

**THE
POSITIVITY
PAPERS
VOLUME SEVEN**

JONAS CAIN



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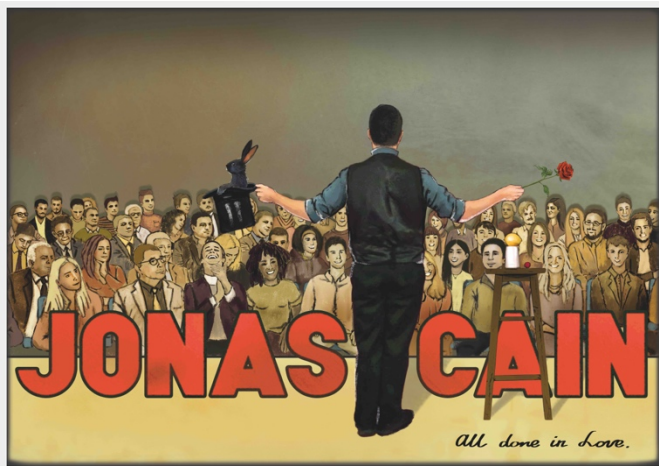
ABOUT JONAS CAIN

Jonas Cain, M.Ed. is a storyteller, magician, musician, and facilitator of fascination.

He holds a Master of Education in Learning Systems Design from Purdue University, is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi honors society, and has been recognized by Parenting 2.0 as a Global Presence Ambassador in recognition of his pioneering contributions to the field of life skills education.

In his spare time, he enjoys playing the ukulele, climbing mountains, and spending time with Pumpkin and Mr. Scoots.

FUN FACT: Jonas can solve the Rubik's Cube in 90 seconds or less.



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BOOKS BY JONAS CAIN

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RESULTS

“In my three-decade career in education, I’ve had my share of professional development. This was shockingly different. The method of instruction was the most valuable. Jonas did an excellent job introducing the material before the presentation and giving us time to digest. We were ready for the topic.”

NAOMI WALSH

ASSISTANT TO THE VICE PRESIDENT | COLLEGE OF THE FLORIDA KEYS

...

“I’ve sat through many keynotes. It’s very rare that a presenter manages to capture my attention in a way that I can’t help but be a part of the experience, and this performance did that for me! It really connects you to the message, and experiencing that made this conference amazing!”

JACOB JONES

STUDENT | TEXAS TSA

...

“From the moment he arrived, to the moment he left, we felt Jonas Cain’s positive energy throughout the building! A true testament to his preparation and genuine care for others. I was amazed to see our students so engaged! This allowed them to lean in and really hear the message.”

KELSEA TREFETHEN

TEACHER | MARANACOOK COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

...

“Jonas Cain’s delivery is a creative and fun way to get an important message through. We are managers of assisted living and memory care communities; we need positivity and laughter to be able to provide the highest quality of care to our residents. He made us laugh, think, and be in the moment!”

ANGELA PELLETIER

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS | WOODBINE SENIOR LIVING

“Jonas Cain had our whole team laughing and learning about ourselves and one another. When we adjourned that evening, the group was better connected and more cooperative than before. A tremendous asset!”

ROBERT McDERMOTT
FRATERNITY EDUCATIONAL OFFICER | PHI MU ALPHA

...

“Our group truly enjoyed Jonas Cain's presentation. I loved how he was not only attentive to the live audience but also to those who chose to be virtual. Such a wonderful experience!”

THERESA BRIAND
PRESIDENT | NEW HAMPSHIRE TAX COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATION

...

“Jonas made the virtual experience very interactive and masterfully adjusted on the fly to the engagement he was getting in the moment from participants. I was impressed with how he tailored the experience to a mixed audience of students with and without developmental disabilities.”

SCOTT WENTZELL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS | BEST BUDDIES

...

“Through some mix of his demeanor, gentle but targeted prodding and compelling material, Jonas opens up a class of young people to speak with confidence and without fear of judgment. I cannot overstate how impressive this is and continually find Jonas Cain's work to be consistently compelling.”

KC FUSSELL
MINI COURSE DIRECTOR | MASS BOYS & GIRLS STATE

...

“It's often difficult to find people who understand how to work with deaf people and use interpreters. I appreciate Jonas Cain's willingness to work with a variety of people and taking the time to really understand his audience.”

ERIKA KAFTAN
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION | WILLIE ROSS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

DEDICATION

For You

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The author aboard *The Lady Bea*, cruising down the Connecticut River.

— SEPTEMBER 8, 2024 —

“Be the chess player, not the chess piece.”

— RALPH CHARELL



INTRODUCTION

He was such a skilled writer that the Académie Française asked Bernard de La Monnoye to refrain from any further submissions. He had already won four poetic essay contests, and they wanted to allow other authors an opportunity.¹

266 years later, Katherine Davis was trying to take a nap, but had the onomatopoeic refrain of Bernard's most famous carol stuck in her head: "Tu-re-lu-re-lu, pat-a-pat-a-pan." In her drowsy state, the refrain became "pa-rum-pum-pum-pum" and, upon waking, wrote her own carol—what we know today as the beloved "The Little Drummer Boy."²

Beloved by many, except David Bowie.

When he arrived in a London studio in 1977 to record a duet with Bing Crosby, he was told they'd be singing "The Little Drummer Boy."

"I hate this song!" David grumbled. "It's not a good showcase for my voice. Is there something else I could sing?"³

Gathering around a piano in the studio's basement, the production's musical supervisors and scriptwriter, Ian Fraser, Larry Grossman, and Buz Kohan, went to work writing a counterpoint for "The Little Drummer Boy."

"It all happened rather rapidly," Buz later recalled. "Within an hour, we had it written and were able to present it to Bowie again."⁴

With less than an hour of rehearsal, David and Bing recorded the now-famous duet—combining centuries-old onomatopoeia with "Peace on Earth," a song that two hours earlier had never existed.

...

It may seem counterintuitive to play a drum for an infant, but this was a different kind of newborn—One who smiles when people of goodwill come as they are to present their finest gifts.

Some may be tempted to believe they have no “finest gift” fit for a King, but that is only when we compare our gifts to those of others. Abundance comes in many forms.

For that poor boy, it was playing a drum.

For David and Bing, it was singing.

For Katherine, it was composing songs while taking a nap.

For Bernard, it was writing—whether carols or poetic essays.

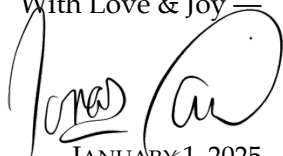
And for Ian, Larry, and Buz, it was working together to create Peace on Earth.

When we care enough to give all the love that we can by presenting our finest gifts, we will see that “day of Glory when men of goodwill live in peace, live in peace again.”⁵

...

As for me, my finest gifts are sharing Love & Joy—and today I present these gifts to you within the stories that follow.

With Love & Joy —

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald A.", written in a cursive style.

JANUARY 1, 2025

HOLYOKE | MA

Groundhog Day

Phil Connors found himself in quite the conundrum. He was trapped in a loop, experiencing the same day, Groundhog Day, over and over and over again.

Every morning he woke up, it was the day before. He experienced this over and over and over again, hundreds and thousands of times—and everything about the day was exactly the same, except for one thing.

His choices.

Phil was given the gift to see how his thoughts, words, and actions impacted the outcome of his day, for better or for worse. Some days, he chose to respond with frustration; other days, he chose to respond with fascination.

We can't control what happens around us, but what Phil Connors discovered is that what we can control is what happens *within* us—how we respond to the world around us.

...

This is of course just a fictional story, from the 1993 film *Groundhog Day* starring Bill Murray.¹ But like any good art, it can offer insight for our everyday lives, if we allow it.

A widely cited study of twins² discovered that a full 50% of our experience of happiness (or unhappiness) is out of our control—a genetic set-point that we have no control over. Another 10% is decided by our circumstances—where we live, where we work, the

people we interact with, and so forth. And the remaining 40% of our lives is decided by our choices—by how we respond to the world around us.

Phil's story is just a work of fiction, but it does point to the truth—and I believe it's no coincidence Hollywood chose Groundhog Day, of all days, to be repeated over and over and over again.

According to the superstition,³ when the groundhog sees its shadow, it runs away from it.

And isn't that the way they say it goes.

