

Schoveing Series 1: Motivating and Inspiring Statistical Programmers in the Biopharmaceutical Industry

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ABSTRACT

Is it possible as a people manager to arouse enthusiasm among the associates that work with you? What creates passion, enjoyment, acceptance, and a love for the work we do in analyzing clinical trial data? Is it possible to wake up and say, "I love my job!" This paper explores 7 habits that a people manager can inhabit and also instill in statistical programmers to create a healthy and balanced work life. Each habit explores ways in which effective results can be achieved through a change in human behavior and the thought process. The paper shows that bad habits can be broken and good habits formed. We can choose the right actions, which in turn influences our reactions. We have dominion over our thoughts, feelings, and life - making conscious choices is inevitable if you want to change. The legacy and attitude we carry at work transcends to our homes, children, and family. Through learning, teaching, and applying these habits, both the people manager and statistical programmer can be assured of a lifetime of harmony, peace, and a strong character rooted in deep roots of daily self-improvement. Embrace yourself with proactive, helpful, and effective behaviors that will eventually strengthen and build others in a positive and friendly way.

INTRODUCTION

This paper has been written to help you as an individual to transcend to a life of motivation and inspiration drawn from practicing 7 habits that have been carefully selected because of their importance in our daily lives. The paper calls for each individual to move from INACTION to ACTION, concentrating on the causes and not effects or conditions that our daily lives brings us. It is true that, once you get involved in working on the level of effects, it is all too easy to loose yourself in it. The causal level should remain your primary focus and this can be achieved by being alert in the PRESENT moment.

The 7 words or habits are designed to draw you into a new way of thinking as you read. As you read, don't read with your mind only, feel the words and the response deep within. You will discover that all I am doing is to remind you of what you have forgotten. You will know explicitly that these words are true when that feeling of heightened aliveness engulfs you. You are now on a path to career success, a happier family life, and a better social life. A NEW YOU! You can succeed. Know you can. And, the secret to a successful life is to do everything in a perfect way, each moment, holding your goal or vision in mind with the unwavering faith that you can succeed.

Within each individual are infinite powers seeking expression - it is my will that this paper brings those powers into action and that each person may have the ability to meet life's situation's with poise, confidence, passion, and enthusiasm.

The habits and skills described in this paper draw its conclusions from the author's personal experience as a people manager and various books on personal development by authors listed in the reference section. We will also draw some very insightful conclusions from the inauguration speech delivered by Steve Jobs at Stanford University on June 12, 2005. Steve changed the way we look at technology you now have a laptop instead of a monitor, computer, keyboard, and mouse!

What is the Schoveing Series? It's a plain and meekly made up name that I thought would be great to come up with when I am given the chance and honor to present in major conferences! That's it to the name.

HABIT 1: COURAGE

Steve Jobs said in the inauguration speech mentioned earlier that: "Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure — these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart". Steve Jobs was a man of courage and we can cherish the wisdom in his courageous words.

Courage is the invincible determination and energy that drives an individual towards victory. The quality of courage will do anything that can be done in this world and no talents or opportunities will make you whole without it. Courage will sweep away mighty barriers and will surmount the greatest obstacles. Courage is an indicator of one's positive attitude and outlook on life. It involves remaining hopeful and resilient, despite occasional setbacks.

My MBA professor in Management while at Colorado State University, once defined courage as the “ability to tell someone to go to hell, and they look forward to taking the trip!” You should have seen the glitter in his blue eyes when he added, “And that’s what a LEADER IS!” While astounding, as it may seem, that definition is what we should strive for when we look at ourselves in the mirror each morning. I am in no way advocating for use of these exact words, far from it, what I am advocating is for that feeling of knowing yourself, your limits, your life, and mastering your thoughts. It is the ability to have dominion over your thought process which in turn controls your actions and which in turn controls your reactions. That’s confidence that grows courage.

