

Opening words: Gray hymnal #434

Closing words: 686

15 - 20 Minutes

Synergy Quote: “Ineffective people live day after day with unused potential. They experience synergy only in small, peripheral ways in their lives. But creative experiences can be produced regularly, consistently, almost daily in people's lives. It requires enormous personal security and openness and a spirit of adventure.” - Stephen R. Covey.

Mission Statement Quote: “The most effective way I know to begin with the end in mind is to develop a personal mission statement or philosophy or creed. It focused on what you want to be (character) and to do (contributions and achievements) and on the values or principles upon which being and doing are based.” - Stephen R. Covey.

Mount Success

Let's climb Mount Success. Along the way we have some stops that help us to achieve our goals.

Synergy: I'm going to climb mount success and I want you to climb with me! Why? In part because it's lonely at the top. A lot of people want to get there, but some people never even start the trip. But I also want you to go with me so that we have synergy. You *point*, you *point*, and you *point* all know some things that I don't. I also know some things that you don't.

Two of my biggest weaknesses are my memory and my math skills. I could use your help to make sure I don't forget to bring something important, like water. I could also use your help to make sure I brought the right amount of food and fuel.

Two of my strengths are my sense of direction and my initiative. I'll help make sure none of you get lost on the way. I'll help make sure that when we find ways to better get to the top that we take action to enact them.

In the finale of the 4th season of the popular reality TV show, *The Apprentice*, two competitors were left, Randal and Rebecca. Donald Trump had to choose between these two competitors as to who would be his next business apprentice. He told Randal that he was hired. Then he asked Randal if they should also hire Rebecca. Without hesitation Randal replied, "No, I firmly believe this is *The Apprentice*, not *The Apprenti*." This is the opposite of synergy. Synergy is a win/win paradigm whereas Randal acted out the win/lose paradigm. 40 MIT students were polled the next day and nearly all said they would have done the same thing. Our youth are being taught that winning is all that matters. Perhaps they should learn the golden rule instead. Those students would need to learn the value of others in order to climb with us.

Mission Statement: We are on the trail now. Are you excited? Now we need to figure out what our mission is. Is just getting to the top all that matters? Are there things we want to enjoy along the way? Mission is about who you are and how you want to live your life. To reach the top as a group we should have a mission statement. We should define how we want to get there. If we ever need to prioritize our actions we can refer to our mission statement to make the choice that's best for all of us.

Writing your mission statement down brings it together so that you can reflect on it and you can share it with the people in your life. Many people include god in their mission statement, but as I'm a humanist my mission statement is about people. Ultimately I believe in the goodness of all people.

Here is my mission statement:

My mission is to live responsibly, to care for those around me, and to explore life to its fullest. I will use the following tenets to achieve my mission:

- I don't take people or things for granted.
- I accept that there are other points of view (and paradigms) and strive to understand them.
- I avoid having expectations and the expectations I have of people I clearly outline to them.
- I will not accept another person's conclusion as true unless I concur with their reasoning.
- I believe that (disregarding a few handicaps) everybody is equal and therefore can accomplish whatever they set their minds to.

Any group can have a mission statement. Your family can have a mission statement. Any committees that you are on can (and probably should) have a mission statement. Here's Channing's statement:

To accept and honor free expression of religious beliefs.

To celebrate who we are and how we differ.

To encourage spiritual growth.

To be a caring church family that works together to make the world a better place.

Channing's mission statement helps us to define who we are as a congregation and how we want our future to look. This is especially important in this time of transition, as we will soon seek a new minister who will be with us for many years to come.

Vision Statement: The trail is starting to get narrower, less people have been here. It's getting colder as the atmosphere thins. Here is where we need a vision statement. What are our short term plans that help us fulfill our mission? By short term, I mean a 2 - 5 year plan.

Your vision statement should compliment your mission statement. In college my vision statement was to graduate. With my daughter, my vision statement is to get her potty trained as soon as possible. If I were to write a vision statement for Channing it would be, "to transition from Amy's ministry, to learn from our interim minister, to define what we need from our next settled minister, and to transition to our next settled minister."

A vision statement is something that should be replaced when you have fulfilled your vision. Of course, do not be afraid to change your vision statement if it no longer works for you. After my first marriage ended I spent a lot of time trying to find somebody to have a relationship with. I consistently found myself dating people who liked me, but for whatever reason didn't want to be involved in my son's life. I eventually decided to stop searching for a partner because I felt it was unrealistic to find somebody that wanted a serious relationship with a single father. A few weeks after I made that decision Nicole sent me a message on OkCupid, an online dating site. I was a little afraid of talking to her because I had just decided to give up searching, but I wouldn't let my past keep me from opportunities of the present.

Time Management: It seems like we just began our climb, but I can see the sun getting lower in the sky. This trail is taking longer than we thought. We need to make sure we spend our time carefully if we are going to make it to the top.

Our mission statements and vision statements help us prioritize the importance of urgent tasks, and make sure we take time for non-urgent tasks as well. While urgent tasks have to get done, non-urgent tasks are important and beneficial too. For example, changing a baby's diaper is urgent, it has to be dealt with right away. At times we can feel overwhelmed by urgent work. But the non-urgent work can prevent some of the urgent work. The non-urgent task of

changing oil will make sure we don't have to deal with an urgent issue like the car engine overheating, or leaking. The non-urgent task of relationship building with children can help reduce the amount of urgent tasks we have to do to repair relationships that we did not foster. The time spent on non-urgent tasks often leads to new opportunities.

