



Seeing True to Break Through

Thoughts from Ron Chapman

June 2006

Friends,

In the last few newsletters, we've been discussing the power of admission especially as it may be demonstrated in living and speaking our truths. I've been reminded of a powerful aspect as it relates to personal failures in a radio interview with Kate Mulqueen, a friend and organizational development consultant.

Kate has been investigating failure for some time, with a special emphasis on learning from failure. Long ago she was struck by the remarkable differences in outcomes from failure that some people experience. Whereas bad results sometimes are transcended and can produce remarkable breakthroughs for some, others can come to horrible conclusions with even worse implications.

Of her findings, the most provocative is that those who learn from their failings typically have what she calls an "internal locus of control." It means that those who find their way to success do not look outside themselves to identify a cause. Instead, they seek to see where they have gone awry. They find no one to blame, rather they are capable of telling the truth about themselves to themselves. From these truths, they gain the information they need to learn and move forward.

It should be acknowledged that Kate also found that those who find their way to success validate their perceptions with others. That's essential to ensuring our perception is accurate.

Last month, we saw that failure to see and speak our truths can lead to unfortunate outcomes. On the other hand, sometimes our truths can create remarkable outcomes. Now, we see that the largest determinant for overcoming failure and finding success is an ability to see and acknowledge the truth about ourselves, even when these realities are uncomfortable.

What is it about the truth that is so potent?

My mentor, Sam, says that if we do not understand a problem or situation fully, we cannot reasonably hope to find an effective solution or action. So the truth ... reality ... once seen and acknowledged, offers us the ability to get real results. Of course, the truth is both within ourselves and also revealed outside ourselves.

My favorite test for how well I'm seeing reality is to observe the results I'm getting. Is there dissonance? If so, I'm probably not seeing clearly. Am I experiencing harmony? That should indicate my perceptions are accurate and that my actions are effective.

As always, I encourage you to give it a try. Nothing is more powerful than our personal experience. Experiment with Kate's observations, or mine. See what comes about. Most of all, try to be honest and forthcoming about what you find. The results may surprise you.

If you'd like to hear more on this subject, tune in to KUNM radio, 89.9 FM, in New Mexico or to the webcast at www.kunm.org on Friday, June 16th at 8:00 a.m. Mountain Daylight Time. I'll be hosting Kate on my regular radio program, Straight to the Heart: Radio Conversations, as we explore learning from failure.

All the best,

Ron

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