**Motivational Minutes on Building Up Others from 2011-2014**

**(Also see Kindness, Communication, Self-worth and Thoughts files.)**

1. **Trust Men And They Will Be True**



**Quote of the day:**

“Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Reflection:**

People often lose faith in themselves and in their own abilities. They clearly see their mistakes, inabilities, and failings, and have to combat their negative self chatter which is always right there to magnify their faults and tell them, "Yes, you are a failure and you'll never amount to anything. You might as well give up now.”

But when someone comes along and shows confidence in them, it can often be the ray of hope that they need to turn things around and keep going.

Try to think of at least one thing that you find outstanding in a person, and then make it your task to let them know. Reinforce the fact that you see and know how exceptional they are in that specific way. Don't be shy; they won't get tired of hearing it. What you're doing is building confidence in that one area, and as they gain confidence, they will start to improve in other areas as well.

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1. **Bring Out the Best In Others**



**Quote of the day:**

“I love you not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you. I love you not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me. I love you for the part of me that you bring out.” — Elizabeth Barrett Browning

**Reflection:**

When I read this quote it made me stop to ask, do others feel this way about me? How wonderful to leave such a legacy and to be known for bringing out the best in others.

If you too would like to have such a legacy, take some time to think of some ways that you can encourage, support and instill confidence in others and start putting them into practice today.

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1. **Reveal The Greatness In Others**

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**Quote of the day:**

“The greatest good you can do for another is not just your riches, but reveal to them their own.” — Disraeli

**Reflection:**

This quote reminds me of the Stevie Morris story.

*Stevie was blind, yet one day his teacher asked him to find a mouse in the classroom. Her appreciation for the fact that nature had given Stevie something no one else in the room had, a remarkable pair of ears to compensate for his blind eyes, prompted her to make such a request. This was the first time Stevie had been shown appreciation for his talented ears. Years later, he said that this act of appreciation was the beginning of a new life, from that time on he developed his gift of hearing and went on to become, under the stage name of Stevie Wonder, one of the greatest pop singers and songwriters of the seventies.*

What that teacher did was reveal to Stevie his own riches. She appreciated his special talent and it sparked the belief in himself to hone his unique gift.

Take time and think about how you can help others see their talents.

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1. **Give Others Responsibility**



**Quote of the day:**

“Leadership is not something that is done to people, like fixing your teeth. Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better.” — Bill Bradley

**Reflection:**

Everyone is in leadership in some way or the other as we all have influence.

Give others responsibility. If you're in a position of authority, try to give others responsibility in the areas in which they are notably strong, even if it's just in one small thing. Let them feel trusted and needed and appreciated for their obvious strengths, and it will help them to develop other strengths.

As you unlock other’s potential, you will be strengthened and increase your own leadership potential. It’s a win-win situation.

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1. **Make A Man What He Should Be**



**Quote of the day:**

"Treat a man as he appears to be, and you make him worse. But treat a man as if he already were what he potentially could be, and you make him what he should be." — Johann Wolfgang Goethe

**Reflection:**

Perhaps you’ve seen the classic movie “My Fair Lady”, adapted from George Bernard Shaw's play, “Pygmalion.” It is a story about a professor who makes a bet with this friend that he can turn an uneducated street girl, by the name of Eliza Doolittle, into an elegant lady. He does this primarily by treating her like a lady until she begins to live up to his expectations of her.

Don’t you want to be treated like what you could be, rather than how you are? If you treat others in this way, it will come back to you in like manner.

Take time to consider: who you are treating the way they appear to be, and thus you’re making them worse, and who you are looking at with eyes of potential, and therefore, you’re helping to make them into who they should be. Depending on your inward findings make the appropriate adjustments.

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1. **Appreciation**



**Quote of the day:**

“The world is starving for appreciation. It is hungry for compliments. But somebody must start the ball rolling by speaking first and saying a nice thing to his companion.” — George W. Crane

**Reflection:**

This is a great quote, but how can you go about putting it into practice?

Possibly you could consider doing the same experiment that Mr. Crane had his students do in one of his courses which I found in the John Maxwell book, *Winning With People*.

