



HIRE WITH CLARITY & INSIGHT.

Sharpen Your Saw

Time ...when I look at my busy life, I often wonder, where am I going to find the time to learn the new things I need to learn and keep myself operating ahead of the eight ball. Then I say eight ball, how about ahead of the Mack truck. In the day to day running of a household, being a mom to 2 teenage boys, a step-mom to 2 Chesapeake Bay retrievers, operating a recruiting and staffing business, being an integral part of my clients' hiring process and launching a software and consulting business, I can hardly find the time to work out, let alone read the latest, hottest-selling business book. So, what's a business owner, working manager, mother and woman of the world to do to keep herself ahead of the game? Get a massage... my thoughts precisely, except that is a temporary solution to a life long journey.

Then, I get over my temporary insanity of the day, and get back to the reality of what I have created for myself, which is "taking care of myself first is where it is at." In Covey's last habit, he writes about sharpening the saw, keeping yourself sharp, taking care of your self, your whole self, mind, body and spirit. You cannot have one without the others. Even when I look at Jack Canfield's latest masterpiece, riddled throughout the book are lessons about taking care of your whole self, start to finish first and then the 'you' in self takes care of everything else that needs to get done, and it gets done, powerfully. It is so easy to get wrapped up in the day to day business pressures, kid pressures, sports pressure, and then before I know it is 10:30 p.m. or right now 12:15 a.m., and the day has gone, exercise is the only thing on the to do list that is still there. Fast forward that 10 years and what I have is an OLD Margaret looking in the mirror asking where her 40's went. Well, one of the only things you cannot get back is time. There is always enough time to make money, but never enough money to compensate for lost time....life just doesn't work that way.

When I read about the most effective people on the planet, often 1 trait that is poignant is their passion for growth; whether it is manifested as a love for learning, reading, development, open-mindedness, self-reflection or spiritual awareness, it is an integral part of their life. Like a commitment. Another thing that people who are highly effective and successful in their endeavors is almost a gripping commitment to personal health and well-being, fitness, and health is a part of their day to day regimen, and when they miss it, something inside just does not feel right. It becomes a habit, for some even a healthy addiction.



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Resources for People in the People Business

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My interpretation of sharpening the saw is taking care of your human vessel. Ensuring that the being your body is carrying around is well-oiled, able to move quickly, fluid of mind, open in spirit, valuable to learn and grasp new concepts, and vital enough to execute all day. By execute I am not only talking about work, I am talking about in relationships, in day to day interactions with your kids, in making dinner for the family, to cleaning the house, to writing an article, to finishing that project even when you don't feel like it. Now THAT takes something.

Another interesting spin on sharpening the saw is taking the time to nurture and rest, to rebuild, to not work out, to veg in front of Thursday night TV, to walk around in sweats all day, to hit the spa, to play in the garden, to read a novel, to take a ride in the country, or a long walk in the woods, to do nothing, to sip a glass of wine, to sleep in, to vacation and turn off the cell phone. To temporarily shut it all down and allow the mind, the body and the spirit to rebuild and revive. All batteries need recharging, the problem is most people, most motivated successful people have a hard time just doing nothing, it is almost as if a compelling voice inside them says "nothing, how can you do nothing, get up and tackle that to do list." Some of the ways and experiences I have created for myself and my kids is family relaxation night. No work, no phones, no computer, just us and a movie, candy, soda, pizza and each other. Another one is a 5-mile hike in the woods with the dogs, no heart rate monitor, no iPod, just the quiet, the sound of leaves being crushed under my boots, the sound of deer rustling against the trees, and the sight of 2 jolly pups plopping down the trail. When these times are complete, I feel totally rejuvenated and ready to go.

For me personally, after writing this article it is clear to me that sharpening my personal saw is going to be my number one main focus for 2007; as woman, as a mom, as a daughter, as a friend, as a sister, as a business consultant, as a CEO, as a volunteer, as a difference maker, as a human being. All other goals will come from that area of focus, as I cannot take care of anyone else unless I am well-taken care of myself.

Best of Success to you,

Margaret Graziano, CPC, CTS, CERS



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