



American Weekly Inspiration

Thoughts for today and every day:

“If I were to give a gift to the next generation, it would be the ability for each individual to learn to laugh at himself.” Charles M. Schulz (1922-2000) cartoonist

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“Forgiving is not forgetting; it’s actually remembering — remembering and not suing your right to hit back. It’s a second chance for a new beginning. And the remembering part is particularly important. Especially if you don’t want to repeat what happened.” Desmond Tutu, cleric and civil rights leader

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“The real test of a man or woman is not how well he plays the role he has invented for himself, but how well he plays the role that destiny assigned to him.” Jan Patocka (1907-1977) philosopher and activist

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“Thou hast only to follow the wall far enough and there will be a door in it.” Marguerite de Angeli, “The Door in the Wall”

American Update:

Competition season has literally flown by so quickly. It is hard to believe that we are four weeks away from our **National Championship** at the **University of North Texas in Denton**. As of today, we have 110 teams and counting and hoping to close registration within the next 2 weeks. We will be joined by the world famous **Australia Dance/Drill Team** from Adelaide competing in the international category. We are honored to have them back at our event. We will also have the **Dallas Mavericks Dancers** as guest performers and the **Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders** will be on site to offer tryout information and sign autographs. High School seniors competing with their solos can earn the chance to advance to the finals of auditions from a representative of the DCC that will judge high school solos.

We will also have Kilgore College Rangerettes in uniform to hand out the first of the Gussie Nell Davis Awards, and numerous college dance teams competing for National Championship titles. MTV will be there filming a documentary on dance/drill teams and following several of the schools that are entered. It will be an exciting event that you won’t want to miss!

Inspiration of the Week:

Life is a Marathon, Not a Sprint

By Maggie Jackson ©2006

We live in an age of instant everything. Instant email, instant messaging, instant meals. How easy it is for the adrenaline rush (or shall I say “panic”?) to begin to nestle its way into our lives. It is no wonder we feel we must sprint to keep up with life.

If you begin to feel the “instant-everything” rush or panic, I encourage you take a moment to declare, either aloud or to yourself, “Stop! I want off the ride and I want off *now*.”

And, if it is impossible to get off the ride, perhaps we can at least slow it down. I want to share four gentle reminders to help you shift from sprinting to training for the marathon I call LIFE:

- **Do one thing at a time.** Contrary to popular belief, doing many things at once is not more efficient. It causes our thoughts to jump from issue to issue and our focus is not as sharp. Doing one thing at a time allows us to finish the action faster and more accurately.
- **Be patient and polite.** We expect things to happen immediately, both at work and at home. Adding a dose of patience and politeness to our daily routine can help lower our stress level and add a sense of more time. Smile at the person you pass on the street. Allow someone with fewer items to get in front of you at the checkout line. Hold a door open for someone who has his or her hands full...or empty.
- **Give yourself the gift of time and be lazy.** Lazy? Yes, lazy. Take time to be lazy. The act of being lazy is good for your heart, your head and your stress level. Sit down. Stand. But remain perfectly still, relax and see what happens. On your first try, you may not last more than a minute because it will seem like eternity. That’s the idea. We want more time, whether it is real or perceived.

- **Pay it forward.** Look for ways to help out in your community. Volunteer at a local charity. Read to students at a local school. There are many fantastic ways you can pay your time and talents forward.

If you can slow down from faster to fast, you might actually see what is happening around you and enjoy the present moment, rather than worrying about what is going to happen next. Remember

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