As a statistical programmer, what talents do you bring and what value? Think about that for a moment. What is your self-perception? Can you easily and quickly use your own words to label and describe your key talents, things you are naturally good at and which have the potential to add value in the context of your work? Please take a moment to do that right now. After the exercise, you will begin to feel confident and courageous about your self-worth. When I did this exercise myself, I realized I have several strengths that I pride in and which raises my courage level. These are – the ability to assume leadership, good technical skills, the ability to arouse enthusiasm among people that work with me, ability to think, ability to do things in the order of their importance, action-oriented, deep listener, and an awakened leader. Learn to respect yourself while understanding and accepting your strengths and weaknesses. This will grow your inner strength and boost your self-confidence.

Benjamin Franklin was a man of action. Over his lifetime, his curiosity and passion fueled a diverse range of interests. He was a writer (often using a pseudonym), publisher, diplomat, inventor and one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. His inventions included the lightning rod, bifocals and the Franklin stove. Franklin was responsible for establishing the first public library, organizing fire fighters in Philadelphia, was one of the early supporters of mutual insurance and crossed the Atlantic eight times. Self-development was a constant endeavor throughout his incredible life. Benjamin Franklin was clearly a man who knew how to get things done. One of my personal favorite affirmations is from Ben Franklin, it goes like this “*Infinite Spirit, increase in me that wisdom that knowest my truest interest, strengthen my resolution to perform that which wisdom dictates*”. Beautiful, isn’t it?

HERE and NOW try the following advice from a President who knew his game:

- **Less Talk, More Action** “Well done is better than well said.” Talk is cheap. Talking about a project won’t get it completed. We all know people who constantly talk about the things they are going to do but rarely ever take that first step. Eventually people begin to question their credibility. Taking action and seeing the task through to completion is the only way to get the job done.
- **Don’t Procrastinate** “Never leave that till tomorrow which you can do today.” This is probably one of the first quotes I remember hearing as a teenager. With an impressive list of achievements to his credit, Benjamin Franklin was not a man hung up on procrastination. He was a man with clear measurable goals who worked hard to turn his vision into reality. What are you putting off till tomorrow that could make a difference in your life today?
- **Be Prepared** “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” You need a plan to accomplish your goals. Charging in without giving any thought to the end result and how to achieve it, is a sure way to fall flat on your face. Think like a boy scout. Have a realistic plan of attack and a systematic approach for getting where you need to be.
- **Don’t Fight Change** “When you’re finished changing, you’re finished.” Whilst many of us don’t like change, others thrive on it. Either way change is inevitable. The stronger we fight against it, the more time and energy it consumes. Give up the fight. Focus on proactively making positive changes, instead of having change merely thrust upon you. Wherever possible, try to view change as a positive instead of a negative.

In my working life, I once met a beautiful and wise woman in a coaching and mentoring course. As the course unfolded and developed, we learned that courage means to **WAIT – Why Am I Talking?** Just listen, deeply. Be patient. Patience *is the ability to wait without experiencing anger, anxiety, or frustration*. That day, I thanked my God that I was not born in New Jersey and was not a Jersey-Girl that honks with a finger pointed in a non-magnetic North direction when lights turn green and you have not pressed the gas peddle. Anyway, back to the story, she told us that we lacked the courage to be awesome mentors because we did all the talking! Courage was shutting up and letting the other person do all the talking. That’s what coaching is all about. Courage is found in silence. Try being silent, the results will be surrounded with peace and harmony from within.

At work, I have had the chance to let associates go – the jargon is “Lose my Losers”. That exercise requires courage. If you end up in that situation, yourself or others, just know when, and how to do it. For yourself, write it in unequivocal terms in your long term development plan that you plan to find a new venture within or outside the department. After all, you are not the loser, the company is! This will give your boss a chance to fire you or support you while you know you have the right skills to be in the industry. Remember to interview every two years so that you

taste and understand your job market. As a people manager learn to manage, mentor, and guide those who are not delivering. Otherwise, help them move on. There are greener pastures and more appreciating pastures than you are providing. Remember that and know courage is on your side.

HABIT 2: RESILIENCE

When speaking to the college students, Steve said in his closing first story that, “Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.”

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from an untoward situation. Think about the adverse reactions we have to deal with when creating the adverse events tables from the data collected in our clinical trials. Imagine, for a minute that AEs and SAEs never existed. It would be impossible! Similarly, our lives, as statistical programmers are filled with adverse situations that warrant us to code ourselves with an armor of resilience. This resilience is a power that comes from within.