When we turn away from the light and see our shadow—the very part of ourselves that we're not yet ready to face—we run away from it.

With both humor and drama, Bill Murray's character demonstrates that when we choose to face our shadow, rather than run away from it, we become empowered to enter into a new season of life—a Spring of rebirth and of growth.

...

We don't have the same luxury that fictional characters have. Though we may at times experience days and weeks (and maybe even months and years) that appear awfully similar to the last, no two moments are exactly the same.

As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus reminds us, you cannot step into the same river twice—for it is not the same river and you are not the same person. In every moment we are in a constant current of change.

After all, the word "current" refers both to that which flows as well as the present moment—what is *currently* happening.

In every moment, we are in a constant current of change, and while we cannot control this current—whether it's a global pandemic, a change in leadership,

or conflicts both personal and universal—what we can control is what happens *within* us—in how we choose to respond to the events around us.

We can choose to run away from the light like the groundhog, or we can choose to face the light like Phil Connors, welcoming a new season of growth with clarity, confidence, and courage.

Reflection

What do you do when you see your shadow? Do you react like the groundhog or respond like Phil?

How to Lose a Friend (in 10 words or less)

At the time, I was wearing rollerblades while playing skee-ball. I wasn't much of a skater, and I wasn't much of a skee-baller either—but it wasn't so much about the activity as it was about spending time with friends. That's what I was really looking for. And that's what brought me to the roller rink that evening.

After a few rounds of skee-ball, Tom rolled past and I stopped him to ask if he would be hosting another Super Bowl party. The big game between the Saints and the Colts was just around the corner, and while I don't particularly follow sports, for me, watching the game isn't so much about the game as it is about spending time with loved ones.

"I don't think I'll be hosting again this year," Tom sheepishly replied, barely making eye contact as he continued rolling away.

"No worries, Tom. I'll catch you guys another time," I said, before turning my eyes back to the skee-balls.

The trick is to give the ball a subtle spin on release, while aiming for the edge of the ramp, about three fourths of the way up. If given the proper speed, the ball will bounce off the edge of the ramp and take flight to the opposite corner—right into the 100-point goal.

Well, that's my working-theory anyway. Most of the time my aim is way off and the ball falls into the 0-point goal. And sometimes my aim is so off that it even bounces off the back wall and rolls back down the ramp! But when I'm careful, and when my aim is sure,

the ball is launched into the air and lands squarely where I want it.

That usually happens only once or twice a round—just enough wins to keep me playing and feeding quarters into the machine.

After a few more rounds, Pat rolled by to say goodbye.

"Nice seeing you tonight, Jonas!" he exclaimed while sitting down to take off his rollerblades. *"Will I see you at Tom's Super Bowl party?"*

I stopped playing and looked at Pat, quizzically, *"I thought he wasn't hosting again this year?"*

"Oh no, he's hosting again," he replied as he put on his shoes, *"and all the guys are going."*

It seems Pat didn't the memo Tom didn't want me there.

I looked Pat in the eye with a knowing smile and said, *"No, I'm not going. I hope you guys have fun."*

After finishing the game, I changed into my shoes and said my goodbyes to everyone, making a point to look Tom in the eyes as I said my final *"Goodbye,"* then walked away.

I have never seen him since.

...

In 1845, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote a poem called *"The Arrow and the Song,"* writing how he once shot an arrow and sang a song and how it was impossible to follow their flight once they left him. A long time afterwards, he later found them both in perfect condition—with the arrow in an oak tree and the song in the heart of a friend.¹

When the arrow leaves the bow, there's no taking it back. Whether with careful or reckless aim, it will fall wherever it may go. So too shall our words fall

where they may. Words said in anger, jealousy, or selfishness will pierce a friend's heart—as will a kind, careful, and gentle word of encouragement. In a similar way, when we give our words a subtle spin on release to conceal our true feelings, we may never know how they will sincerely land, regardless of our intended goal.

To this day, Tom's arrow is still unbroken, and his song still sings—yet it's not so much a feeling of loss for the friendship that I remember most. Rather, it is the reminder of how words can travel further than we may ever know, for who has sight so keen and strong to follow the flight of words? They just may land in the heart of a friend—whether in the 100-point goal of goodwill or the 0-point goal of distrust.

Reflection

What might you do to be a careful archer of your word?

A Simple Misunderstanding

It was a simple misunderstanding, really. When the Earl of Huntly set fire to Donibristle—an estate on the coast of the Firth of Forth in Scotland—the Earl of Moray stayed inside as long as he could before escaping out the back and heading for the rocks on the shore. He might have gotten away if not for the tassels of his helmet. They had caught fire during the harrowing escape and their burning glow caught the attention of his pursuers.¹

And all of this could have been prevented had it not been for a simple misunderstanding. King James* had already given the Earl of Moray a pardon, which is why he refused to surrender—and yet, the Earl of Huntly had him killed anyway.

Sometimes, *objective* reality is replaced by *subjective* reality. Regardless of the truth, whatever *feels* true for our contextual experience trumps the original intent.

In other words, it was a simple misunderstanding—and this explains how we got the word *ampersand*.

You know, that word we use to refer to the logogram for the conjuncture *and*: &

It originally derived from the ligature (the joining together of two or more letters) of the letters *e* and *t*—which is the Latin word for *and*. The word *et* was so

* Yes, that King James. Author of the Holy Bible.

common that people began to simply combine the two letters into one symbol. Over the years, the symbol evolved into what we know today as the *ampersand*.

The use of the *and* symbol became so common that by the 1830's, many schools included it as the 27th letter of the alphabet, which was a confusing way to learn the alphabet. Imagine reciting "...X, Y, Z, &."

To make it clearer, teachers had students end the alphabet in Latin by reciting "...X, Y, Z, & *per se and*." *Per se* is Latin for "by itself," so by including *per se* in the recitation, what it means is "the symbol & by itself is the word and." Surely that cleared everything up, right?

When reciting the alphabet, & *per se and* became slurred into *ampersand*—much like we tend to slur the letters L, M, N, O, P as *elemenopee*. Over time, the slurring of & *per se and* became so ubiquitous that by 1837 *ampersand* had become the common English term for the "and" symbol.

So, you see, it was a simple misunderstanding, really—like when Sylvia Wright was a little girl listening to the song "The Bonnie Earl of Moray."³

"*They have slain the Earl of Moray and Lady Mondegreen.*"

Upon hearing this, the young Sylvia imagined the Earl dying beside his faithful lover, Lady Mondegreen. For Sylvia, it didn't matter that she misunderstood the original lyrics, which actually said:

"*They have slain the Earl o' Moray and layd him on the green.*"

Sometimes, objective reality is replaced by subjective reality. Regardless of the truth, whatever *feels* true for our contextual experience trumps the original intent.

And for Sylvia, the truth was far less romantic. She knew nothing of the feud between the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Moray. For her, “The Bonnie Earl of Moray” was a ballad of two lovers, and that’s just how she intended to keep it—much like I like to believe Elton John’s song waxes poetic about *Tony Danza* holding me closer. It doesn’t matter that Elton is actually singing about a *tiny dancer*. Growing up in the 1980’s with Tony Danza as “the boss,” it made more subjective and contextual sense for the song to be about Tony Danza, regardless of the objective truth.

Today, we call these misunderstandings a *mondegreen*: a misinterpretation of a phrase in such a way as to give it a new meaning. It was Sylvia herself who coined the term *mondegreen* in her 1954 essay entitled “The Death of Lady Mondegreen,” when she misunderstood the feuds between the Scottish nobility of the 16th century.

So, you see, it was a simple misunderstanding, really.

...

To clear things up, I offer a challenge: whenever you find yourself about to say the words *or*, *but*, and *however*, in their stead, try the word *and*.

This subtle yet non-insignificant change has the power to reframe conversations, enhance communication, and improve relationships.⁴

In his book *The Five Essentials: Using Your Inborn Resources to Create a Fulfilling Life*, the anthropologist Bob Deutsch states that the inherent paradoxes, contradictions, and ambiguities found in our modern world suggests we are in the “age of and.”⁵

Not *or*. Not *but*. Not *however*.

& per se and.

Or suggests simplicity; *and* suggests complexity. When you lead with *and* rather than *or*, look for the new perspectives it inspires.

