



POWER CHOICES[©]

Guiding People and Businesses to Choose Passion & Performance for Amazing Health & Wealth

Choose to Reflect

September 2005

Power Choice #8– Reflection– Laura Novakowski

Almost 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "One travels more usefully when alone, because he reflects more." As I continue on this journey of growth, I realize that **choosing to reflect** is one of my most valuable life choices.

Recently, I left a daylong meeting feeling particularly dissatisfied and distracted. There had been a lot of behaviors and emotions in the meeting that left me feeling like less than adequate. My vision to help people to enhance their planning, performance and practices had lost some significance. And so the long drive home on the country roads was more conducive to quiet thoughts than to cell phones and radios.

As my mind started to slow down – there is always some degree of mental overload after these conference, especially in this meeting where there was a great deal of energy and emotion invested – I allowed myself to **replay** the events. And so started to reflect and I realized three major issues arose for me

First, the meeting was scheduled at a very busy time for everyone and we didn't take time to "**catch-up**" with each other. As much as I'd like to believe I am the center of the universe, I'm not the center for everyone else, they have lives and challenges and In retrospect taking extra time making each other comfortable – using the old standby, an ice-breaker – might have helped us to relax, loosen up a little and get reconnected.

Secondly, whenever we had a break, we broke into cliques and launched into criticism. Remarks such as, "**she** was poorly prepared", "**they** don't know what they are talking about" and "they didn't ask **me** for **my** input" floated around the dining room. In reflection, I now believe that the downtime didn't allow us to recharge or relax, it only added to the confusion and the distrust. As I look back, we could have taken five minutes before breaking to allow people to express their feelings and concerns openly.

Thirdly, I felt that as we adjourned the conference we left with a too many loose ends. We had covered a lot of information and didn't really clarify collectively how to best move forward. Taking the last half hour of the meeting to "debrief," ask questions and leave with a call to action that would have reunited and refocused the group.

Traveling those country roads helped to me to relax, recharge and re-evaluate. My next encounter, the very next day was so much better because I chose to **reflect** and not engage in the blame game but look at the take-aways that certainly would add value to my life and my work.

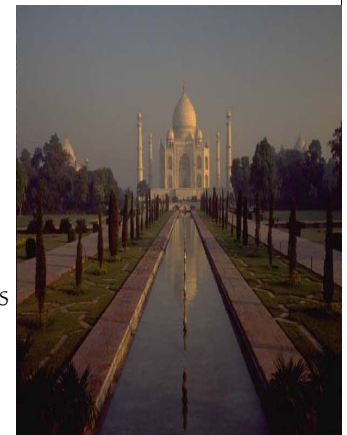
So how about you, can **you** see value in this Power Choice—**Reflection**?

Choices to Ponder

- I choose to **invest** in quiet time!
- I choose to **review** experiences and events!

The outer conditions of a person's life will always be found to reflect their inner beliefs"

James Allen



A great book:

MEDITATIONS

Marcus Aurelius

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Reflection the Key that Unlocks Self-Awareness

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

"The state of your life is nothing more than a reflection of your state of mind."

Wayne Dyer

Recently I was asked the following question: If you could only teach one skill, what would that be? My colleagues from Human Resources to Consulting to Executive Coaching responded to this question by supplying specific skills such as active listening, asking good questions just to name a few. Their responses were thorough, eloquent and logical, but not even close as to how I answered the question.

The question was excellent. Individuals were required to reflect before they could respond. Albert Einstein wrote many years ago "Without deep reflection, one knows from daily life that one exists for other people." Thousands of years before Einstein Confucius stated that "study without reflection is a waste of time; reflection without study is dangerous."

As Einstein indicated, reflection is necessary for individual self-awareness. And yet, how much actual time do we as individuals, small business owners, entrepreneurs, parents or executives actually spend on reflection? The harried pace of today's world provides a convenient excuse for not taking the time to reflect.

How often do we hear:

- *I'm too busy to be bothered with that?*
- *I have fires to put out?*
- *I can't think about yesterday because I need to deal with today?*
- *Why did I do that because everybody else does that?*

*When was the last time that you reflected? For me, it was at a recent wake and funeral of a dear man who wasn't a relative, but someone whom I had lovingly called Uncle for over 50 years. At the wake, a slide show was presented showing pictures of his life. My family was in many of those photographs and I reflected upon those childhood experiences. This reflection caused me to shed some quiet tears as I re-connected with those almost forgotten memories. I realized how much I had changed and how **that** change had positively affected me.*



*So, if you could teach one skill to your child, student, friend, employee or even yourself, what would you teach? For me, there was only one answer – **Awareness through Reflection.***

Leanne Hoagland-Smith, **ADVANCED SYSTEMS**, the Learning & Process Specialist

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Complete the following Power Choice Inventory...

- Do you take time to mentally review a past experience or event?
- Can you see the value in the "instant replay"?
- Can you look at a situation and determine actions or behaviors that you can improve upon?
- Are you able to look at facts without personalizing the outcomes?
- Can you critique situations with dignity and mutual respect?
- Can you proactively contribute in a group with honest feedback?
- Are you willing to take 24 hours before giving a response?
- Are you willing to say up front "I need more time to think about this?"

Conduct your "Choices Inventory" in conjunction with the action planner found on the last page of this newsletter. Finding **your** inspiration will help you to find your *magical potential and go beyond purpose to achievement* to making your dreams a reality and making conscious choices that will crystallize the life **you** desire.

If **you** are interested in learning more about processes that help you and your organization *inspire* new ways of looking at every situation, **implement** Power Choice strategies, and **improve** results, please contact us at:

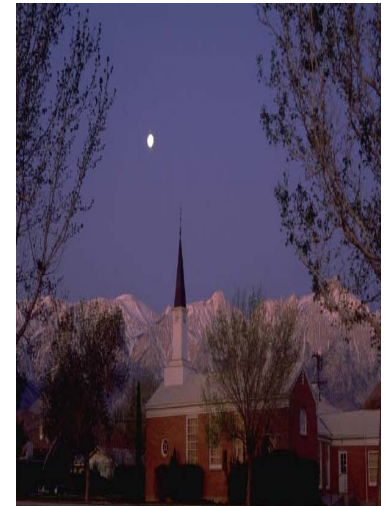
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"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect."

Mark Twain



"It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character, and judgment"

Cicero



Action Plan Exercise: Power Choice #7 – Choose to Reflect

1. Describe a recent **disturbing or unsettling** situation (Example: A non-productive meeting):

2. Describe the aspects of the situation that you felt were **negative** or unproductive: (Example: Lack of an agenda)

3. Describe at **least 3** aspects of that same situation that were positive :

4. Describe how reflecting on both the negative and positive aspects of the situation can and will help you in the future:

If you are interested in a keynote or seminar to excite the
M.A.G.I.C.A.L.™ Potential: 7 Capacities for Going Beyond Purpose to Achievement

for you or your people, please contact:

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