating their hearts out. Their sense of worth comes from being compared, and someone else's success, to some degree, means their failure. Only so many people can be "A" students; only one person can be "number one." To "win" simply means to "beat."

Often, people with a Scarcity Mentality harbor secret hopes that others might suffer misfortune -- not terrible misfortune, but acceptable misfortune that would keep them "in their place." They're always comparing, always competing. They give their energies to possessing things or other people in order to increase their sense of worth.

They want other people to be the way they want them to be. They often want to clone them, and they surround themselves with "yes" people -- people who won't challenge them, people who are weaker than they.

It's difficult for people with a Scarcity Mentality to be members of a complementary team. They look on differences as signs of insubordination and disloyalty.

The Abundance Mentality, on the other hand, flows out of a deep inner sense of personal worth and security. It is the paradigm that there is plenty out there and enough to spare for everybody. It results in sharing of prestige, of recognition, of profits, of decision making. It opens possibilities, options, alternatives, and creativity.

The Abundance Mentality takes the personal joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment of Habits 1, 2, and 3 and turns it outward, appreciating the uniqueness, the inner direction, the proactive nature of others. It recognizes the unlimited possibilities for positive interactive growth and development, creating new Third Alternatives.

Public Victory does not mean victory over other people. It means success in effective interaction that brings mutually beneficial results to everyone involved. Public Victory means working together, communicating together, making things happen together that even the same people couldn't make happen by working independently. And Public Victory is an outgrowth of the Abundance Mentality paradigm.

and influence, I don't feel safe enough to expose my opinions and experiences and my tender feelings. Who knows what will happen?

But unless I open up with you, unless you understand me and my unique situation and feelings, you won't know how to advise or counsel me. What you say is good and fine, but it doesn't quite pertain to me.

You may say you care about and appreciate me. I desperately want to believe that. But how can you appreciate me when you don't even understand me? All I have are your words, and I can't trust words.

I'm too angry and defensive -- perhaps too guilty and afraid -- to be influenced, even though inside I know I need what you could tell me.

Unless you're influenced by my uniqueness, I'm not going to be influenced by your advice. So if you want to be really effective in the habit of interpersonal communication, you cannot do it with technique alone. You have to build the skills of empathic listening on a base of character that inspires openness and trust. And you have to build the Emotional Bank Accounts that create a commerce between hearts.

Empathic Listening

"Seek first to understand" involves a very deep shift in paradigm. We typically seek first to be understood. Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. They're either speaking or preparing to speak. They're filtering everything through their own paradigms, reading their autobiography into other people's lives.

"Oh, I know exactly how you feel!"

"I went through the very same thing. Let me tell you about my experience."

They're constantly projecting their own home movies onto other people's behavior. They prescribe their own glasses for everyone with whom they interact.

If they have a problem with someone -- a son, a daughter, a spouse, an employee -- their attitude is, "That person just doesn't understand."

A father once told me, "I can't understand my kid. He just won't listen to me at all."

"Let me restate what you just said," I replied. "You don't understand your son because he won't listen to you?"

"That's right," he replied.

"Let me try again," I said. "You don't understand your son because he won't listen to you?"

"That's what I said," he impatiently replied.

"I thought that to understand another person, you needed to listen to him," I suggested.

"OH!" he said. There was a long pause. "Oh!" he said again, as the light began to dawn. "Oh, yeah! But I do understand him. I know what he's going through. I went through the same thing myself. I guess what I don't understand is why he won't listen to me."

This man didn't have the vaguest idea of what was really going on inside his boy's head. He looked into his own head and thought he saw the world, including his boy.

That's the case with so many of us. We're filled with our own rightness, our own autobiography. We want to be understood. Our conversations become collective monologues, and we never really understand what's going on inside another human being.

When another person speaks, we're usually "listening" at one of four levels. We may be ignoring another person, not really listening at all. We may practice pretending. "Yeah. Uh-huh. Right."

We may practice selective listening, hearing only certain parts of the constant chatter of a preschool child. Or we may even practice attentive listening, paying attention and focusing energy on the words that are being said. But very few of us ever practice the fifth level, the highest form of listening, empathic listening.

