

## *I would like to say I never procrastinate, but that's not true. Is there a cure?*

Sometimes people think procrastination is a time management problem; truth is you cannot manage time. You have 24 hours each day. To make the most of your days, and eliminate the stress of procrastination, think about managing your choices. Managing choices is a *Character Management* issue. Character comes from saying what you will do (honesty) and doing what you say (integrity). This is true whether it is something you say to others or a goal or commitment you "say" to yourself.

Are you a person who keeps promises? Many people are better about keeping promises to others than to themselves; either way this leads to procrastination. If you are procrastinating you are probably mistaking "might do" and "maybe" for commitment. A commitment problem underlies your procrastination. Each commitment you make with others and each goal or scheduled activity you make with yourself is a promise. As James, the brother of Jesus wrote, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no".

Stop saying to yourself, "later, tomorrow, next week, after tax season, next quarter, (*insert your procrastination term here!*)". Start saying "I commit to doing the things I say I will do when I say I will do them." The best time to start is RIGHT NOW!

Mark Sturgell, CBC – Performance Development Network



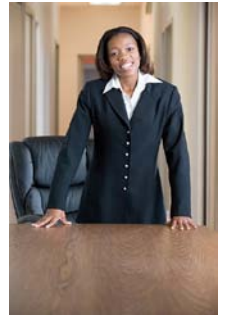
## *The Qualities of Skillful Leadership*

*"If you wish others to believe in you, you must first convince them that you believe in them."*

– Harvey Mackay

If you want to be a leader who attracts quality people, the key is to become a person of quality yourself. Leadership is the ability to attract someone to the gifts, skills, and opportunities you offer as an owner, as a manager, as a parent. I call leadership the great challenge of life.

What's important in leadership is refining your skills. All great leaders keep working on themselves until they become effective. Here are some specifics:



**1) Learn to be strong but not rude.** It is an extra step you must take to become a powerful, capable leader with a wide range of reach. Some people mistake rudeness for strength. It's not even a good substitute.

**2) Learn to be kind but not weak.** We must not mistake kindness for weakness. Kindness isn't weak. Kindness is a certain type of strength. We must be kind enough to tell somebody the truth. We must be kind enough and considerate enough to lay it on the line. We must be kind enough to tell it like it is and not deal in delusion.

**3) Learn to be bold but not a bully.** It takes boldness to win the day. To build your influence, you've got to walk in front of your group. You've got to be willing to take the first arrow, tackle the first problem, and discover the first sign of trouble.

**4) You've got to learn to be humble, but not timid.** You can't get to the high life by being timid. Some people mistake timidity for humility. Humility is almost a God-like word. A sense of awe. A sense of wonder. An awareness of the human soul and spirit.

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# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## Security Minute – Opt Out for Mailings

Are you tired of receiving those "credit card of the month, loan, insurance, etc." applications in your home mail? Are you concerned about identity theft and worried that an unscrupulous person could be filling those out, getting credit in your name, and at the same time ruining your credit?

To opt out from all three credit bureaus providing your information to those "legitimate" requestors, you can either call or simply go to the website to opt-out from receiving offers for 5-years or Opt-Out permanently.

1-888-567-8688 or  
[www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com)

**OptOutPrescreen.com**

*The sky's the limit when your heart is in it.*

– Author unknown

*In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity*

– Albert Einstein

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An understanding that there is something unique about the human drama versus the rest of life. Humility is a grasp of the distance between us and the stars, yet having the feeling that we're part of the stars. So humility is a virtue; but timidity is a disease. Timidity is an affliction. It can be cured, but it is a problem.

**5) Be proud but not arrogant.** It takes pride to win the day. It takes pride to build your ambition. It takes pride in community. It takes pride in cause, in accomplishment. But the key to becoming a good leader is being proud without being arrogant. In fact I believe the worst kind of arrogance is arrogance from ignorance. It's when you don't know that you don't know. Now that kind of arrogance is intolerable. If someone is smart and arrogant, we can tolerate that. But if someone is ignorant and arrogant, that's just too much to take.

**6) Develop humor without folly.** That's important for a leader. In leadership, we learn that it's okay to be witty, but not silly. It's okay to be fun, but not foolish.