*The students were to pay an honest compliment every day to three different people. They could increase that number if they wished, but to qualify for a class grade, they had to compliment at least three people every day for thirty days. At the end of the thirty day experiment they had to write a paper on the changes and altered outlook on life in themselves and the people they had been complimenting.*

*Some of Crane’s students resisted this assignment saying they wouldn’t know what to say, or that it was dishonest. However, Mr. Crane assured them, if you speak an honest statement of praise for some trait or merit that deserves commendation then it is not dishonest, even if you don’t particularly bond with the person. You are merely stating a fact. At the same time you may find that nobody is entirely devoid of merit or virtue. In addition, your kind words may change someone’s day in a much more profound way than you expect. You never know when your casual compliment may come at a critical point when that person is just about to throw in the towel.*

Why not start your own experiment today and see what the outcome is?

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1. **How Did You Make Them Feel**



**Quote of the day:**

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” — Maya Angelou

**Reflection:**

Just as the quote says, most people don’t remember your words but they certainly remember how you made them feel. Therefore it is important how you treat people. The words you speak to them, your tone of voice, the body language you use—will help to determine whether their memory of you is good or bad.

It reminds me of a story that one of my friends told me.

*“A few weeks ago I was travelling for a business project. We met with the regional manager of the company we were collaborating with and discussed our plans. I don't recall much of the conversation but what I do recall was the way he made us feel. When we shook hands he seemed to be scanning the horizon for wandering birds. When we spoke, his eyes were glued to his iPad as if watching “The Greatest Show on Earth”. We were not impressed. I do not doubt that he has credits to his name and many other qualities that make him a successful business man. But he certainly wasn’t successful with us.”*

Possibly many of you reading this are thinking, “So what? It happens to me all the time.” But just because rudeness is common, is that an excuse for accepting it, or does it shed light on a realization that we have lost the art of courtesy in our culture?

What memory will people take with them after interacting with you? If you’re not sure, consider asking a trusted friend how you make them feel after speaking with you.

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1. **Care For The Happiness Of Others**

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**Quote of the day:**

“The more we care for the happiness of others, the greater is our own sense of well-being.” — Dalai Lama

**Reflection:**

Life constantly presents us with opportunities to take an extra step or do a kind deed that will make a difference in someone's life. The wonderful thing is that as we do, it changes things for the better for us, too. Like a boomerang, the blessing comes back to us. This story by Lilia Potters illustrates this principle.

*The weather had been dark and rainy, and I felt just as gloomy. As I sat at my desk, I remembered it was the birthday of a longtime friend--a single, middle-aged woman who had dedicated the past 30 years to nursing. Knowing that she didn't have family in town, I decided to give her a call. Sure enough she was scheduled to work late into the evening, and wouldn't have much of a birthday this year. As always, though, she sounded cheerful and was happy I had called. After I hung up, I couldn't shake the feeling that she would really appreciate a little special attention on her birthday. That evening I set off to the hospital with a card, a slice of cheesecake, and a “flower” sculpted from balloons. My friend's grateful smile and joyful exclamations assured me I had done the right thing and was a generous reward for the little effort it had taken me. When I got home, I realized that I had not only cheered up a lonely friend on her birthday, but I had caused my own gloom to dissipate in the process. Making her day had made my own.*

Isn't that the way it is when we take the time and make the effort to do something for someone else? It's like the little saying, “Loving-kindness is twice blessed; it blesses him who gives, and him who receives.”

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1. **Sow Courtesy**

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**Quote of the day:**

“He who sows courtesy, reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness, gathers love.” — Saint Basil

**Reflection:**

I often hear that people want to get along well with others and be liked, but they often don’t always know how to go about it, or how to build strong connections with people. As the quote says, politeness and kindness is a great way to start.

Courtesy is contagious. So why not start an epidemic? Here are five suggestions to get you started.

1. **Smile.** A sincere smile disarms the guarded, soothes the argumentative, calms the angry, and encourages the downhearted. It sets a positive tone.
2. **Be optimistic.** Everyone has enough problems already. People are drawn to upbeat, solution-oriented people.
3. **Be sociable.** If you’re shy or withdrawn, focusing on making the other person feel accepted and at ease will help you be less self-conscious.
4. **Be respectful.** It’s easy to respect people who you have a lot in common with, but respecting others’ right to think and be different is even more important, as well as more endearing.
5. **Look for the good in others.** Everyone has at least a few admirable qualities. Focus on finding those, not finding fault.