When I say empathic listening, I am not referring to the techniques of "active" listening or "reflective" listening, which basically involve mimicking what another person says. That kind of listening is skill-based, truncated from character and relationship, and often insults those "listened" to in such a way. It is also essentially autobiographical. If you practice those techniques, you may not project your autobiography in the actual interaction, but your motive in listening is autobiographical. You listen with reflective skills, but you listen with intent to reply, to control, to manipulate.

When I say empathic listening, I mean listening with intent to understand. I mean seeking first to understand, to really understand. It's an entirely different paradigm.

Empathic (from empathy) listening gets inside another person's frame of reference. You look out through it, you see the world the way they see the world, you understand their paradigm, you understand how they feel.

Empathy is not sympathy. Sympathy is a form of agreement, a form of judgment. And it is sometimes the more appropriate emotion and response. But people often feed on sympathy. It makes them dependent. The essence of empathic listening is not that you agree with someone; it's that you fully, deeply, understand that person, emotionally as well as intellectually.

Empathic listening involves much more than registering, reflecting, or even understanding the words that are said. Communications experts estimate, in fact, that only 10 percent of our communication is represented by the words we say. Another 30 percent is represented by our sounds, and 60 percent by our body language. In empathic listening, you listen with your ears, but you also, and more importantly, listen with your eyes and with your heart. You listen for feeling, for meaning. You listen for behavior. You use your right brain as well as your left. You sense, you intuit, you feel.

Empathic listening is so powerful because it gives you accurate data to work with. Instead of projecting your own autobiography and assuming thought, feelings, motives, and interpretation, you're dealing with the reality inside another person's head and heart.

Sandra described the symptoms and he said, "Okay. I'll call in a prescription. Which is your pharmacy?"

When she hung up, Sandra felt that in her rush she hadn't really given him full data, but that what she had told him was adequate.

"Do you think he realizes that Jenny is just a newborn?" I asked her

"I'm sure he does," Sandra replied.

"But he's not our doctor. He's never even treated her."

"Well, I'm pretty sure he knows."

"Are you willing to give her the medicine unless you're absolutely sure he knows?"

Sandra was silent. "What are we going to do?" she finally said.

"Call him back," I said.

"You call him back," Sandra replied.

So I did. He was paged out of the game once again. "Doctor," I said, "when you called in that prescription, did you realize that Jenny is just two months old?"

"No!" he exclaimed. "I didn't realize that. It's good you called me back. I'll change the prescription immediately."

If you don't have confidence in the diagnosis, you won't have confidence in the prescription.

This principle is also true in sales. An effective salesperson first seeks to understand the needs, the concerns, the situation of the customer. The amateur salesman sells products; the professional sells solutions to needs and problems. It's a totally different approach. The professional learns how to diagnose, how to understand. He also learns how to relate people's needs to his products and services. And, he has to have the integrity to say, "My product or service will not meet that need" if it will not.

Diagnosing before you prescribe is also fundamental to law. The professional lawyer first gathers the facts to understand the situation, to understand the laws and precedents, before preparing a case. A good lawyer almost writes the opposing attorney's case before he writes his own.

It's also true in product design. Can you imagine someone in a company saying, "This consumer research stuff is for the birds. Let's design products." In other words, forget understanding the consumer's buying habits and motives -- just design products. It would never work.

A good engineer will understand the forces, the stresses at work, before designing the bridge. A good teacher will assess the class before teaching. A good student will understand before he applies. A good parent will understand before evaluation or judging. The key to good judgment is understanding. By judging first, a person will never fully understand.

want to do would bring great benefits. Describe the alternative they are in favor of better than they can themselves. Show that you understand them in depth. Then carefully explain the logic behind your request."

"Well, I'll try," he said.

"Do you want to practice with me?" I asked. He was willing, and so we dress rehearsed his approach. When he went in to make his presentation, he started by saying, "Now let me see if I first understand what your objectives are, and what your concerns are about this presentation and my recommendation."

He took the time to do it slowly, gradually. In the middle of his presentation, demonstrating his depth of understanding and respect for their point of view, a senior professor turned to another professor, nodded, turned back to him and said, "You've got your money."

