



## The Coach's Time Out

with Shandel Slaten



### I - Huddle up

"The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials." - Chinese proverb

Oh boy, here we go - an article on trials with a bunch of pithy sayings - "No pain; no gain" or how about "Pain is inevitable, Suffering is optional." Okay, yes I do have a couple good quotes for you, but how about a time-out to consider why we experience trials in life, why they are necessary to secure our character, and why you may want to stop and learn from the trial you are experiencing today.

Let's get personal. What is the number one trial you are facing right now? It would behoove you to define it **because in your trial resides your greatest opportunity** for growth. The dictionary defines a trial as "the use of due process to determine a person's guilt or innocence; the act of trying, testing, or putting to the proof." A trial shines the light on who you really are and what you are made of from the inside out. The fight you had with your spouse on the way out the door, your aimless teenager, that employee...*need I say more*, second quarter financials, disgruntled shareholders or perhaps all of the above - your reaction and your attitude is the measuring rod of where you truly stand in regard to your character.

Trials are painful because they test our character and frankly the truth can sting. Phillip Brooks said, "*Character may be manifested in great moments, but it is made in small ones.*" Do you short-cut the problem with a lie or remain a person of integrity regardless of personal cost? Do you run away and work more hours or resolve the conflict at home? Do you buy your way out of guilt with gifts or solve the problem with words? Do you humble yourself or do you get more defensive? Do you play the blame game or do you first examine yourself to see what you can learn? It is the trials (or testing) in life that demonstrate the proof of where you are in the process of your character development and character is everything to a leader.

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf stated, "*Leadership is a combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without the strategy.*" What a powerful statement, especially when we are conditioned to strategize about everything; we need a strategy for the marketing department, the T-ball team, etc. etc. We could not succeed in business without good strategies and people that help us develop even better ones. Believe me, I'm all for "strategy", without it I'd be out of a job! However, for me the true reward is to walk with a person through a difficult time where they face the truth of who they are, choose the short-term pain, and identify the **source** and not just the symptoms of their problem. This individual emerges as a better person with the people surrounding him or her winning as well. People will gladly follow a leader with character and integrity be it in the home, the office, or the ball field.

Character is gained through perseverance and patience in situations where you have no control; and when you do have control it is acquired by choosing the RIGHT and CORRECT way. Identifying areas of weakness is painful, but you have a choice to open your eyes, face the truth, realize you are not perfect, and become a better person; or continue to avoid it and live your guarded (and inevitably self-centered) life.

Quick analogy. I love to water-ski and I mean love it! However, each summer I dread the first time out because I know I'll use muscles I forgot I had and will endure days of pain for my 7 minutes of fun. Do I stop because it hurts? - Noooo - because I also know that those obscure muscles will soon be strengthened and the pain will be replaced by the challenge of improving my speed, grabbing another buoy and having a blast on the water.

Emotional pain is bit harder to identify, but it too is a signal that some unknown muscle is emerging and when "re-framed," offers the opportunity for fun, challenge, and strength to the inner person. Like water-skiing, if you are working on your "weak side" you may indeed do a few headers and even get hurt - but you are a winner and you **will** succeed in this new challenge. Truth is, I could successfully ski behind the boat in a straight line without ever straining a muscle or falling - but how boring would that be! Besides, that's not skiing - that's being "dragged across the lake" - so get in the game. Enlarge your character by improving your weak side and don't worry - after a few falls - you'll nail it and the reward will include the honor of BEING the person YOU have always greatly admired.

## II - Pep Talk

*"The one thing that doesn't go away in a company is the character and humanity of its leader.... that person has to be the best listener, the best interpreter, and the most passionate driver of the company's purpose." - Mary Lou Quinlan, vice chairman of the McManus Group, in FAST COMPANY magazine*

*"We know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope... and hope does not disappoint." ~ The Book of Romans*

*"Too many people overvalue what they are not and undervalue what they are." ~ Malcolm Forbes*

*"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." ~ Albert Einstein, Nobel laureate (b. 1879)*

*"Life's most challenging opportunities are often brilliantly disguised as unsolvable problems. ~ Charles Swindoll.*

## III - Next Play – Group Coaching Opportunities this Fall

**Transitioning from Entrepreneur to CEO?** Moving your company from a start-up to a rapid growth company? Consider joining the business development group beginning in September. The group will consist of 8 CEO's and 2 coaches in a lively discussion and application of the Kauffman Center's book, **LEADING AT THE SPEED OF GROWTH**. By Thanksgiving, you will set and reach your goal for the personal transition required to prepare your company for the next level.

**Conquer your fear** – is it a myth? According to the book, **FEEL THE FEAR AND DO IT ANYWAY**, fear will always exist as we develop and grow through life in never goes away for good. Whatever fears you may have, from flying to Hawaii to asking for the sale or what you need in a relationship, you can discover freedom from your feeling of fear and experience power and accomplishment. In this small group setting, you will break out of your comfort zone, learn the principles to "re-frame" fear to bring you success, and develop specific assignments to set and meet your personal goal. In 90 days, you WILL see a difference and emerge from your prison of fear.

**Women In Training Toward Integrity.** The **WITTI Girls Club** was a smashing success this summer and a new group is starting this fall. Integrity means that your thoughts, words, and actions are all in alignment. This is a group coaching opportunity for women who are interested in establishing their personal foundations and finding life balance in order to build for a successful future. Women gather

from all over country to encourage each other in meeting their personal goals, while formulating their life's mission and purpose statement; boundaries, standards and values. It is fast paced group and a ton of fun!

**All groups** will meet over the phone twice a month via a bridge line (similar to a conference call.) The benefits of using the phone for this type of training is outrageous; you do not have to fight traffic or have another lunch or evening away from your office or home, you have complete confidentiality and you gain the feedback and challenge of your peers. The cost ranges from \$100 - \$150/month. Email [ss@truelifecoaching.com](mailto:ss@truelifecoaching.com) for more information.

**THANK YOU FOR THE GREAT IDEAS!** Last month, you generously responded to the inquiry for what group coaching topics you would like to see. The above groups were designed to meet some of those needs and others are being researched - so thank you! I am always looking for new ideas so if you have a specific area of interest you would like to be coached around or would like a team-building course with your peers or co-workers, please continue to send me your suggestions.

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

Thank you for taking the time to read this third edition of TIME OUT. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those who may find it beneficial. Last month, I added over 50 people to the list, so thank you very much! Have a great day and I wish you the best of success.

*Life's a blast – go for the extra point!*

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