

The Compassionate Samurai: Chapter 1,2

Monday, February 3, 2008 Call

Mannafest 2008!!! 10 more registrations in our group last week...where are you in making your plans?

Incentive 2008: Keep track of where you are in accumulating 100 pts!

Last year we worked through the great book “The Slight Edge” by Jeff Olson. How-to’s lead to incremental changes. Our new book is about exponential changes...caused by working on character changes. “By incorporating these ten character traits into your life, you’ll create the opportunity for exponential, long-lasting transformation by leveraging good how-to’s.” Our new book, “The Compassionate Samurai” by Brian Klemmer.

Chapter 1: Commitment

“Compassionate samurai say what they mean and do what they say. They make bold promises and keep them. Average people do what they say as long as it’s convenient.”

1. What emotional response do you have to the word “commitment?”
 - (a) Commitment does not have conditions...you take the action no matter what else is happening.

Samurai would keep their word even if it meant their death. They put a value on honor we rarely see today. It was not that they did not value life, they valued keeping their word and their principles more. For them, living an unfulfilled life or one without principles was worse than death.
 - (b) Commitment is the basis for trust, which is the foundation of all relationships. Therefore, breaking it equates to destroying trust.

Examples of broken commitments daily:
 - Promising to tuck our kids in
 - Being late for appointments
 - Saying we will call someone back
 - Saying we will repay debts
 - Etc.
- Broken commitments destroy relationships, businesses, health, pretty much everything.

2. To avoid breaking commitments some people just refuse to make them

Marianne Mediocre, or John Average Man...two people who make up excuses for not making any commitments.

Lead lives of convenience...lives that never amount to accomplishing much, because without agreement nothing happens.

Agreements: goals, commitments, etc.

“Mediocrity is the height of selfishness.”

Here is the list of excuses we have heard (used) in explaining our mediocre lives:

“I don’t really need all that.”

“I’m not into having a lot of ‘things’.”

“People who want the finest things in life are simply materialistic.”

“The key to happiness is to have no desires.”

“It’s just God’s will.”

“You can’t be spiritual and have success.”

“Rich folks are greedy and don’t have a heart of compassion for anyone.”

Your choice: you can become “a slave to the tyranny of reason instead of enjoying the liberty brought about by results.”

The language of compassionate samurai: make big commitments, keep them, and never offer reasons when you don’t make things happen.

3. What are we committed to when it is not making agreements and keeping them?

a) Committed to looking good...you never have to worry about failing because you never commit.

b) Committed to being comfortable...how many of you know people like that? They object to others who challenge them to do more. “If in being more you can inevitably do more for others, then your unwillingness to grow is really taking away from those around you. It is a self-centered, selfish attitude.”

c) Committed to being right

There is nothing wrong with being right...it just immediately makes it necessary for someone to be wrong. In many instances both people can be right, or the issue being quibbled about is so trivial...

Compassionate samurai make the agreement to stay outside of this box as much as possible.

d) Committed to being accepted.

In an employment situation some people fail to agree to doing greater

things because they are worried about co-workers who won't want to work that hard. Same with kids in school...they do not want others to lose respect.

Fear is the #1 reason we fail to commit.

“Learn to make agreements to give yourself and others more liberty.”

4. Competing commitments

Ask these questions:

“What do I consistently do to present myself as valuable and useful in the eyes of others?”

“What am I really good at? What do I consider a “main strength” that I keep reverting back to?”

“How do I appear to others in order to gauge my personal worth?”

“If I am really successful, what do I fear may change in my relationships with my friends and family?”

“What have I always been told I was good at?”

“What act of pretension do I go to work with that keeps me from fully connecting with others?”

Chapter 2: Personal Responsibility

“A man can fail many times, but he isn't a failure until he begins to blame someone else.”

1. A viewpoint: everything you have, don't have, and ever will have in life is because of the choices you make.

This is the position of the compassionate samurai.

The average person...is a victim to their circumstances...life happens to them.

Where are you?

2. Choice: just realizing everything is your choice changes your experience

a) “I have to take the kids to school...”

Change this language to

“I choose to take the kids to school.”

Note your different emotion, state of being depending on which of these phrases you use. Second produces more energy and upbeat.

b) Many people are so afraid of not finding another job that they choose security over opportunity and pretend they don't have a

choice.

c) “You’re responsible for how the relationships in your life are working right now.”

Yes, all choices. The average person does not believe they have choices...why? If they did, they would be responsible. So, even if they don’t the reality is that they are still responsible (but just not “able to respond”).

3. What about abuse, extreme situations, is it still about choice?

a) Viktor Frankl, “Man’s Search for Meaning”

“We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

This is not just about taking personal responsibility, but also how you respond to other people’s actions toward you.

Choice is about the ability to create liberty. What you pick now determines what you enjoy tomorrow. What you decide not to choose also determines what you will never have in this lifetime.

Examine the current state of affairs...we have a crisis in our country.

“The choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence; it’s either nonviolence or nonexistence.” Martin Luther King

4. A perspective taken by some Christians that is lose/lose

Either I am responsible or God is...this is a box! It means if God is responsible then I need not take action; it is God’s will and I am a victim. If I am responsible, I must deny that God is all powerful.

It is not either/or...God is all powerful and I am still responsible.

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