When you can present your own ideas clearly, specifically, visually, and most important, contextually -- in the context of a deep understanding of their paradigms and concerns -- you significantly increase the credibility of your ideas.

You're not wrapped up in your "own thing," delivering grandiose rhetoric from a soapbox. You really understand. What you're presenting may even be different from what you had originally thought because in your effort to understand, you learned.

Habit 5 lifts you to greater accuracy, greater integrity, in your presentations. And people know that. They know you're presenting the ideas which you genuinely believe, taking all known facts and perceptions into consideration. It will benefit everyone.

One-on-One

Habit 5 is powerful because it is right in the middle of your Circle of Influence. Many factors in interdependent situations are in your Circle of Concern -- problems, disagreements, circumstances, other people's behavior. And if you focus your energies out there, you deplete them with little positive results.

But you can always seek first to understand. That's something that's within your control. And as you do that, as you focus on your Circle of Influence, you really, deeply understand other people. You have accurate information to work with, you get to the heart of matters quickly, you build Emotional Bank Accounts, and you give people the psychological air they need so you can work together effectively.

It's the Inside-Out approach. And as you do it, watch what happens to your Circle of Influence. Because you really listen, you become influenceable. And being influenceable is the key to influencing others. Your circle begins to expand. You increase your ability to influence many of the things in your Circle of Concern.

And watch what happens to you. The more deeply you understand other people, the more you will appreciate them, the more reverent you will feel about them. To touch the soul of another human being is to walk on holy ground.

Seek first to understand. Before the problems come up, before you try to evaluate and prescribe, before you try to present your own ideas -- seek to understand. It's a powerful habit of effective interdependence.

When we really, deeply understand each other, we open the door to creative solutions and Third Alternatives. Our differences are no longer stumbling blocks to communication and progress. Instead, they become the stepping stones to synergy.

Application Suggestions

1. Select a relationship in which you sense the Emotional Bank Account is in the red. Try to understand and write down the situation from the other person's point of view. In your next interaction, listen for understanding, comparing what you are hearing with what you wrote down. How valid were your assumptions? Did you really understand that individual's perspective.
2. Share the concept of empathy with someone close to you. Tell him or her you want to work on really listening to others and ask for feedback in a week. How did you do? How did it make that person feel.
3. The next time you have an opportunity to watch people communicate, cover your ears for a few minutes and just watch. What emotions are being communicated that may not come across in words alone.
4. Next time you catch yourself inappropriately using one of the autobiographical responses -probing, evaluating, advising, or interpreting -- try to turn the situation into a deposit by acknowledgment and apology. ("I'm sorry. I just realized I'm not really trying to understand. Could we start again?")
5. Base your next presentation on empathy. Describe the other point of view as well as or better than its proponent; then seek to have your point understood from their frame of reference.

Synergy means that $1 + 1$ may equal 8, 16, or even 1,600. The synergistic position of high trust produces solutions better than any originally proposed, and all parties know it. Furthermore, they genuinely enjoy the creative enterprise. A miniculture is formed to satisfy in and of itself. Even if it is short-lived, the P/PC Balance is there.

There are some circumstances in which synergy may not be achievable and no deal isn't viable. But even in these circumstances, the spirit of sincere trying will usually result in a more effective compromise.

Fishing for the A Third Alternative

To get a better idea of how our level of communication affects our interdependent effectiveness, envision the following scenario.

It's vacation time, and a husband wants to take his family out to the lake country to enjoy camping and fishing. This is important to him; he's been planning it all year. He's made reservations at a cottage on the lake and arranged to rent a boat, and his sons are really excited about going.

His wife, however, wants to use the vacation time to visit her ailing mother some 250 miles away. She doesn't have the opportunity to see her very often, and this is important to her. Their differences could be the cause of a major negative experience.

"The plans are set. The boys are excited. We should go on the fishing trip," he says.

"But we don't know how much longer my mother will be a child, and I want to be by her," she replies. "This is our only opportunity to have enough time to do that."

