

# Work / Life

## Eight Steps to Having the Relationships You Want

### Highlights

- [Eight Steps to Having the Relationships You Want](#)
- [Find A Grave](#)
- [Beware Computer Thrombosis](#)
- [Ten Pathways to Positive Speech](#)
- [Love Me, Love My Dog](#)
- [You are "A People"](#)
- [Secrets of Successful Teams](#)
- [Playing the Average](#)

### NAVIGATOR

Like it or not, we are all gladiators. We go to sleep and wake up in a social arena from which there is no escape. Challenge upon challenge confronts us, walls restrain us, and a mob of spectators mocks, sneers, or cheers us. Each and every day brings new battles whether we want them or not and whether we're up to them or not. Life forces us to face one skirmish after another—no choice in the matter.

What we can choose, though, is which kind of gladiator to be, victor or victim.

Being a victim in this social arena translates into having bad relationships.

Most people are victims—victims of their own perceptions.

That's because people don't develop and listen to their own unique, authentic self. Rather they allow their mental spectators—those little tyrants rattling around in their heads—to tell them second by second how to fight their battles, what they can and cannot do. These tyrants applaud and they hiss, they encourage and they discourage.

These mental spectators are the memories of the judgments of real-life people. For example, it's the memory of your aunt saying, "I hope you marry someone rich, because you're not going far on brains." It's the echo of your father growling, "You've got a back problem—no spine."

And their influence over your relationships can't be overestimated.

Millions of people accept the judgments of their mental spectators as the truth and, therefore, the mediocre results that come from believing those judgments.

With so many people living this way, the question becomes, is this the way I have to live? Fortunately, the answer is not unless you want to.

Once you identify your mental spectators—and your interactions with them—you can move beyond victim and assume the role of victor.

What it takes are eight steps for getting command—eight steps you can apply to most any situation you want altered. You can positively influence your relationships, your employment options, and any aspect of your life.

Let's look at the steps.

#### 1. Define What Ails You.

Ask, what's my problem? Am I a jealous weasel, troubled that others have what I want? Am I ticked off most of the time? Am I sad and whiney? Anxiety ridden? Moody? All of the above? Without this step, you're doomed. It will take personal courage, but you won't get results without identifying what ails you.

#### 2. Discover the Effects.

Ask, how are my problems affecting my life? Am I a lousy parent, a friendless dork, a backstabber, a drunk, a junkie? Am I none of the above, but someone who is less than I could be? This step requires absolute self-honesty, but the truth will help set you free.

#### 3. Seek the Source.

Ask, from where are my problems coming? Who are my real and my mental spectators? What do my mental spectators look like, say, and do? Exactly who or what is keeping me from taking command of my life? This could be one of the most incredible experiences of your life. You will look into the abyss and see who is looking back.

#### 4. Identify Your Role.

Ask, how am I contributing to my problems? What is my responsibility in all this? Did I decide to be a garbage disposal? Do I beat myself to death trying to please others? Do I expect things of myself that are unfair? Do I treat myself as a friend or an enemy? Do I allow my mental spectators to drive me to distraction, depression, anger, and anxiety? Recognizing your role in your own problems is a positive—but scary—step toward knowing yourself and gaining personal command.

#### 5. State Your Desires.

Ask, what do I specifically want to do about my problems? Do I want to be a doormat, a drunk, a friendless geek? Or do I want to rule my mental spectators? Do I want to stand up to a spectator, real or imagined, who puts me down? Do I want to take command of my education, my bank account, my relationships? Until you can actually list your desires in the order of their importance, you will be a victim. However, once you do this, you are on your way to being a victor.

#### 6. Seek Options.

Ask, what are my options, and in what order should I place them? What is the first option

I should concentrate on? The second one? The third? If you have a massive hangover most mornings, you might opt to give up your drinking buddies for some real friends. Secondly, take the money you normally spend at bars and deposit it in a college fund for yourself or your kids. If, instead, you're a workaholic and you want to spend more time with your kids, then DO IT. Very few people on their deathbed have said, "If I could live life all over again, I'd spend more of it at work and less with people I love." Choices are involved here, but by weighing options and alternatives, and then making personal choices, you are taking command. Do this, and you'll begin to gain real power.

