

## **Teamwork and Self-Development**

### **They truly do go hand-in-hand**

Every summer, I block out several days to attend the National Speaker Association's annual convention. This year it was at the end of July in Philadelphia. This was my 16th consecutive convention and every year there is someone or something that happens to make blocking the time on my calendar well worth the time.

So I ask you, when was the last time you personally decided to take time to learn, grow, and develop your job skills? I am not talking about mandatory company training, although that is important. I mean, when was the last time you chose to take time for yourself to learn something new and grow professionally?

This year, as with every year, we had some amazing speakers. One in particular we had the pleasure of hearing was the incredible Robyn Benincasa. She shared her amazing stories as a World Champion Adventure Racer and how everything revolves around teamwork.

The one quote that sticks in my mind from Robyn is, "It's the little things that allow groups of ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things together, and the magic that happens when you create true human synergy with your team."

I thought I would share with you Robyn's acronym for "TEAMWORK." As you read over these, take time to think about your current team. Do you truly have "Teamwork" or are you part of a group of people working on a common project and calling yourself a team?

**TOTAL COMMITMENT**

**EMPATHY AND AWARENESS**

**ADVERSITY MANAGEMENT**

**MUTUAL RESPECT**

**WE THINKING**

**OWNERSHIP OF THE PROJECT**

**RELINQUISHMENT OF EGO**

**KINETIC LEADERSHIP**

Two of these really stuck with me. The first was "T" – Total Commitment. Everyone starts off committed to a task or project. True commitment starts when the fun stops. True commitment starts when you haven't accomplished all that you wanted to for the day and you persist, working late rather than stopping for the day. True commitment is moving toward just one more thing, one more small accomplishment.

The other item that stuck with me was the "R" – Relinquishment of Ego. My question is, are you willing to relinquish your ego to help someone else? Suppose someone on your team is struggling. Do you take the time to personally help them out? What about the rest of the team? Does everyone pull together to help and support or is it about everyone doing the absolute best each person can do on their own with their individual parts of the project? True teamwork occurs when everyone is willing step back and set aside their own ego to help a teammate, regardless of the need or challenge facing them.

More important, perhaps, than being willing to help is being willing to ask for help. We have this belief that we are not successful if we have to ask for help. Quite the opposite is true – when we ask for help, we reach our goal and the person or persons who help us receive fulfillment. Think about the last time you offered to help someone and they said yes. How did that make you feel?

Too often, we look at teamwork as standing on the back of others to accomplish our goals, when in reality it is about lifting others up higher to accomplish more, together. Teamwork is not just in sports; it applies in our everyday lives and, while it is prevalent in the sporting world, it could not be more necessary than in our lives, personally and professionally, every single day. As the great Wilma Rudolph said, "Regardless of what you do in life, someone else helped you."

Robyn shared numerous stories displaying amazing teams who stuck together and checked their egos at the starting line. In your offices, does everyone check their egos at the door when they come in or do some bring their egos into the staff meeting?

Back to our personal development and growing, for me the statement, "If you're not growing you're dying," is not just a cliché, it is my true belief. When I went to college right out of high school, I did not want to go and really didn't push myself and it showed with low grades and lack of desire. Several years later, when I took the time to develop because I was motivated, my retention and enjoyment of learning skyrocketed. According to the book, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," the seventh habit is about us and our ability to continually develop. That is why, today, I take time to grow and learn frequently.

Now let me ask the reverse of the question above. When is the next time you are going to grow because you want to?

While self-development is essential, team-development and building a culture where the team continually grows is vital. What does your team do to grow together? To succeed, remember that while personal growth is good, growing as a team is essential.

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A diverse, twenty-year background in real estate, mortgage banking, event planning, and production, as well as radio and television broadcasting, created a perfect storm that put Gregg Gregory where he is today. Gregg works hard to ensure that different personalities can work together successfully to accomplish your organization's mission, goals, and objectives.

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