



Leadership Emails

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Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!

August 17 - September 14, 2023

Kevin's Leadership Emails are powerful explorations into personal development, both inside and outside of the practice.

Enjoy reviewing all this transformational, thought-provoking content.

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Training Up

Since my daughter, Addison, was born in 2017, I have been on a relentless pursuit of raising her to understand the importance of being a strong, kind, loving, and respectful little girl. I know how important it is to plant the seeds early on in life, stay committed to the reinforcement of these choices of character, and constantly be aware of how she is evolving. To say it takes time, energy, and effort is an understatement, as so many parents before me made claim to this reality.

I am reminded of a Proverb (22:6) I have held close to my heart since the moment I was blessed to become a father. It has been a powerful message that has helped me stay fervent in my pursuit of building a strong foundation for both my children as I prepare them for each stage of life where it becomes more and more challenging with outside forces waiting to work against you.

At the onset of fatherhood, it was hard to imagine Addison being an adult, as it seemed so far away. Yet here I am with Addison starting 1st grade this week, and Owen on her heels of starting school himself in the near future. Time, as promised to me, is now moving more rapidly than any other stage of my life. It would be so easy to become complacent, believing I have plenty of time to impart my influence. Fortunately, I have stayed focused on doing my best to be mindful of my daily influence on each of them.

I will share the message with you here as there is a tremendous amount of value in its simplicity that transcends raising children, which I will expand upon.

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

I encourage you to take a moment and switch out the subject of the Proverb from “child” to “team member,” or “friend,” or whomever you believe would be worthy of such focus, attention, and effort.

“Train up a team member in the way she should serve our patients and fellow team members, and when she has been with us for her entire career, she will not depart from it.”

You may be scratching your head saying, “Why is Kevin using a Proverb to make a point about working in healthcare?”

It would be a smart question to ask.

The reason I am sharing this with you is because I cannot emphasize enough how vital it is to pour into and train appropriately those who join your team to serve alongside you on the mission you have defined.

You have two options when welcoming new team members to your team.

You can welcome them with a well thought out system to train them in a manner that sets them up to be successful and feel as if they are contributing productively to your cause.

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You can welcome them with a welcoming wave and smile on day one, and say, “Good luck... now let’s get to work...you will figure it out as you go!”

Which way do you believe will help a team member “not depart from” the defined mission?

This applies to tenured team members as well. We all deserve the time and attention to be taught, coached, trained, and/or encouraged to move along the path you have chosen to fulfill your mission. In fact, the more “seasoned” we become (i.e., the more years we are a part of the team), the easier it is to rest on our past efforts and behaviors as we stall out from expanding our influence and Excellence.

In my heart of hearts, I believe I know what to do and how to do it, when it comes to shining light on their pathway to living a life they will be proud to have lived. Whether that be a child, a teenager, a young adult, or someone at my stage of life or beyond. It is never too late to begin, and no one will ever reach their limits with regards to study when it comes to maximizing the gifts we have been giving by God.

My motivation for creating this message for all of you is to connect with you where you are at in life when it comes to your own commitment to “not depart from” the path you want to walk as you shine your own light unto the world.

What we do together begins with the professional commitments we all make on a daily basis, yet travels far beyond the four walls of your practice, which is what is intended from the outset. You have the opportunity...DAILY...to be a positive force for good. It is up to you to choose to be the light.

Each day we wake up is an opportunity to be Excellent! Tomorrow is not promised, and the day will come that you will no longer be here to choose whether to be a light or not.

Since none of us know when our time is up, why not choose to give it our all TODAY?

Who will you choose to share your gifts with, so they do “not depart from” the ways of which you are trying to guide them?

You have a gift...be generous in giving of it. Someone out there is worth the effort!

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Being Questioned by Life

Over the past week, I found myself in a thought-provoking conversation with a doctor who was sharing a part of his story that led him to question his happiness and future desires in life. Ironically, the doctor is experiencing a tremendous amount of (worldly) success, and I sensed he was unhappy, almost to the point of being emotionally upset. One would think he would have no cares in the world, and all was well, yet it was not.

As we went deeper exploring the source of angst, the story told by Viktor Frankl in his legendary book, *“Man’s Search for Meaning,”* came to mind as he viewed circumstances in life differently based upon his experience in concentration camps. I was moved to ask this doctor to explore answers by doing the opposite of what we typically do when we engaged in pondering life.

I encouraged him to think about the honor to serve in life...

- What is being asked of you in life?

“Success” has been bestowed upon you...

- What are you meant to do with it?

Create a different energy by taking action on something different...

- What action can you take to bring to life your purpose more than it is today so it can carry you far into the future?

He was searching for the meaning and purpose in his life at a time where he felt his results, though perceived by others as “amazing,” were leaving him emptier than at other moments in life.

