

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF “THE THREE T’S”

A quick overview of the main points, witty one liners, and literary quotes from Rob Peck’s presentation, “Keeping all the Balls in the Air.” (With The 3T's: Tolerance, Tenacity & Teamwork)

TOLERANCE-

3 core connections between leadership and laughter:

#1 Universal antidote to stress (whether it be our own or others around us).

Humor provides a quick and effective way to defuse tension, build rapport, and raise morale ("Laughter is like leavening.... it helps heavy spirits rise!")

#2 Improves communication

Humor is a natural hearing aid. (To tweak the old E.F. Hutton commercial- When people laugh, people listen)

Saying something funny not only energizes people's attention, it also sharpens their retention.... and by making it more memorable, the point becomes something they can more readily recall in subsequent situations. Hence the communication has a more lasting relevance.

#3 Develops... and deepens resiliency

Leadership is bound to have some bumpy rides; having and honing a good sense of humor is like having a built in shock-absorber. At some point everybody experiences a moment of fallibility and "drops the ball". Fortunately in almost all cases if we can take our (and others) inevitable imperfections lightly, we're relieved to learn that as long as we can laugh at it... we can live with it.

Quick quips n' quotes:

* What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul (Yiddish Proverb)

* Shakespeare: "If music be the food of love...." surely laughter's the best dessert. And... it's fat free!

*Mark Twain: "Laughter is the best medicine." (Plus, no co-pays!)

TENACITY-

The vital link between resiliency and resourcefulness.

5 Key points from story of how my young daughter Jazzy's reaction to dropping all three balls at once positively reinforced my determination to be a "recovering perfectionist".... and what I learned about perseverance from my favorite juggling "student teacher" at Greenfield Community College (60 yr. old. former marine, Bill Reeves):

#1 Jazz's relaxed response ("whoops!") set a compelling example of how to stay light and not sweat the small stuff

#2 The good laugh we shared about it at the time... and the many humorous retellings since, created a fun (and bonding) shared memory; inspiring the acronym- W.H.O.O.P.S. (When Humans Overcome Obstacles, Providence Smiles!)

#3 When similar setbacks or challenges occurred, in order to see them from a more positive perspective, all either of us has to say is "Whoops!"

#4 Bill Reeve's ability to reframe failure (after 4 straight weeks of fumbling, bumbling, and stumbling) "why stop now... when I'm right on the brink of mediocrity!"

#5 The surprising way his perseverance paid off in the end: "With all this dropping, chasing, bending, twisting, and lifting... my back hasn't felt this good in years! Who cares about learning to juggle? I figure just by failing I'm saving a hundred bucks a week!" (on chiropractic visits)

Apt literary references, paraphrases, and personal credos:

- * "We are made to persist. That's how we find out who we are." Tobias Wolf
- * "We are, what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit." Aristotle
- * If necessity is the mother of invention.... failure's the father!
- * "Difficulties are placed in our path not to obstruct, but to instruct." Brian Tracey
- * Pits are also seeds

(Of course when it comes to capturing the correlation between our most troubled times and our most treasured attributes nothing sums it up as eloquently as Herman Melville's great line: "A smooth sea never made a skillful sailor".)

TEAMWORK-

Pooling resources, and playing to people's strengths.

4 Benefits of using Appreciative Inquiry as a tool to enhance group effectiveness:

#1 Shines a light on what's right (Positively shifts focus from worrying about what's wrong to looking at what's working... and why)

#2 People respond far more energetically when they are challenged to build on their strengths than when they are castigated to shore up their weaknesses.

#3 In most cases, there's equal, if not more, opportunities for break-through advancements hidden inside what's already going well than there is in changing what's going poorly

#4 Shifting from isolated, "silo thinking" to more cooperative approaches and truly collaborative initiatives

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