"All year long we've looked forward to this one-week vacation. The boys would be miserable sitting around grandmother's house for a week. They'd drive everybody crazy. Besides, your mother's not that sick. And she has your sister less than a mile away to take care of her."

"She's my mother, too. I want to be with her."

"You could phone her every night. And we're planning to spend time with her at the Christmas family reunion. Remember?"

"That's not for five more months. We don't even know if she'll still be here by then. Besides, she needs me, and she wants me."

"She's being well taken care of. Besides, the boys and I need you, too."

"My mother is more important than fishing."

"Your husband and sons are more important than your mother."

As they disagree, back and forth, they finally may come up with some kind of compromise. They may decide to split up -- he takes the boys fishing at the lake while she visits her mother. And they both feel guilty and unhappy. The boys sense it, and it affects their enjoyment of the vacation.

effect" is generally considered to be between 72 and 87 percent of your personal maximum rate.

Flexibility comes through stretching. Most experts recommend warming up before and cooling down/stretching after aerobic exercise. Before, it helps loosen and warm the muscles to prepare for more vigorous exercise. After, it helps to dissipate the lactic acid so that you don't feel sore and stiff.

Strength comes from muscle resistance exercises -- like simple calisthenics, push-ups, and sit-ups, and from working with weights. How much emphasis you put on developing strength depends on your situation. If you're involved in physical labor or athletic activities, increased strength will improve your skill. If you have a basically sedentary job and success in your life-style does not require a lot of strength, a little toning through calisthenics in addition to your aerobic and stretching exercises might be sufficient.

I was in a gym one time with a friend of mine who has a Ph. D. in exercise physiology. He was focusing on building strength. He asked me to "spot" him while he did some bench presses and told me at a certain point he'd ask me to take the weight. "But don't take it until I tell you," he said firmly.

So I watched and waited and prepared to take the weight. The weight went up and down, up and down. And I could see it begin to get harder. But he kept going. He would start to push it up and I'd think, "There's no way he's going to make it." But he'd make it. Then he'd slowly bring it back down and start back up again. Up and down, up and down.

Finally, as I looked at his face, straining with the effort, his blood vessels practically jumping out of his skin, I thought, "This is going to fall and collapse his chest. Maybe I should take the weight. Maybe he's lost control and he doesn't even know what he's doing." But he'd get it safely down. Then he'd start back up again. I couldn't believe it"

"Almost all the benefit of the exercise comes at the very end, Stephen," he replied. "I'm trying to build strength. And that doesn't happen until the muscle fiber ruptures and the nerve fiber registers the pain. Then nature overcompensates and within 48 hours, the fiber is made stronger."

I could see his point. It's the same principle that works with emotional muscles as well, such as patience. When you exercise your patience beyond your past limits, the emotional fiber is broken, nature overcompensates, and next time the fiber is stronger.

Now my friend wanted to build muscular strength. And he knew how to do it. But not all of us need to develop that kind of strength to be effective. "No pain, no gain" has validity in some circumstances, but it is not the essence of an effective exercise program.

The essence of renewing the physical dimension is to sharpen the saw, to exercise our bodies on a regular basis in a way that will preserve and enhance our capacity to work and adapt and enjoy.

And we need to be wise in developing an exercise program. There's a tendency, especially if you haven't been exercising at all, to overdo. And that can create unnecessary pain, injury, and even permanent damage. It's best to start slowly. Any exercise program should be in harmony with the latest research findings, with your doctor's recommendations and with your own self-awareness.

This is why I believe a personal mission statement is so important. If we have a deep understanding of our center and our purpose, we can review and recommit to it frequently. In our daily spiritual renewal, we can visualize and "live out" the events of the day in harmony with those values.

Religious leader David O. McKay taught, "The greatest battles of life are fought out daily in the silent chambers of the soul." If you win the battles there, if you settle the issues that inwardly conflict, you feel a sense of peace, a sense of knowing what you're about. And you'll find that the Public Victories -- where you tend to think cooperatively, to promote the welfare and good of other people, and to be genuinely happy for other people's successes -- will follow naturally.

