



Leadership Emails

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Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!

August 22 - September 12, 2024

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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If (Part 2)

It was encouraging to receive so many positive responses to the previous message: If (Part 1). There's so much wisdom and meaning in this poem; it's a worthwhile use of our time to go through it in such a detailed fashion.

In Kipling's second stanza, he traverses into the realm of the mind. There are forces that can work for or against you depending on the choices you make: the choice of where you apply your focus and effort in any given moment.

If
(Excerpt No. 2)

*If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn out tools;*

Let's begin to discover more wisdom...

*"If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;"*

Have your dreams be an inspiration, not an obsession.

Far too many people overly identify with "what's to come," instead of finding their worth in who they are today and the blessings they already have. I'm all for dreams, as long as they are used as a guide for the future, not the final destination.

The only comparison that matters in life is this: are you better today than you were yesterday?

When your life comes to an end, the effort you put into your daily legacy is what will define your future legacy.

Developing your dreams will be infinitely easier if you're willing to dedicate space in your life to spending time in thought.

I appreciate those who are willing to pause and think...making time to be still and listen.

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Thoughts and ideas are the beginning to creating goodness, yet, if we stand motionless in these ideas, the time spent will be worthless. Action is the necessary key to bring life to your efforts in thought. The goal is not the idea alone; creating an outcome is the mission.

*"If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;"*

One of my favorite moments in Kipling's poem is his encouragement to welcome the "good and the bad" in life with the same level of enthusiasm. I am a living testament about embracing the time you spend in your valleys as something extraordinary awaits you on the other side. Of course, please celebrate the "triumphs," while also embracing the "disasters."

*"If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,"*

Have the courage and resolve to endure the manipulation of others' intention to cause you harm.

Nefarious people will take your words out of context, alter their meaning, or use them against you.

Keep your head about you during these times!

Truth will always prevail.

Do not allow the deceitful people around you to take you out.

Do not fall into the traps set to derail you from being a force for good.

Be mindful of those who are only out for their own personal gain, for their intentions are never based in the good of all.

Be resolute!

*"Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn out tools;"*

Certain people in your life will intentionally try to destroy the good you have created.

When moments like this arrive, be steadfast in your pursuits and be prepared to carry on, even in the midst of destruction.

We all have to fight the negative mental and emotional forces working against us. When you are on a mission in life, based in good intentions, destructive forces will show up more often and with more fire than those who go through life with no purpose at all.

Be steadfast in your beliefs...stand strong in the face of adversity!

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If (Part 3)

Your continued responses have been thought-provoking...I appreciate each of you who are taking the time to share the meaning you find in this poem; I have enjoyed reading and pondering all you have to share with me!

Let's jump right into Kipling's third stanza, where he weaves his words deep into the depths of perseverance.

If
(Excerpt No. 3)

*If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";*

Let's continue our journey together as we explore the meaning of Kipling's powerful poem...

*"If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss,"*

Simply put, when life deals you a difficult hand, rise above adversity without complaint.

Life will always be a mystery, with uncertainty being a constant.

Having the fortitude to work through the tough times without bringing the rest of the world down with you is a display of strength and resolve.

We all will face loss: relationships...finances...many aspects of life come and go.

Steadiness in navigating the grieving process will give you the best chance to endure it all with a rare kind of peacefulness; gracefully making it through the storm.

*"If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on';"*

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Having the fortitude to exert your will in order to press through the difficult times will heavily influence your outcomes in life.

Remain hopeful!

Have faith in yourself to persevere through it all!

Believe the journey through the valley will be worth it in the end!

Never, ever give up!

Remain steadfast and true to yourself...your commitment to your integrity and character are what will define you when it is all said and done.

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If (Part 4)

Today, we explore the final stanza in Rudyard Kipling's powerful poem, "If." I have read this poem and listened to the narration often, each time leading me to delve deeper into the meaning and impact it has on me as I navigate all life has to offer day in and day out. The poem encourages me to check in on my own "words of wisdom" I pray I will leave behind to all those I am blessed to have relationships with in my lifetime.