### 7. Learn Winning Techniques.

Ask, how do I rule my real and mental spectators? Must I collapse in a heap when they point thumbs down? How can I learn to take charge on every level and get a grip on my life? There is no magic involved, but you might feel as if there is. Unlike a vanquished gladiator falling at the whim of spectators, you decide your own course.

### 8. Master Your Relationships.

Ask, what more can I do to master my relationships by strengthening myself and my perceptions? How do I take command right now in developing my own identification and self-worth? Congratulations! You're working on the one person in the entire world you can work on—YOU! And any improvements in yourself can't help but enrich your relationships with other people and the world around you.

Although this is only a brief overview of each of the eight steps for jump-starting your relationships and taking control of your life, you'd be amazed at how significant the effects of a few minor adjustments in perception can be.

(Source: Dr. Hartley, social psychologist, scientist, and the author of "Tyrants of Self-Concept: Ruling the Rulers," a 122-page e-book that thoroughly describes the eight steps for improving your relationships, taking control of your life, and living the life you want to live. Visit: <http://www.rulingtherulers.com>)

"I would rather be a could-be if I cannot be an are,

Because a could-be is a maybe that is reaching for a star.

I would rather be a has-been than a might-have-been, by far,

For a might-have-been has never been, but a has was once an are."

--Milton Berle

## WEB SITE PICKS

<http://www.findagrave.com/>

Find A Grave is the place to locate the final resting places of the most famous people. Want to put your favorite red sweater on Mr.

Roger's grave? You'll have to go to Pennsylvania to do it. Are you a baseball fan? Check out where Babe Ruth, Roger Maris, and Shoeless Joe Jackson are buried. Maybe you're more into history. You can search and find the gravesites of politicians, suffragists, presidents, and first ladies.

This is also a great tool for finding some of your family history. More than 4.4 million names are registered, as well as dates of birth and death and burial locations. You also can search by location, so maybe you could work some history into your upcoming family vacation.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

### Beware Computer Thrombosis!

Sitting in front of the computer for hours on end could increase your risk of thrombosis (referred to as "economy-class syndrome" when it develops from taking long plane trips), so it is advisable for anyone who commonly sits for prolonged periods at a computer to undertake frequent leg and foot exercises and regular breaks for mobilization away from the computer.

Just as you must get up and walk around in a plane on long-haul trips, so should you regularly stand up while sitting at your computer. Blood clots (thromboembolism) can form even if you have no other risk factors. Blood clots caused this way are referred to as "eThrombosis." [I intentionally keep my printer and other accessories at a location where I must get up and walk over to them.]

It's very common for people sitting still for a few hours to get little tiny clots, and when they walk they disappear. But if they then sit there for long periods of time, the clot might grow and the leg might swell, and a bit [of the clot] might break off and go to the lung [or the brain].

"If you add to that other risk factors, like somebody who perhaps in the past broke their leg, or somebody with some sort of co-existing illness, then you get to a point where you might develop a serious blood clot," conclude the researchers.

[You might want to consider anti-coagulation supplements such as aged garlic extract and nattokinase.]

(Source: *European Respiratory Journal* 2003;21:374-376. Excerpted by Betty Kamen, Ph.D., and Michael Rosenbaum, M.D., at <http://www.bettykamen.com>)

"And in the end it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

--Abraham Lincoln

## HUMOR

### Senior Personals

Some "Senior" personal ads seen in Florida and Arizona newspapers

FOXY LADY: Sexy, fashion-conscious, blue-haired beauty, 80s, slim, 5'-4" (used to be 5'-6"), searching for sharp-looking, sharp-dressing companion. Matching white shoes and belt a plus.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENT: Recent widow who has just buried fourth husband looking for someone to round out a six-unit plot. Dizziness, fainting, shortness of breath not a problem.

SERENITY NOW: I am into solitude, long walks, sunrises, the ocean, yoga and meditation. If you are the silent type, let's get together, take our hearing aids out and enjoy quiet times.

WINNING SMILE: Active grandmother with original teeth seeking a dedicated flosser to share rare steaks, corn on the cob, and caramel candy.