Our conversation continued and I could sense a shift in his demeanor by the end of it. I encouraged him to find time in solitude to put attention to this all-important aspect of life. I told him that our conversation would lead to something powerful: for him, if he put in the time and effort, and for others, as one day I would share an important message with others.

The time has come to fulfill my promise to him as a means to show how a time of uncertainty and struggle can still expand our Excellence in uncommon ways. Thus, today’s message.

I want to leave you with insightful words from Frankl in the hopes his perspective on life can lead to the expansion of your own efforts to serve others and create moments of goodness.

“It did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us. We needed to stop asking about the meaning of life, and instead to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life...daily and hourly. Our answer must consist not in talk and mediation, but in right action and in right conduct. Life ultimately means taking responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which life constantly sets for each individual.”

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Regardless of life's circumstances, the world still expects something of you.

- What do you believe is expected of you?

Regardless of life's circumstances, you still have responsibilities and purpose to fulfill.

- What do you believe are your responsibilities and purpose?

I hope you decide to ponder your role in the larger story of life in a way you never have before. I am confident the time spent will lead to something remarkable you have not considered yet about how life can use your God-given gifts.

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Imagine Yourself As...

What is life asking of you? This was one of the questions posed to you during last week's message. I found myself in a thought-provoking conversation with someone who resonated with the emotions stirred up from exploring the answers to such a profound question.

As I listened to his thoughtful responses, a past message came to mind that tapped into my soul as it created this image of strength and resolve at a moment in life when I needed it so desperately. After this particular conversation and subsequent email responses, I felt moved to share it with all of you as we all seem to be feeling "the weight of the world" more than ever before.

"Imagine yourself as a lion, a majestic creature embodying strength, courage, and regal power. Just like a lion, you too are meant to conquer challenges and emerge victorious.

Life's trials and tribulations are your training ground, refining your character and honing your skills.

When faced with adversity, remember the lion's unwavering determination.

It doesn't cower in fear; it stands its ground, ready to face whatever comes its way.

The lion's mighty roar echoes through the wilderness, a symbol of its resilience and dominance.

In your journey, you may encounter setbacks and difficulties, but let them be stepping-stones, not stumbling blocks. Embrace them as opportunities to learn, grow, and evolve.

As a lion conquers its prey, you can conquer self-doubt, fear and obstacles and emerge victorious.

Just as the lion hunts with purpose, pursue your dreams with unwavering focus.

The lion's pride works together seamlessly, supporting each other in their pursuit of survival.

Similarly, seek the support and encouragement of your loved ones, for their belief in you can be the wind beneath your wings.

So, when you feel the weight of the world, remember the lion's unyielding spirit.

Stand tall, roar with confidence, and let your actions reflect your unbreakable will.

Embrace your challenges, for they are the forge where your strength is tempered.

You are the lion in your story, and victory is your destiny."

You have a say in how your story is written and how it will end.

You have influence about the path you take on the journey towards your destiny.

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Stay the course or choose a different, more adventurous path in life.

Stay the course or choose a simpler path in life.

You can choose to submit to the circumstances of life...

Or...

You can choose to take ownership of your current circumstances, followed by channeling the spirit of the lion and go “into the mystery” with the intention to alter how your story will ultimately end.

Great news...YOU have choices...that’s the beauty of being granted free will!

What will you choose?

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Power of the Pause

I just wrapped up the 9-month project of creating my latest live event presentation, which I will deliver in 16 days at our annual Doctor Retreat in San Antonio, TX.

There are many stages of presentation development I routinely go through in order to come up with a final product I can be proud of. Throughout the process, there is one thing each stage has in common: I intentionally work in a “pause” in order to reflect, reset, and refocus my efforts. Without taking intentional moments of pause, I am certain the final product would be less than ideal, as these in-person presentations are not something that can be rushed to completion.

When all is said and done, I put anywhere from 40–60 hours of preparation into each of my presentations (I will spare you my personal, painstaking process for creating the content). For those who are true masters at content creation and presentation delivery, there are more efficient and effective ways than mine, I have no doubt! This year, I have close to 50 hours into crafting the message I will share with those in attendance at the Doctor Retreat.

The power of pausing is what allows me to go from one stage of presentation development to the next until I reach finality. A pause could be as short as a day or as long as 3 months, but no matter how much time is needed, it is paramount to create an energy of rest in order for the process to evolve naturally and with utmost clarity.

The pause is a healthy way to detach from all the emotional baggage that comes with each new stage of effort. Without an appropriate pause, there would be no editing or adjusting to create something extraordinary. Rushing the process would lead to an inferior final product.

I share this with you because I want you to take time to determine where moments of pause can help you achieve the highest level of Excellence in all you do. Consider this: as of today, we have been exploring the topic of Excellence for the last 36 weeks.

