

LEADERSHIP COACHING AND MENTORING –PACK

January 2022

Established in 2006

Welcome to this month's edition.

Happy New Year and I hope you had a good Christmas. Everything about this edition is aimed at supporting you to have the best year ever.

Damian Piper CBE our Resilience Coach starts this month edition with: "I've just reread my article 'Same storm, different boat' from January 21. It feels like I could repost it and it be as relevant one year on as it was then. Covid themed, it talks about the need to recognise that people respond differently to the same event. A year on, I'm going to approach the Covid subject from a different angle....."

From me: "Bettina sits quietly in class alongside other pupils. There is a boy sitting next to her who is becoming increasingly distressed. Without turning Bettina reaches out to him and strokes his hand, despite verbal language being a challenge for Bettina, she soothingly says "it's ok" "it's ok" as her school mate calms, he says "thank you Bettina". 'Bettina's Kind Heart'

Influence: lessons from business for teaching. **Sam Pullan** one of our subscribers has kindly given me permission to publish his article. "Car dealers. Marketing executives. Phone companies. Waiters. Teachers. What do we all have in common? We all want people to do what we want. Buy stuff, read stuff, eat stuff, do stuff, don't do stuff, do stuff differently."

From **Justin Smith**, Operations Manager for Thera East Anglia: 'Anyone can lead when the plan is working The best leadership is when the plan falls apart'. "Around 19 months ago, life changed for all of us when the current pandemic started, and although we still had in place our plans to support people with a learning disability, it felt a little like parts of the plan fell apart. We were faced with all kinds of challenges:....."

Meike Phillips brings this article to our attention: "100 ways to slightly improve your life without really trying"

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It's not about how good you are

It's how Good You want to be

adaptation

I've just reread my article 'Same storm, different boat' from January 21. It feels like I could repost it and it be as relevant one year on as it was then. Covid themed, it talks about the need to recognise that people respond differently to the same event.

A year on, I'm going to approach the Covid subject from a different angle. Adaptation. One thing feels certain is the probability that what we plan for could well get disrupted. When this happens, the sense of disappointment, frustration and in some cases, anger are often felt or observed in others. I'm not going to pretend there are not real-world consequences and impact to changes in circumstances. Of course there are. What we can do is look to generate greater objectivity about the situation we face. This will put us in a better place to respond in a way that's helpful rather than hindering.

So, what can we do? Thinking in advance about what you'll do if you receive unwelcome news is a great start point. As opposed to trusting that you'll respond appropriately in the moment. Our brains aren't great at that. Here's some ideas to get you thinking

- **Objectivity questions.** Scale is a great way to bring perspective to situations. For example on receipt of unwelcome news asking ourselves, "how important is this on a scale of 1 – 10 where 10 is death" can quickly help do this. This is not to underplay the seriousness of the current situation. There are some situations where we might find ourselves at the upper end of the scale. Chances are though many of the things we face will be at the lower end. With this objectivity we can begin to decide what is an appropriate response.
- **Third parties.** Considering how a third-party might respond can help your thinking. Someone who inspires you, someone who has lots of experience or even someone you want to inspire yourself. This latter one can be interesting. It's rare that you'll see losing your temper or shouting as great role modelling for people we care about. Knowing who you'd like to inspire in advance is critical
- **Pictures.** This one might seem a little leftfield for some. However, one coaching client I worked with used a visualisation to help her respond to events. The image she would conjure up was a stone dropping into a pond. This reminded her that her response needed to be proportionate to the event that had occurred. In the same way water always gives a proportionate response to whatever is dropped into it. This one might not resonate with you. Before discounting, I'd just ask you consider it.

The important thing with any of these ideas is to personalise them for yourself. No matter what comes your way as we kick off the new year. I hope you get to live happily and healthily.

Damian Piper CBE

Change and Resilience Coach www.effectivechallenge.com





Being Bettina's Dad – Bettina's Kind Heart

Bettina sits quietly in class alongside other pupils. There is a boy sitting next to her who is becoming increasingly distressed. Without turning Bettina reaches out to him and strokes his hand, despite verbal language being a challenge for Bettina, she soothingly says "it's ok" "it's ok" as her school mate calms, he says "thank you Bettina".

This is an example of Bettina's kindness to someone else in need.