**Lastly,** deal in realities. Deal in truth. Save yourself the agony. Just accept life like it is. Life is unique. Some people call it tragic, but I'd like to think it's unique. The whole drama of life is unique. It's fascinating. And I've found that the skills that work well for one leader may not work at all for another. But the fundamental skills of leadership can be adapted to work well for just about everyone: at work, in the community, and at home.

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Authored by Jim Rohn

## *What one thing should our team do to produce a measurable impact on our business?*

**R**enew your focus before you change your actions. Most teams fall short of potential to produce desired results until everyone is "on the same page." To gain clarity of action you need improved clarity of purpose, so begin with strategic thinking and business planning – even if your organization already has a plan. There is no better 'teambuilding' process that will produce desired impact. Does your team share the same goals, as well as understand individual roles? Really? How do you know?



Become a strategic thinking and execution team. Developing an executable plan that focuses collective actions to produce desired results requires more than just an annual one-day "retreat." In effect, many businesses *do strategic planning* without any sustainable benefit other than a dusty document and to say "we did it." That is not what we suggest. The objective of planning is the establishment of an *ongoing planning process as a routine part of teamwork* in order to achieve substantially improved performance for the short term and the long term.

Re-engage your purposeful thinking, planning and action. Involve an experienced coach who understands business and behavioral change. Such a person will ask questions that take you from where you are to where you and your team really want to be. Mark Sturgell, Performance Development Network – Copyright protected All articles, quotes, and material in this newsletter are copyrighted. © 2008. No part can be reproduced in any form without specific written consent from SA and copyright holder(s). All rights reserved worldwide.

## *My Confession*

In understand the following was written by Ben Stein and is circulating on the internet. It may give you some thoughts to consider.

“I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit up, bejeweled trees, Christmas trees. I don’t feel threatened. I don’t feel discriminated against. That’s what they are: Christmas trees.

“It doesn’t bother me a bit when people say, ‘Merry Christmas’ to me. I don’t think they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year. It doesn’t bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu. If people want a crèche, it’s just as fine with me as is the Menorah a hundred yards away.

“I don’t like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don’t think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can’t find it in the Constitution and I don’t like it being shoved down my throat.

“Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship celebrities and we aren’t allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that’s a sign that I’m getting old, too. But there are al lot of us who are wondering where these celebrities came from and where the America we knew went to.

“In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different. This is not intended to be a joke. It’s not funny, it’s intended to get you thinking.

“Billy Graham’s daughter was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her, ‘How could God let something like this (Hurricane Katrina) happen?’ Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said, ‘I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we’ve been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?’

In light of recent events, terrorists attack, school shootings, etc. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O’Hare (she was found murdered) complained she didn’t want prayer in our schools, and we said okay. Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said okay.

Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn’t spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem. (Dr. Spock’s son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he’s talking about. And we said okay.

“Now we’re asking ourselves why our children have no conscience. Why they don’t know right from wrong. And why it doesn’t bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with ‘we reap what we sow.’

“Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world’s going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspaper says, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send ‘jokes’ through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar, and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workplace.

“Are you laughing yet?

“Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us.”

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## *Books to Consider*

***10 Passions of a Man’s Soul: Harness Your Strength, Impact Your World*** by Mark Elfstrand, 2006, Moody Publishers, Chicago. By zeroing in on the unleashed man’s most instinctive passions, the author hits the target with purpose, adventure, pleasure, legacy, power and more.

***Encouragement Changes Everything*** by John C. Maxwell, 2007, Encouragement is an essential nutrient of growing a positive attitude and improving life, and providing that encouragement benefits both the giver and the receiver(s).

## ***Perspective of a Life – Emily’s “Gifts of Love”***

Emily’s day planner for 2008 revealed two of Emily’s priorities; the first was her exercise/workout schedule, which indicated her commitment to staying healthy being an athlete of dance -- a committed performer. The second priority in the day planner was her careful notation of birthdays for people in her life, which showed how much she valued and loved others. Over and over we have heard about the great experience of love and acceptance others felt from Emily. Thus we, her family and friends, have experienced an abundance of love.

