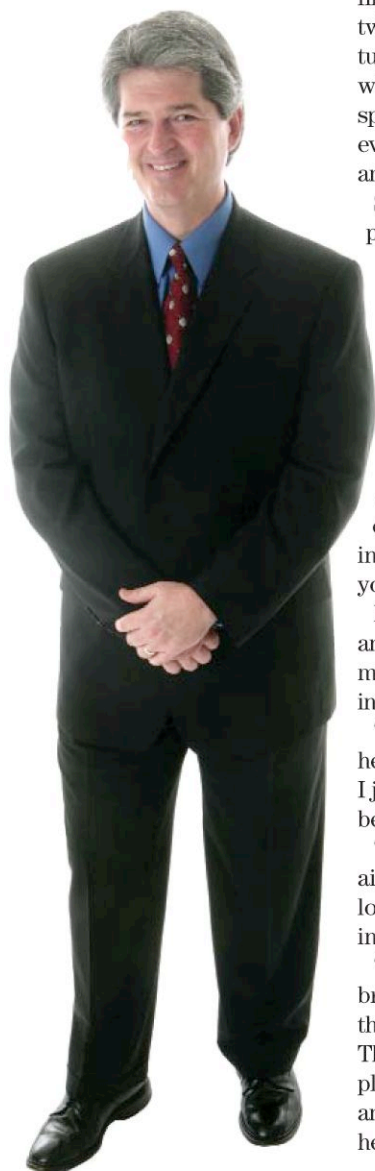


Change your perspective

MAKE THREE CHOICES CONSISTENTLY TO IMPROVE YOUR LIFE.



I had decided it was a bad day long before I arrived at the airport that Sunday night. Not only had I spent two hours hopelessly mired in traffic because of rain, but I had left the warm comfort of my home, my family and our Sunday evening meal — a favorite weekly ritual — just to make this flight.

Thanks to the rain, I now sat in the waiting area drinking coffee and listening to the flight attendant announce a two-hour delay in my departure. I was truly miserable and with every negative thought, I spiraled downward, hating every aspect of being stuck in an airport on Sunday night.

Suddenly, a whirling blur of pink and white flew past me, knocking the coffee out of my hand and spilling the hot liquid into my shoe. I had been struck by a girl about 8 years old who was turning cartwheels through the waiting area.

“Cathy!” her mother called, running after her child while also apologizing. “Come tell this man you’re sorry.”

Hand in hand, the mother and daughter walked over to me as I tried to blot the liquid in my shoe with a napkin.

“I’m sorry,” Cathy said, with her lower lip protruding. “But I just had to do cartwheels because I’m so happy.”

“You’re happy to be at the airport?” I asked, so incredulous that I forgot I was talking to an 8-year-old.

“Oh yes,” she said, her face breaking into a smile. “This is the coolest place in the world. There are lots of different people and stuff to eat and shops, and, best of all, everybody here is going on an airplane!”

Sometimes, a miracle can be as simple as a change in perspective, and a miracle is what I experienced that night. Sitting in that airport waiting area, I realized that Cathy and I were looking at exactly the same circumstances, but we had chosen to see them completely differently. While I chose a perspective that filled me with begrudging misery, her choice had brought joy so great she had to turn cartwheels to express it.

In the weeks that followed, I began to apply what I learned that night to other areas of my life.

When my morning commute was slow, instead of becoming angry, I focused on the opportunity it gave me to call an old friend and found myself smiling through the entire drive. When I faced a challenging problem at work, instead of resenting it, I focused on how grateful I was for my talented team, and before long, we found a solution together. And when my hot water heater exploded, flooding my basement, I focused on how grateful I was to have a home and the money for repairs, even as I stood ankle deep in water.

Over time, I realized that my entire life was changing simply because I was choosing to see things differently. I not only began to experience greater results, I also began to have a consistent joy that improved my performance,

my relationships and my health.

If you want to experience this same miraculous change in perspective, then you must learn to make three choices consistently.

Look for the possibilities.

Every challenge you face also brings opportunity, but if you focus only on the difficulties, you will miss the chance to grow. Train yourself to look for the good that could come from a crisis, and one day, you may see that your best moments came from your greatest challenges.

Visualize success and expect it to happen.

If you constantly envision the worst possible outcome, it’s likely to happen. Instead, expect the best. See yourself being successful and replay that scene over and over in your mind. Also, make sure that the words you speak affirm your belief in yourself and you will see your confidence grow.

Fill your heart with gratitude. Gratitude is the ultimate antidote to fear and depression. When you’re caught in a downward spiral, simply begin to name all the things for which you are grateful. Within a few moments, you will feel a lift in your spirit that is more powerful than any drug. <<

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