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1. **Learning From Others**

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**Quote of the day:**

“I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him.” — Galileo Galilei

**Reflection:**

Everyone has at least one good quality or skill to pass on, and a wise person will look for that something. What some people have to offer is obvious, but with others it is more hidden and it must be drawn out.

Sometimes the learning experience doesn’t center on some special skill or knowledge the other person has, but from simply being around that person and partaking of his or her good qualities, such as faith, patience, optimism, or outgoing love and concern for others.

You can even learn from some people about how not to behave, what not to do, and why not to follow in their footsteps. It’s been said that a wise man learns from his mistakes, but a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others.

If you can learn to see people from the angle of “this person has something to offer that can help make me a better person,” you’ll not only learn something, but you’ll also be more likely to focus on things you respect in them and thereby build stronger and more meaningful relationships.

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1. **Spirit of Approval**

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**Quote of the day:**

“I have yet to find the man, however exalted his station, who did not do better work and put forth greater effort under a spirit of approval than under a spirit of criticism.” — Charles M Schwab

**Reflection:**

There are many examples in history of people who did amazing things, in great part due to the faith that someone had in them. That strength of faith and the belief that others had in them helped many of these notable people to overcome what seemed to be impossible odds, opposition, danger, or difficulty. They might have ended up unheard of by the rest of the world if they hadn't been inspired to achieve, and as a result of that, pressed on to become more than they were.

One such example is Robert Fulton’s mother.

*Robert was a poor pupil at school and the teacher complained to his mother. Whereupon Mrs. Fulton replied proudly: "My boy's head, sir, is so full of original notions that there is no vacant chamber in which to store the contents of your musty books."*

*"I was only ten years old at that time," said Fulton, "and my mother seemed to be the only human being who understood my natural bent for mechanics. She developed my early talent for drawing, and encouraged me in my visits to the machine-shops of the town."*

Robert Fulton was widely credited with developing the first commercially successful steamboat as well as the first working submarine.

What are you doing to encourage others to succeed?

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1. **Make Me Feel Important**



**Quote of the day:**

“Pretend that every single person you meet has a sign around his or her neck that says, ‘Make me feel important.’ Not only will you succeed in sales, you will succeed in life.” — Mary Kay Ash

**Reflection:**

Have you ever felt insignificant? I sure have at times, and I must admit, it’s not a comfortable feeling. Award-winning speaker and internationally best-selling author, Tony Robbins, says feeling significant is one of the six fundamental human needs. I believe that many people suffer from feeling unimportant. Respecting an individual’s dignity and making others feel important and significant is a great service to mankind. When you give to others in this way, you’ll reap good results.

Stop and take a moment to picture in your mind’s eye the people you are acquainted with, then think of ways you can make them feel significant.

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1. **Appreciation**

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**Quote of the day**:

“How beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it.” — G. Elliston

**Reflection:**

Though the following story on kindness is set in the 1950's when telephones had operators, none-the-less, the principle of appreciation for a service rendered is still applicable.

*A telephone operator known by her callers as "Central" was tired and her head ached. She had just succeeded, after repeated efforts, in finally putting a woman caller through to the number that she had eagerly requested, and now that same woman was calling again.*

*"Can't that woman be quiet for a minute!" she thought to herself, while she repeated, "Number, please?" trying not to speak crossly.*

*"Central?" said a pleasant voice. "I want to thank you for going to so much trouble to get me that last number. You are always so kind and obliging and I want you to know that I really do appreciate it."*

*The surprise was so overwhelming, that Central could only mutter, "I, oh, yes Ma'am."*

*Nothing like that had ever happened before. Suddenly her headache was better, suddenly the day was brighter, suddenly too, there came a lump in her throat and she reached for her handkerchief. Oh, it felt so good to be thanked!*

Doesn't it feel good when someone encourages you with a few sincere words of praise and appreciation? Don't forget to do it for others.

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1. **Being Charming**

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**Quote of the day:**

“A truly charming person never has time for envy, self-pity, or gossip.” — Loretta Young

**Reflection:**

Being charming is much more than being a polite and delightful person to be around. It goes beyond having manners, good looks, or dressing nice. True charm is something deeper.