But suggests contrast; *and* suggests similarity. When you lead with *and* rather than *but*, look for the novel solutions that emerge.

However suggests exclusion; *and* suggests inclusion. When you lead with *and* rather than *however*, look for the unity it fosters.

For example, what's more important to you? A meaningful career or a salary that supports quality of life? Before you answer, consider whether this is truly a matter of *or*. Maybe it's better framed as an *and* question.

When you have conflicting priorities, leading with *and* rather than *but* can lead you to new possibilities that focus on solutions rather than obstacles.

And when you have a disagreement with a friend, leading with *and* rather than *however* can start a collaborative conversation that unites rather than divides.

The substitution of one word acknowledges each individual's interests as legitimate while also recognizing there are issues to be resolved. Rather than letting a misunderstanding limit and divide us, leading with *and* can foster an environment conducive for communication, opportunity, and community.⁶

Final Thoughts

And connects two or more ideas to demonstrate a relationship of equal importance, and when we take this relationship to heart, we just might discover wider perspectives, new solutions, and enhanced unity.

This is not to suggest we should never use these other words, but it is to suggest that if we find ourselves stuck, giving *and* a try just may do the trick to remove the block of misunderstanding and confusion.

After all, objective reality is colored through the subjective lens of each individual's contextual experience. Embracing this complexity and nuance with *& per se and* can open the door to perspective, possibility, and peace.

Reflection

How might ampersand enhance your experience of the world around you?

Fear or Joy?

Proposing to Stephanie was like a masterclass in following your Joy. Her bright eyes, exuberant smile, and resounding “yes” was one of the happiest moments of my life. Which is part of what made it so hard, seven days later, when she died unexpectedly.

The sudden fall from a peak of Joy to a pit of Despair is jarring, and after years of wallowing grief, I realized I had a choice: I could stay there and let it destroy me, or I could lift myself up and live again.

It took a fair amount of courage to overcome the fear of being hurt again, but despite the fear and despite the hesitation, I boldly stepped forward and found love again.

Years later, when I proposed to Sara, her smile offered a sign that love can truly find a way—which is part of what made it so hard, after a year of marriage, when she decided she wanted a divorce.*

The experience of loss has taught me to be motivated by Fear rather than Joy—at least when it comes to matters of the heart.

But it doesn’t have to be that way.

That’s the thing about motivation: It’s ever-present. It’s not that we lack motivation; rather, it’s a matter of what we’re motivated by.

Are we motivated by what we stand to lose or by what we stand to gain? Are we motivated by Fear or by Joy?

* Cue the trombone.

According to evolutionary psychologists, humans and animals alike are commonly motivated by gaining or enhancing pleasure (Joy) and by avoiding or minimizing pain (Fear).

Common fears often include (but are not limited to) deception and exploitation, rejection, insecurity, and criticism; and their corresponding joys often include honesty and compassion, acceptance, security, and praise.

As I continue to explore motivation in my own life—whether in my work, in my hobbies, or in matters of the heart—what I’m continuing to discover is a curious paradox: Avoiding what we Fear often also avoids what brings us Joy.

Just as motivation is ever-present, so too can Fear and Joy be concurrently ever-present. It’s not a matter of avoiding one to move towards the other; rather, it’s a matter of expanding our Joy to be greater than our Fear—giving us the courage to do the hard things that may offer pain, but also offer our greatest abiding Joy.

Reflection

Think of one activity you did today. What motivated it? Was your Fear greater than your Joy? Or was your Joy greater than your Fear? In a similar way, think of one thing you avoided today. Was it Fear or was it Joy that motivated you?

Leading with Yes

I was wrong, but she didn't make me *feel* wrong. And even though I can't remember what the word was, I can still remember how she made me feel.

Seen. Appreciated. Cared for.

Considering this all came about because of a mistake, that's a mighty fine outcome!

While speaking with my friend, Andrea, I mispronounced a word, and after I said it, she gave me a look that said, "*I'm not quite sure I know what you're talking about.*" So I rephrased it and she caught my drift. She then corrected the pronunciation but in the most gentle way possible:

"I can tell you're an avid reader. Words like that we may often read but don't often say out loud."

That's some high praise coming from a librarian, and certainly a far cry from how many people choose to approach similar situations—those who are quick to correct, criticize, or complain.

But that's the thing about making people wrong: They don't like it! And instead of being grateful, they can become resentful—preventing positive and productive connections with the people around us, while also losing the opportunity for open communication and collaboration.

This may seem like a paradox when we are coming from a place of genuine care and support for the people we have ongoing relationships with. But *how* we help is just as important as the *desire* to help—because if it's not done with care, it just might backfire.



For example, someone might say to you: “*You’re never too old to learn something new.*” You might be tempted to respond with, “*No! You’re wrong! You can’t teach an old dog new tricks!*” But if you want to maintain connection, you might first consider the *contextual truth* of this statement, which can help you find an agreement to lead with.

Before criticizing, before correcting, and before complaining, you might choose curiosity by considering questions such as:

- Under what circumstance is their perspective valid?
- If I had their life experiences, might I believe or do the same things?
- What assumptions am I making that might be clouding my judgment?

Staying curious with questions like these can protect us from the temptation to lead with “*No, you’re wrong...*” and instead lead with the much more helpful words “*Yes, and...*”

These words are helpful because *yes* starts from a place of agreement rather than disagreement. This is true even if you don’t agree with *everything* that is said or *everything* that is done—but there is always Always ALWAYS something you *can* be in agreement with. Even if it’s to simply acknowledge: “*Yes, I understand you feel this way.*”

Once a connection is made, it can be confidently maintained while building off of it with the word *and.*

And honors the complexity that comes from multiple perspectives—and because we led with the common ground of *yes* rather than *no*, others will be far more open to listening to these other perspectives, because we demonstrated that we were listening, that we heard them, and that we acknowledge their point of view.

Final Thought

The psychologist Carl Rogers once suggested: “*The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.*” I would further suggest that this paradox can be extended beyond ourselves—that it is when we accept our current state of affairs *as they are*, it is *then* that we are empowered to change them.

Therefore, if you want to have positive and productive ongoing relationships with the people around you, consider leading with *yes* rather than *no*—and once you’re securely connected on that common ground, you can confidently use *and*^{*} to build from there. If you do, it just may become the epitome of preventing mischievous relationship taboos—especially if it’s not already your niche or forte.[†]

Reflection

How might leading with yes affect your ability to connect with the important people in your life?

* *Per se* &

† Worcestershire Sauce

The Vibrato of Gratitude

The first time he told the joke, everyone laughed, and seeing how much they enjoyed it, he told it again—but by then it only got a few chuckles.

And when he told the same joke a *third* time, no one was laughing anymore. It seems the joy had simply worn off.

This story is attributed to the actor and filmmaker Charlie Chaplin,¹ and whether or not it's true, what certainly *is* true is the sentiment of the words he supposedly said afterwards:

"If you can't laugh and laugh at the same joke, why do you cry and cry at the same pain and sorrow?"

•••

A possible answer can be found in a suggestion by Aesop, the ancient Greek storyteller, who once said: *"Gratitude turns what we have into enough."*

If this is true, then it can perhaps explain why we stop laughing after hearing the same joke: We simply had enough of it.

And this may also explain why we cry and cry over the same sorrows: We don't believe we've had enough, preventing us from appreciating what's already been given—both materially and experientially.

I'm reminded of the time I accidentally let go of my Bert and Ernie balloon at the Fourth of July fireworks. I cried and cried and cried, watching the Sesame Street duo disappear into the night's sky, with the rocket's red glare and the bombs bursting in air—

which gave proof through the night that I'd never see them again.

As a four-year-old child, my mind couldn't reconcile the fact that it was just a mylar balloon. For me, the balloon *was* Bert and Ernie—and to see them reach such a fate was simply too much.

It wasn't about the lost balloon; rather, it was the thought of the affable duo being lost forever. By that time, I had already experienced the death of our beloved family dog, PJ, and to see these friends reach a similar fate brought great sorrow and pain.

With the gift of time, however, I've come to appreciate the sentiment of the vibraphonist Lionel Hampton, who once suggested: "*Gratitude is when memory is stored in the heart and not in the mind.*"

It's no wonder these words come from a vibraphonist, an instrument that features a pulsating change of pitch—created by a set of electronic fans that rapidly open and close the resonators of a xylophone.