After such an extended stretch of focus and attention, the time is ripe to pause. Let’s reflect, reset, and refocus. Let’s take account of the work you have done to date, and determine where your time, energy, and attention will serve you best for the final 16 weeks of the year, as together, we surge to the finish line of our yearlong dedication to Excellence.

I encourage you to pause and ponder the following...

Where have your efforts to expand your level of Excellence led to positive outcomes?

Time spent in this energy space will reinforce your belief, spur your growth, and refresh your commitment to expanding your personal Excellence and sharing your gifts with others.

Where have your efforts fallen short of your expectations?

Is time to adjust and correct your course, or is it time to abandon your efforts altogether and transition into another area of focused attention with much greater potential for positive impact in your life?

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Time spent in this energy space will give you permission to move on without judgment or shame. Not all your ideas of expanding your Excellence will be equal. Learning to “let go” after a careful assessment is powerful and freeing. There is brilliance in subtraction when done with discernment.

Pause.

Take a breath.

Let go.

Press on.

There is a powerful peace awaiting you within a pause.

You deserve to experience this peace.

Give yourself the kindness of time and space to breathe life into your soul.

You deserve that fresh air.

Give yourself a strong platform to perform with a level of Excellence you will look back on and be proud of.

You deserve to enjoy being your very best.

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Slow Down, Think Deeply

Take a moment to pause...last week's message struck a chord with many who took the time to engage with it, and it resulted in powerful observations on additional uses for "the pause" beyond my one interpretation of it. It also led to several team discussions; discussions I was even asked to participate in. Much goodness has come from such a simple, yet often overlooked, principle of life.

During these discussions on "the pause," there were two people in particular who inspired today's message through an insightful question:

During "the pause," are you to be still and quiet, or are you meant to think about where you are at and what you are experiencing?

I was impressed with the intention of using "the pause" in its most beneficial way. My response was based on my study of my faith and of a stoic's approach to understanding life.

I want to share a thought-provoking excerpt from the book, "Stillness is the Key," by Ryan Holiday, which I believe helps put context around the use of pausing to be still as you embrace the moment you are creating.

Holiday begins by sharing a story about Fred Rogers, host of the famous children's show, "Mr. Roger's Neighborhood," and his intention for teaching kids, and adults, effective ways to handle the many circumstances we all face in life. Rogers was bullied as a kid, which led him to take on this mission to help kids be more confident and content as they grow up.

As the story goes, Rogers wrote a message to a struggling friend by encouraging him to, *"Just think. Just be quiet and think. It'll make all the difference in the world."*

The majority of the population has lost the ability and desire to think. The submission to distractions and instant gratification has created a vast chasm of unhappiness and discontent because we have lost the skill and desire to spend time with ourselves working out all the circumstances of life. I will attest that taking time to think—or as some may say, overthink—about all the happenings of life has given me peace and a feeling of content knowing I am giving myself the best platform to produce favorable outcomes.

Holiday writes about the conflicting views on thinking...

"There is, on the surface, a contradiction here. On the one hand, the Buddhists say we must empty our minds to be fully present. We'll never get anything done if we are paralyzed by overthinking. On the other hand, we must look and think and study deeply if we are ever to truly know (and if we are to avoid falling into the destructive patterns that harm so many people).

In fact, this is not a contradiction at all. It's just life.

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We have to get better at thinking, deliberately and intentionally, about all the big questions. On the complicated things. On understanding what's really going on with a person, or a situation, or with life itself.

We have to do the kind of thinking that 99% of the population is just not doing, and we have to stop doing the destructive thinking that they spend 99% of their time doing."

A final message from Holiday comes later on after telling a story about the moment where a situation becomes clear in your mind...he uses the word "satori," which means, "an illuminating insight when the inscrutable is revealed, when an essential truth becomes obvious and inescapable." He is using "satori" as a motivator for people to spend more time in intentional thought.

"Couldn't we use more of that (satori)?"

Well, no one gets to satori going a million miles a minute. No one gets there by focusing on what's obvious, or by sticking with the first thought that pops into their head. To see what matters, you really have to look. To understand it, you have to really think. It takes real work to grasp what is invisible to just about everyone else.

This will not only be advantageous to your career and your business, but it will also help you find peace and comfort."

Peace and comfort. What a beautiful vision of what can be achieved by actively pursuing mastery in the lost art of thinking. I can confirm this state of mind is achievable and well worth the effort.

Seek solitude.

Pause.

Think.

Experience peace and comfort.

Enjoy the journey of pursuing this comforting state of mind.

Once you feel a level of comfort in your own process and ability to achieve a reasonable version of this state of mind, please, encourage others to try it as well. It is a gift worth giving!

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