The Mental Dimension

Most of our mental development and study discipline comes through formal education. But as soon as we leave the external discipline of school, many of us let our minds atrophy. We don't do any more serious reading, we don't explore new subjects in any real depth outside our action fields, we don't think analytically, we don't write -- at least not critically or in a way that tests our ability to express ourselves in distilled, clear, and concise language. Instead, we spend our time watching TV.

Continuing surveys indicate that television is on in most homes some 35 to 45 hours a week. That's as much time as many people put into their jobs, more than most put into school. It's the most powerful socializing influence there is. And when we watch, we're subject to all the values that are being taught through it. That can powerfully influence us in very subtle and imperceptible ways.

Wisdom in watching television requires the effective self-management of Habit 3, which enables you to discriminate and select the informing, inspiring, and entertaining programs which best serve and express your purpose and values.

In our family, we limit television watching to around seven hours a week, an average of about an hour a day. We had a family council at which we talked about it and looked at some of the data regarding what's happening in homes because of television. We found that by discussing it as a family when no one was defensive or argumentative, people started to realize the dependent sickness of becoming addicted to soap operas or to a steady diet of a particular program.

I'm grateful for television and for the many high-quality educational and entertainment programs. They can enrich our lives and contribute meaningfully to our purposes and goals. But there are many programs that simply waste our time and minds and many that influence us in negative ways if we let them. Like the body, television is a good servant but a poor master. We need to practice Habit 3 and manage ourselves effectively to maximize the use of any resource in accomplishing our missions.

Education -- continuing education, continually honing and expanding the mind -- is vital mental renewal. Sometimes that involves the external discipline of the classroom or systematized study programs; more often it does not. Proactive people can figure out many, many ways to educate themselves.

It is extremely valuable to train the mind to stand apart and examine its own program. That, to me, is the definition of a liberal education -- the ability to examine the programs of life against larger questions and purposes and other paradigms. Training, without such

The Daily Private Victory -- a minimum of one hour a day in renewal of the physical, spiritual, and mental dimensions -- is the key to the development of the Seven Habits and it's completely within your Circle of Influence. It is the Quadrant II focus time necessary to integrate these habits into your life, to become principle-centered.

It's also the foundation for the Daily Public Victory. It's the source of intrinsic security you need to sharpen the saw in the social/emotional dimension. It gives you the personal strength to focus on your Circle of Influence in interdependent situations -- to look at others through the Abundance Mentality paradigm, to genuinely value their differences and to be happy for their success. It gives you the foundation to work for genuine understanding and for synergetic win-win solutions, to practice Habits 4, 5, and 6 in an interdependent reality.

The Upward Spiral

Renewal is the principle -- and the process -- that empowers us to move on an upward spiral of growth and change, of continuous improvement.

To make meaningful and consistent progress along that spiral, we need to consider one other aspect of renewal as it applies to the unique human endowment that directs this upward movement -- our conscience. In the words of Madame de Sta'l, "The voice of conscience is so delicate that it is easy to stifle it: but it is also so clear that it is impossible to mistake it."

Conscience is the endowment that senses our congruence or disparity with correct principles and lifts us toward them -- when it's in shape. Just as the education of nerve and sinew is vital to the excellent athlete and education of the mind is vital to the scholar, education of the conscience is vital to the truly proactive, highly effective person. Training and educating the conscience, however, requires even greater concentration, more balanced discipline, more consistently honest living. It requires regular feasting on inspiring literature, thinking noble thoughts, and, above all, living in harmony with its still small voice.

Just as junk food and lack of exercise can ruin an athlete's condition, those things that are obscene, crude, or pornographic can breed an inner darkness that numbs our higher sensibilities and substitutes the social conscience of "Will I be found out?" for the natural or divine conscience of "What is right and wrong?"

In the words of Dag Hammarskjold,

You cannot play with the animal in you without becoming wholly animal, play with falsehood without forfeiting your right to truth, play with cruelty without losing your sensitivity of mind. He who wants to keep his garden tidy doesn't reserve a plot for weeds.