The experience of vibrato is determined by both the density and frequency of change: It could be deep or shallow and it could be fast or slow. And the same could be said of our experience of gratitude: How deep is our gratitude? And how often do we experience it?

Final Thoughts

Regardless of what we achieve and regardless of what we gain, everything is temporary, in a constant state of vibrato—whether deep or shallow and whether fast or slow. And how we choose to experience this vibrato is completely up to us:

We can choose to store our memories in our mind, focusing on what we have lost when the resonators are

closed; or, we can choose to store memories in our heart, and focus on the reverberation of happy memories when the resonators are opened.

The choice is yours to make, and time is yours to take—after all, to live is to fly, both the low and high.*

Crying over the same sorrow can be as pointless as laughing at the same joke. Which reminds me:

Q: Why shouldn't you draw a circle?

A: *It's pointless!*

Q: Why shouldn't you draw a circle with a broken pencil?

A: *It's pointless!*

Q: Why shouldn't you tell jokes with the same punchline?

A: *It's pointless!*

It's all pointless, so to help us “fly home” with the gratitude of enough—like the famous Lionel Hampton tune and like Bert and Ernie on that fateful Fourth of July evening—we can consider the words attributed to Charlie Chaplin who said you mind as well choose to “*enjoy every moment of your life,*” whether while in laughter or in tears.

Reflection

How deep is your gratitude? How often do you experience it?

* So shake the dust off of your wings and the tears out of your eyes.

Experiencing the Colors That Are Real

He only worked there one summer—that space between high school and the rest of life—and the only thing Bob really remembers about his time at the factory is a conversation he had with the woman one day at lunch.

When Bob's mother worked there two decades earlier, this same woman had already been there for decades, so he was curious to speak with her. "What's her story?" he wondered silently to himself.

"I'm saving for retirement," she answered out loud when they sat together at lunch. "I'm going to see the world!" She had been delaying gratification for decades, saving every spare penny for "someday."

Bob didn't think much of it at the time. After all, summer was brief, and he already had his own "someday" to think about. It wasn't until years later that he thought about that conversation again, when he learned of the woman's death—two weeks after retirement. All those years of waiting for a "someday" that never came.

She was finally ready for takeoff, but had run out of runway.

...

This story is reminiscent of Alanis Morissette's "Ironic."

♪ Mr. Play-It-Safe was afraid to fly. He packed his suitcase and kissed his kids goodbye. He waited his whole

*damn life to take that flight—and as the plane crashed down he thought, “Well, isn’t this nice?” And isn’t it ironic? Don’t you think?*¹ 🎵

We can wait our whole lives for *someday* opportunities, or we can make our opportunities for ourselves, like Brandon did.

•••

All his life, Brandon Burlsworth dreamed of only one thing: playing for the Arkansas Razorbacks. But after high school, the Razorbacks didn’t make him an offer.

Instead of playing it safe by accepting a full ride scholarship at the school he *didn’t* want to attend, Brandon bet on himself by paying his own way as a walk-on at the University of Arkansas—but with no guarantee of ever earning a scholarship. He could only afford one year of tuition, so he doubled-down his efforts to prove himself, which is reminiscent of Philip Seymour Hoffman’s advise:

*“If you’re auditioning for something that you know you’re never going to get...if you get a chance to act in a room that somebody else has paid rent for, then you’re given a free chance to practice your craft. And in that moment, you should act as well as you can. Because when you leave the room and you have acted as well as you can, there’s no way the people who have watched you will forget it.”*²

It was a longshot, but Brandon took the opportunity to boldly step forward and perform. Every day, he was the first player on the field and the last to leave, and when his fellow teammates went off campus for parties and vacations, he would stay on campus to continue training. The coaches took notice, and by the end

of his freshman year, Brandon earned a full scholarship and a starting position on the offensive line.

Instead of waiting for the opportunity of *someday*, Brandon made the opportunity himself—and became captain of the team, received the coveted College Football All-America award, and was drafted by the Indianapolis Colts as a starter for the 1999 season.

Imagine if Brandon had waited for *someday*? It would have never come. Two weeks after being drafted by the Colts, he was involved in an automobile accident that took his life.

We can choose to wait our whole lives for the right opportunity to take flight, or we can choose to make every day an opportunity to tiptoe through the tulips—much like the fashionable Dutch society did in 1636. But then again, they took it quite literally.

...

No one knows for sure how it all got started. The tulip had only recently been introduced to the Netherlands, so perhaps the rich colors of the petals became a status symbol to the rich (or those who wished to be rich).

Regardless of how it started, as demand for the flower rose, so did the price—and people began buying and selling bulbs sight unseen hoping for an opportunity to make a quick profit. But the investment came at considerable risk: some tulip bulbs were selling for more than *ten times the annual income* of a skilled artisan!

But by February 1637, tulip prices sank suddenly when the bulb bubble burst. Speaking about the rise and fall of Tulip Mania in his book *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, the author Charles Mackay said:

“Many who, for a brief season, had emerged from the humbler walks of life, were cast back into their original obscurity. Substantial merchants were reduced almost to beggary, and many a representative of a noble line saw the fortunes of his house ruined beyond redemption.”³

• • •

Yes, what goes up must surely come down; and as the “Spinning Wheel” also reminds us:

*♪ Did you find the directing sign on the / Straight
and narrow highway? / Would you mind a reflect-
ing sign? / Just let it shine within your mind / And show
you the colors that are real. ♪*

Perhaps if the bulb traders were more interested in the experience of “the colors that are real,” rather than the made-up numbers on a ledger line, they might not have been “ruined beyond redemption.”

Perhaps.

As for the woman who “waited her whole damn life” in the factory, she was certainly interested in the colors that are real; and even though he expressed it differently, Brandon was also interested in the colors.

Sure, the woman may have also been interested in the money, but it wasn’t the money per se that she was after; rather, she set it aside as she waited for an *experience*.

Brandon didn’t wait for the experience; instead, he blew through his life’s savings in a year. For him, the money was less important than the *experience* he pursued.

We often describe people who lack experience using words like *naive* and *immature*. Perhaps these same words can be used to describe people who seek happiness and fulfillment in removable things rather than authentic experiences. As Jack Johnson reminds us:

♪♪ And cars and phones and diamond rings / Bling, bling,
'cause those are only removable things / And what about
your mind? / Does it shine? / Are there things that con-
cern you more than your time?⁵♪♪

Final Thoughts

We can wait our whole lives for *someday* opportunities, or we can make our opportunities for ourselves.

And what about Bob? As his *someday* gets closer and closer he's been thinking about that summer at the factory and the woman who ran out of runway. He wants to experience the colors that are real, so this September, he's cashing in his chips and retiring—to make the most of the runway he has left.*

Reflection

What opportunities are you making for yourself? Are they experiences? Or are they removable things?

* When I play saxophone with the Belchertown Community Band, Bob sits behind me playing trumpet. He's lived a life that's full—as a musician, educator, and person. It's safe to say that Bob has been experiencing the colors that are real his whole life; and now, perhaps he'll get to experience even more of what the palette has to offer.

All Fun & Games

He raided the city with a sledgehammer, destroying every pinball machine in sight. It was the compassionate thing to do.

The mayor believed the arcade game promoted gambling, robbed school children of lunch money, and corrupted the youth to a life of crime. So you see, he was just trying to protect the children—an act of kindness, really.

Mayor Fiorello La Guardia's ban on pinball lasted for over three decades and only came to an end in 1976 when professional pinball wizard Roger Sharpe stood in a Manhattan courtroom as a star witness for the Amusement and Music Operators Association, testifying that pinball is a game of skill rather than mere chance. Playing a pinball machine set up in the courtroom, he called the shots:

*"Look, there's skill, because if I pull the plunger back just right, the ball will, I hope, go down this particular lane."*¹

When the ball landed precisely where Roger said, the astonished committee voted to remove the ban.² But then again, the council may have had an interest in legalizing the game—since the city stood to gain roughly \$1.5 million in revenue by imposing a licensing fee on each machine.

Compassion banned pinball; greed brought it back.

...

According to Harry Williams, an early pioneer and innovator of pinball, there are three key elements that make a good game:³

1. *Sense of accomplishment.* A good game makes players happy because it requires you to accomplish something. Just think of how good it feels to cross things off your to-do list.