BEATLES OR STONES? I still like to rock, still like to cruise in my Camaro on Saturday nights, and still like to play the air guitar. If you were a groovy chick, or are now a groovy hen, let's get together and listen to my boss's collection of eight-track tapes.

MEMORIES: I can usually remember Monday through Thursday. If you can remember Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, let's put our two heads together.

MINT CONDITION: Male, 1932, high mileage, good condition, some hair, many new parts including hip, knee, cornea, valves. Isn't in running condition, but walks well.

### Arrested

At Heathrow Airport today, an individual, later discovered to be a public school teacher, was arrested trying to board a flight while in possession of a compass, a protractor, and a graphic calculator.

Authorities believe he is a member of the notorious al-Gebra movement.

He is being charged with carrying weapons of math instruction.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### Ten Pathways to Positive Speech

Gossip may be defined as any form of communication that harms another. It can ruin lives, assassinate reputations, split families, alienate friends, and destroy businesses. On the other hand, a gossip-free environment leads to peaceful lives, healthier relationships, and overall prosperity.

Yes, the gift of speech is a marvelous one,

depending upon how it is used.

Would you like your words to soothe instead of sting? Heal instead of hurt? And build instead of burn? Following these 10 pathways will help:

#### #1 Speak No Evil.

Say only positive statements. Let words of kindness be on your tongue. This means to respond instead of react. And, even, to “edit your speech before you speak.”

#### #2 Hear No Evil.

Refuse to listen to gossip, slander, and other negative forms of speech. If you're on a diet, don't bring the cake and cookies into the house. If you're ending gossip, try and keep away from conversations that may tempt you to listen or chime in. Hint: If avoiding the conversation is impossible, have another topic of positive interest you can quickly bring up in order to change the subject.

#### #3 Don't Rationalize Destructive Speech.

Excuses like “But it's true” or “I'm only joking” or “I can tell my spouse anything” just don't cut it. Gossip is gossip, any way you cut it. Besides, the fact that it is true is what qualifies it as gossip. If it were not true, it would be libel or slander, depending upon the medium.

#### #4 See No Evil.

Judge people favorably, the way you would want them to judge you. If you've ever been accused of doing something for which you know you were innocent, then you know how it feels to be misjudged. Remember, if you weren't there, you don't know. And, even if you were, you may have missed what actually happened in context.

#### #5 Beware of Speaking Evil Without Saying an Evil Word.

Body language and even positive speech can bring tremendous destruction. Yes, telling someone who you know takes advantage of others' kindness, that a particular person will give you “the shirt off his back,” although it seems like positive speech, is not an act of kindness.

#### #6 Be Humble. Avoid Arrogance.

These will be your greatest weapons against destructive speech. As Rabbi Noah Weinberg teaches, “Take pleasure in your accomplishments, not pride.” This way you recognize the ultimate source of your accomplishments. And, those who are arrogant are so full of themselves, there is no room for their Creator in their lives.

#### #7 Beware Of Repeating Information.

Loose lips sink ships. Even positive information needs permission before being repeated. Telling someone who's out of a job that your mutual friend, Julie, got a raise, does not constitute proper speech.

#### #8. Honesty Really Is the Best Policy—Most of the Time.

Be careful to always tell the truth unless it will hurt others, break your own privacy, or publicize your accomplishments. Strive for honesty in everything you do. But, if it's between honesty and unnecessarily hurting another's feelings, it's better not to be so truthful. Those who boast about being brutally honest are usually more brutal than honest.

#### #9 Learn to Say “I'm Sorry.”

Everyone makes mistakes. If you've spoken badly about someone, clear it up immediately. It might be embarrassing, but get it over with quickly. Apologize, ask for forgiveness, and let him or her know it won't happen again. By the way, if bringing up your mistake to that person will only hurt them more, then don't apologize, but commit to not ever doing it again.

#### #10. Forgive

If you have been wronged, let it go. Forgive for your sake, if not for theirs. Those who can forgive live healthier, happier, and less stressful lives. Those who say they'll forgive but not forget are actually saying that they'll never forgive nor forget.

Try this for the next month. The good news is, if you slip up now and then, it only means you are human. Try again. I congratulate you simply for making the effort.