Big Picture: The paths are beginning to fork now. Some of the trails aren't well marked. Some of the trails haven't been maintained for awhile. Now we need to see the big picture!

The difference between a leader and a manager is that a manager will make sure we have everything to be able to get to the top as efficiently as possible. A leader will make sure we are going in the right direction.

To understand the big picture we must become aware of how we impact others. Without the big picture we can't get up this mountain. We have to think outside the box and try to understand as much that goes on around us as possible.

Bode Miller is considered one of the greatest skiers of all times. His father, Woody Miller, is considered to be an aging Hippie. Woody Miller taught his son the values that led Bode to casually dismiss his poor performance at the 2006 Olympic games. When Tom Brokaw later said to Woody, "So sorry this didn't work out better, Woody." Woody replied, "Yeah, too bad. But can I ask you something? Why isn't the country paying more attention to global warming? I don't get it." Woody didn't understand it because he thought that in the big picture his son's performance was less important than the issue of global warming. In two generations will anybody remember Bode Miller? In that same amount of time how much devastation will have been caused by pollution? Seeing the big picture will help us remain focused on our mission and integrate experiences that contribute to our mission, but don't redefine our mission.

Initiative: The trees are starting to thin now. We can't see the top but we can feel that we're close. This is where initiative comes into play. When we foresee an obstacle by understanding

the big picture we then need to find and enact a solution. We expected that there would be some trees lying on the path ahead because we understood the bigger picture. Now we need to figure out if we are going over them, under them, around them, or cutting through them.

The company I work at has developed a culture where when people come up with ideas they should volunteer themselves to enact them. This is often a path to promotion. A member of management does not want to hear what's wrong. If all they ever hear about is what is wrong then the people saying what is wrong are burdening management with more work. Instead the person who finds a problem should offer one or more solutions. They also should offer to enact the solutions, if management agrees to them. This is a win/win for management and staff members. For staff members this can give them exposure to new work that will help their careers, while at the same time they get the satisfaction of having resolved an issue. For management this means one less problem to overcome, and possibly a helpful view into how to grow the person's career.

We can't stop now. We're almost there. We have challenging work to do and we can do it, especially if we work together. Without the work we'll never finish.

Continuing Education: It's beginning to get rocky. The plants struggle here to find soil. We can see a tree that is living on top of a rock.

According to the US census bureau; my generation is the most educated. I personally did little to contribute to that figure as I left Rhode Island College at the end of my second year in order to start my career. As important as formal education and graduation can be, there is always more to learn. There are gems of wisdom in books, online sites, trade publications, and conferences. New ideas come out regularly which can help make sure we continue to, as Stephen Covey says, "sharpen the saw".

I try to read two non-fiction books a month. I select books that will help me at work or at home. Next month I plan to read [Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner](#)

[Strength in Children](#) by Linda Lantieri. I expect to learn from the book a couple of useful ways to improve the emotional intelligence of my children. I also plan on reading [Advanced Software Testing - Vol. 1](#) by Rex Black to find some ways to improve my group's quality assurance testing.

When I was involved with the video games industry I read every issue of Game Developer Magazine, read articles on the industry website Gamasutra, went to a Game Developers Convention, and regularly attended the Boston chapter of the Independent Game Developers Association.

Whether you read books to further your knowledge, attend conventions, or take continuing education classes, it's important to keep learning throughout your life. Education is fun too.

Ownership: We've reached the tree line. Only rock and ice are between us and the summit. This portion is dangerous. If we slip here we may as well not have come. Let's use ropes so we can look out for each other as we climb. This area is about ownership.

Let me give you an example of ownership. Several months ago a bad software bug was resolved by my company. The bug had caused some patient images to be lost. I created a utility to identify what patients were missing images. Because of an error I made, the clean-up routine deleted many more images than the original issue. I could have blamed the error on one of my employees. I could have ignored it and pretended it wasn't there. Instead, I apologized, and explained what the error was. I helped create a way to resolve it. I met with my employees to brainstorm how we could avoid this type of issue from re-occurring. We came up with two ideas that were not just useful to my group, they were useful to the whole division. I then spread the word throughout the division about what the mistake was and how others could also learn from my mistakes.

If I had slipped here I probably would have been caught. Somebody would have found out and then I would have lost people's trust. I have also set an example at work that it's more important to learn from mistakes than to cover them up.

With examples like Nixon, Enron, and AIG, it is already hard to trust people. By owning up to mistakes, people will be able to trust each other. The bad examples of ownership we often see are of people taking shortcuts for the quick payoff which causes them to lose in the long term.

That's it, we're at the top now. We used synergy to work towards a common goal. We created a mission statement to define our trip. A vision statement was used to clarify our short term goals. The big picture helped make sure we knew where to go. Initiative made sure we kept going. With continuing education we learned better ways to attain our goals. Finally with ownership we made sure to make the tough yet ethical choices to get us to the top without compromising ourselves or others. I hope you feel our trip was as successful as I do.

===== Keeping the below Just In case =====

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Crying baby Kitchen fire Some calls 1	Exercise Vocation Planning 2
Not Important	3 Interruptions Distractions Other calls	4 Trivia Busy work Time wasters