
talking about...

... *designing better relationships for better outcomes*

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Talking About Pty Ltd

"Listening, real listening is what most people fail to do... listening is done not only with the ears but with all of our being. It is compassion and a tolerance that another may say something you don't want to hear... real listening is a gift and a duty in love that you give to another that tells them they are cherished and of worth."

... Paul Tillich, (1886 - 1965) US (German-born) Protestant theologian

Changing the Habits of a Lifetime

"Habits are at first cobwebs then chains" ... Infomaniac 2004

Breaking the habit of a lifetime is a challenge. If we have been doing something a certain way for a long time, we are going to need a concerted effort to change what we do.

We have a saying that change can be "simple but not easy". For example, it is simple to stop smoking. Do not put a cigarette in your mouth and light it. Simple, right! However, giving up such an addictive habit is not so easy. There are many factors that have people who want to give up smoking fall back into old habits – physical addiction being primary amongst them. We can readily say that giving up cigarettes is simple but not easy.

In general changing our habits is simple but not easy. After all, by definition a habit is something that we have been doing without much thought for some time. The "simple" part is initially recognising and declaring we will be different. Provided we listen to feedback, opportunities to change our habits will show up. However, changing habitual actions of which we are generally unaware is going to be tricky. Most likely, and despite our best intention, we will fall back into our habits at some time. Indeed, if we want to change our habits, it is useful to recognise that such relapses are part of the observed cycle of change.

Why is this? Our habits show up when we do not think about how we should do something, rather we just do it. If we are to change our habits then we must be conscious of our actions as we take them and often this will not be the case. Hence, we will be predisposed to fall back into our old ways of doing things. Many people assess these relapses as failures and, as a result, can quickly give up.

So how can we change our unwanted habits?

One of the most important things we can do to is enrol the support of people around us. All of our learning and attempts at change will take place in the context of our relationships with others. Those close to us are used to our habits; after all they see them a lot. People in our life have a story about us and in subtle (or sometimes not so subtle) ways will transparently seek to hold us in that story. For example, if they hold that we are cynical, they will see cynicism in what we do, even if we are seeking to change that. Their stories act as friction for our change, meaning it is something more we must overcome to change our habits.

We can look to overcome this friction and have those around us help with our attempts at changing our habits by enrolling them in supporting our change. To do so, we cannot simply expect that they will listen to us wanting to be different and support that. This may happen, however we will enhance our chances of their help if we are clear with them about what we are seeking to achieve and directly ask for their help. If we can gain their support for our attempts at change, they can provide us with an awareness of when we are falling back into our old ways. By recognising relapse as a normal part of the change process, we will then be more likely to re-affirm our commitment and improve the possibility we can be different.

"Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing."

... Abraham Lincoln, (1809 - 1865) 16th President of USA

When Hell Freezes Over ...

We received this one a while ago ... enjoy!

The following is supposedly an actual question given on a University chemistry mid-term exam. The answer by one student was so "profound" that the professor shared it with colleagues, via the Internet, which is, of course, why we now have the pleasure of enjoying it as well.

Bonus Question: Is Hell exothermic (gives off heat) or endothermic (absorbs heat)?

Most of the students wrote proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law (gas cools when it expands and heats when it is compressed) or some variant. One student, however, wrote the following:

First, we need to know how the mass of Hell is changing in time. So we need to know the rate at which souls are moving into Hell and the rate at which they are leaving. I think that we can safely assume that once a soul gets to Hell, it will not leave. Therefore, no souls are leaving.

As for how many souls are entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Most of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell.

Since there is more than one of these religions and since people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all souls go to Hell. With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially. Now, we look at the rate of change of the volume in Hell because Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in Hell to stay the same, the volume of Hell has to expand proportionately as souls are added.

This gives two possibilities:

1. If Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter Hell, then the temperature and pressure in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.
2. If Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

So which is it?

If we accept the postulate given to me by Teresa during my Freshman year that, "*it will be a cold day in Hell before I sleep with you,*" and take into account the fact that I slept with her last night, then number 2 must be true, and thus I am sure that Hell is exothermic and has already frozen over. The corollary of this theory is that since Hell has frozen over, it follows that it is not accepting any more souls and is therefore, extinct...leaving only Heaven thereby proving the existence of a Divine being.

THIS STUDENT RECEIVED THE ONLY "A"

The creativity of human beings never ceases to amaze. At a workshop we ran the other day, we asked participants write a short alliteration to introduce another participant. One of the participants claimed to not be creative, yet still came up with a very innovative introduction. We are all creative – sometimes we just need to find out where we are most creative.

“When I ask you to listen and you start giving advice, you have not done what I have asked. When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings. When I ask you to listen and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as it may seem.

Listen! All I asked was that you listen; not talk or do – just hear me... I can do for myself. I'm not helpless. I may be discouraged and faltering, but not helpless. When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and feeling of inadequacy. But when you accept as fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you and get about the business of understanding what's behind this irrational feeling. And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice. ”

... Ralph Roughton

Upcoming Events

Managing Information Overload – A Key Leadership Challenge

Ever feel stressed by the volume of information that you must deal with in your role as a leader? If you do it's no surprise. A staggering 31 billion emails are sent every day.

Information overload is a serious and growing problem and a major cause of stress for managers. The bad news is that this information explosion is only set to increase.

The good news is that there are simple and effective actions you can take to reclaim control of your most valuable asset, your time. And the first is to attend our next Leader's Edge breakfast seminar on Wednesday 16th March entitled '**Managing Information Overload**'.

At this session you will learn:

- Techniques and practical exercises to double or treble your reading speed while increasing comprehension;
- How to use Mind Mapping - a powerful and versatile tool for managing information and saving time;
- Ways to combine memory, Mind Mapping and speed reading to overcome information overload;

The session will be run by Chris Lyons from one of our strategic partners Gloop. Chris specialises in brain-friendly approaches to boosting your personal effectiveness and helping you to achieve more, faster. You can find out more about Gloop at their web site, www.gloop.com.au.

If you're serious about tackling information overload and reducing stress you won't want to miss this session. Of course if you enjoy working late and being stressed then you definitely won't want to attend.

Places are limited. Call us today for more details and to book your place.

Where: Victorian Club, Level 41 Rialto, Collins St Melbourne

When: Wednesday, 16th March 2005, 7:30am to 9:30am

Your Investment: \$40 (including GST) for this event only in the Leader's Edge Series (Breakfast included)

Accelerated Competency Forum (ACF) for Graduates

We believe that every individual or aspiring leader has the potential to become an "Optimal Performer".

Our strategic partner, TLA Consulting focuses on the development of leaders from graduates through to those at executive level. They are running a program specifically designed for graduates known as the Accelerated Competency Forum. This is a dedicated component of their Leader's Edge Program. This program is specifically designed for Graduates who have been in an organization for six months to two years.

This program will assist organisations retain their competitive edge and allow individuals to discover more about how to address the issues faced by graduates and companies into today's ever evolving business environment. To find out more, please go to www.talkingabout.com.au/PDFfiles/ACFProgramForGraduates.pdf.

Where: Hotel Y, 389 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
When: 21st - 23rd March 2005
Your Investment: \$1500 (including GST)

Our Web Site

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