(Source: Bob Burg. Excerpted from “GOSSIP: Ten Pathways to Eliminate it from Your Life and Transform Your Soul,” by Lori Palatnik with Bob Burg. Visit [www.burg.com](http://www.burg.com))

## PROVERB OF THE MONTH

### Love Me, Love My Dog

Saint Bernard of Clairvaux uttered, “Qui me amat, amat et canem meum,” in the middle of the 12th century, which translates to “Who loves me also loves my dog.” He wrote this at a time when dogs were not really considered man's best friend, but often disease-ridden menaces. His meaning: If you love me, you must take me as I am and be willing to put up with all my weaknesses and foibles. He illustrates the nature of true friendship—acceptance of the person as a whole, faults and all.

## INSPIRATION

### You are “A People”

A little girl was asked to bring her birth certificate to school one day. Her mother wisely cautioned her about the important document and told her to be especially careful with it. But in spite of her good intentions, the child lost it. When she became aware of its loss, she began to cry.

“What's the problem, honey?” her teacher asked sympathetically.

The little girl wailed, “I lost my excuse for being born!”

Isn't it wonderful that we don't need an excuse for being born? We need make no apologies for being who we are. Nobody on Earth is more or less valuable than you. Sometimes we need to be reminded of that, especially when our sense of self-worth is less than it ought to be.

Several years ago, an older friend of mine developed Alzheimer's disease. Bill had lived an active and productive professional life. But in his later years, his wife cared for him at home. He was aware of his increasing dependency on her and of the debilitating effect of the disease on his mind. Bill gave up everything he had ever done for himself until eventually nothing was left. As his mind suffered, his sense of worthiness also took a beating. He felt as if he were nobody.

There was one group to which he belonged that decided to stay with him during his decline. He sat on the University of Denver Board of Trustees and was encouraged by them to continue attending meetings as long as he was able. One of the board members drove Bill to the meetings and brought him back home afterward. This continued even after he had lost his ability to remember names, track a conversation, or participate in any meaningful way.

His wife knew that he remained a board member in name only and that their decision to include him was made solely out of compassion. But Bill seemed to enjoy himself at the meetings and she reasoned that they were probably good for him. After he returned from one such meeting of the trustees, his wife asked him, “Did you have a good meeting, Bill?”

He thought for a moment before replying. Then he answered quite honestly, “I don't know.” After a pause, he added this heartfelt comment: “But they still think I'm a people.”

To them, he was somebody. To them, he mattered. He was still a person of value and worth. He could no longer read or write or do any of the things that had been important earlier. But he was still “a people.”

You need make no apologies for being who you are. You are a person of value, unique and beautiful. You are “a people,” unrepeatable and of infinite worth. That is something to celebrate!

(Source: Steve Goodier's book *Touching Moments*.)

“There is something greater and purer than what the mouth utters. Silence illuminates our souls, whispers to our hearts, and brings them together. Silence separates us from ourselves, makes us sail the firmament of spirit, and brings us closer to heaven.”

—Kahlil Gibran

## WORK/LIFE

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### Secrets of Successful Teams by Chris Widener

To be a success is not always to be a success individually. In fact, most of the time we achieve our successes as part of a team.

We are all part of teams. Our family is a team. Our place of work is a team. The community groups we belong to are teams. Sometimes we are the team leader or "coach," while other times we fulfill the role of follower, or "player." It is so important then for us to understand teams and how they work, especially those who achieve success—the achievement of their desired goal.

In my life I have been on some successful teams and some not-so-successful teams. This includes both athletically as well as professionally. When I was growing up, I worked for seven years with the Seattle Supersonics, our local National Basketball Association team. They were at times unsuccessful, and, in 1979, my second year working there, the most successful team in the league, winning the World Championship. I have been able to see firsthand what makes the difference between the unsuccessful teams and the successful ones.

Here are some principles that I know, when implemented on a regular basis, can turn any lackluster team into an outstanding one! These principles can be applied to your family, your business, your organization, and yes, your sports team. Enjoy.

#### Communication/Leader

The leader needs to communicate the vision. If they are setting the pace, they need to let people know where they are going so that the team can follow. The coach always does a pre-game talk, laying out the vision.