Charm is the ability to create extraordinary rapport that makes others feel exceptional, it exudes warmth and genuine interest in others, while at the same time not being concerned with whether you are liked or not.

Charm is an attribute well worth acquiring. Some of the first steps toward this goal would be removing envy, self-pity and gossip from your life and being more concerned about building up others.

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1. **Encouragement**



**Quote of the day:**

“The finest gift you can give anyone is encouragement. Yet, almost no one gets the encouragement they need to grow to their full potential. If everyone received the encouragement they need to grow, the genius in most everyone would blossom and the world would produce abundance beyond our wildest dreams.” — Sidney Madwed

**Reflection:**

There are many examples in history of people who did grand things, became someone great, discovered something unknown, invented something ingenious, wrote something creative, sang something beautiful, inspired others, and helped to make the world a better place through their efforts, all because someone had faith in them.

One such story is the famous Italian tenor opera singer, Enrique Caruso.

*Many years ago a boy of ten was working in a factory in Naples. He longed to be a singer, but his first teacher discouraged him. "You can't sing," he said. "You haven't any voice at all. It sounds like the wind in the shutters."*

*But his mother, a poor peasant woman, put her arms about him and praised him and told him she knew he could sing, she could already see an improvement, and she went barefoot in order to save money to pay for his music lessons. That peasant mother's praise and encouragement changed the boy's life. His name was Enrico Caruso, and he became the greatest and most famous opera singer of his age.*

Give the gift of encouragement whenever you can, you just may be an instrument to change someone’s life for the better.

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1. **Simple Gestures**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Nine-tenths of wisdom is appreciation. Go find somebody's hand and squeeze it, while there's time.” — Dale Dauten

**Reflection:**

The things that are easy to do are also the things that are easy to avoid doing. The more the pace of our lives speeds up, the greater the impact the simple gestures of life will have on those most deserving of them.

Even if you don’t have the opportunity to squeeze somebody’s hand, there are other ways to show appreciation. Near the very top of my list of simple gestures that have profound consequences, is the lost art of writing thank-you notes. Most everyone loves getting mail. We all have a deep-seated need to feel impor­tant.

Sure, it takes time to correspond, but fewer acts have the power to bond people together like a heartfelt note of thanks. It cements relationships and confirms that you care.

Why not take some time to consider: how you can show more appreciation in this way, through sending an e-mail, a Tweet, a comment on someone’s Facebook page or by leaving a post-it note on someone’s desk, or yes, even through taking the time to send a handwritten note via snail-mail. Whether some, or all of these ways work for you—get started today!

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1. **You Are Worthwhile**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Every man I meet is in some way my superior.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Reflection:**

Often people will succeed or fail according to the amount of faith others express in them. If people feel that others expect them to fail, they often quit short of their potential. But if others express faith in them, even when it involves overlooking their weak points and forgiving them for their mistakes, this encourages them to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone and do better. They will want to live up to the faith you have placed in them.

There are many stories of people who showed promise and potential, but were disappointed over and over again, until finally someone believed in them and it ignited in them the strength to persevere and succeed. Bob Danzig, Publisher of the Albany New York Times, and CEO of Hearst Newspapers is one of those people.

*Bob grew up in foster homes when he was a child. During that time one of his social workers said to him “you are worthwhile.” When he first took his job at the Albany New York Times as a copy boy, the manager said to him, “you are full of promise.” He attributes his success to those two positive messages of appreciation played over and over again in his head.*

Those words gave him permission to aspire. I'd like to do the same for you now. Believe me when I say, YOU ARE WORTHWHILE. Now go show the world.

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1. **Build Confidence In Others**



**Quote of the day:**

“The truly successful person inspires others to do more than they have thought possible for themselves.” — Denis Waitley

**Reflection:**

Everyone needs to feel confident and secure in the knowledge that he or she has something to offer others. Building confidence is like building a large structure. It takes time, patience, and the right kind of building blocks. A solid foundation needs to be laid brick by brick. The blocks for building confidence in others come in various forms—recognition, encouragement, appreciation, acceptance, admiration, and trust.