Emily’s birth date is an awareness of God’s gift of life and joy that we experienced and claim. You see, we were a couple who wanted a child but were not able to have one until the sixth year in our marriage. We consulted a fertility doctor who began working with us. He told us he would work with us for 12 months. If at the end of the 12 months conception did not occur, there would be nothing else he could offer us. It was in the 11<sup>th</sup> month that Emily was conceived. (And if it was not for Emily coming into our lives, there would be no Laurie.) Thus, we are grateful for our time we together – 9,570 days that Emily walked this earth! She is a wonderful gift we will always cherish.

### **Reason, Season or Lifetime**

You may have encountered the following ideas before. But they affirm to us the connections provided by God through which we influence or impact the lives of others. . .

A person comes into our life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. When you know which one it is, you will know what to do for that person.

When someone is in your life for a **reason**, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally, or spiritually. They may seem like a Godsend. In a very real way they are and are there because you need them to be.

Then, without any wrongdoing on your part or at an inconvenient time, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end. Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand.

What we must realize is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled; their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered, and now it is time to move on.

Some people come into your life for a **season**, because your turn has come to share, to grow or to learn. They bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never known. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it. It is real, but only for a season.

**Lifetime** relationships teach you lifetime lessons, the things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson. Love the person and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life.

From the emails, cards, conversations we have received, Emily, in life and death, came into others’ lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. During these last 11 months of grieving, many individuals have also come into our life for a reason, a season, or our lifetime. No matter what experiences of Emily others shared, they have ultimately touched our lives deeply. We thank everyone for being a part of Emily’s life and for ministering to her and to us. Ultimately life is about our relationships and the ways we share God’s love and grace.

This year we have experience an abundance of other people’s love for Emily through their words, prayers, and gifts. Our family, which will always include Emily, has received extra-special love and acknowledgments of those who knew and loved her. We will cherish these connections and the new memories that have developed.

## Gifts of Love

In memory and love of Emily and to God's glory, gifts of contributions have been made to:

- ♥ Orange United Methodist Church
- ♥ Clinton First United Methodist Church
- ♥ Galloway Memorial United Methodist Church
- ♥ Durham Rescue Mission
- ♥ Carolina Donor Services
- ♥ Mississippi Organ Recovery Agency
- ♥ The Baddour Center
- ♥ Girl Scouts
- ♥ The Gideons
- ♥ Living Services
- ♥ The UMMC Children's Hospital
- ♥ St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
- ♥ Tree Givers Foundation

One relationship that impacted Emily as well as the other person was a homeless man on 15-501. Emily gave him granola bars when she saw him. You may recall an earlier story from a friend of Emily's stopped at a traffic light on 15-501. She saw this man and gave him a granola bar. He told her that he had a friend named Emily who gave him granola bars. We recently met another Emily who moved into our area from Durham who worked with the homeless on 15-501. She identified a homeless man on 15-501 who went by the name Bulldog. We have come to believe that he was the man our Emily knew. Bulldog got sick this summer, was hospitalized, reconnected with his son, and died this November. We believe that both Emily and Bulldog had a **lifetime** impact on each other.

Edward and Cindy Geiger met Emily at the scene of the accident. They have become our extended family in North Carolina. Not a month has gone by that we have not communicated with them. They have modeled for us a love and compassion that goes beyond the illustration of the good Samaritan in the Holy Scriptures. On the morning of Emily's birthday, they put at the scene of the accident a dozen red roses surrounded with a lot of white baby's breath and real greenery as our gift to Emily. We believe that the accident site at the Geiger's is not just a coincident, but a gift of God's grace poured out on us. The Geiger's have had a **lifetime** impact on us.

Another gift is Emily's friendship with Jackie Irby. As we previously shared, Jackie at times was a loving father to Emily as well as a co-worker and friend. Jackie connected her to Judge Fox. Jackie was the first person and the last person to greet us when we were in Hillsborough in August. Jackie and I talked several times, and he shared that Emily had picked out a piece of scrap marble that she had planned on using for a table top in the future. Jackie finished the piece and surprised Diane with this wonderful gift, now from Jackie and Emily. This piece is now in our family room on an old iron sewing machine base. It represents the beauty of loving relationships shared with friends like Jackie. Jackie had a **lifetime** impact on Emily. He has modeled how to be a parent to someone away from their family. We deeply thank him.