"A kind word to one in trouble is often like a switch in a railroad track...."

"An inch between wreck and smooth sailing"

Henry Ward Beecher

If you have previously followed the "Being Bettina's Dad" series, you will know that Bettina has a diagnosis of autism, a learning disability, and copes with epilepsy. The traditional traits and perhaps 'labels' of autism are often:

- Autistic people often have difficulty 'reading' other people - recognising or understanding others' feelings and intentions - and expressing their own emotions. This can make it very hard to navigate the social world. Autistic people may:
- appear to be insensitive
- seek out time alone when overloaded by other people
- not seek comfort from other people
- appear to behave 'strangely' or in a way thought to be socially inappropriate
- find it hard to form friendships.

While some of these traits were true of Bettina in her early years, with the support and love of her family, and a wonderful school <https://www.marketfieldschool.co.uk/> her personality constantly shines through, breaking through those stereotypes. Bettina's qualities of being gentle, caring, and helpful, light up the worlds of people who come into contact with her and her acts of kindness are long lasting in their memories.

Bettina's kindness is given for free, there are no conditions, and she has no expectations of favours in return.

Related: [Being Bettina's Dad: Bettina's Code of Conduct – Leadership in the Raw](#)

5 random acts of kindness Bettina spontaneously makes:

1. Bettina is incredibly polite: "how are you Bettina?" "I am fine thank you" I have known people to go out of their way to ask Bettina how she is, just to get this response.
2. Bettina senses when you are worried or upset and puts her arm around you. There have been times when Bettina has kissed my arm when I wasn't expecting it and for me the world feels right again.
3. Recently on a trip together in Frinton-on-Sea, a horse fly bit my face, just under my eye and I was even more shocked when Bettina stopped, put her arm around me and steered me towards a bench to recover my composure. In a moment our roles were reversed, and Bettina became my 'carer'. I was so grateful for her kindness and compassion.
4. As soon as I mention we are going to the beach, the night before Bettina raids the fridge for our lunch, choosing things she thinks I will like. (Bettina always nails it)
5. Bettina acts without prejudice, bias, or cynicism. Bettina is always authentic with her kindness.

Related: [Being Bettina's Dad: Be your authentic self – Leadership in the Raw](#)

5 reasons to be kind this year – because:

1. It will make the world go round
2. Everyone is fighting a hard battle especially with everything that has happened with Covid.
3. There will be plenty of events that we will not be in control of in the coming months and perhaps years, but we can control how we behave towards other people.
4. It will make you feel better about yourself if you are kind to someone else and it will encourage them to do a kindness for another person next time. (I have found kindness to be contagious).
5. You have the opportunity to make life less difficult for another person, a great privilege.

Never, if possible, lie down at night without being able to say:

"I have made one human being at least a little wiser,

Or a little happier,

Or a little better this day."

Charles Kingsley

And 5 spontaneous acts of kindness you can make in 2022:

1. Smile and remember to say please and thank you when shopping and when you purchase your coffee.
2. Stop and speak to someone who looks downcast, worried, and desperate – your kind words could be the ones that save them.
3. Pause and let another motorist or pedestrian have your right of way. (smile when you do). Give up your seat on a bus or a train for a person who needs it more than you. Open the door for another person.
4. Acknowledge someone's hard work with a compliment
5. Never say "I am too busy" - ask someone "can I help?"

As Joyce (Bettina's mum) comes towards the end of her 'Hidato' quiz book, Bettina notices and immediately stops what she is doing and goes into another room to find a new book for her. Bettina knows Joyce will enjoy completing her new puzzles. Joyce has not asked or expected Bettina to do this - Bettina does it because she is kind.

Joyce: "Aren't you kind"

Bettina: "I don't mind"



Bettina and her super proud Dad.

"Sometimes miracles are just good people with kind hearts"

Steve Raw www.leadershipintheraw.org

Praise for: Being Bettina's Dad – Bettina's Kind Heart

"This is so beautiful Steve Thank you for sharing this with us"

Dr Radha. @DrRadhaModgil

Dr | Broadcaster | Speaker | Podcaster | Author 'Know Your Own Power'

@YellowKiteBooks 

Influence: lessons from business for teaching

[Sam Pullan](#) [Uncategorized](#) December 28, 2021 5 Minutes

Background

Car dealers. Marketing executives. Phone companies. Waiters. Teachers. What do we all have in common? We all want people to do what we want. Buy stuff, read stuff, eat stuff, do stuff, don't do stuff, do stuff differently.