Keep plenty of these building blocks on hand and use them at every opportunity. When you notice someone has done something that is commendable, don’t keep silent. When someone does a good job or is of service to you, appreciate them, voice your thankfulness. When you see someone struggling with a new or difficult task, encourage them to keep going. When you notice someone hiding on the sidelines, involve that person in a positive way.

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1. **Look For The Good**

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**Quote for the day:**

“If we treat people as who they can become, they will be inspired to rise to the level of our expectations.” — John Maxwell

**Reflection:**

It takes optimism to be able to look past others’ shortcomings—to see their potential and what they could become. The more you look for the good in people, the more good you will find. Like the saying, “Tell him he’s admirable and he will be admirable. Tell her she’s beautiful and she will be beautiful.” Having a positive attitude towards another, shows you have faith in them, and when you demonstrate this, that person is likely to try and live up to your expectations.

If you focus on a person’s bad habits or traits, it gradually takes on such importance in your mind that it eventually eclipses anything good about that person. But it also works the other way: If you can focus on even one good quality, you will discover other good things.

If you start by looking for the good in just one person, you’ll more easily find the good in others as well. It’s contagious! Pretty soon others will view you as a happy, positive person who is nice to be around.

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1. **Don't Judge People By Old Measurements**

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**Quote of the day:**

"The only man who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew every time he sees me, whilst all the rest go on with their old measurements, and expect them to fit me." — George Bernard Shaw

**Reflection:**

This quote is so applicable to life, for, almost without exception, people form a certain opinion of us in our personal or professional lives; even though we ourselves, in the natural order of events, grow, develop and constantly change. Sadly, if they are asked to express an opinion of us they are very apt to judge us by what they knew of us in a very early stage of our development. I think that all of us, as well as Shaw, would like to be judged by current standards, as we are all growing and we do certain things in stages. Each of us are like the butterfly, we have our larva stages, our cocoon stages, and our butterfly stages, and we all grow mellower, finer, more intelligent and kindly; even more beautiful in our spirits, as the different stages come and go; as our measurements change.

One of the most delightful experiences I have is finding out that people, as a whole, grow with the years. Take a tip from Shaw and don't judge people by old measurements.

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1. **Of Course You Can**

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**Quote of the day:**

"Our chief want in life is someone who will make us do what we can." — Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Reflection:**

“Of course you can” are magical words. I've dared to do many things because of these words. We have enough obstacles to fight against, including our negative self-chatter that is always willing to tell you all the reasons why you can’t do something. Therefore it is important to surround yourself with people who will believe in you and support you.

My hope is that you will find a relative or a friend, a teacher or boss who believes in you. Or, hire a coach. There will be many times in the years ahead when you will not believe in yourself, and you will benefit greatly from their encouragement and their faith in you.

It is also my hope that you will reciprocate by looking around you to find someone that you can encourage and support. There is someone who is struggling and who needs your help today. Find them, and tell them these magical words, "of course you can!"

No telling what wonderful things we can accomplish if we lift each other up and support one another. I’m looking forward to hearing about all the wonderful things you accomplish. I believe in you and know that “of course you can” do it.

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1. **Keep Playing**

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**Quote of the day:**

“It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed.” — Napoleon Hill

**Reflection:**

It takes just a few moments to make somebody's day, to help someone with their own personal aims and dreams--especially someone who looks up to you for encouragement and support as the following story reflects.

*A mother wished to encourage her small girl's interest in the piano, so she took her to a local concert featuring an excellent pianist. While her mother was engaged in conversation, the little girl wandered off. The girl's mother had the staff make an announcement about her lost daughter, but still the girl was not found, until at last, the curtains opened, revealing the little girl sitting at the grand piano, focused in concentration, quietly picking out the notes of 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'. As the pianist entered the stage he walked up to the little girl, and said, "Keep playing." As he sat down he whispered some more words of encouragement then began quietly to play a bass accompaniment, and then a few bars later reached around the little girl to add more accompaniment. At the end of the impromptu performance, the audience applauded loudly as the pianist took the little girl back to her seat to be reunited with her mother. The experience was inspirational for everyone.*

Who are you helping to reach their dreams?