2. *Develop skills to accomplish a goal.* A good game provides players with evidence that they are a source of cause and effect in the world, empowering you with a growth mindset and an internal locus of control. This helps you become an engaged co-creator of your world.

3. *Belief that what you do matters.* A good game provides players with meaning, provoking your natural evolutionary desire to feel like the hero of your own story.

Reflection

Using these guidelines as a yardstick, sociologist Corey Keyes, in his research on languishing, says pinball is a good game—providing the joy of accomplishment, skill building, and meaning.⁴ And whether or not you're a Pinball Wizard, these same joys don't just have to be all fun and games—they can also provide encouragement that permeates every aspect of your life.

1. *What activities do you engage in that provides a sense of accomplishment?* Maybe it's by dividing your to-do list into manageable parts so you can cross off many individual tasks that tend to a larger task. Or maybe it's by consistently showing up every day and putting in honest effort in pursuit of your goal.

2. *What skills are you developing to accomplish your goals?* To win the Super Bowl, an athlete has to know more than just how to run around with a ball. They also have to master physical strength, mental resilience, nutrition, contract negotiations, and brand building, just to name a few. Developing peripheral skills can provide a sense of competence as you assemble a toolbox of skills for accomplishing meaningful goals.

3. *How does what you do matter?* When what we do has a meaningful impact on the lives of others—with less greed and with more genuine compassion—we become a significant part of something bigger than ourselves. As Les Brown reminds us: “Help others achieve their dreams and you will achieve yours.” Put another way, when we seek significance, success comes along for the ride.

Final Thoughts

You don't have to be a Pinball Wizard to gain the benefits of accomplishment, skill building, and meaning—but since Mayor La Guardia isn't around anymore, you can give it a try for yourself. After all, the joy of pinball isn't always just fun and games. If we approach it with fascination, curiosity, and wonder, it just may encourage us with a life of virtue.

And *that* is truly the compassionate thing to do.

Here's the Thing About Motivational Speakers

I was in awe. "100,000! What did the company get in exchange for this investment?"

"We got a virtual keynote presentation," he reiterated, confused by my lack of understanding.

My friend had served on a committee that planned a virtual meeting at his workplace that was attended by every level of employee. His task had been to collect bios, presentation topics, and fees of various speakers. He shared several names from the list, all names you would recognize. People like to quote their aphorisms on social media. There were no speaking fees lower than \$75,000.

"Yeah, I get that, but what kind of support did you get as follow-up to ensure employees were able to apply what they learned?" I clarified.

"Follow-up?" He appeared even more confused. "Management wasn't interested in that. They just wanted to give employees something nice to feel good about to help bolster morale."

I don't know about you, but I wouldn't feel too good about spending \$100,000 without a reasonable expectation of return. But maybe that's just me.

...

Encouragement without empowerment is a waste of time; yet empowerment without engagement is impossible.

Simply telling someone “You can do it!” without also providing them with the knowledge, skills, resources, support, and opportunities to “do it” is a recipe for false hope—a “good lie” with a hollow sense of security and lulled complacency.

At the same time, unless we understand what’s at stake, no amount of knowledge, skills, resources, support, and opportunities will suffice, because no one is listening and no one cares, and therefore nothing is retained and nothing can be transferred.



Ultimately, no one follows through with change until three drivers move them: *pain*, *knowledge*, and *support*.

1. ***Pain.*** People tend to go to greater lengths to avoid pain than to obtain pleasure, which is what makes pain one of the greatest motivators of all. In other words: *No one will change until they hurt enough that they want to change.*

2. ***Knowledge.*** The mere pain of desire is never enough without the support of relevant knowledge and skills, making it a critical asset for those hoping to make positive changes. In other words: *No one will change until they learn enough that they know how to change.*

3. ***Support.*** What you know and what you can do is meaningless without the support of relevant resources and opportunities to transfer your knowledge and skills. In other words: *No one will change until they receive enough that they are able to change.*

Final Thoughts

As for my friend and the company he works for, they had plenty of pain and plenty of knowledge, but with a woeful lack of support.

They had knowledge, because they had a \$100,000 speaker deliver a slick presentation of pithy aphorisms to boost employee morale.

They had pain, because in the days following the presentation, entire teams and departments were eliminated, effectively making the content of the presentation irrelevant because the cornerstone of morale (trust) had been violated.

And they had a woeful lack of support, because without follow-up, no one was held accountable for applying and transferring what they learned beyond the meeting, making the investment meaningless.

Well, that is except for the people who were let go. They learned how to apply for new positions and transfer to new companies—perhaps companies that actually care about the people who make it all possible.

Perhaps.*

Reflection

What's motivating you today? Pain, knowledge, or support?

* Insert your own aphorism here.

Prison (but with cats)

When he stepped outside the next morning and found the cat still sitting there, he took a closer look. Scrawny and covered with scratches, he was compelled to help, spending his last £20 at the local veterinary clinic.

This was a significant moment for James, because his sole income came from busking at Covent Garden—and even then, he could only buy food with whatever meager money was left over after supporting his heroin habit.

The pair soon became inseparable, with the stray following James everywhere he went, even hopping the bus to Covent Garden with guitar in tow.

Before they met, the stray cat had nowhere else to go, and the stray musician had nothing to live for. Together, they formed a bond, much like a chemical reaction—a meeting of two personalities that left both forever changed.

Perhaps Bob sensed the pain and sorrow, and that's why he planted himself on James' doorstep—to lend a helping hand (or paw, as the case may be). And perhaps that's why James named his new feline friend Bob, after the interdimensional entity who feeds on the pain and sorrow of others—a fictional character from the television show *Twin Peaks*. But instead of adding to the pain and sorrow, this real-life Bob helped James realize there was more to life.

Much, much more.

Because by the spring of 2007, James decided he wanted to take better care of himself so he could better take care of Bob, so he finally put down the heroin and completed a methadone program.

“When I was using drugs, the only thing you care about is yourself and where your next bit of drugs are coming from,” James recalled in an interview about his relationship with Bob. “But when I found him, and he was injured and he asked me for help, I had to think about someone other than myself.”¹

•••

It’s been said that to live a happy life, we need only three things: Something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for. Bob gave James the first two, and in so doing, gave James hope for a brighter future for himself.

Aside from the new lease on life, James also become a published author, writing nine books about his experience with Bob, including *A Street Cat Named Bob*,² which in 2016 was turned into a movie starring Bob as himself.³

And it’s not just James who is getting a second chance at life. Inmates at Pendleton Correctional Facility, a maximum-security prison outside of Indianapolis, spend their days caring for homeless cats.⁴

Proponents of the program say the initiative helps inmates gain skills such as empathy, responsibility, and self-esteem, helping to significantly improve recidivism rates, because the skills gained in the program helps them better manage their lives upon release.

As for the inmates, they say it gives them a reason to get up in the morning.

“These cats need somebody like I need them,” says Joseph Coleman, a cat caretaker in prison for homicide. “I need them just as much as they need me...When I’m in here with the cats, I’m not thinking about out there.”

As for the cats themselves, it’s a chance to experience loving care.

Before coming to Pendleton, many had been abandoned on the streets or come from abusive households. In a traditional shelter, they would be cooped up in a cage, but in this prison, they are free to roam the indoor cat sanctuary—including towers and scratching posts—and interact with people on a regular basis, helping to socialize them and increase their chances of adoption.

“I feel that we’ve already took enough from society,” said Anthony LaRussa, one of the inmates taking responsibility for the cats. “When we’re able to come to a program like this, we’re able to give back—and not for just us, but for the animals.”

When inmates at Pendleton were given something meaningful to do, they also found something to love, and their relationships with the cats gave them hope for a brighter future—even after they had long given up on themselves.

Some cats came to the sanctuary from particularly troubled pasts and have been a challenge to care for, but for inmates like Anthony, he takes personal responsibility for letting them know they’re cared for so they won’t give up. “A lot of us have gave up in life, me included,” he admitted. “With them, I just don’t want to give up.”