It's not always easy, though. Usually the stuff you (we) want people to do is stuff they aren't already doing. Or if they are doing it, they aren't doing it enough, or in quite the right way. We all know that though. So, why this blog?

Well, there I was, idly flicking through Freakonomics Radio, when I came across an episode called [How To Get Anyone To Do Anything](#). Always a sucker for a quick fix (Get rock hard abs fast without exercise or diet? Yes please!) I dived in.

The episode was an interview with Robert Cialdini, author of *Influence: the psychology of persuasion*. First published in 1984 and, I'm told, a classic of the genre, it was updated in 2021, hence the podcast. In it, Cialdini takes host Stephen Dubner through some of the key principles that people he calls "compliance professionals" use to get us to do those things they want us to, but which we probably wouldn't without some gentle encouragement.

It was good. So I bought the book. And in this short series of blogs, I'm going to outline some of Cialdini's theories and how they might be applicable to various roles in school. He identifies seven "levers of influence" but I'll stick to four: liking, social proof, authority, and commitment and consistency.

A couple of disclaimers: I haven't interrogated Cialdini's sources, nor sought corroboration for his claims. I also note from various reviews that lots of other people have said and written similar things, and no doubt some have contradicted them. Be that as it may, I found lots of the book was relatable and applicable to teaching, and I thought you might too. Here goes.

Part 1: Liking

"Few of us would be surprised to learn that we are more influenced by the people we like." Sure thing. Cialdini breaks down "liking" into a range of categories, which are more helpful to us as teachers. I know, I know, we don't want the children to be our friends, and getting them to like us is not our primary, or even secondary or tertiary, aim. Nevertheless, getting on well with pupils (and parents) can have many benefits, perhaps especially in the pastoral context.

Cialdini says you can increase the chances of people liking you, and therefore your ability to influence them, though several routes.

1. Physical attractiveness. Obvious, really. But if you are not favoured in the looks department, fear not: there are other ways too.

2. Similarity. Claim, or find, similar interests to your interlocutor and you're onto a winner. Anyone who has ever struck up a conversation with a difficult pupil about something they and you both like – cooking, fish, football, painting, fashion, whatever – and felt that, at last, you might be getting through to them knows this. (Top Tip: If you have any interest at all in football, make sure you have a Fantasy team. Teenage boys in particular are obsessed with it and are amazed and delighted to find out that you are too. If you have a staff league, so much the better: they also love to know that the Head of PE is in eighth place and the Physics teacher they've never really bothered about has just transferred in Mo Salah.) According to Cialdini, an initial similarity of interests is the single most important factor in a mentor-student relationship. Worth bearing in mind when you are thinking about pastoral match-ups.
3. Praise. "We are phenomenal suckers for flattery." Remarkably, Cialdini says flattery doesn't have to be genuine and it doesn't even matter if the flatteree knows you are complimenting them because you want something. It still makes them like you. So, give lots of praise. Not only that:
 - Give compliments behind someone's back. Don't just tell someone they've done well. Instead, or in addition, identify someone close to the flatteree, and tell them the person has done well. If you've chosen the link person well, the person's form tutor, perhaps, the compliment will be passed on and you'll be safe from accusations of ulterior motives. I can also imagine this working if, for some reason, a direct compliment from you wouldn't go down well – if, for example, the flatteree would deem it death-inducingly uncool to be called out for doing something good by their Head of Year.
 - Give compliments about the kinds of behaviour you want to see replicated. This will encourage people to live up to the standards you want to inculcate. Cialdini gives a really nice example. His paperboy used to throw his newspaper into his porch, as opposed to nearby where it might get wet, about 75% of the time. After a Christmas card and tip thanking the paperboy's conscientiousness in getting the delivery right almost all the time, the success rate went up to 100%. Apparently, it's crucial to compliment a trait as well as action: in this case, not just delivering the paper well, but also the boy's conscientiousness in doing so. That makes the boy feel conscientious and want to continue to live up to that label. So, not just, "Thank you for picking up that crisp packet," but, "Thank you for your thoughtfulness in picking up that crisp packet."
4. Conditioning and association. "Merely communicating negative news affixes to the communicator a pair of devil's horns that, in the eyes of the recipients, apply to other characteristics," says Cialdini. This is bad news for pastoral leaders, who often find themselves dishing out the serious sanctions and therefore, if this "horns effect" is real, being seen as generally horrible. Happily, it works the other way too. Advertisers use gorgeous models because, *per point 1 above*, we "like" physical attractiveness and will associate that good feeling with whatever it is we are being sold. It's also why companies are so keen to be