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1. **The Geode**



**Quote of the day**:

“Since you are like no other being ever created since the beginning of time, you are incomparable.” — Brenda Ueland

**Reflection:**

Every person has an inner beauty, a touch of the divine. Just because you don't see it at first glance doesn't mean it isn't there. Wherever you are and whoever you are, there are treasures right in front of you. Don't be fooled by appearances.

Consider the geode. Outwardly a geode is just a rock and is usually found lying around with other rocks in some desert place. Its name comes from the Greek word geoides, which means earthy. It looks just like the rest of the earth that surrounds it, but to the trained eye, it is no ordinary rock. The gem hunter or geologist knows that inside that rock is a wonder of nature that, when the rock is carefully split open, will take your breath away.

The expert will carefully saw the rock in two to reveal the dazzling crystals inside, such as the purple amethyst. He is often not quite sure what he will find, but with eager anticipation he skillfully goes about his job and is rewarded by being the first to see the wonder that lies within.

Will you look for beauty in others today? It might take some careful work to get through the stony surface, but there's no telling what beauty you will uncover!

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1. **Grand Mama’s Glasses**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Into the hands of every individual is given a marvelous power for good or evil—the silent, unconscious, unseen influence of his life.” — William George Jordan

**Reflection:**

It is interesting how we all influence others for good or bad. I liked this little story that has a profound impression.

*A small boy was caught trying on his Grandmother's glasses. When asked by his mother why, he replied, “I want to wear glasses like Grandma's because she can see much more than other people. She can see when folks are hungry and tired or sorry, and she can even see what will make them feel better. She can see what they meant to do, even if they didn't do it right. She can see when they are going to cry, and she can see how to get them smiling again. I asked her one day how she could see so good, and she said it was the way she learned to look at things as she got older. So when I get older, I want a pair of glasses just like Grandma's, so I can see as good as that, too."*

What a wonderful influence she had on her grandchild and not only him but on me. I hope that when people view my life they are influenced as favorably.

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1. **Give Recognition**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Be so busy giving recognition that you will not need it.” — Jim Rohn

**Reflection:**

In addition to the good tip in this quote, below are a few more practical tips that can help you improve your relationships:

* Sincerely compliment others, but especially those whom you feel threatened by.
* Pass on the credit to others at every opportunity.
* Keep your cool remembering that a soft answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs it up.
* Take time to listen to others. Show interest in their situations and be sympathetic.

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1. **Expect Greatness**



**Quote of the day:**

“It is the nature of man to rise to greatness if greatness is expected of him." — John Steinbeck

**Reflection:**

Of all the millions of people on earth, there are no two people alike. You are a unique person with unique gifts and talents that set you apart as an individual. Get excited by not only the potential that lies within you, but the exceptional qualities of others.

As you rise to greatness, encourage others around you to tap into their full potential as well, and as you help others succeed, you’ll find it always comes back to you in positive ways. That’s a win-win situation.

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1. **Second Fiddles**

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**Quote of the day:**

"It takes a rare type of ability to play the second fiddle with enthusiasm." — Sir Malcolm Sargent

**Reflection:**

In today’s world with the emphasis on being the best, it is hard to remember that a lot of the credit to how successful we are goes to how good our support team is. Like the story behind the quote illustrates.

Which of the instruments in the orchestra is the most difficult to play?

*If you ask any knowledgeable musical friends you're sure to start an argument, with some voting for the harp, other voting for the oboe or French horn. But the late Sir Malcolm Sargent had quite a different answer. In his dressing room before the last night of the Proms one year he was asked that same question. Fingering the elegant carnation in his buttonhole, he pondered. "Without doubt, it is the second violin. I can find any number of violinists who can perform the job of being lead or first violin admirably." And his bright eyes twinkled. "But it takes a rare type of ability to play the second fiddle with enthusiasm."*

Sir Malcolm's words held a deeper meaning, of course. The world couldn't exist without its second fiddles. Think of the people who never hit the headlines, but cheerfully suppress their own ambitions to help a spouse or support a family, or employees who make it possible for businesses to ship on time and become internationally acclaimed. While the stars receive the flowers and the plaudits, the second fiddles are making music for the team, doing a good job, but often being overlooked and getting very little thanks for it.

Think about who are the second fiddles in your life, supporting you to succeed and give them the due respect and appreciation they deserve.