On the other side of the prison walls (and on the other side of the pond), when he talks about his new-

found hope in sobriety, James says, “I believe it came down to this little man. He came and asked me for help and he needed me more than I needed to abuse my own body. He is what I wake up for every day now. He’s definitely given me the right direction to live my life.”⁵

Reflection

To live a happy life, we need only three things: Something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for. If lately your heart has felt empty, consider what might be missing:

1. *Do you have something meaningful to do?* If not, what project might you undertake? The best projects are ones that take a lifetime to complete—because it’s the process itself that brings joy.

2. *Do you have someone to love?* Whether it’s the love of a partner, a family member, a friend, or a pet, consider which of The Five Love Languages you can use to demonstrate that love: words, time, gifts, acts, or touch.⁶

3. *Do you have something to hope for?* If not, what short-term and long-term plans might you create for yourself? Challenge yourself every day to come up with an answer to this question: “What are you looking forward to?”

Keyboards, Steamships & The Pot Roast Principle

She cut the ends off the pot roast before placing it into the pan, just as her mother had instructed. Curious, she asked her mother why. “Because that’s the way my mother had done it,” was her reply.

Still curious, she called her grandmother and asked the same question, but got the same reply: “Because that’s the way my mother had done it.”

Even more curious, she went to the nursing home and asked her great grandmother, and found the origin of the recipe: “Because the roast was always bigger than the pot I had back then. I had to cut off the ends to make it fit.”

Graham Hancock muses that we are a species with amnesia—quick to forget who and why we are. Perhaps this is why we keep doing the same things, even after circumstances change, simply because we have forgotten the initial purpose.

We don’t have the same problem with steamships, though.

...

When the SS Ruth Alexander pulled into port in Manila, it endured three weeks of bombing before attempting an escape under the cover of darkness. The ruse didn’t work, though, and after being struck by a Japanese plane, the ship sank in the Makassar Strait on January 2, 1942.

During its 29 years of service, the steamship was known by many names and used for many purposes.

Passenger ship. When it was first built in 1913 by Norddeutscher Lloyd, it was the SS Sierra Cordoba—a passenger ship operating between Bremen, Germany and Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Supply ship. During WW1, it was commandeered by the German Navy to help supply raider ships from the Straits of Magellan.

Military transport. After being discovered by British forces in 1917, it was interned in Callao, Peru, where it was placed in commission with the United States Navy as the USS Callao—a transport ship to bring military personnel home from Europe.

Passenger ship. After the war, the ship was sold to Dollar Steamship Lines and renamed SS Ruth Alexander—a passenger ship with stops along the western coast of the United States and Mexico.

Cargo ship. In 1939, the United States Maritime Commission converted SS Ruth Alexander into a cargo ship for American President Lines—and after arriving in Manila, it soon found its end as a victim of WW2.

As circumstances changed, the utility of the ship changed—and one man who served on the USS Callao recognized the shifting utility of an outdated technology, and sought to improve efficiency for typists.

...

This story is being typed on a modern laptop computer keyboard; a keyboard layout designed by

manufacturers in 1873 to slow down typists. Back then, when adjacent keys on a typewriter were struck in quick succession, the keys would jam. To prevent this, manufacturers engineered an inefficient keyboard that scattered the most common letters, forcing typists to reduce their efficiency.

In the decades that followed, vast technological improvements eliminated the initial jamming problem, but we continue to use a keyboard that sabotages our efficiency despite the change in circumstances.

Years later, in a high school computer lab in the 1990's, I asked my teacher why the keyboard letters are scattered randomly across the board. "It makes typing easier," she replied.

Perhaps she hadn't read August Dvorak's book.*

...

During WW2, August suggested a new way for sailors to reload their artillery weapons—a suggestion that shaved five seconds off their time—and the Navy adopted it immediately.¹

He didn't start off as an efficiency consultant, though. During the expedition to capture Pancho Villa, August was wounded, and upon recuperation and discharge, he enlisted in the US Naval Reserve, where he taught mathematics and navigation. During WW1, he served aboard the USS Callao bringing troops home from Europe, and after the war he received a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and became an education professor at the University of Washington.

* I haven't read it either.

It was there, in 1925, that a typing teacher sought August's insight into why her students kept messing up simple words, such as: *that, which, is, to, be, here, when, and, with, it, of, the, for.*²

Uncommon words with a difficult spelling are common causes for errors in handwriting, but this isn't the case while typing common easy-to-spell words. August concluded that the errors were simply a problem of mechanics—instances where the typist must execute an excessive amount of jumping back and forth from row to row on the keyboard.

Armed with a grant from the Carnegie Foundation, August went to work designing a keyboard with simplified mechanics by grouping the most used letters and letter combinations where they are easier to reach, improving both accuracy and speed. In 1936, he published his findings in the book *Typewriting Behavior* as an in-depth study on the psychology and physiology of typing, where he introduced the Dvorak Simplified Keyboard.³

This new keyboard reduced finger motions between rows by placing the bulk of a typist's work on the home row, where more than 3,000 common words can be typed, resulting in less finger motion, errors, and strain, and increased efficiency.⁴

In 1944, the US Navy spent two weeks training fourteen clerks on Dvorak's keyboard, resulting in improved speed and reduced errors. Nineteen years after the initial question was asked, August's efforts had finally helped us get a bigger pot for our roast.

But then again, awareness doesn't mean acceptance. After all, people tend to resist change.

...

Despite the advantages, the Navy decided it wasn't worth the effort to change keyboards and retrain typists on the new system.⁵ After all, traditional keyboards had been the de facto tradition for over 60 years, and millions of people had an interest in avoiding change—including typists, typing teachers, typewriter and computer salespeople, and manufacturers. As Ralph Nader once pointed out:

“The typewriter companies and the secretarial schools don't want an increase in productivity. They don't want an office to get the same work out of two typists that used to take three.”⁶

Even when circumstances changed, and even when a better way was presented to them, people prefer tradition—as suggested in an opinion in *The New York Herald Tribune*:

“Doubtless the new keyboard would be an improvement. Square eggs would be an improvement, too, but the world somehow continues to adjust itself to the egg-shaped kind.”⁷

Despite his efforts, the only lasting contribution for efficiency offered by August was his suggestions for reloading artillery weapons. It's curious that people are reluctant to change, unless it helps us kill one another more efficiently.

...

This story is not a ploy to get you to use the Dvorak keyboard (although it is available...check your computer, tablet, and phone settings). Rather, this is a story about awareness, tradition, and curiosity.

It is a story about adapting as circumstances change. To have what we have never had, we must be willing to do what we have never done.

We don't have to continue cutting the ends off of our pot roast. We can get a bigger pot—and that bigger pot might already be in the kitchen.

As circumstances change, we can change the name and utility of our steamship. August served many roles in his lifetime: efficiency consultant, researcher, inventor, professor, sailor, soldier, husband, father, son, and distant cousin to Antonín Dvořák (composer of *The New World Symphony*).

In his book, August spoke of what he calls *intelligent behavior*, referring to the adoption of new technologies and techniques in place of previous de facto traditions—a call for adapting to the ever-changing circumstances of our New World. Frustrated by mass *unintelligent behavior*, though, August once declared:

"I'm tired of trying to do something worthwhile for the human race, they simply don't want to change!"⁸

But not everyone resists change.

Barbara Blackburn failed her high school typing class, but after trying the Dvorak Simplified Keyboard, she thrived at the skill, and in 1985 she was entered into the The Guinness Book of World Records for the fastest typing speed of 170 words per minute.

Ten years after his death, Barbara found a bigger pot for her roast and changed the name of her steamship. And all it took was a new keyboard.

Three Metaphorical Questions

1. *What keyboard are you using, and how is it helping or hurting you?*
2. *How has the role and name of your steamship changed over time?*
3. *Are you still cutting off the ends of your pot roast?*

Give Peace a Chance

Three months before Louis Armstrong arrived, civil war broke out in the Republic of Congo—a war that would last five years and claim over 100,000 lives.

In the Autumn of 1960, however, the war was given a one-day intermission when Satchmo arrived for a concert, where over 175,000 people from both sides of the conflict attended.

He didn't intend to interrupt the war. He was merely fulfilling a contract with Pepsi to promote the opening of new bottling plants in West Africa. But merely showing up was enough for the country to give peace a chance.*

"Man, they even declared peace in The Congo fighting the day I showed up," Louis later remarked. "They all dig me and my horn!"¹

...

