



The Coach's Time Out

with Shandel Slaten

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I. Huddle Up - The Quick Fix Gone Bad



If I have one more string of cheap white Christmas lights (already embedded in the tree mind you) go out on me because ONE of them is burned out I am going to scream. Remember the days when we paid an arm and a leg for a string of lights, but when one burned out the rest stayed lit? You barely noticed the burned out bulb and when you did the problem was easily identified and taken care of with a 10 cent replacement bulb. Now, we pay 99 cents for a string of lights thinking WHAT A DEAL for the ease and convenience. We string them perfectly together from top to bottom only to find out 2.5 days later the whole mid section of the tree is completely dark. This begins the process of climbing in the tree and testing each one until you find which little bulb is the culprit of the blackout. Or if you're like me and need the "quick fix" - I just throw another string on the dark spot, hope no one sees all the unlit ones, and call it good until I have time to deal with it.

Here is the problem with my "quick fix" approach: MY Christmas joy is robbed every time I look at that tree, because I see the faulty string of lights, remembering that the problem is there and that I have not taken the time to resolve it. Worse yet, when people walk into the house they all gasp and say what a beautiful tree I have, at which point I smile and downplay the compliment...as I get that twinge in my stomach and mumble under my breath...yeah well don't get too close. Then, over the course of hanging out by my tree, they take a double look at it and say, "Hey, did you know there are some unlit lights under there." I laugh it off with "Yes, I'm working on that."

This "cover-up" is what I have seen many of us do with our character when we are hurt or disappointed by someone we love or respect - or when we are afraid that saying how we really feel will hurt or disappoint them. As with the cheap Christmas lights, we often take the short-term easy way out when we anticipate or encounter conflict and so cheapen our relationships. We downgrade our values and we compromise the long-term health and ease of our professional and personal relationships. For example, back in the day if you had a fight with your spouse and said hurtful things, you identified and admitted your words were mean-spirited and went quickly to apologize so the relationship could be repaired and fully on track again. Not that big of a deal with the highly valued, well maintained string of lights - one offense, one sincere apology, and back on track. However, in the cheapening or compromising of our values for the ease of what appears on the surface to be a more "peaceful" life, it is now an ordeal when a disagreement emerges.

Perhaps it is a breakdown of trust and/or controlling behavior that sets us up for the cheap set of lights scenario. It always seems to start small: "Oh she doesn't need to know that - it will only upset her if I tell her now" or "if I bring that up again he is going to read me the riot act so I'll just handle it and he'll never need to worry his pretty head." Silently, the value in the relationship is cheapened, trust is broken, and now instead of fixing the one light burned out while the rest of the relationship is functional and brightly shining, we find it is too dark and too overwhelming to even begin to light up the relationship again. So instead of making the time and spending the energy to find and resolve the real problem - we just throw something else in that dark spot and hope it shines bright enough to fool the rest of the world. This "quick fix cover-up" keeps you (at least temporarily) from having to go through ALL the effort that one burned out light on the cheap string entails, oh but how it can make Christmas and life all the more stressful!!!!

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II. Pep Talk - Monthly Quotes

"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it to anyone else." - Charles Dickens

"The past is over, forget it. The future holds out hope, reach for it." - Charles R. Swindoll

"Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anyone else expects of you." - Henry Ward Beecher

"There are only two things you can choose to become after someone wrongs you: better or bitter. Bitterness only hurts you." - Norman Geisler

"It is not the great temptations that ruin us; it is the little ones." - John W. De Forest

III. MVP Award - Profiling successful people choosing balanced living—Therese Beale



This month's MVP award goes to the terrific Therese Beale. Her fun picture demonstrates what a light-hearted and yet total quality person she is. Shania Twain's new song, "She's not just another pretty face" reminds me of Therese. She runs a successful company, parents two darling boys, a great wife, and basically she understands who she is and what it takes to continually climb up and forward. I enjoy working in a level 5 coaching relationship with Therese as well as calling her friend. If your company is looking for a top-notch messaging guru check - Therese is your gal. www.bealecommunications.com

Here's Therese...

Life was "fine" when I met Shandel. My health was good, my family life satisfying and I was in the fourth year of running my own business. A battered economy, however, took its toll on my balance sheet and my psyche. After three banner years of delighting in a wonderful work/life balance, I was measuring my worth by my P&L statement. Finally doing a business plan would be just the key to get me back on track, I thought.

Little did I know there was much more at stake. With a coach at my side I took a closer look at the issues that were standing in my way. Those insights were exciting, challenging and even frustrating. Yes, I completed the business plan, but I learned a lot more in the process. Here are a few highlights:

Needs Rise to the Surface

Like most people in our goal-oriented culture, my brain was constantly cluttered with "woulds," "shoulds" and "coulds." How much time did I waste pondering my next step instead of simply paying attention to what mattered most? This mental fog dissipated when I began paying attention to my values and my needs. For me, that meant making a contribution and feeling appreciated. I began focusing on business activities where my strengths would be valued. I volunteered my services where they were needed most. I let go of any need to be in charge and poured my energy in making a specific contribution that filled a definitive need. In doing so, my own needs were satisfied and those nagging "woulds, shoulds and coulds," no longer seemed important.

Trust the Heart...

[You've got to KEEP READING...click here for the rest](#)

IV. Game Schedule - Upcoming Events

Dream Giver Coach Training. In the first week of November, I had the honor to be certified as a Dream Giver Coach in Virginia Beach, VA. It was a fabulous experience to be one of only 8 coaches being selected for the first round of training, we were honored to be trained by Dr. Bruce Wilkinson, author of the newly released book "The Dream Giver" and the best seller "Prayer of Jabez." He has such a great heart and a wonderful dream that caused him to uproot himself and his family to help the continent of Africa. You'll have to read the story it's neat. I highly recommend both books for great Christmas gifts. (link below even) As a Certified Dream Coach I will assist "dreamers" who are ready to enter the 7 stages of pursuing the dream that is within them. It is such a great adventure and I do hope you enjoy the book. I am living my dream and going to take steps toward my BIG DREAM this year. So watch out! Thank you for your great words of encouragement and support.

In The News If you happen to pick up an issue of the Issaquah Destination, be sure and read the article on coaching. You'll find a few "Shandelisms" in there.

V. On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK

Thank you for taking the time to read this month's edition of The Coach's Time Out. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those whom may find it beneficial. If you desire to subscribe, please click on the link below or send an email to ss@truelifecoaching.com with the word SUBSCRIBE.

Life's a blast - go for the 2 EXTRA points!

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