Is resilience necessary as we grow older? I have a friend, a remarkable talent in the IT field, who once told me that the older he got, the more entrenched in his interests he got and would take risks only if it was an obligation. He said, “resources and the right network have to exist to bounce back. Sometimes you have no choice but to take the risk. Is the magnitude similar to a risk you took in the past? It's up to you to assess that. The key being that if you decide to bounce back and take risk, be sure to enjoy the ride to offset the potential costs!”

As managers of statistical programmers, we have to stop being moons. Moons are dead, cold things – no light - no heat – no fire – no energy. Build yourself and your associates into a resilient sun. You have it in you – manifest it. Get into action and convert yourself into a living sun. You can do it. It is within your power. Every human soul contains within it the elements of the sun – get to work and express yourself. Stiffen up your backbone, and hold your head erect. Don't be afraid to say, “I AM IT.”

Resolve to grow, build, sustain, and embrace resilience by going back to what Benjamin Franklin did:

- **Get Moving** “All mankind is divided into three classes: those that are immovable, those that are movable, and those that move.” There's a reason we use the expression, movers and shakers. Movers are the ones who take action, the people who get things done, while the immovable are sitting around scratching their heads wondering how others could possibly be so successful. Which group do you want to belong to?
- **Avoid Busywork** “Never confuse motion with action.” We are always running around doing things. We rush from one meeting or event to the next, sometimes without achieving a great deal. At the end of the day, how much of our busywork are we proud of? How much of that running around improves anyone's life (including ours) for the better? Make your motion mean something.
- **Give Yourself Permission to Make Mistakes** “Do not fear mistakes. You will know failure. Continue to reach out.” If we fear making mistakes, we become scared to try new things. Fear leaves us nestled in our comfort zone. Staying in your comfort zone rarely leads to greatness. Taking risks and giving yourself permission to make mistakes, will ultimately lead you to whatever your version of success may be.
- **Act Quickly on Opportunities** “To succeed, jump as quickly at opportunities as you do at conclusions.” Opportunities are everywhere. The trick is being quick enough and smart enough to seize them when they arise. Instead of jumping to the conclusion that something won't work or can't be done, allow yourself the freedom to ask what if?
- **Continue to Grow** “Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.” We all have vices of some description. The key is to keep them under control or preferably eradicate them entirely. Be kind to those around you, whether they are neighbors, family, co-workers or friends. Never accept that you have finished growing as a person.

As a statistical manager, try practicing the following GROW questions in your coaching sessions without providing solutions, because questioning is one of the key skills when coaching.

- **GOAL**, where are we going?
- Where are we now, **REALITY**?
- What are the **OPTIONS**?
- **WILL**, What are the next steps?

HABIT 3: GRATITUDE

Gratitude is the hallmark of good breeding! Imagine how good it feels when you get a thank-you note from your boss that glitters with appreciation and gratitude for a task or project well executed. Showing gratitude and not just feeling grateful and appreciative, is a skill that calls for attention and mastery. Why? This is because it is human nature for people to like and respond to those who show them gratitude and appreciation. In fact, they respond by giving more.

In our complex and diverse working environments where we have competing timelines and changing deliverables, the one individual who will remember to be grateful will make a mark that will make programmers get energized to do more the next time around. If you are grateful to people and if you let those people know are grateful, almost always they will give more next time. If you don't show your gratitude, chances are that there won't be a next time or that you will end up with less.

Try the following to master the skill of being grateful. *Les Giblin* offers the following advice:

- **When you say “thank you”, MEAN it.** Be sincere when you thank people. People will know who you are genuinely appreciative. They also know when you are not sincere.
- **Say it clearly and distinctly.** When thanking people, don't mumble, whisper or slur the words. Say thanks as if you are glad you are saying it.
- **Look at the people you thank.** It means so much more when you look at the people you thank. Anybody worth thanking is worth looking at.
- **Thank people by name.** Personalize your thanks by names. It makes a lot of difference to say “thank you, Mr. Njoroge” instead of saying “thank you”.
- **Work at thanking people.** This means to watch for chances to show your appreciation. The average person will thank for the obvious – the above average for the not so obvious. Remember that.