the official hairspray/umbrella/tea towel of the Olympics (Olympics = good, so official Olympics tea towel = also good), and why politicians seek celebrity endorsements. This is the “halo” counterpart to the horns effect. We can learn from this: if you are someone who has to tell people off a lot, risking the horns effect, make sure that isn’t the only communication you have with those individuals. Show them your halo, be that a shared interest, a compliment, or the certificate that only you give out – even if, given 3a above, it’s best that someone else actually passes it on.

To sum up: in some circumstances at school, it’s helpful for people to like you. To aid that process, you could find or develop similar interests; give compliments, even ones that aren’t genuine, possibly indirectly, that reinforce traits you like; associate yourself with good things as well as bad; and if you are so blessed, work your looks.

Next time: social proof, or why we often look to what others are doing to decide what we should do, and how we as teachers can harness that.

<https://idontknowtheanswers.wordpress.com/2021/12/28/influence-lessons-from-business-for-teaching/>

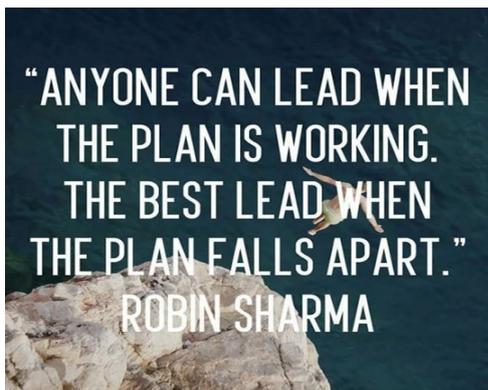
Sam Pullan

Head of Y7 and 8. Hist and Pols teacher

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From the Guardian courtesy of Meike Phillips

[100 ways to slightly improve your life without really trying | Life and style | The Guardian](#)



The writer and leadership expert, Robin Sharma said that ‘anyone can lead when the plan is working. The best leadership is when the plan falls apart’. Around 19 months ago, life changed for all of us when the current pandemic started, and although we still had in place our plans to support people with a learning disability, it felt a little like parts of the plan fell apart. We were faced with all kinds of challenges: what could we do that was safe? What could we support people to do that was safe? How could we keep each other safe? What could we do when people’s routines had to change? Where would we get the PPE from?

How could we keep each other up to date with the ever-changing guidance around keeping each other safe? All of this presented a challenge to us as leaders when it felt like things were falling apart. We had to rise to the challenge despite the huge impact on our work and personal lives.

The situation we have found ourselves in has held a magnifying glass up to our ability as leaders. Lazarus Takawira said that crisis is a good revealer of great leadership. The crisis we have found ourselves in has shown what amazing leaders we are at all levels. MDs have led and consulted with their Senior management teams; information has been shared with the teams out there supporting people; dialogue has been struck up that has moved backwards and forwards in order to ensure we do the best we can for each other whilst sticking within the guidelines.

Where there have been cases of people catching the virus, there have been instances where staff have cancelled their annual leave; people have stayed at addresses in order to reduce the numbers (who might increase risk); managers have worked alongside staff teams; our amazing Support Workers have shown leadership in supporting each other, coming up with creative ideas to replace activities and routines suddenly stopped by rapidly imposed legislation. Our Support Workers have inspired each other and the leaders who lead them.

Many people we support have inspired those paid to support them by debunking predictions about how they might react to such sudden changes to their lives and routines. People we support showed their leadership in showing us all how to adapt to change; how to remain calm; how to face our own emotions; how to have a can-do attitude when things looked hard to achieve.