The spirit of Kipling's words have always left me pondering my own commitment to my chosen fundamentals in life. During this four-week mini-series, I have used my earlier writings from this year to check in on how I am doing when it comes to my own "Foundation and Framework" I choose to use as my guiding principles in life. I picture my son and daughter reflecting on my life when I have long passed, praying I have instilled in them the virtues they would be proud to carry on from their dad.

If
(Excerpt No. 4)

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!*

Let's wrap up our breakdown with this final stanza...

"If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,"

Do not allow the opinions and actions of others to influence you in a destructive way.

Stand firm in your convictions while living life with integrity in the pursuit of being a light unto others.

"Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;"

Remain humble...keep your ego in check, as arrogance will lead to poor choices in life.

"If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;"

Remain unattached to the opinions of others...do not allow any one person to destroy your sense of self-worth.

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This reinforces one of my personal mantras in life: “I will no longer allow a single person or circumstance to rob me of my joy in life.”

“If all men count with you, but none too much;”

Treat everyone with kindness and respect, without judgment of worth.

Refrain from allowing the opinion of one person to influence your opinion of yourself.

*“If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run—
Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,
And—which is more—you’ll be a Man, my son!”*

Every minute in life is equal and valuable...it is up to you to do with each 60-seconds as you desire.

We all are given opportunity to use time.

It is not for me or others to judge how you use it.

It is up to you to determine how you steward this greatest of gifts.

My profound hope is that you use your time wisely and leave no opportunity for regret!

Thank you for going on this journey into “If” with me...I pray it was time well spent!

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The Voice

Since I last wrote to all of you, I have had an unusually high amount of “simple” conversations. When I say “simple,” I mean highly focused and influential conversations that are getting to the core of what is getting in the way of performing at a high level of Excellence. There seems to be a “heavy” energy that is traversing coast to coast. Please, do not misinterpret my intention for today’s message...there is much to celebrate! But when we are focused at performing as true champions, there is going to be a higher sense of awareness to all matters of consciousness: those who do connect with our standards and bring unwelcome distractions, they can become louder and more obvious to us than those who bring us peace.

The common denominator in all of these conversations has been that small, yet mighty voice inside our head (which Steven Pressfield refers to as “Resistance”) that is working overtime to stop us in our tracks in an effort to derail us from being catalysts for good. This voice is creating feelings of doubt, anxiousness, uncertainty, and countless other unwarranted emotions. The good news is, all is well and all will be just fine. In fact, it will be Extraordinary, should we choose it to be!

As I engaged in all of these conversations, I did my best to guide each person to their own discovery using a process each of you can utilize privately when you find yourself battling “the voice” at any time.

To begin with, it is important to define what it is you want in order to be able to determine what is getting in the way of achieving what you desire. When we are too broad or general, it becomes difficult to hone in on the source of “Resistance.”

Once you have clearly defined what it is you want to accomplish, we want to transition into defining what it is we need in order to complete the journey. It could be knowledge, an encouraging word, a new perspective, a moment of solitude, the list goes on. The key is to determine WHAT (or WHO) is going to help you push through what is in the way of you making progress and feeling joy along the way.

While in the midst of self-reflection and discovery, it is important to calm down “the voice.” Personally, I pray for God’s help to settle the evil force that is spiraling in my head. You may utilize meditation, speak out loud in private as if “the voice” is sitting next to you and staring you in the face, or simply breathe out the unwelcome energy that currently exists within your mind. Whatever your choice of tactic is, go for it with exuberance in order to push through swiftly.

Most importantly, DO NOT believe the lies “the voice” creates. It is so important you do not fall victim to believe things about yourself that are simply untrue! This is where the majority of people fall into the abyss and never return. Be strong and resilient to push through when “the voice” is loud and deceiving.

Once “the voice” is neutralized, take advantage of this moment of calmness and get back to doing what you know needs to be done in order to make progress with whatever your objective is...pursue goodness during the endurance phase!

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“The voice” can create a gap between your capabilities and your execution, so it is important for you to take time to shrink the gap so you can be proud of your actions and outcomes. Do not allow “the voice” to win!

Remind yourself of your Purpose: you have Gifts, and they are meant to be shared with others. Give them away in abundance!

Most importantly, put energy towards all of this TODAY...there is no benefit to waiting any longer.

Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!