What is the opposite of not being grateful? Here are a few answers.

- “Clinical operations think we push buttons, I am not here for anyone!”
- “My children don't appreciate gifts from Auntie Elsie because she handcrafts them!”
- “I don't like this job, I am only doing it to get a paycheck and pay my bills!”
- “I hate my job!”
- “I am only a SAS programmer, so I have nothing to loose!”
- “I just do it, who cares whether there is a statistical analysis plan. It's the way we work here!”

Gratitude is not evident in such statements. Avoid building up on someone's talk that only belittles and undermines another group's work or effort. Remember ideas are like children, we like our own, *so invest in great ideas that change the mindset of all around you.* Just like charity begins at home, *gratitude begins with you.*

Among all the assets you can acquire in life, a simple rule of thanking people will take you further in your career and family life. Remember, we have a lot to be grateful for when we wake up. Our life. Our children. Our spouses or partners. Our jobs. Freedom. Our homes. Our dogs. Our cats. And MOST OF ALL, our *statistical programming career* that analyzes data that change, revolutionize, and extend human lives! That's the power of gratitude.

HABIT 4: ASSERTIVENESS

Example: When speaking to the students on the inauguration ceremony, the third story Steve gave centered on death and loss. Steve said, “When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: “If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right.” It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: “If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?” And whenever the answer has been “No” for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.”

Steve remained assertive in his career. In fact he was fired from Apple, the very company that he had started. What a blow to his ego and feeling that someone had hit his head with a BRICK! However, he never gave up and continued to believe in his dream and openly defended his position and values.

Assertiveness is a form of self-expression that involves communicating feelings, beliefs and thoughts openly, and defending personal rights and values in a socially acceptable, non-offensive, and non-destructive manner. Picture a line between the words passive and aggressive. At the middle point of this line lies assertiveness, a place where you

work with others by finding the right words at the right time to express your feelings and thoughts.

Try the following to build your assertiveness as a statistical programmer and people manager:

- **Choose to start your day with a high energy level.** For instance, if the energy scale is measured on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, resolve to start your day at Energy Level 7 or higher! This energizes your body and you are mentally ready to seize the day. Avoid complaining, criticizing, and condemning anything and anyone. Why? That will only lower energy level. Fuel your fire during the day when you find your energy level going down. Get up from your sit and take a break. Visit with your boss. Drink some water. Go say hello to someone in the office who has a positive demeanor. Go for a walk. Just do something that will raise your energy level.
- **Choose to be welcome anywhere.** To be welcome anywhere means to skillfully make a good impression. You control other people's opinion of you. Their opinion of you is largely controlled by how you conduct yourself. So, to be welcome anywhere, it is of absolute necessity that we carry and conduct ourselves in such a manner that the effect on other people will be good. What value do you put on yourself? Be proud of yourself, of who you are, of what you do, of where you work, of your heritage, and of your accent since we all carry one! Never apologize for yourself or for your situation in life. You are what you are, so handle yourself with pride and respect.
- **Choose to learn a new communication skill.** As a programmer, learn how to say "No!" and a quality no. That enables your listener to understand your point of view and why you will not accept a changing and evolving statistical analysis plan or "Nice-to-have" outputs that waste your programming time. When you say NO, provide a rationale. Don't forget to observe the body language of the person you are talking to.
- **Choose to act on the important.** We are in an environment where being REACTIVE is the norm. We have developed the bad habit of reacting to everything – emails, chats, requests, phone calls, etc. Don't react to the urgent. It has been said many times that people spend a great deal of time doing tasks that are 'urgent but not important'. This is the fine art of reacting! So, have a clear idea of what's important and if you don't know, ASK. Your important tasks should contribute to your mission, your values, your timelines, and your high-priority goals. Strive for effectiveness in your daily work by choosing to be pro-active, set important goals, thinking creatively, plan ahead, and remember to learn and renewal yourself along the way. Have fun.
- **Choose to begin with the end in mind.** The late Stephen Covey suggests writing down your end in mind before you: plan your day, start a project or meeting, begin an important conversation, write an email or a text message, or post something on social media. And yes, begin with the end in mind when you sit down with friends or family at dinner. Enumerate a wise carpenter, who will *measure twice and cut once*. Think everything through before you act. As a programmer, train yourself to realize the true progress in your personal development begins with you creating a blue print that will make your day and life easier and comfortable. And next time, a clinician asks you to "push-the-button" to make your SAS program run, tell them with your chin high and a smile, "I begin with the end in mind, I don't push-the-button!"

