

MAXWELL MOMENT**Finding Joy**

by Dr. John C. Maxwell

The pursuit of happiness. It's one of our unalienable rights spelled out in *The Declaration of Independence*, but what does it mean to pursue happiness? When so many of us are unhappy and empty, how can we find joy?

To begin with, we must learn to reconcile the ambition to do with a willingness to *be*.

As change agents, leaders sense all is not well in the world. We see problems and search for solutions. Yet, if we only focus only on what is wrong, we miss the joy of the blessings in our lives - family, friendship, health, and freedom. We have to offset our discontent with the status quo by finding contentment in the life we have been given.

As leaders, we are lean and hungry, looking for opportunities to improve and grow. However, we find joy by being comfortable in our own skin. Happiness comes when we learn to take pride in our talents and to smile at our quirks.

We have an inner drive to *do* something - a restlessness to make something happen. At the same time, joy is discovered in the peaceful quiet of a soul at rest. Alongside our restlessness for change, we have a need for relaxation and recreation.

We won't fully experience joy until we've answered life's biggest question: Why am I here?

Without a life purpose, we flounder around without direction or joy. Life coach SuEllen Williams encourages clients to write out their life story in five-year increments, noting life-altering events and influential people. During the exercise, clients will often discover a predominant theme that has brought them fulfillment. By re-aligning with what has brought meaning in the past, Williams feels her clients put themselves on track toward the pursuit of happiness.

If we don't nourish ourselves, joy will elude us.

We nourish ourselves whenever we enter into activities that build our energy reserves. Consider this list of common nourishment sources:

1. **Music** - What songs lift me?
2. **Thoughts** - What thoughts speak to me?

3. **Experiences** - What experiences rejuvenate me?
4. **Friends** - What people encourage me?
5. **Recreation** - What recreation re-creates me?
6. **Soul** - What spiritual exercises strengthen me?
7. **Hopes** - What dreams inspire me?
8. **Home** - What family members care for me?
9. **Giftedness** - What gifts activate me?
10. **Memories** - What memories make me smile?

To find joy, we must clean up our vocabulary.

We pursue happiness when we banish the shoulda, coulda, wouldas in life and decide that everything is fine the way it is. To reconstruct our vocabulary, it's important to understand the difference between facts of life and problems. A fact of life is something we cannot change, but we can adjust our attitude about it. A problem is something we can change, and becomes possible when we take responsibility to fix it.

To discover joy, it's important to celebrate success.

Timing is critical to celebration. Be sure to celebrate after the fact and not before the job is done.

The Kentucky Wildcat football team learned this lesson the hard way. In 2002, the Wildcats led the heavily favored Louisiana State Tigers 30-27 with two seconds left to play. The Tigers had the ball, but they were 75 yards away from the end zone - an impossible distance to cover in one play.

Wildcat players dumped Gatorade on their coach to celebrate the win. Kentucky students poured out of the stands and waited to charge onto the field after the final whistle. The Kentucky quarterback waved his arms toward the adoring fans in a salute of victory.

Then, the impossible happened. The LSU quarterback lofted the football as far as he could throw it. The ball bounced off the fingertips of a mob of players, and landed in the waiting arms of an LSU receiver who raced to the end zone! LSU had won the game on a desperation pass!

Shocked and silent, the Kentucky fans were left to stare at their soggy coach as the LSU Tiger players celebrated their stunning, last-second victory.

In closing, happiness doesn't always find us, we have to pursue it. Doing so involves a number of steps:

1. Willingness to Be Who We Are
2. Searching for a Life Purpose
3. Nourishing Ourselves Regularly
4. Cleaning Up Our Vocabulary
5. Celebrating Success

In this edition of *Leadership Wired*, I hope I've given you some helpful tips on chasing down joy. Best wishes as you pursue happiness!