John F Kennedy said that there are two parts to crisis: danger and opportunity, and that in a crisis we need to be aware of the danger and recognise the opportunity. We should be proud that we have recognised the danger, and seized opportunities. Due to technology, we are talking more than ever, and we have become readily available to each other. We have shown each other what we can do in a crisis and how we have responded calmly and positively. We have all shown and continue to show our leadership when it looked like the plan might fall apart.



Justin Smith
Operational Manager and Registered Manager
PBS Coach and PROACT SCIPr-UK® Instructor
Thera East Anglia

100 ways to slightly improve your life without really trying

Whether it's taking fruit to work (and to the bedroom!), being polite to rude strangers or taking up skinny-dipping, here's a century of ways to make life better, with little effort involved ...

Bring fruit to work. Bring fruit to bed! Illustrations: Leon Edler/The Guardian

The Saturday magazine team

Sat 1 Jan 2022 11.00 GMT

- 1 Exercise on a Monday night (nothing fun happens on a Monday night).
- 2 On the fence about a purchase? Wait 72 hours before you buy it.
- 3 Tip: the quickest supermarket queue is always behind the fullest trolley (greeting, paying and packing take longer than you think).
- 4 Bring fruit to work. Bring fruit to bed!
- 5 Consider going down to four days a week. It's likely a disproportionate amount of your fifth day's work is taxed anyway, so you'll lose way less than a fifth of your take-home pay.
- 6 Everyone has an emotional blind spot when they fight. Work out what yours is, and remember it.
- 7 Plant spring bulbs, even if they're just in a pot.
- 8 Send a voice note instead of a text; they sound like personal mini podcasts.
- 9 Keep a bird feeder by a window, ideally the kitchen. It'll pass the time when you're washing up.
- 10 Always bring ice to house parties (there's never enough).
- 11 Get the lighting right: turn off the overhead one, turn on lots of lamps (but turn off when you leave the room).
- 12 Sharpen your knives.
- 13 Feeling sluggish at work? Try the [Pomodoro technique](#): 25 minutes on, five-minute break, and repeat.
- 14 Buy a cheap blender and use it to finely chop onions (it saves on time and tears).
- 15 Keep your children's drawings and paintings. Put the best ones in frames.
- 16 Set aside 10 minutes a day to do something you really enjoy – be it reading a book or playing [Halo](#).

- 17** Don't be weird about how to stack the dishwasher.
- 18** Reuse all plastic bags – even bread bags. Much of the packaging you can't reuse can be taken to larger [branches of supermarkets](#) for recycling.
- 19** Take a photo of the tag you are given when leaving your coat in a cloakroom.
- 20** Can't sleep? Try a relaxing soak with lavender bath oil before bed.
- 21** Add the milk at least one minute after the tea has brewed.
- 22** Laugh shamelessly at your own jokes.
- 23** It might sound obvious, but a pint of water and two paracetamols before bed after a big night avoids a clanger of a hanger.
- 24** Start a Saturday morning with some classical music – it sets the tone for a calm weekend.
- 25** Look closely.
- 26** Set time limits for your apps. Just go to the settings on your smartphone and add a limit – for example, if you have an iPhone [turn on Screen Time](#).
- 27** If possible, take the stairs.
- 28** Always be willing to miss the next train.
- 29** Eat meat once a week, max. Ideally less.
- 30** Be polite to rude strangers – it's oddly thrilling.
- 31** Ask questions, and listen to the answers.
- 32** Connect with nature: stand outside barefoot for a few minutes – even when it's cold.
- 33** Join your local library – and use it. Find yours [here](#).
- 34** Go for a walk without your phone.
- 35** Eat salted butter (life's too short for unsalted).
- 36** Stretch in the morning. And maybe in the evening.
- 37** If you're going less than a mile, walk or cycle. About half of car journeys are under two miles, yet these [create more pollution](#) than longer journeys as the engine isn't warmed up yet.
- 38** Sleep with your phone in a different room (and buy an alarm clock).