Once we are self-aware, we must choose purposes and principles to live by; otherwise the vacuum will be filled, and we will lose our self-awareness and become like groveling animals who live primarily for survival and propagation. People who exist on that level aren't living; they are "being lived." They are reacting, unaware of the unique endowments that lie dormant and undeveloped within.

And there is no shortcut in developing them. The Law of the Harvest governs; we will always reap what we sow -- no more, no less. The law of justice is immutable, and the

longer there. A few bad feelings surfaced. But our deep desire and our implicit agreement was to prepare ourselves to start where we left off and deal with those feelings until we resolved them.

One of those difficult times had to do with a basic tendency in my personality. My father was a very private individual -- very controlled and very careful. My mother was and is very public, very open, very spontaneous. I find both sets of tendencies in me, and when I feel insecure, I tend to become private, like my father. I live inside myself and safely observe.

Sandra is more like my mother -- social, authentic, and spontaneous. We had gone through many experiences over the years in which I felt her openness was inappropriate, and she felt my constraint was dysfunctional, both socially and to me as an individual because I would become insensitive to the feelings of others. All of this and much more came out during those deep visits. I came to value Sandra's insight and wisdom and the way she helped me to be a more open, giving, sensitive, social person.

Another of those difficult times had to do with what I perceived to be a "hang up" Sandra had which had bothered me for years. She seemed to have an obsession about Frigidaire appliances which I was at an absolute loss to understand. She would not even consider buying another brand of appliance. Even when we were just starting out and on a very tight budget, she insisted that we drive the fifty miles to the "big city" where Frigidaire appliances were sold, simply because no dealer in our small university town carried them at that time.

This was a matter of considerable agitation to me. Fortunately, the situation came up only when we purchased an appliance. But when it did come up, it was like a stimulus that triggered off a hot button response. This single issue seemed to be symbolic of all irrational thinking, and it generated a whole range of negative feelings within me.

I usually resented my dysfunctional private behavior. I suppose I figured that the only way I could deal with it was not to deal with it; otherwise, I felt I would lose control and say things I shouldn't say. There were times when I did slip and say something negative, and I had to go back and apologize.

What bothered me the most was not that she liked Frigidaire, but that she persisted in making what I considered utterly illogical and indefensible statements to defend Frigidaire which had no basis in fact whatsoever. If she had only agreed that her response was irrational and purely emotional, I think I could have handled it. But her justification was upsetting.

It was sometime in early spring when the Frigidaire issue came up. All our prior communication had prepared us. The ground rules had been deeply established -- not to probe and to leave it alone if it got to be too painful for either or both.

I will never forget the day we talked it through. We didn't end up on the beach that day; we just continued to ride through the canefields, perhaps because we didn't want to look each other in the eye. There had been so much psychic history and so many bad feelings associated with the issue, and it had been submerged for so long. It had never been so critical as to rupture the relationship, but when you're trying to cultivate a beautiful unified relationship, any divisive issue is important.

Becoming a Transition Person

Among other things, I believe that giving "wings" to our children and to others means empowering them with the freedom to rise above negative scripting that had been passed down to us. I believe it means becoming what my friend and associate, Dr. Terry Warner, calls a "transition" person. Instead of transferring those scripts to the next generation, we can change them. And we can do it in a way that will build relationships in the process

If your parents abused you as a child, that does not mean that you have to abuse your own children. Yet there's plenty of evidence to indicate that you will tend to live out that script. But because you're proactive, you can rewrite the script. You can choose not only not to abuse your children, but to affirm them, to script them in positive ways.

You can write it in your personal mission statement and into your mind and heart. You can visualize yourself living in harmony with that mission statement in your Daily Private Victory. You can take steps to love and forgive your own parents, and if they are still living, to build a positive relationship with them by seeking to understand.

A tendency that's run through your family for generations can stop with you. You're a transition person -- a link between the past and the future. And your own change can affect many, many lives downstream.

One powerful transition person of the twentieth century, Anwar Sadat, left us as part of his legacy a profound understanding of the nature of change. Sadat stood between a past that had created a "huge wall of suspicion, fear, hate and misunderstanding" between Arabs and Israelis, and a future in which increased conflict and isolation seemed inevitable. Efforts at negotiation had been met with objections on every scale -- even to formalities and procedural points, to an insignificant commo

While others attempted to resolve the tense situation by hacking at the leaves, Sadat drew upon his earlier centering experience in a lonely prison cell and went to work on the root. And in doing so, he changed the course of history for millions of people.