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LEADERSHIP@LARGE

World-Changing Leadership

On November 27, 2007, Mark Everson was removed as CEO of The American Red Cross after it was learned he was having an adulterous relationship with a subordinate. With Everson ousted, the Red Cross began an executive search to find a new leader - it's fifth CEO in the past six years. Sadly, the image of the Red Cross had already been tainted from organizational failures after 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. In both cases, allegations of financial impropriety rocked the charity and led to the dismissal of top leaders.

Shortfalls of non-profit leadership may dominate media attention, but they should not be allowed to overshadow the profoundly positive influence of thousands upon thousands of upstanding charitable and humanitarian organizations. In its December 2007 issue, *Fast Company* did its part to raise awareness of the social good done by not-for-profit entities by recognizing 45 "world-changing non-profits." The organizations highlighted on the list benefit the global community and the neighborhoods we live in by:

- Creating jobs through microlending
- Providing medical care to treat curable diseases
- Combating hunger by giving out foodstuffs and clean water
- Building affordable housing for low-income families
- Initiating mentoring programs for at-risk youth
- Championing energy conservation and efficiency
- Giving shelter to victims of domestic violence
- Rehabilitating men and women with a history of substance abuse

In addition to honoring top non-profit companies, *Fast Company* examined their key leadership attributes with an excerpt entitled "The Six Practices of High-Impact Nonprofits" from the book *Forces for Good* by Leslie R. Crutchfield and Heather McLeod Grant. The following is a summary of the authors' main ideas of the qualities distinguishing world-changing non-profit leadership.

Advocate and Serve

The most influential non-profits are not content with the success of a lone program - they are trying to revolutionize broken systems. Forever appealing to a broader audience, the best non-profits lobby legislators and campaign tirelessly to advocate their positions.

Make Markets Work

The most powerful non-profits do not depend solely upon the benevolence and deep pockets of donors. Instead, they position themselves so that market forces propel them forward. As Crutchfield and McLeod Grant write, "Tapping into the power of self-

interest and the laws of economics is far more effective than appealing to pure altruism."

Inspire Evangelists

Some organizations are hard pressed to get buy-in from their own employees. World-changers have a hard time understanding how anyone, anywhere could fail to be inspired by their cause. The best non-profits never rest. Fueled by a sense of urgency, they zealously enlist outsiders in their vision.

Nurture Non-profit Networks

Non-profit world-changers do not subscribe to the scarcity mindset. On the contrary, they ceaselessly look to forge partnerships with like-minded companies. Understanding the principles of synergy, they are open-handed with talent and resources. Quick to share, they soon reap the benefits of reciprocity.

Master the Art of Adaptation

World-changers don't allow vision to be handcuffed by methods. They have big problems to solve, and they attack them with creative persistence. If one strategy isn't working, it's quickly discarded so that another can be tested.

Share Leadership

The top non-profits are tackling issues bigger than themselves. Perhaps for this reason, their leaders share power better than most. Whether heaping praise on partners or empowering their teams, leaders of world-changing organizations are refreshingly egoless. Mindful of the magnitude of their vision, they make a point to train successors who can steer the ship after they are gone.

Read the complete article from *Fast Company*: "[The Six Practices of High-Impact Nonprofits](#)" written by Leslie R. Crutchfield and Heather McLeod Grant. [Click here](#) to see *Fast Company*'s list of 45 world-changing non-profits.

Leadership's Trap Doors

While most spiders weave webs, the California trapdoor spider (resembling a smaller, less hairy tarantula) takes a different approach to hunt its food.

For a home, the spider digs a deep, narrow burrow in the ground. As a roof, the spider spins its silk to build a hinged, D-shaped trapdoor. The spider also lines the trapdoor with silk, and then uses its saliva to reinforce the door with dirt or clay. Next, the spider chews the edges of the trapdoor until it is perfectly contoured to fit over the burrow's opening. Finally, the spider camouflages the trapdoor by covering it with leaves, twigs, and pebbles.

Once the trapdoor has been constructed, the spider crouches beneath it and waits for an unsuspecting insect or small frog to come along. When it senses movement on the lid of the trapdoor, the spider swings it open, sinks its fangs into the victim, and drags the prey down into the burrow.