Upon hearing of Emily's accident and condition on Sunday morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>, Beth Burge dropped and stopped everything in her world and flew to be with Emily and us. Beth was one of Emily's most trusted friends. Beth stayed with Emily in the surgery intensive care unit until they rolled Emily into surgery on the 31<sup>st</sup> to harvest her organs. She stayed with us through the 2<sup>nd</sup> when she went home to prepare for the memorial service on Sunday. When she arrived on Sunday she brought an 11 X 14 black and white framed portrait of Emily for the service and as a gift to us. Beth stays in contact and has asked us to be in her wedding in memory of Emily. Beth was definitely a **lifetime** friend for Emily. She showed us what it takes to be a best friend in the most painful moments of life's tragic end. A true best friend is there for you like no one else. Beth has impacted us for our **lifetime**.

The night of Emily's accident we were out of town having dinner with a college friend in Monroe, Louisiana. Laurie was attending the Liberty Bowl in Memphis with her friend Amanda Bilbo. Sunday morning when Amanda received word that Emily was in a serious accident, and that Laurie's aunt and uncle were coming to pick her up, Amanda informed her employer who had provided for both of them to attend the game. The employer purchased two round trip tickets for Laurie and Amanda to fly to Columbia, South Carolina, where Amanda's mother picked them up and brought them to Chapel Hill. Amanda and Laurie were with us through the memorial service in Chapel Hill before returning home. In this traumatic time it was a tremendous gift and blessing to have Laurie with us and for Laurie to

have the support of Amanda. Amanda showed us the qualities of a best friend as she was there for Laurie and still is. Such best friends are for a **lifetime**.

In May of 2007 we attended services at Orange United Methodist Church. Pastor Ray Warren told us at that time if we ever needed anything don't hesitate to call on him. On Sunday morning in the University of North Carolina Medical Center, he got a phone call from us. Ray was with us at the hospital and at Emily's apartment. The church staff and members of the congregation arranged and helped us manage a memorial service and worked to get the message of Emily's death to the people that knew her. This congregation and staff ministered to us in the "hour" of our specific need and reason. We probably would not have managed as well as we did without their love and prayers. Their response to **reason** has developed a **lifetime** memory.

A very beautiful gift of compassion and love came as we watched Marlena Duncan dancing to "I can only imagine." Marlena was a gift that initially caught us by surprise first. Marlena left the University of Southern Mississippi and went to New York for additional study with professional dance masters for three years. We did not know how to reach her when Emily died. We knew we wanted someone with a personal connection to Emily to dance at the memorial service. We sought to find and invite Sylvia Blackwell, Emily and Laurie's children's minister and a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi dance program. We learned that Sylvia had recently had surgery and was not able to dance. But she had a young dancer in her company who would be glad to dance. It was Marlena. Marlena spent the Friday before the memorial at Southern reviewing videos of Emily's performances. Marlena incorporated Emily's movements and style into the piece for the service. What a beautiful gift of love.

Another relational gift that came from Emily's life and death is our relationship with the Shelton family - Joey, Connie, and the children. They were living in Durham at the time of the accident. We had called a childhood ministerial friend with the news that Emily had been in an accident and that we were traveling to her. We asked if he could find a minister to check on her and be with her since we could not be there. Connie was the one he found, and she went and sat with Emily. She prayed with Emily. She held her hand. She sang to her.... The Thursday after the accident, the Shelton family moved to Jackson. On their trip to Jackson, Connie read the highlighted verses in Emily's Bible. And on Sunday she facilitated and preached at Emily's memorial service here in Clinton. Not a month goes by that we do not talk, visit, share and connect with Connie and Joey. They have met us in our pain and walked with us. They have held us, cried with us, laughed with us and been quiet with us. They have blessed our tears. We feel Christ the comforter in their presence.

Connie and Joey's journey from Durham to Jackson has impacted us in all three perspectives. They came to us for a specific need and **reason** in our life. They walked with us during this **season** of our life. As they have continued for the last 11 months to walk with us, we have developed a deeply personal, **lifetime** relationship.