African lore tells of a legend of Okuka Lokolé, a mystical being with powers to charm wild beasts with his music, inspiring jazz musician Le Grand Kallé to pen these lyrics in response to Louis' intermezzo: "They call you Satchmo, but to us you are Okuka Lokolé."²

At the time, Louis' talent was unrivaled by his contemporaries, even taking down The Beatles in 1964 when he ended their 14-week streak topping the charts with his number one hit "Hello, Dolly."

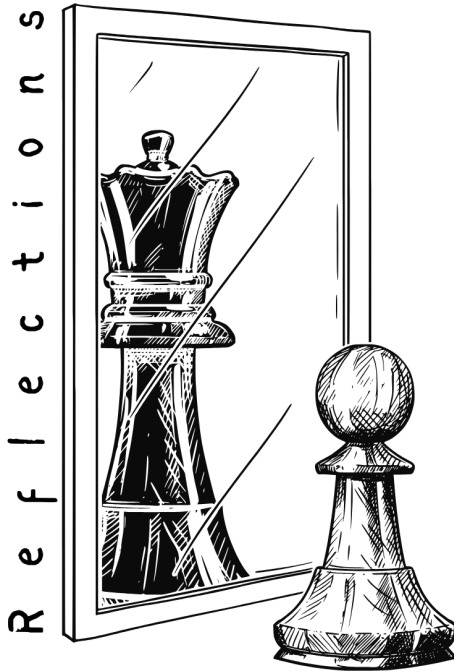
* And all that jazz.

Satchmo's career spanned six decades—as a musician, actor, philanthropist, activist, and ambassador. And for one day in The Republic of Congo, as a peace-maker.

He didn't even have to say a word—he let his horn do all the talking. And if we allow it, Louis Armstrong's presence can still speak to us today, if we're ready to listen:

Reflection

*What's your horn? What is it saying to those around you?
What happens when you fulfill your contract by showing up
as your authentic self?*



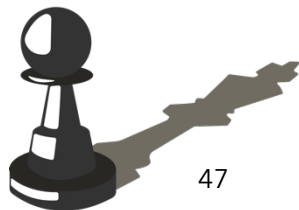
REFLECTIONS

In 1901, a twelve-year-old kid beat Juan Corzo, chess champion of Cuba. Fifteen years later, that same kid began an eight-year winning streak and beat the World Champion, Emanuel Lasker.¹

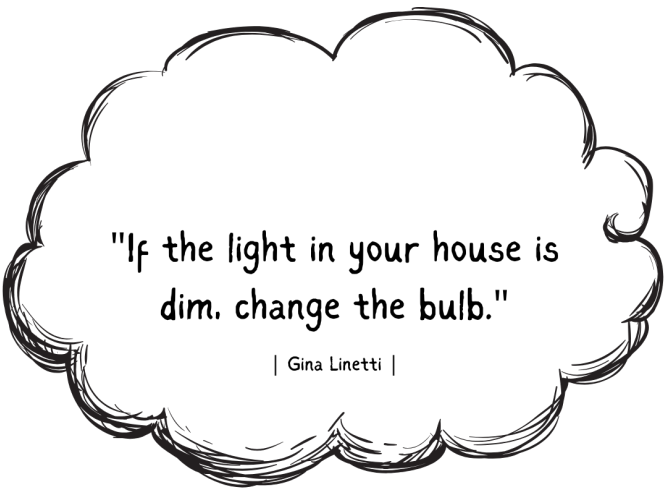
What propelled José Raul Capablanca to become one of the greatest chess players of all time? According to him, it's because "a good player is always lucky." And he should know; he was a good player. Sure, José had talent—but more than that, he used his talent. Though studying engineering and playing shortstop for Columbia College, he also joined the Manhattan Chess Club, where he continued to hone his skills and dominated tournaments. Encouraged by the success, after three years, he decided to leave Columbia to pursue chess full-time.

José was lucky, because he was good; and he was good, because he invested in himself. As the author Ralph Charell reminds us: "Be the chess player, not the chess piece." Players don't keep their skills tucked away in a box. They play the game. They don't rely on just one move, but rather study all the moves and know when and how to use them. After all, in chess, as in life, the pawn is no less important than the king; at the end of the game, both pieces go back in the same box.

As you consider your next gambit, perhaps the following reflections can offer insight for the moves ahead.

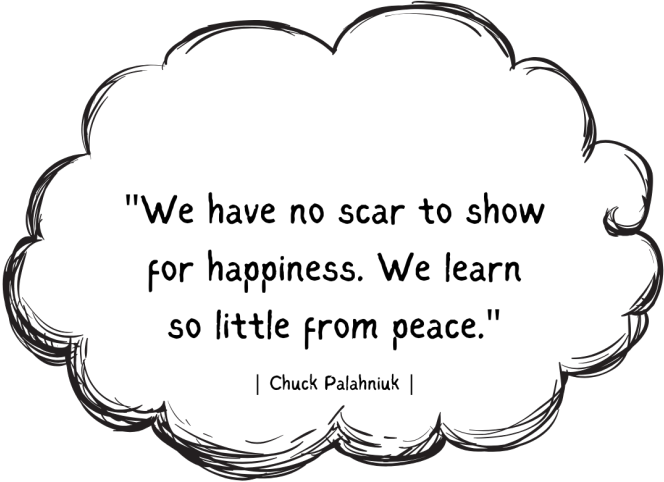






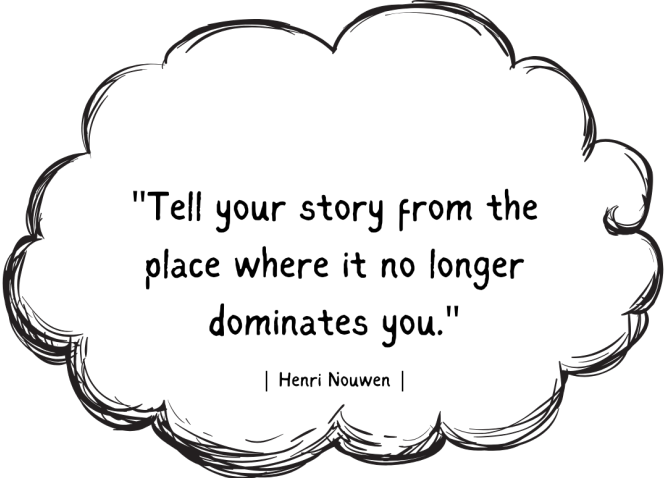
"If the light in your house is
dim, change the bulb."

| Gina Linetti |



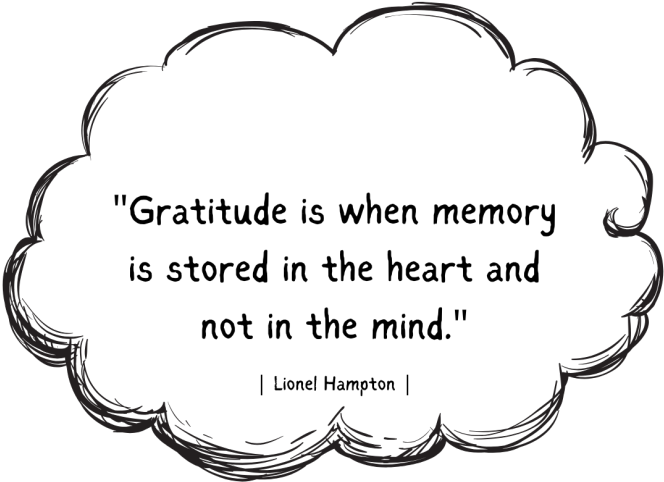
"We have no scar to show
for happiness. We learn
so little from peace."

| Chuck Palahniuk |

A hand-drawn cloud shape with a scalloped, irregular border, containing text. The cloud is drawn with multiple overlapping lines, giving it a sketchy, textured appearance. The text inside is centered and reads: "Tell your story from the place where it no longer dominates you."

