

“Work is love made visible.” – Kahil Gibran

THE FOURTH PRACTICE: Love Your Way To Wealth

Love Is The Answer

The business world has been in denial about one of our most powerful team-building, inspirational, entrepreneurial tools. It is disguised in many ways such as recognition and awards programs, bonding techniques, and the team building process. But there is no doubt about it; the greatest leadership gift is love—corporate love. Team spirit, nurturing leadership, and the enlightened corporation are all derived from a place in the heart. No matter what we call the positive forces in our business and personal life, they all have the same origin, and that source is love.

Love is the most powerful energy in the universe—much greater than all the destructive force our egos could hope to muster. All the Principles and Practices depend upon love. It is the starting point, the meaning and purpose for being and the solution to our most pressing problems.

An amazing thing occurs when you give love. Because it follows the spiritual laws of the universe rather than the dictates of this finite world, it increases. The more you give away, the more you have to give.

You can build a money-making business without love and compassion, but do not expect to find true peace of mind or self-fulfillment. Our true nature is to love. Transcending the obstacles to our love is the way to remove the blocks to personal and financial achievement. It is really quite simple, but not easy. It is so hard to capture this hidden power because it is concealed so close, within our very soul.

Meeting Attack With Love

According to the law of cause and effect, what we give (cause) determines what we get (effect) in return. A smile begets a smile, compassion reflects itself, and kindness is returned many times over. If you attack someone, you are likely to be attacked back. But what if you changed the rules and met someone's attack with compassion and kindness rather than retaliation? Meeting attack with love is disarming. It violates the laws of the world, and that is exactly what we need to do to discover Miracles at Work. If we realize the attacker is actually making a call for love, turning the other cheek in forgiveness, rather than indignation, becomes easier for us. A shift in energy from the negative to the positive happens as a potentially explosive situation is defused and the perpetrator automatically responds to your tolerance.

Meeting an attack with defenselessness is contrary to the laws of this world, which might profess, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Jesus helped us to see things differently by teaching us to "love thy enemies."

Jesus, the Buddha, Gandhi, and, more recently, Martin Luther King and former South African President, Nelson Mandella, demonstrated the power of this axiom. Meeting attack with loving detachment transforms a battlefield into a meadow of peace.

Disarming A Labor Union

As I mentioned in previous chapters, when I was president of Adams and Adams Building Services, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) attacked us with full force in an attempt to organize our members under a so-called "master agreement." This

agreement would have stripped freedom of choice from our members and forced them to join the SEIU.

Now remember, I was a former air traffic controller who, as a striking PATCO union member, was fired in 1981. I grew up in a blue collar, union family. My father, a machinist at Westinghouse Electrical Corporation in Lester, Pa., was a member of the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) for his entire working career.

Fortunately, we organized our company from the very start as if there were a labor organization looking over our shoulder. We put in place all the mechanisms that would protect member rights, including a three-step grievance system, a company-wide evaluation and promotion program, comprehensive recognition and awards, and pay rates exceeding market levels—the things that showed our corporate caring.

We were the only major janitorial company in Hartford County that did not sign the master agreement. The union and our competitors desperately wanted us in the fold. The union viciously attacked us with what they called “informational picketing” at our job sites and even at our company headquarters. Their flyers of false information said things such as, “When janitors knock over Lego block displays at Lego Systems, they are forced to stay on their own time to put them back together again.” They got into my divorce file and took statements out of context. Then, I started receiving threatening phone calls at home saying, “We know where you live. The boys are coming down tonight to give you a visit. We know where your daughter lives, she just might get a visit tonight too.” At the same time, pictures of mutilated bodies started arriving in the mail. That was when it became clear to me that the “Mob” was involved in this union. The SEIU acted without ethics or honor, but we did not attack back. The union’s whole strategy in attacking us was to divert our attention from doing our everyday business and have us fight back. Instead, we kept our focus and did not respond

with defense or attack. The situation was eventually diffused. The SEIU was unable to get us to play by their rules. We stuck by our values and ethics and maintained a position of detachment. Our company, whose founder was fired as a striking PATCO union member, remained non-union.

Corporate Hugs

I coined the term “Corporate Hugs” in our company, and when I first started using it, there were some snickers and looks of disbelief. However, it was not long before other people picked up on the idea, and it became part of our language. Literally, grabbing someone and giving them a hug is not recommended unless the receiver approves, but there are many other ways of demonstrating to the members of your team that you care for them. For instance, a recognition and awards program does not have to cost a bundle to do a lot. The intent and symbol of appreciation is the most important thing. That intent, that attitude of gratitude, can be demonstrated every day through courtesy, kindness, and by saying to your staff, “Thanks for a job well done.” This is saying *I love you*, without having actually verbalized it.

Corporate hugs can include listening to others, meeting them at their level, showing interest in the individual and their family, giving the people on the front lines the power to make decisions and the responsibility for their outcome, asking for their feedback in a regular, systematic way, and sending birthday and employment anniversary cards. People need to be surrounded by this type of corporate affection and intimacy. Yes, intimacy...when you look at another person in the eyes be willing to see to the depths of their soul and, in turn, expose yourself to them with affection and feeling. Intimacy, spoken phonetically, sounds like *in-to-me-see*. To deepen our relationships, we must be willing to allow others to

see into our experience of the world. Growing a business is an intensely intimate affair. A caring, trusting, safe place to work is critical to building corporate community.

Another thing we started in our company was to ask a simple question when we were making decisions that affected our workforce. “Is this a loving, caring thing to do?” Sometimes, “Tough Love” was required, but we tried to clearly focus on the problem and not the individual. Decisions can be made with compassion and kindness, without condemnation. This is one example of releasing the practice of being solely “bottom-line, profit-oriented,” and shifting the concentration to our most important asset, the people who make our business possible. The way you treat a person influences your corporate culture and can strengthen the heart of your company. Mix in lots of love and compassion, and success will be sweet. Contaminate it with condemnation, contempt and greed, and your company will grow bittersweet and eventually, even financial prosperity will taste sour.

By practicing defenselessness, we claim our natural power, which is anchored in the foundation of love—the ultimate force. In that place, we are open to the miracles the universe has waiting for us. If our vision comes from right intentions and desires—those that are supported by high principles and ethics—and we let go of our attachment to the outcome, the result will be even more magnificent than we expect (Principle Four). Releasing the outcome means patiently trusting that the Universe will support our intentions and desires not in our time, of which Universe knows not, but when the stage is set and the moment is right.

Loving your way to wealth is the upside down approach to a survival of the fittest—*you win, I lose*—approach to building your business. If you seek to build a lasting business with a heart, love is the only answer.

Written guidelines to transforming your company from the soul up are based on your acceptance of universal truth and ethics, which is the subject of our next Practice.

“If you could only love enough, you could be the most powerful person in the world.”

— Emmet Fox

“Conducting your business in a socially responsible way is good business. It means that you can attract better employees and that customers will know what you stand for and like you for it.”

— M. Anthony Burns