



## The Coach's Time Out

with Shandel Slaten



### I - Huddle Up - *"Instead of risking...we medicate the gap."*

Are you a risk-taker? This is a tricky question for me. RISK can mean different things for different people. Are you a person that loves a challenge, loves to turn a "no" into a "yes", you would risk your life-savings on an entrepreneurial idea, or defy the laws of nature with adrenaline sports? Do these kinds of ventures make you a true risk taker?

Growing up in the Sierra-Nevada Mountains gave this small town girl a few too many opportunities for risk and adventure: jumping snowmobiles in the full moon, passing three logging trucks on a two-lane highway in a '71 Vega, leaping off 40-foot cliffs into the Feather River, and countless other "near death experiences." Let's just say that some adventures were cause for a visit to the chiropractor on Monday morning. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained" is the thought that comes to mind!

Conquering the freeway while talking on my cell phone and running my own business is plenty to satisfy my daily risk quota these days. Perhaps you feel the same way. We have traded our adventure stunts for business tactics, keeping the risk factor and adrenaline rush firmly in place. We are Americans. We are entrepreneurs. Risk defines us...until someone challenges us to look deeper, or shall I say look within. We are challenged to risk emotionally. Does "risk" define us now?

Perhaps we have spent our life pursuing our career goals and have become wealthy. We have taken risks to achieve these goals. But have we risked becoming wealthy in relationships? Intimacy is necessary for wealthy relationships. The only way to have true intimacy is to risk your "self" emotionally. At this point, the risk-taker and "the ego" in many of us comes to a screeching halt. A risk-taker is one who puts themselves in harm's way. Risk means exposing oneself to potential pain, loss, or danger. When we think about exposing our inner being, the word *expose* is enough to send half of us running!

Our hearts cry out for true intimacy, yet we dwell in a sterile environment void of real love. We plan our next vacation, pursue the next career goal, and check another item off our list in hot pursuit of fulfilling our heart's longing. Our hearts are longing for intimacy. To have intimacy, one needs to be truly honest with his or her feelings – all of them. The good, the bad and the ugly. For most of us, being vulnerable is scary. Perhaps verbal intimacy and vulnerability were not accepted or encouraged in your home growing up. "Take that feeling outside, young man, there's no room in here for that!" There may have been some unwritten rules in your house about honest communication with one another. In all of us, there is a longing to be unconditionally loved, but many of us have a hole, a gap in us, where intimacy was meant to abide.

Have you felt the gap within you? You want love, but as you pull people in, your attempt for true intimacy is sabotaged. The fear of rejection and the risk of truly being yourself unconsciously pushes love away. My effort to draw people toward my heart, while driving them away creates a gap between myself and the people I most desire to love. Here's the sad part – instead of risking emotional vulnerability – we **medicate the gap**. We anesthetize the chasm in our soul with work, alcohol, food, pornography, shopping, bad relationships, adrenaline sports, travel and vacations, and even the latest pharmaceutical drug marketed to us. We keep our brain just busy enough that we don't have to connect to our heart. Our public-persona is beautifully rewarded, so we keep medicating the gap. Yet our "true" self is never quite fulfilled and is left searching for significance and purpose.

So how do you bridge the gap toward real intimacy? The answer is to take risks with your heart. Decide to build up enough emotional strength to be authentic and trust another. Maybe you start by trusting your closest friend, or maybe you start by trusting God. Trust and intimacy go together and you may have to risk getting hurt in order to heal your relationships. Yes, you might get hurt. Your heart might get bruised when you hear the truth. But denying truth doesn't change its reality. Risk may bring pain, but risk also brings freedom.

I want you to have the freedom to love and to be loved. When you are ready to take a risk emotionally, then you are ready to open up your soul. Develop a team of safe people to support you in your new venture. Practice being verbally intimate. Practice risk-taking. Practice vulnerability and being real. As you know, there are BIG payoffs to risk. It is often the risk you fear most that holds the greatest potential for adventure. Bridge the gap and find love, intimacy, and abundant life! Decide to be a risk-taker, today.

### II - Pep Talk

*"Trust, which is the glue of business, is created by dependability, quality content, and intimacy with clients. Of those elements, intimacy is the hardest to achieve." ~ George Forrest Colony of Forrester Research, Inc., in Fast Company*

*"There are costs and risks to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction." ~ John F. Kennedy*

"Success tends to go not to the person who is error-free because he also tends to be risk-adverse. Rather, it goes to the person who recognizes that life is pretty much a percentage business. It isn't making mistakes that's critical; it's correcting them and getting on with the principal task." ~ Donald Rumsfeld

"Life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing." ~ Helen Keller

"Every time you are tempted to react in the same old way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future." ~ Deepak Chopra

### III - MVP AWARD - Profiling successful people choosing balanced living



I would like to introduce to you, Bob Thordarson, CEO and co-founder, of Consumerware, Inc. as this month's MVP. I wish each of you had the privilege of knowing Bob; he is one of the kindest people you will ever meet and runs a very successful business designing and manufacturing innovative telecommunications products for all the major phone companies in the country. In addition, Bob is currently raising money and getting fit for the American Stroke Association by running in 2 marathons as his dad died several years ago from a stroke. If you would like to contribute, please visit <http://thordarson.pledgepage.com/> Bob lives in Seattle with his wife, Sandra and their yellow lab Beaker.