These articles have been laid on our hearts through our pain and our love for Emily with the power of encouragement to share this witness and stewardship of God in Emily's life and our own. We are not writers. One Sunday in January, we had lunch after church at Galloway United Methodist Church in Jackson where Joey and Connie are now pastors. It was there that we met Sandra Dyess who has shared her talent and gift for reviewing and editing. Her talent has not only blessed us, it also has helped these articles to be a blessing to you. Sandra and David came upon us during a need and **reason** and are continuing with us during this **season**.

The other Sunday we went to church Faudlin Pierre in his home church in Hollywood, Florida, and then we had lunch with him. He shared a picture of himself and Emily and more stories. But the best gift he gave was when, remembering that the following Saturday would be Emily's birthday, he told us how greatly she is missed. Emily was a **lifetime** friend with Faudlin and now he is impacting us for a **lifetime** through our continued relationship. He called us this Thanksgiving just as he used to call Emily on holidays.

We received a very special gift from Beth Burge this week. You may recall Emily had told Faudlin how Amos Lee's music rekindled her desire to dance. Well, Beth went to an Amos Lee concert in Mobile, Alabama, and talked with him after the concert. She shared some things about Emily. He wrote on a piece of paper, "To Emily, Happy 27<sup>th</sup> birthday. You are missed. Amos Lee." Beth gave us the note.

We have received two knitted prayer shawls. The first came from the women of Orange United Methodist church. It is the perfect green to go with Emily's complexion and auburn red hair. The other shawl came out of a new ministry at Clinton First United Methodist Church where the women of the church have established the Emily Bearden Memorial Prayer Blanket Ministry. With each blanket given a card quotes Emily, "I have a deep desire to help people. There is so much pain in this world. I want to confront the pain, acknowledge and help people who suffer."

So many gifts have come to us through Emily's life and death: the little white wooden cross left at the scene of the accident by an unknown person; the little dancer left at the scene by Jana; the 4 ½ foot steel cross hand crafted by Emily's nephew Scott and given on Mother's Day; the stain glass art; the love and prayers received from family, friends, and co-workers; the prayers and compassion of so many. There are so many stories we could share that are written on our hearts as gifts of love.



Two gifts from Emily that probably came out her struggles in her young life are two oil paintings she did. These paintings, just like her music, her dance, her books and her friends, are a part of her that lives forever in our eyes and hearts, in our memories, in the photo graphs and videos we have.

### Today

Affirmations that Emily had and used

Today, I practice offering myself to God, surrendering without asking, demanding, or suggesting.

Today, I identify some of the behaviors that create obstacles to my spiritual growth.

Today, I look for the qualities in others.

Today, I practice performing my actions with faith and alertness.

Today, I face a difficult situation rather than run from it.

Today, I spend time studying the scriptures.

Today, I remember that life is a gift, not a right.

Today, I remember that when I serve others I am serving God.

Today, I identify something I learned from making a mistake.

Today, I repeat the mantra "I am Love" at every possible moment.

### I Remember

Ashley Powell

Every dark and rainy evening, I remember.

Every time I see a butterfly or dragonfly, I remember.

Every song I hear about dancing leads me to remember.

Emily, I remember you.

I remember the way you pulled your hair back in a ponytail.

I remember the way you curled up on the couch eating Treasures.

I remember the sour milk smell your car once held.

I remember.

Every dance concert I attended, I remember.

Every time I drive past Eva Street, I remember.

Every time I hear Tracy Chapman, I remember.

Emily, I remember you.

I remember the sound of your laugh.

I remember the sad sight of your weeping.

I remember your love for writing.

I remember.

Every time I think of dreamers, I remember.  
Every time I thank God for good friends, I remember.  
Every time I see a smart, feisty red headed little girl, I remember.

I remember the small size of your feet.  
I remember your patience with children.  
I remember your compassionate heart.  
I remember.

I will always remember you Emily. Always.



Oh, just to be able to tell Emily happy birthday...Or I love you... or I am looking forward to your next visit home... Or to hug her... Or to talk about the paintings... Or connections with others we have shared.... Yes, loss of Emily hurts. But our life was blessed with 9,570 days she was with us on this earth.... But the greatest gift is our faith and belief that she was a believer in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and we will see her again in the eternity of Heaven.

The ultimate gift of love, "...that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:15-17.