HABIT 5: ENJOYMENT

In this habit, we will explore what Steve Jobs said when he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He said, "No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven, don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — *which is living with the results of other people's thinking*. *Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice*. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary".

Steve, I have no permission in this instance, to add anything beyond what you have said. Reader, go back and read those words again and let them sink deep into your subconscious mind.

Maslow, a great and renowned philosopher, described a rich and enjoyable life as one that had achieved self-actualization. He defined self-actualization as the willingness to persistently try to improve oneself and engage in the pursuit of personally relevant and meaningful objectives that lead to a rich and enjoyable life.

So, how about you ardently and with persistence try the following:

- **Keep Going.** “Diligence is the mother of good luck.” Have you ever looked at a successful entrepreneur or business person and thought how lucky they are? Most of the time, luck has nothing to do with it. Hard work and sacrifice on the other hand have everything to do with it. Successful people deal with failure. They tackle their demons head on. They pick themselves up and keep going. So enjoy dealing with your circumstances, good or bad!
- **Quit your job if you don't like.** If you don't like what your are doing, QUIT. Simple. Stop telling your spouse all the negative things about your job. Stop telling your children, “I AM DOING THIS JOB FOR YOU!” STOP IT! Your children have nothing to do with your inadequate perception and view about life. Quit and find a better and fulfilling job that values work-life-balance. **Example:** I remember this very vividly of a former colleague, whose children would say with joy, when they drove by her former workplace, “Mom, that's your former job, we are glad you are not there because you have time for us!”
- **Practice the law of giving and receiving.** Look at this viewpoint as an emotion, and not as a money channel. Stuart Wilde says that “The way to ensure that you will always have enough is to forget about the money and concentrate instead of giving of yourself emotionally – that is supporting people, putting out energy, and being there for others.” So, practice listening, empathizing and really hearing what other people are saying. Don't buy emotion; just be there for them while they let it out. Don't try to fix things. No one needs fixing; they just need a strong, kindly person to listen and to empathize. **Action:** One of the best actions you can taken in relation to giving and receiving is to keep a GRATITUDE JOURNAL, writing in it every day without fail, 3 things are enough each day. This will pull abundance to you and you are making your blessings REAL!

In the habit of enjoyment, may I encourage you to build a habit of deep listening? We are challenged to listen at three levels. These are: - Listening for the feet, which is the will level. Listening for the heart, the feeling level. Listening for the head, which is the thinking level. In as much as we are challenged to listen at these different levels we are also challenged to express ourselves more clearly from these 3 levels. Ask the following questions as you listen:

- Tell me more ...
- Help me understand ...
- I heard you say ...
- Ask “what if”
- Bring order to the statements
- Ask – if you are unclear what is meant, ASK.
- Summarize.
- Establish what the other person wants.
- Explore the feelings – “You sound enthusiastic about the idea ... “
- Clarify – what is being conveyed?
- Phrase it your way – “Based on my understanding, you are saying that ... “

Just tell your listener, I only have 15 minutes, and let's make the BEST OUT of it!

HABIT 6: ACCEPTANCE

Steve Jobs said in his acceptance speech, “I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting that medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. **You've got to find what you love.** And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. **And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.** *If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle”.*

Imagine for a moment the acceptance that Steve took when he received the news that he was no longer needed. Acceptance helps your soul sing with joy. This joy flows through you to raise your level of inspiration, and doors are opened that before seemed unreachable. Acceptance means allowing the present moment to be. It is a modality that allows you to step back and appreciate what you have and not strive for things that lie dimly at a distance.

