



Seeing True to Break Through

Thoughts from Ron Chapman

April 2009

Greetings!

Spring is fully underway with new growth evident, and there is no better time for our own growth and development. Let's resume where we left off last month, a place several of you indicated is very interesting.

We are focused on self-transcendence, getting past our "selves" and our limited perspectives. To borrow a phrase I recently heard, we seek a rising-up-ness beyond ourselves. That is completely consistent with being driven by an interest in others (Level 4 leadership or humanness), by human-based principles (Level 5), or by "super principles" that exist as spirituality or truth (Level 6).

Last month's newsletter indicated ... we always act consistently with our most strongly held values ... what we desire or pursue is always a good reflection of those values ... there are ways to find new values which can propel us forward.

Let me demonstrate this through two stories. The first involves an executive director of a non-profit that has grown and developed. It needs some new skills in the leader, and the director has been laboring to develop them. In a moment of clarity, he realizes what the organization needs is not who he is. And he cannot in his heart find a way to want to be that new person; he is so very good at what he does and who he is. He resigns. The non-profit succeeds.

In another case the CEO of a small corporation finds herself in a similar situation. She is in her early sixties and very prominent in her field. Yet the organization needs something she has been unable to provide. Searching deeply within herself, she finds she cares deeply about the mission. In her own moment of clarity she is remade, adapts and is able to find a new orientation, which leads the firm to success.

While the two examples reach different outcomes for the individuals involved, they are in fact comparable. In each case the leader looked deeply within themselves to gain clarity on their values. The director was true to the principle of self identity, an identity he could not change, and opted out, which led to a successful outcome. The CEO was true to the mission and was able to overcome herself, which led to a successful outcome.

Revaluing begins with an open minded inner examination. What values are most important to me? How are they demonstrated in my actions and life? Can they be altered? Do I wish them to be altered? Are they serving me well, or have they reached an end?

The principle of revaluing is simple. What we value will guide us unerringly, for better or worse. Unless we can subordinate existing values to some other value, we cannot relinquish them. There are only two paths to revaluing. One is a conscious choosing, the other is forced upon us by difficulty. Regardless, the common connection is the clarity that they no longer serve us or can no longer take us where we desire.

We do not abandon any core value as long as we believe it serves us. There are no exceptions. The only choice is whether we choose or whether we are compelled. We can facilitate that with the revaluing questions above.

And it appears that life and growth insist on dealing with such revaluings ... willingly or unwillingly.

A good friend had been examining a revaluing in her life. I had told her that sometimes life used two-by-fours to get our attention. And if that did not work, it would increase the size of the board whacking us to get our attention. She called me one day simultaneously laughing and crying. I asked her what was wrong.

"I was avoiding the revaluing and tried to distract myself by cleaning house, doing everything I could to ignore it. I was cleaning by the fireplace and raised up really fast. I almost knocked myself out when I hit the mantle. I've got a huge blood-filled lump on my head." She paused to breathe. "Ron, the mantle is an eight-by-twelve. You weren't kidding!"

If a person wanted to value people, or principles or super-principles above their current values, they would first need to understand current values as evidenced in current behavior. Then they would need to find some reason or cause to justify those emergent values. The path to higher levels of leadership or humanness comes only through revaluing.

Enjoy the journey ... keep me posted!

Ron

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