In the November/December edition of *Ivey Business Journal*, John S. McCallum examines four dangerous traits that, like trapdoor spiders, can ambush, drag down, and destroy a leader. Referring to them as The Four Horsemen the Executive

Apocalypse, McCallum lists denial, fear, greed, and pride as the attributes most likely to doom a leader.

Denial

Denial can sneak into a leader's life in a variety of subtle ways: refusal to confront a tough truth, unwillingness to listen to feedback, inability to face personal shortcomings, or reluctance to hold others accountable. When leaders turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to the problems around them, they lose credibility and the entire organization suffers. Leaders avoid the trap of denial when they ask probing questions, dole out disciplinary action to underperformers, and address little problems before they mushroom into bigger hazards.

Fear

Fear in a leader cause either panic or paralysis. In either case, when leaders yield to the emotion of fear, they begin to think irrationally. Their judgment becomes impaired, and they are no longer fit to lead. Leaders sidestep the trap of fear by finding the courage to take risks and by summoning the bravery to fight when their backs are against the wall.

Greed

Once greed has taken residence in the character of a leader, it spreads like the most invasive of cancers. A greedy leader can never get enough. He or she is never content - always striving to get ahead and take the advantage. Along the way, a leader greedy for gain loses perspective and discards ethical behavior. A greedy leader is a self-centered, myopic leader. Leaders steer clear of the trap of greed when they are generous with their time, resources, and attention.

Pride

A degree of ego fuels ambition, but a surplus of ego conflagrates the ugly quality of arrogance. Conceit in a leader serves as a repellent, keeping others distant. Arrogant leaders lose touch with their constituents, cutoff their closest allies, and make decisions out of personal pride rather than reasoned observation. Leaders dodge the trap of pride by serving those around them. Rather than stepping onto a pedestal, humble leaders kneel down so that others can stand on their shoulders.

Read the complete article from the *Ivy Business Journal*: "[Denial, Fear, Greed, and Pride: The Four Horsemen of the Executive Apocalypse](#)," by Josh S. McCallum.

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Mi OPEN POSITION

Vice President of Sales Position

Mi is looking for a Vice President of Sales to serve as the sales leader for the Maximum Impact brand.

The team at Mi passionately seeks to impact leaders at the heart level. We consistently turn on the heart of leaders through relevant leadership events, resources and training. We are best at creating and leveraging authentic customer



relationships, powerful and intriguing brands and the life-changing message of John Maxwell, an intentional experience.

We are searching for a talented, innovative professional who has the character, competence, and influence to help us accomplish our mission. **The VP of Sales is primarily responsible to drive the growth of the brand toward success. He or she will position the brand by actively increasing brand recognition, strength, and revenues.**

Some of the responsibilities of the position include hiring employees; developing and leading the sales team through genuine relationships, formal and informal training and modeling effective behavior; managing cross-functional goals and projects; designing marketing programs to deliver volume and profit goals; conducting consumer research to identify new areas of opportunity; managing budgets, revenues, profit margins and ROI; leading presentations on major sales calls and new line intros; leading new sales channels; and working with the product development team to manage day-to-day activities to achieve goals.

Must have a Bachelor's degree, but preferably an MBA. Must also have extensive leadership experience with prior corporate training or events experience a plus.

For more information about Mi, please visit www.maximumimpact.com.

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QUOTES

Apologizing

"Never ruin an apology with an excuse." ~ Kimberly Johnson

"An apology is the superglue of life. It can repair just about anything." ~ Lynn Johnston

"Right actions in the future are the best apologies for bad actions in the past." ~ Tryon Edwards

"When you realize you've made a mistake, make amends immediately. It's easier to eat crow while it's still warm." ~ Dan Heist

For more information on Dr. John C. Maxwell, please [visit our website](#). In our effort to become your new content provider, portions of *Leadership Wired* are often written by editors other than John C. Maxwell and do not necessarily reflect his opinions.

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