- 39** Send postcards from your holidays. Send them even if you're not on holiday.
- 40** Instead of buying new shoes, get old ones resoled and buy new laces.
- 41** Buy a plant. Think you'll kill it? Buy a fake one.
- 42** Don't have Twitter on your phone.
- 43** If you find an item of clothing you love and are certain you will wear for ever, buy three.
- 44** Try taking a cold shower (30 seconds to two minutes) before your hot one. It's good for your health – both physical and mental.
- 45** Text to say thank you.
- 46** Read a poem every day. Keep a compendium, such as [A Poem for Every Day of the Year](#), by your bed.
- 47** Take out your headphones when walking – listen to the world.
- 48** Buy secondhand.
- 49** Buy in person!
- 50** Learn [how to floss properly](#).
- 51** If something in the world is making you angry, [write \(politely\) to your MP](#) – they will read it.
- 52** Say hello to your neighbours.
- 53** Learn the basics of repairing your clothes.
- Sign up to our Inside Saturday newsletter for an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the making of the magazine's biggest features, as well as a curated list of our weekly highlights
- 54** Always bring something – wine, flowers – to a dinner/birthday party, even if they say not to.
- 55** Learn the names of 10 trees.
- 56** Call an old friend out of the blue.
- 57** Every so often, search your email for the word "unsubscribe" and then use it on as many as you can.
- 58** Buy a newspaper. (Ideally this one.)

- 59** Always have dessert.
- 60** Drop your shoulders.
- 61** Make something from scratch. Works best if it's something you'd normally buy, such as a dress or a bag.
- 62** Go to bed earlier – but don't take your phone with you.
- 63** Volunteer. Go to [gov.uk/government/get-involved](https://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved) for ideas.
- 64** Dry your cutlery with a cloth (it keeps it shiny).
- 65** Instead of buying a morning coffee, set up a daily transfer of £2 from a current into a savings account and forget about it. Use it to treat yourself to something different later.
- 66** Don't save things for "best". Wear them – *enjoy* them.
- 67** Sing!
- 68** Think about your posture: don't slouch, and don't cross your legs.
- 69** Hang your clothes up. Ideally on non-wire hangers (it's better for them).
- 70** Skinny-dip with friends.
- 71** Switch your phone off on holiday (or at least delete your work email app).
- 72** Always use freshly ground pepper.
- 73** Thank a teacher who changed your life.
- 74** Respect your youngers.
- 75** Keep your keys in the same place.
- 76** Ditch the plastic cartons and find a milkman – [The Modern Milkman](#) has a comprehensive list.
- 77** Rent rather than buy a suit/dress for that forthcoming wedding (even if it's your own).
- 78** Always book an extra day off after a holiday.
- 79** Ignore the algorithm – listen to music outside your usual taste.
- 80** Mute or leave a WhatsApp group chat.
- 81** Learn a TikTok dance (but don't post it on TikTok).

- 82** Cook something you've never attempted before.
- 83** Join a local litter-picking group.
- 84** Handwash that thing you've never cleaned.
- 85** Don't get a pet/do get a pet.
- 86** Nap.
- 87** Learn how to breathe deeply: in through the nose, out through the mouth, making the exhale longer than the inhale.
- 88** Buy a bike and use it. Learn how to fix it, too.
- 89** Politely decline invitations if you don't want to go.
- 90** If you do go, have an exit strategy (can we recommend a French exit, where you slip out unseen).
- 91** If in doubt, add cheese.
- 92** Don't look at your phone at dinner.
- 93** Do that one thing you've been putting off.
- 94** Give compliments widely and freely.
- 95** Set up an affordable standing order to a charity. [RNLI](#) and [Greenpeace](#) spring to mind ...
- 96** Keep a book in your bag to avoid the temptation to doomscroll.
- 97** Listen to the albums you loved as a teenager.
- 98** Make a friend from a different generation.
- 99** Staying over at a friend's place? Strip the bed in the morning.
- 100** For instant cheer, wear yellow.

This article was inspired by a similar exercise in Weekend magazine in January 2000. See the original list at [theguardian.com/100-tips-from-2000](https://www.theguardian.com/100-tips-from-2000)

The year for each other?