In your current role, reflect on how you work and who you interact with. If the work and people around you are not pleasing, then you can accept the situation and then do something about changing your environment. Life will be a struggle and you will be polluting the universe if all you do is complain about the work and people around you. You have the master key to unlock your potential in a bigger company and with a better salary, if only you can decide to accept the situation and do something about it.

Why not try the following serendipitous action items:

- **Know Yourself** “There are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know one's self.” Understanding ourselves is not easy. Sometimes we just don't want to see ourselves for who we really are. It's much easier to hold onto a romanticized version of ourselves or to simply view ourselves through other people's eyes. Start by being brutally honest with yourself. Follow through with understanding, compassion and acceptance.
- **Don't Self-Sabotage** “Who had deceived thee so often as thyself?” We spend so much time worrying about other people hurting us, yet fail to comprehend the damage we inflict on ourselves. If you are using negative self-talk, lying to yourself or indulging in addictive behavior you are self-sabotaging. Life can dish up enough challenges without us adding to the mix. Be kind to yourself. Treat yourself like you would a best friend.
- **Don't Give Up** “Energy and persistence conquer all things.” Achieving our goals can be downright exhausting. There will be days when you want to give up. There will be times when your energy levels flat line and you wonder why you bother getting out of bed. Yet you push forward, day after day because you believe in yourself and you have the determination and strength to back up that belief.
- **Wise Up** “Life's tragedy is that we get old too soon and wise too late.” Benjamin Franklin said this one. Who hasn't had the thought - I wish I could know then, what I know now? Unfortunately **there is no time machine**; there is no going back. The key is to wise up as early as you can to start forging a life of purpose, achievement and happiness.

HABIT 7: ENTHUSIASM

Many authors recognize that an enthusiastic attitude is fundamental to our success, joy, and personal development. Each day is a new life to a wise man, and its important to let the winds of enthusiasm sweep through you as you carry on during the day. Eckhart Tolle defines enthusiasm as being “in GOD”. Eckhart says that, without enthusiasm in your actions, your miss out on the accessible and great power of being PRESENT in the NOW. Enthusiasm can be increased through: Non-Judgment, Non-Resistance, and Non-Acceptance. Just go read the books listed in the reference section!

Today's I.Q. tests have one very important shortcoming, which is that they fail to measure “emotional drive.” Dale Carnegie in, *The Little Recognized Secret of Success* “makes it clear that low scores in the I.Q. test should never sentence you to a menial job, and a high score does not necessarily mean that you are guaranteed of success! It is possible to find someone considered having a low I.Q. who suddenly gets an idea that drives him or her to success. What does this have to do with a Statistical Programmer? We all know that programmers are people with high I.Q.s and what will drive them to success is understanding the value of *Emotional Intelligence* and the impact it has on their personal motivation and that of others. Programming should be more than an occupation or science. We should be passionate about the work we do ... changing lives, changing science, giving people a reason to live, a reason to appreciate life and be with their families a while longer. We have a very special job and each of us should savor the moment of waking up, knowing you will make a difference!

According to James Allen, the author of the book, *As a Man Thinketh*, he points out clearly that we are what we think all day long. So, if I knew what you were thinking, I would know who you are. We are products of our thoughts and it behooves us to watch what we think because to attain self-fulfillment requires that we be guided with positive thoughts and actions. It is this positive energy that helps improve our relationship with others and our willingness to be open to new ideas that can change our lives. Focusing on the NOW is important because we shut down the iron gates of the past and have little worry concerning the future. The past is what it is. You are what you are, and you can only change that by changing your thought process, and having an enthusiastic and positive approach to the opportunities provided in the present moment.

Dale Carnegie says, “One of the chief reasons for success in life is the ability to maintain a daily interest in one's work, to have a chronic enthusiasm; to regard each day as important.” When I worked at Bristol-Meyers-Squibb several years ago, we were confronted with a submission that required us to act faster than our competitor for a Leukemia drug. It was not easy, we had to shorten the timelines, stay passionate, and still keep quality with the final deliverable. As the Lead Programmer for the submission I remember showing enthusiasm and a can-do-attitude to get the submission completed. We found better ways to work, in parallel, in a single area, communicating often and

with ease, taking rests, and looking out for each other. In the competitive drug environment that we find ourselves, it is crucial that we realize the one ingredient of success. Enthusiasm.