#### Here's Bob...

Reflecting back to where I was a year ago, I would describe myself as very task-oriented, in the "doing" mode, and busy making things happen. I spent very little time looking inward asking the questions of why am I "doing" all this? Is this "doing" meaningful to me? I simply did the next thing as it happened in front of me; not "doing" it with purpose and intent, but by default.

Making the investment in myself to live purposefully has paid dividends in every area of my life. In the coaching process with Shandel, I took a 3-month "Be You" class where the group learned to look at the core of who we are to discover what is truly important. Discovering my personal values and applying them to everything I do in life has been huge for me! It is huge, because it makes me happy. Living by my values and bringing my behavior in line with those values naturally creates happiness. At the end of the day, when my values have been recognized, I am fulfilled and happy. Intentional living at it's best.

A year ago I tended to DO a lot of things for others that frankly didn't work for me and, in retrospect, I am not sure really helped them either. Whether it be my wife, friends, customers or employees – I practiced mind reading doing the things I thought they wanted me to do so they would be happy. Now, I ask what it is they want from me and if I am able to help I do so with a joyful heart and if not I communicate my needs in the situation. Instead of being driven by guilt and busting my butt to please, I keep my boundaries, effectively communicate and I do things for others joyfully and guilt-free.

The impact of this discovery alone has greatly benefited my business. In the past, I would please my customers at all costs. I would promise them the world so they would be happy, while I would lay awake at night in terror of how I would deliver. Now, I ask them what they need and how I can assist. If it doesn't work for me, I communicate with them and most of the time we work it out to a win-win situation. My customers are happier and I sleep better at night! Similar with my employees, I am much more direct with my expectations. I address difficult issues as they arise instead on internalizing my feelings and expectations only to carry around anger and/or disappointment. Living in integrity with my words, thoughts, and actions aligned has granted me great freedom to be who I am across the board.

The discipline of self-discovery and becoming aware of why I do things has brought a sense of satisfaction to my life in every area. I feel like I have only discovered the tip of the iceberg and look forward to seeing what other powerful things will come to my awareness as I continue on this journey.

~ Bob Thordarson

## **IV – Game Schedule**

**Free 30 minute** coaching session for those interested in having a personal coach. May Day and Thanksgiving seem good months to offer the opportunity for you to experience coaching. If you have been intrigued by the idea of living with intent, being held accountable for your goals, or willing to invest in yourself, why not schedule a call with me today? I currently have room for 8 more clients and welcome you to be one of them.

In my feeble attempts to keep up with this high-tech world - this month we are revamping the newsletter (thank you direct presenter) and next month we roll out the new website (thank you RedFalcon.net.) Your feedback is welcomed and appreciated.

**BE YOU IN 2002** – With 3 successful groups completed and one in progress, our next 3-month course will be offered to 4 women and 4 men living in the Greater Seattle area. We will focus on gaining life balance by re-orienting your life around values. You will discover your top 5 values, strategize on how to restore your integrity, identify unmet needs, and recognize energy-zapping tolerations. Time, Day, and Location determined by the needs of the group. The cost is \$400 or \$150/month. Please contact [ss@truelifecoaching.com](mailto:ss@truelifecoaching.com) if interested.

**TOLERATION FREE ZONE** - Need some accountability to clean up your life? Are you ready to eliminate some junk around the house, get organized, and make room for some free time and space for summer? Do you have internal weights holding you down - emotionally, physically, and spiritually? This could be the class for you. This is a fun fast-action class to hold you accountable to face the music and LET GO OF IT! Class is conducted over the phone and the cost is equivalent to a latte a day for an entire month or (\$59.) Please sign-up today [ss@truelifecoaching.com](http://ss@truelifecoaching.com)

**WOMEN'S STUDY** – Free class for women ages 18-40 living in the Seattle area. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from 7-9 PM. Currently, we are discussing faith and the effect it has on our lives. Email [ss@truelifecoaching.com](mailto:ss@truelifecoaching.com) for more details and directions.

## **On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK**

Thank you for taking the time to read this edition of TIME OUT. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those whom may find it beneficial. I welcome your feedback on the new format and any other comments that might make this newsletter more effective.

**Life's a blast – go for the 2 points!**

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