He records in his autobiography:

It was then that I drew, almost unconsciously, on the inner strength I had developed in Cell 54 of Cairo Central Prison -- a strength, call it a talent or capacity, for change. I found that I faced a highly complex situation, and that I couldn't hope to change it until I had armed myself with the necessary psychological and intellectual capacity. My contemplation of life and human nature in that secluded place had taught me that he who cannot change the very fabric of his thought will never be able to change reality, and will never, therefore, make any progress.

Change -- real change -- comes from the Inside-Out. It doesn't come from hacking at the leaves of attitude and behavior with quick-fix personality ethic techniques. It comes from striking at the root -the fabric of our thought, the fundamental, essential paradigms, which give definition to our character and create the lens through which we see the world. In the words of Amiel:

Moral truth can be conceived in thought. One can have feelings about it. One can will to live it. But moral truth may have been penetrated and possessed in all these ways, and escape us still. Deeper even than consciousness there is our being itself -- our very

* *

If your center is Pleasure...

SPOUSE: Companion in fun and pleasure or obstacle to it.

FAMILY: Vehicle or interference.

MONEY: Means to increase opportunities for pleasure.

WORK: Means to an end. "Fun" work OK.

POSSESSIONS: Objects of fun. Means to more fun.

* *

If your center is A Friend or Friends...

SPOUSE: Possible friend or possible competitor. Social status symbol.

FAMILY: Friends or obstacle to developing friendships.

MONEY: Source of economic and social good.

WORK: Social opportunity.

POSSESSIONS: Means of buying friendship. Means of entertaining or providing social pleasure.

These are alternative ways you may tend you perceive other areas of your life

* *

If your center is Spouse...

PLEASURE: Mutual, unifying activity or unimportant.

FRIENDS: Spouse is best or only friend. Only friends are "our" friends.

ENEMIES: Spouse is my defender, or common enemy provides source of marriage definition.

CHURCH: Activity to enjoy together. Subordinate to relationship.

SELF: Self-worth is spouse based. Highly vulnerable to spouse attitudes and behaviors.

PRINCIPLES: ideas which create and maintain relationship with spouse.

* *

If your center is Family...

PLEASURE: Family activities or relatively unimportant.

FRIENDS: Friends of the family, or competition. Threat to strong family life.

ENEMIES: Defined by family. Source of family strength and unity. Possible threat to family strength.

CHURCH: Source of help.

SELF: Vital part of but subordinate to family. Subordinate to family.

PRINCIPLES: Rules which keep family unified and strong.

* *

If your center is Money...

PLEASURE: Economic drain or evidence of economic stress.

FRIENDS: Chosen because of economic status or influence.

ENEMIES: Economic competitors. Threat to economic security.

CHURCH: Tax write-off. Hand in your pocket.

SELF: Self-worth is determined by net worth.

PRINCIPLES: Ways that work in making and managing money.

* *

ENEMIES: No real perceived "enemies"; just people with different paradigms and agendas to be understood and cared about.

CHURCH: Vehicle for true principles. Opportunity for service and contribution.

SELF: One unique, talented, creative individual in the midst of many unique, talented, creative individuals who, working independently and interdependently, can accomplish great things.

PRINCIPLES: Immutable natural laws which cannot be violated with impunity. When honored, preserve integrity and thus lead to true growth and happiness.

Appendix B

A Quadrant II Day at the Office

The following exercise and analysis is designed to help you see the impact of a Quadrant II paradigm in a business setting on a very practical level.

Suppose that you are the director of marketing for a major pharmaceutical firm. You are about to begin an average day at the office, and as you look over the items to attend to that day, you estimate the amount of time each one will take.