Thomas Edison said: “when a man dies, if he can pass enthusiasm along to his children, he has left them an estate of incalculable value”. We all think about what we can inherit on the material prism, however it is true that enthusiasm will produce more than wealth and the master key that opens the storehouse of a rich living.

Let us pose for an instant and realize that as statistical programmers in the same office, we have exactly the same kind of job, write SAS programs be it for development, validation, or for submission purposes, etc. **Example:** One of the programmers in the Oncology therapeutic area is resentful, half-hearted, and glad to be home after 6pm. The other programmer works with unending gusto and purpose and each day is a new adventure. Which of the two programmers will advance in their career and do a better job? It's that easy. Come to work putting your past behind you, your criticism, complaining, and condemning behind you, and you will fill your workday with moments of pride and achievement.

Once, I interviewed a programmer in a conference several years ago, and asked what they found most fulfilling about their job, the programmer replied, “My parent's both died of cancer, I saw the pain in their eyes as they slowly dissipated to the next world, and so I when I program, its not SAS code and its not owned by anyone, its my code, my life, my destiny, and who I am today. My job provides the channel to enrich my life and provide a solution to patients who need me, because I can write a SAS program.” Powerful, very authentic, I thought. Indeed, that is true and amazing enthusiasm, the enthusiasm that achieves, accomplishes, and offers victory to us.

Enthusiasm is what brings you closer to a richer and fuller life that enables you to remember that joy and happiness is from within and not without. Be grateful for everything in your life and strive to harbor thoughts of hope, love, wholeness, courage, confidence, and success. Strive to be happy.

Under this habit, we will also explore how not to be a jerk as a manager and this is the only bookmark you will ever get. This is the only reason an employee leaves their boss, not their job. If they don't like their boss, they will leave, even when well paid, receive recognition, and have a chance to learn and grow. People don't leave companies, they leave their bosses behind. Enjoy the following the HR exit interview:

Interviewer: John, it is sad to see that you are leaving this organization. You are competitively paid and just received a very good bonus.

John: Is this confidential?

Interviewer: Definitely, yes.

John: This was my first time working for a boss who has worked in the same company for 23 years. She knows everything about the company, which is good for her. The work is good. But this boss, she has such low regard for herself and difficult to work with, I've decided life is too short to spend it working for a jerk.

Go find the job that makes you whole and happy. You have nothing to regret! Strive for greatness, happiness, your well being and that of your loved ones! Good luck and when you have a forgiving chance for your boss and those you think wronged you, watch the movie, *The Devil Wears Prada*.”

Dale Carnegie said, “Enthusiasm is more than just zest for work. It is for the whole life and living. If you have it, you have a priceless possession. Cherish it”. May I add, NOURISH it!

CONCLUSION

I can sum up the 7 Habits with one word, **ACHIEVEMENT**. It is *AWAKENED DOING* as Eckhart Tolle would put it. Inspire yourself and those around you by starting to practice at least one of the habits, then consistently work your way up to embracing more. Remember, when you practice gratitude, you change every relationship in your life. Your efforts are rewarded with a more positive and productive life.

These modalities or habits are simple to understand and easy to put into effect; it is a matter of changing your mind and opening up to allow the power of the life force within you carry you along. Be present. You will find responding to the newfound energy motivating and fulfilling. As you walk this new journey, keep this priceless serenity prayer written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr where you can see it every day:

God grant me the serenity

To accept the things I cannot change,

The courage to change the things I can;

And the wisdom to know the difference.

In closing, do something compassionate and kind for yourself every day. No, I am not talking about buying yourself a pair of new shoes; I am talking about doing something that is spiritually enriching and nurturing. Stay in the silence.

According to Tennyson, the silence provides everything you look for and to quote him in one of his poems, one line says, "Speak to him for he listens, and spirit with spirit can meet. Closer is he than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." Let transformation of spiritual and mental capacities be a part of your story in this lifetime. Life is not all about making money, there are significant memories that you want to collect while surrounded with love and sincere friendship. Step up and fill the gaps in your life. Write your Grand Plan TODAY. I AM THAT I AM, and my success story is within me to execute!

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