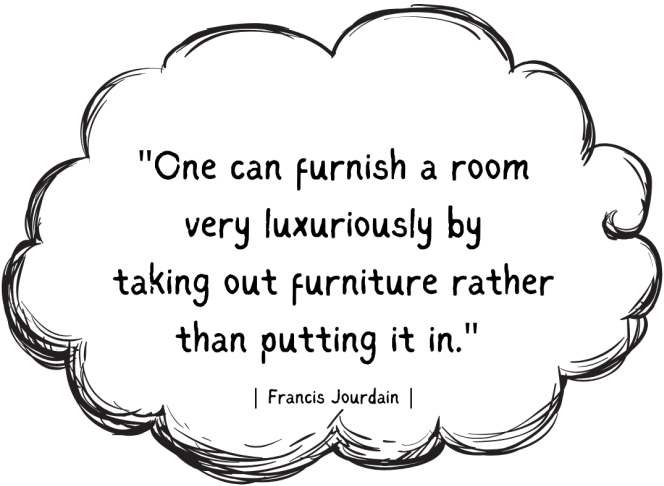
"Tell your story from the
place where it no longer
dominates you."

| Henri Nouwen |



"Gratitude is when memory
is stored in the heart and
not in the mind."

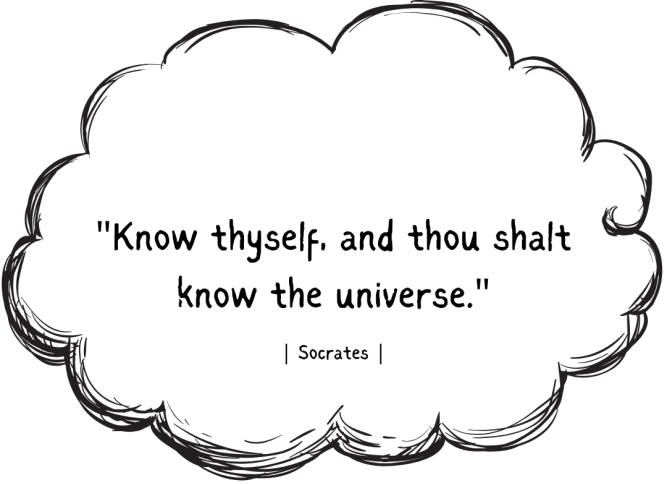
| Lionel Hampton |



"One can furnish a room
very luxuriously by
taking out furniture rather
than putting it in."


| Francis Jourdain |






"Know thyself, and thou shalt
know the universe."

| Socrates |



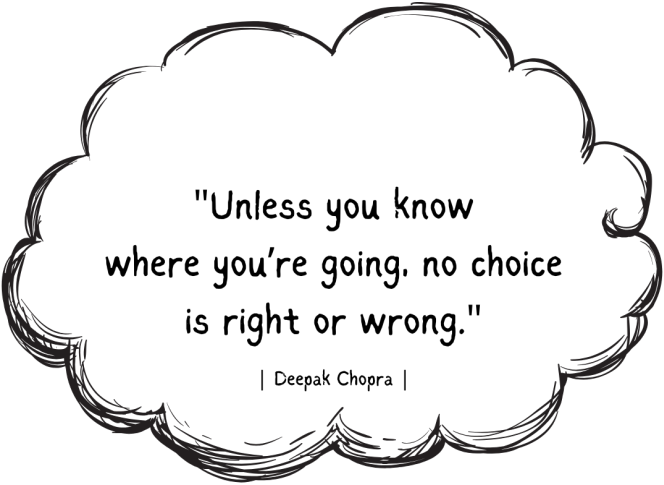
"Authenticity is more
important than perfection."

| Mat Franco |



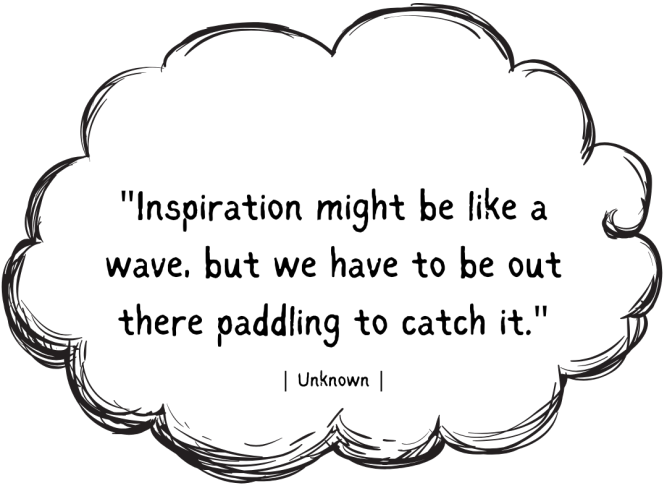
"After all is said and done,
more is said than done."

| Aesop |



"Unless you know
where you're going, no choice
is right or wrong."

| Deepak Chopra |

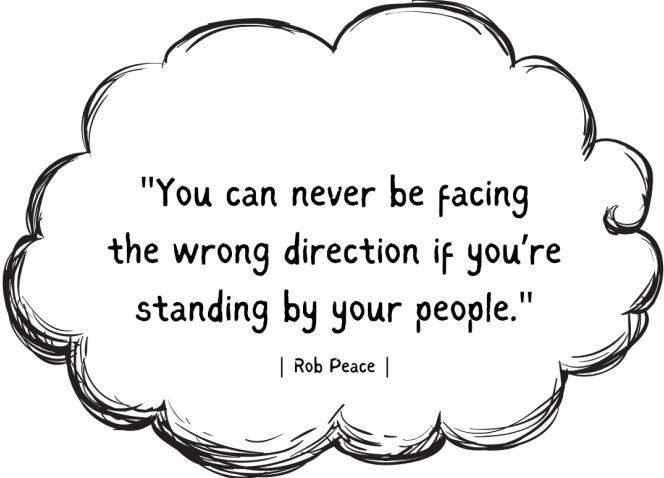


"Inspiration might be like a wave, but we have to be out there paddling to catch it."

| Unknown |




R E L A T I O N S H I P S




"You can never be facing
the wrong direction if you're
standing by your people."

| Rob Peace |



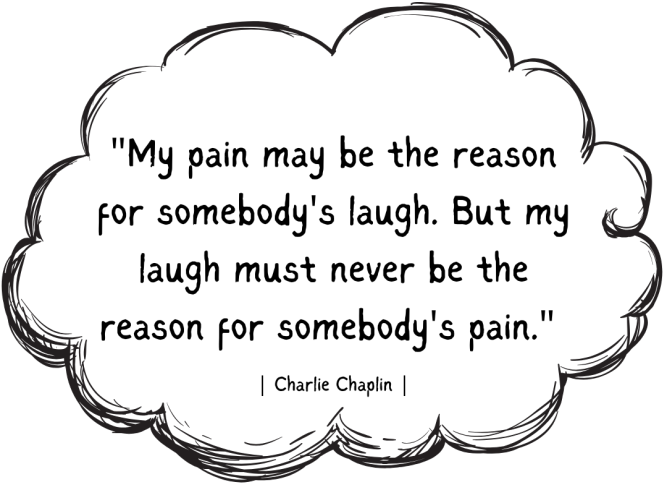
"The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches, but to reveal to them their own."

| Benjamin Disraeli |



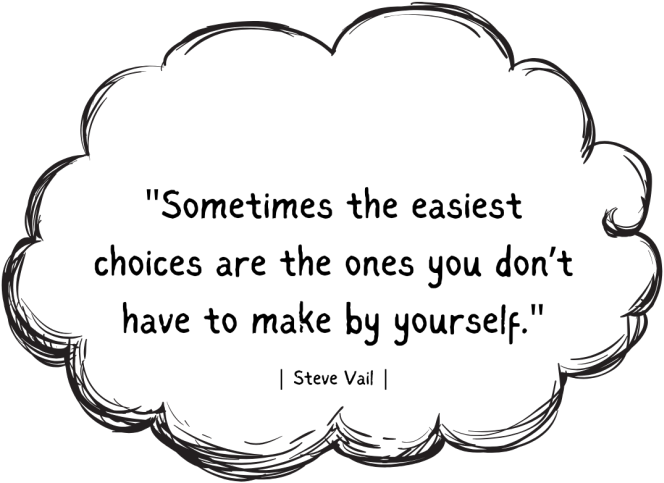
"Have enough courage to
trust love one more time and
always one more time."

| Maya Angelou |



"My pain may be the reason
for somebody's laugh. But my
laugh must never be the
reason for somebody's pain."

| Charlie Chaplin |



"Sometimes the easiest
choices are the ones you don't
have to make by yourself."

| Steve Vail |

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