Your unprioritized list includes the following:

1. You'd like to have lunch with the general manager (1-1 1/2 hours).
2. You were instructed the day before to prepare your media budget for the following year (2 or 3 days).
3. Your "IN" basket is overflowing into your "OUT" basket (1-1 1/2 hours).
4. You need to talk to the sales manager about last month's sales; his office is down the hall (4 hours).
5. You have several items of correspondence that your secretary says are urgent (1 hour).
6. You'd like to catch up on the medical journals piled upon your desk (1/2 hour).
7. You need to prepare a presentation for a sales meeting slated for next month (2 hours).
8. There's a rumor that the new batch of product X didn't pass quality control.
9. Someone from the FDA wants you to return his call about product X (1/2 hour).
10. There is a meeting at 2 P.M. for the executive board, but you don't know what it is about (1 hour).

Take a few minutes now and use what you have learned from Habits 1, 2, and 3 that might help you to effectively schedule your day. By asking you to plan only one day, I have automatically eliminated the wider context of the week so fundamental to fourth generation time management. But you will be able to see the power of Quadrant II, principle-centered paradigm even in the context of one nine-hour period of time

It is fairly obvious that most of the items on the list are Quadrant I activities. With the exception of item number six -- catching up on medical journals -- everything else is seemingly both important and urgent.

If you were a third-generation time manager, using prioritized values and goals, you would have a framework for making such scheduling decisions and would perhaps assign a letter such as A, B, or C next to each item and then number 1, 2, 3 under each A, B, and C. You would also consider the circumstances, such as the availability of other people involved, and the logical amount of time required to eat lunch. Finally, based on all of these factors, you would schedule the day.

In most meetings, Quadrant II items are usually categorized as "other business." Because "work expands to fill the time allotted for its completion" in accordance with Parkinson's Law, there usually isn't time to discuss them. If there is, people have been so beaten and smashed by Quadrant I, they have little or no energy left to address them.

So you might move into Quadrant II by first attempting to get yourself on the agenda so that you can make a presentation regarding how to optimize the value of executive board meetings. You might also spend an hour or two in the morning preparing for that presentation, even if you are only allowed a few minutes to stimulate everyone's interest in hearing a more extended preparation at the next board meeting. This presentation would focus on the importance of always having a clearly specified purpose for each meeting and a well-thought-out agenda to which each person at the meeting has had the opportunity to contribute. The final agenda would be developed by the chairman of the executive board and would focus first in Quadrant II issues that usually require more creative thinking rather than Quadrant I issues that generally involve more mechanical thinking.

The presentation would also stress the importance of having minutes sent out immediately following the meeting, specifying assignments given and dates of accountability. These items would then be placed on appropriate future agendas which would be sent out in plenty of time for others to prepare to discuss them.

Now this is what might be done by looking at one item on the schedule -- the 2 P.M. executive board meeting -- through a Quadrant II frame of reference. This requires a high level of proactivity, including the courage to challenge the assumption that you even need to schedule the items in the first place. It also requires consideration in order to avoid the kind of crisis atmosphere that often surrounds a board meeting.

Almost every other item on the list can be approached with the same Quadrant II thinking, with perhaps the exception of the FDA call.

Returning the FDA call. Based on the background of the quality of the relationship with the FDA, you make that call in the morning so that whatever it reveals can be dealt with appropriately. This might be difficult to delegate, since another organization is involved that may have a Quadrant I culture and an individual who wants you, and not some delegatee, to respond.

While you may attempt to directly influence the culture of your own organization as a member of the executive board, your Circle of Influence is probably not large enough to really influence the culture of the FDA, so you simply comply with the request. If you find the nature of the problem uncovered in the phone call is persistent or chronic, then you may approach it from a Quadrant II mentality in an effort to prevent such problems in the future. This again would require considerable proactivity to seize the opportunity to transform the quality of the relationship with the FDA or to work on the problems in a preventive way.

Lunch with the general manager. You might see having lunch with the general manager as a rare opportunity to discuss some longer-range, Quadrant II matters in a fairly informal atmosphere. This may also take 30 to 60 minutes in the morning to adequately prepare for, or you may simply decide to have a good social interaction and listen carefully, perhaps without any plan at all. Either possibility may present a good opportunity to build your relationship with the general manager.