The leader communicates the vision frequently, so as to always be updating the team as to where they are and what changes need to be made. The coach doesn't relegate the direction he gives to the pre-game, he coaches and communicates all the way through the game.

#### Team

Watch a good basketball team. They are talking to each other all of the time. Helping one another out, encouraging one another, praising one another, and telling each other how they can make changes so the same mistakes aren't made again. The same is true of successful teams in the professional world and in life in general.

#### Excellence

The truly great teams are teams that are committed to excellence. In everything they do, their goal is to achieve at the highest level. And this commitment is held throughout the team and at every level. A successful team cannot have members who are not

committed to excellence, because in the end they will become the weak link.

#### Followership

If you want a fascinating read, pick up *The Power of Followership*, by Robert Kelley. The author basically makes the point that the secret to getting things done lies not only in great leadership, but in how well the rest of the people, 99 percent of the team, follows the leadership. Good teams are filled with people who are committed to following and getting the job done.

#### Understanding Roles

Pardon the Chicago Bulls analogy, but it is so clear. When the game was on the line, with only one shot left, everyone, the coaches, the players, the 20,000 people watching in the stadium, and millions watching on TV, knew who would shoot the last shot. That was Michael Jordan's role.

Every team works best when the members of the team have clearly defined and understood roles. Some do one thing, others do another. One isn't better or more important than the other, just different. When teams operate out of their strengths and their roles, they win.

#### Strengths and Weaknesses

Every team member has strengths and weaknesses. The successful teams are those who on a regular and consistent basis enable the members to operate out of their strengths and not out of their weaknesses. And what is one person's strengths will cover another's weakness. This is teamwork, enabling all of the bases to be covered.

#### Fun

The team that plays together stays together. Is your team all work and no play? If you're smart, that will change. Get your team out of the office once a month and go have some fun. Enjoy one another. Enjoy life. It will bring a sense of bonding that can't be made even in "winning."

#### Common Goals and Vision

I have found that these need to have three aspects. Short, simple, and clear. Can you say it in less than 30 seconds? Is it simple? Can you and others understand it? Does the team all know what they are working together for?

#### Appreciation

All through the "game," successful teams appreciate one another and show it in a variety of ways. The coach shows it to the players, the players show it to the coach, and the players show it to one another.

Here is a "Successful Teams" checklist:

- Is there communication between coach and players and from player to player?
- Is my team committed to excellence?
- Do those on the team know what it means to follow?

- Does everyone on my team know his or her specific role?
- Do the individuals on our team regularly operate out of their strengths as opposed to their weaknesses?
- Does our team take a break from time to time to just have fun together?
- Do we understand our common goals and vision? Can we all state it (them)?
- Is there a sense and communication of genuine appreciation among my team?

(Source: Chris Widener, popular speaker, writer, and president of Made for Success. Visit [www.yoursuccessstore.com](http://www.yoursuccessstore.com))

## FINANCES

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### Playing the Average

The single-category method may help you save taxes on mutual fund sales. With this method, all the shares you own will be divided by the total you invested and reinvested. That will be the cost you use when you figure out your gain on the sale.

Suppose you have paid \$8,000 and accumulated a total of 1,000 shares. Thus, your average cost-per-share will be \$8. If you cash in \$4,000 worth of shares, when the price is \$10, you will be assumed to have a profit of \$2 per share.

If you don't select a special method, you'll be required to use FIFO (first-in, first-out). In this example, you sold 400 shares of ABC Fund, trading at \$10, to raise \$4,000. You'll be presumed to have sold the first 400 shares of this fund you've acquired. Thus, if you bought some of those shares many years ago, at a price of, say, \$5 or \$6 a share, those are the shares you will be presumed to have sold, inflating your tax bill.

On the other hand, if you started to invest in this fund in 1998 or 1999, near the market peak, your first-in shares may be your highest-cost shares. Using FIFO would mean selling those high-cost shares first and perhaps realizing a capital loss.

Crunch the numbers to see which will give you the lower tax bill.

(Source: *Retirement & Financial Planning Report*, published by FEDweek.)

### Questions/Comments to:

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An online version of this newsletter may be found at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codec/cc/navig-9.pdf>