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1. **Look For The Good In People**

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**Quote of the day:**

“If you look for the bad in people expecting to find it, you surely will.” — Abraham Lincoln

**Reflection:**

The quote reminds me of the story told about Socrates.

*Socrates was sitting outside of the gates of Athens when a man came up to him and said, ‘I am thinking about moving into Athens. Can you please tell me what it is like to live here?’ Socrates replied, ‘I would be happy to tell you, but first would you please tell me what it was like in your previous city?’ The man quickly roared, ‘Oh, it was awful. The people stab you in the back and rob you blind. I am not leaving any friends, only enemies.’ Socrates frowned and sadly continued, ‘Well, you best be on your way because you will find the same thing here in Athens.’*  
  
A*nother man stopped to speak to Socrates and inquired, ‘I was considering moving here to Athens. Can you tell me what it is like to live here?’ Socrates again replied, ‘I would be happy to tell you, but first would you please tell me what it was like in your previous city?’ The man smiled and said, ‘Where I come from the people all work together and help each other. Kindness is everywhere and you are never treated with anything but the utmost respect.’ ‘Welcome to Athens,’ smiled Socrates,‘ You will find the same thing here.’*

If we look for the bad in things, places or people we will find it. However, if we look for the good in every situation, we will find that too.

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1. **Thank You For The Respect**



**Quote of the day:**

“The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing others' loads, and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts, becomes for us the magic of Christmas.” — W. C. Jones

**Reflection:**

When the very first Christmas card was printed in December 1843 at the request of Sir Henry Cole, an Englishman living during the reign of Queen Victoria, who would have ever imagined that 165 years later an estimated five billion Christmas cards would be sent each year worldwide? What a wonderful idea and it reminds me of a story told by Reamer Kline.

*One summer my family gave work to a wandering man, even though we suspected he had a problem with alcohol. In the fall, he left us, but at Christmas a greeting arrived from hundreds of miles away—no personal message, just a signature. Then in the spring he came to see us.*

*“I've stopped drinking,” he said. “I'm going to a permanent job.” When we thanked him for his Christmas card, he told us that it was the only card he had sent. “I wanted it to say `thank you,' not for the work, but for the respect you gave me. It helped me to begin a new life.”*

Stop and think who needs your respect and encouragement and then act on it.

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1. **Encourage People In Their Progress**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Always assume each and every person wants to do a better job and grow.” — Steve Farrar

**Reflection:**

You most likely have heard of Scrooge, the main character in the Charles Dickens' story "The Christmas Carol." If you ask almost anyone they will tell you he was a miserable old miser who hated Christmas. However, that is not a true representation because at the end of the story he is a generous and kindly man.

It is sad that so often we don't give people credit for the changes and growth in their life when we talk about them. Instead of seeing them in a new light we speak of them like we do Scrooge, seeing him still as the miserly old man pictured at the beginning of the story.

Unfortunately it is easier to remember the worst in people. I think we all have some Scrooges in our lives—people we see only in a bad light. Perhaps they made a mistake once. Let's not hold that against them. It's the Scrooge at the end of the story that matters, not the one at the beginning.

Let's take a lesson from the story, “The Christmas Carol” and encourage people in their progress and change.

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1. **Looking With the Eyes of Potential**



**Quote of the day:**

"My mother was the making of me. She was so true and so sure of me, I felt that I had someone to live for—someone I must not disappoint. The memory of my mother will always be a blessing to me." — Thomas A. Edison

**Reflection:**

Mothers are wonderful and have a great influence on their children. However, you can have the same good influence on others if you always look at others with eyes of potential as is portrayed in the following story.

*A partially deaf boy came home from school one day carrying a note from officials at the school. The note suggested that the parents take the boy out of school, claiming that he was "too stupid to learn." The boy's mother read the note and said, "My son, Tom, isn't 'too stupid to learn.' I'll teach him myself." And so she did.*

*When Tom died many years later, the people of the United States of America paid tribute to him by turning off the nation's lights for one full minute. You see, this Tom had invented the light bulb—and not only that, but also motion pictures and the record player. In all, Thomas Edison had more than one thousand patents to his credit.*

You never can tell what an influence you will have on a person when you have a little faith in them.