Time to read: 22 seconds

Dear Steve

Spread Hope – Be kind, grateful and give unconditional love, warmth and encouragement to others, without expecting the same in return

Offer Help – If your offer is taken up – listen with care, kindness and compassion – ask questions, and repeat back what you have heard

If the person asks for ideas on what to do:

Share How – These may be actions that have worked for you, or you know work for others – the ultimate choice on whether someone does anything, is of course theirs, and theirs alone

With thanks to The Prince's Trust Young Ambassadors who helped with these words

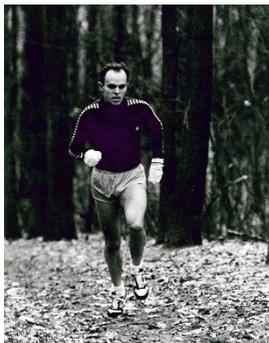
And with my love and best wishes for a wonderful 2022 to you all

David

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Running through Spandau Forrest before reaching the Berlin Wall

Creating your Business Plan for life and work

November 1988 – Nightfall in Berlin

Even though it is dark this evening, this part of the Berlin Wall is lit up from the spotlights coming from the watch towers of the GDR (German Democratic Republic) guards from the Eastern side of the occupied zone. I can hear their dogs barking and can see the guards

watching me through their binoculars – for once they are not tracking me with their semi-automatic weapons. They are definitely getting friendlier over there, but I am not sure why.*

Leaving our Flat in Kisselnallee in West Berlin and running towards Spandau Forrest for a long run, I am now running along a track hugging the Berlin Wall. This has been my daily route for the last 18 months, since we arrived as a family on New Year's Eve 1986 and, like all of my runs, I am lost in thought.

We have had an exciting time in Berlin, our youngest daughter Bettina was born at the military hospital and now I have received my posting order for Colchester. It will soon be 1989. I am not going to wait until 1st January, or when I arrive back in the UK, to start planning my objectives for a new tour. I need to start thinking now about what I am hoping to achieve in my first year and over the next three years. So I start to think and I start to plan. It's a long run, I have plenty of time to think about:

Buying our first house and setting down roots for our family

Passing my driving test (stuff always has got in the way until now)

Getting promoted! An ambition to make Warrant Officer as soon as possible

If I want promotion, I need to deliver on a large scale project of some kind as the competition is fierce

Becoming a track athlete for a top running club. Chasing trophies and medals both for my teams and individually

I need to get up and go.... take a leap forward!

In November 2018 in autumn Colchester

It was raining heavily last night but this afternoon the sky is blue and the leaves are golden and red, both on the trees and also on the pavement, as I 'enjoy' a long run through the streets of Colchester. Sunday runs are always the best for thinking and creative thought because there is no deadline I need to keep, so once again I am lost in thought and those thoughts turn once more to planning for the coming year.

During the last 30 years, since leaving Berlin, I have exceeded my personal aspirations and dreams and it is now about holding on to what I have and what I have achieved. That is a challenging objective in itself and one I have to work hard at every day.

Therefore, this afternoon, my focus, during this this long run, is all about 2019 Business Planning for the company I work for www.dosh.org. Again, I cannot wait for 1st January, I need 'to get up and go...take a leap forward'.

We think our company and team is dynamic, progressive and driven so I need to think big, very big! Our criterion for a plan for 2019 will be:

Do something nobody is expecting – by being audacious

Creating a wow factor for the people we support

The difference we can make in another person's life

Make 'commitments' because we are committed to doing what we say we will do. (we are not in the business of 'wishing' or 'hoping')

Endeavour (showing real intent to see things through to the end because 'trying' doesn't cut it)

It has to be viable and sustainable

A plan for the unexpected

"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step" Martin Luther King

By the time I have completed my run, I have sorted (in my head) the majority of the objectives for 2019. I now need to consult with my colleagues, they may have better ideas or they can improve on the ones I have (they usually do).

Finally.....

I am always excited by the coming of each New Year, it is an opportunity for change, development, growth and reinvention, both in my personal life and also my work. So November is a time for reflecting on the current year and planning for the next one.

I have until the end of December to complete the first draft of my company Business Plan. In part 2 of 'GET UP AND GO! TAKE A LEAP FORWARD' I will share with you what we have agreed on.

All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible.

T.E. Lawrence

Footnote:

* I thought there was something different in the atmosphere coming from the East when I was out running that night in 88; however, I could never have predicted the Berlin Wall coming down six months after I left Berlin. For a flavour of what it was like to run along the Wall, here is a short video: 'The Wall of Berlin 1988'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R09JKtlxq6g> A good reason to always plan for the unexpected?