

Chapter Six

Find Freedom Inside

*I believe there's an inner power
that makes winners or losers.
And the winners are the ones
who really listen to the truth
of their hearts.*
Sylvester Stallone

There are three definitive steps you can take to provide an internal freedom in your life. That internal freedom can then be the next step you need to experience in order to produce positive paths to production. (How's that for alliteration?)

Pay it Forward)

The concept of paying it forward is a great mechanism for allowing one good act to spread throughout many people, rather than just the one for whom the initial good deed was done.

Wikipedia quotes a letter from Ben Franklin explaining the concept nicely.

“The concept was rediscovered and described by Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to Benjamin Webb dated April 25, 1784:

I do not pretend to give such a Sum; I only lend it to you. When you meet with another honest Man in similar Distress, you must pay me by lending this Sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the Debt by a like operation, when he shall be able, and shall meet with another opportunity. I hope it may thus go thro' many hands, before it meets with a Knave that will stop its Progress. This is a trick of mine for doing a deal of good with a little money.”*From:*
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pay_it_forward”

At a normal-person level, I remember my father starting a “pay it forward” chain when I was still a child. We were riding home from somewhere late one night along a dark Adirondack road when my father stopped and picked up a hitchhiker. Though we were poor, this man was even poorer and lived in a still-unfinished home about five miles up the road from us.

After the hitchhiker casually mentioned he didn't have enough money to buy milk and bread for his kids. Without making any grand statements, my father reached into his pocket, took out his last five-dollar bill and handed it to the man.

“Here. Get some food from Roxy's store in the morning.” were my father's only words.

The man objected, saying he couldn't pay it back until he got some work.

Never one to use many words, my father quietly said, “It's okay. Help somebody else out when you get work.”

I knew we were having tough times financially, and my father never mentioned that to the guy, nor did he say anything to me. The message my father sent didn't need words of explanation. It was there for me to put deep into my soul.

Perform Random Acts of Kindness

Doing something unexpected and kind for someone you may not even know is an internally freeing act. Somehow, when you perform a kind act, your inner being takes a significant step towards a freedom that transcends explanation.

My daughter illustrated that concept one Sunday morning after church.

She, my son and his family and my wife and I would often meet at a restaurant for a late morning breakfast after attending church. One morning my daughter was quite late in appearing at the restaurant. After some reasonable delay, she walked into the restaurant with Charles in tow.

Charles was one of the homeless street people in our town. Marla, in a moment of God-prompted generosity, had stopped and invited Charles to share breakfast with us.

Once over the first semi-shock of our unexpected guest, our conversation was interesting and enlightening as we learned more about the real person, Charles.

Little Acts of Love

Recently, my wife and I cleaned out our attic. We dealt with the trauma of finally bringing ourselves to discard some of the boxed up mementos that had lived in our attic for many years.

Not everything got thrown away. My wife held onto a box of little notes I had written her while in college. Notes written, not for official reasons like birthdays and holidays, but simple words and drawings expressing my love for her.

As I watched the wonderfully nostalgic look on her face while reading them over, I felt pangs of guilt surge through my heart.

“Why did I ever stop sending those little acts of love?”

There was no viable answer for that unspoken question, and I made a quiet resolution to try and resurrect that habit. Not only do those unexpected gestures of reaffirming love bring joy to the person receiving them, but there is an internal freedom that comes to the giver.

I can't explain the reason that happens, but perhaps it is the feeling that comes when you realize the one you love is receiving your message in a deep and meaningful way.

Whatever the reason, it works.

Why not give it a try?