

PowerChoices ©

PURPOSE, POTENTIAL & PERFORMANCE

February 2010

UPHOLD

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Calls to Action:

I will take one more step to uphold something important to me in my personal, professional or business life.

Look for March's **Power Choice© Gather**

Power Choices© Comments

"I thoroughly enjoyed each of these articles. They are right on target."

Deb O. (Pennsylvania)

January has ended and we are now in the flow of the year (or not) depending on the challenges and changes that are confronting us.

The topic for February is **UPHOLD**, the second topic to support 2010's theme of **Augmentation**.

UPHOLD

(According to Dictionary.com)

1. to maintain, affirm, or defend against opposition or challenge
2. to give moral support or inspiration to

Once you have identified what you would like to augment in your life. Taking the second step is to **uphold** basic tenets, principles and actions to ensure that financial, physical, education, career, family, social, life purpose or whatever goals you have set for 2010 are met.

If interested, please consider continuing to read.

"The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just."

Abraham Lincoln
United States President (16th)

"In order to be happy we require all kinds of supports to our self-esteem."

Bertrand Russell
English Philosopher, Logician

"Recommend virtue to your children, that alone - not wealth - can give happiness. It upholds in adversity and the thought of it and my art prevents me from putting an end to my life."

Ludwig van Beethoven
German Composer

Consider Upholding What is Important to You!



Uphold Your Belief in Yourself!

Laura Novakowski

Have you ever found yourself in a black hole? *I know that I have.* The importance of finding yourself in a place of dissatisfaction, disappointment, disillusionment – as you can see the “dis’s” can go on for a very long list – is that realization causes you to stop and look around.

Someone recently asked, “*How do you stay so optimistic and positive?*” I really had to think about what I actually did to help me overcome obstacles-walls-barriers that might prevent me from being my best.

I thought about what I actually visualized and the above image showed up for me. As I look around, all I may see is blackness. In that blackness, close my eyes and imagine that there is nothing there. Now I open my eyes. Suddenly, as my eyes adjust, I start to see slivers of light. Next, I see patches of blue sky and clouds. As I am sitting at the bottom of the abyss, I find that I start evaluating what strengths and gifts have helped me move forward, ahead or out of similar situations in the past.

In order to move up, I must set a goal. Setting a goal is easy –everyone “sets goals.” The hard part is taking action. Now, in this picture there is also a ladder. Fortunately, this becomes access to the sky, the light, the solution. I must put my foot on that first rung of the ladder, also known as taking an action step. But, there is much in the way of that action step that I have to decide is worth overcoming.

Can I handle this challenge? Can I stretch out of my comfort zone and reach up to grab the first rung of that ladder? Or will I sit on the bottom and allow myself to remain beaten down? It takes courage to take action to start again. Courage to throw off all those anchors and weights that are trapped in my mind and say “*I’m not good enough.*” *I don’t bring enough skills, knowledge and talents to the table.*” Yes, my heart and mind shouts back at me and I thrust out my hands to the ladder and start climbing.

The only way that I can move out of any difficult situation is to do the steps above. **A**ppreciate that situation that I find myself in and determine all the challenges and obstacles that I will encounter to get out of that situation. Next, find my blue sky and **C**reate the image of where I want to be next.

Take action in a deliberate, confident and purposeful manner. **S**ustain my progress and keep reaching for the next rung of the ladder. I have conquered the “black hole.”

This ACTS help me to uphold my belief in myself. What acts do you engage in to help you uphold your belief in yourself?

ACTS™
*is a proven process that
Positive Power Strategies,
Inc. engages to help
individuals, companies and
communities to find ways to
“Uphold their belief in
themselves and their
potential.*

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Uphold – A Matter of Choice

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

The word uphold for many Americans is heard when elected officials take office and promise to uphold the U.S. Constitution. However, each day each of us in our own ways uphold more than just this incredible document. We make choices based upon our belief systems to uphold:

- Business commitments
- Family obligations
- Personal decisions

By upholding specific ethics and values, we may figuratively or literally and in some cases both figuratively and literally raise them higher than other actions. These actions may also come with some penalty, some sacrifice because the act of raising them might be difficult. For example, when we uphold those positive core values that make us who we are, this may cause us to turn down business because we know it is not a good fit or it may actually cost us some hard cold cash directly out of our pockets.

Several years ago I had the opportunity to observe a businessman pay for a paper from a vending machine and he then asked his friend would he like a free paper. The other businessman said *“Sure, why not, everyone else does it.”* So two papers were taken for the price of one. I then proceeded to place my \$.50 into the machine, open and then close it without taking a paper. Next, I deposited another \$.50 and took my paper. As I walked into the restaurant, the gentleman who paid for only one paper and took two held the door open for me, but he could not look me in the eyes. He knew his actions were wrong.

What I did not know at that time was my potential customer was in the parking lot watching everything. He came in and shared he saw what happened. Then he said, *“You were recommended to me because of your values and all I want to know is when do we start.”*

This experience truly demonstrated that upholding our values is 100% a matter of choice. You can either choose to choose not to uphold what is important or not important to you,

Now this again may be difficult because it may require you to get off automatic pilot thinking and reflect. Do I really want to uphold this action or is it a battle that at this time I choose not to fight.

What I know to be true is by having a written values statement allows me to make those matter of choice decisions far easier. By investing the time to compose my values, I have greater clarity around not only acceptable behaviors, but what actions I am willing to take to uphold those values.

For some having firm values and adhering to them is difficult because by taking this action we may be viewed by some as one way or another. Then we are grouped and now judged not for who we are, but for another’s perception.

James Allen is quoted as saying *“Circumstances do not make a man, they reveal him.”* His words are all about how we are upholding who we are. The businessman who stole the paper and the once who accepted the stolen paper revealed who they were.

Every action we take reveals who we are and what we choose to uphold. The hardest part is that sometimes those choices are not easy and that is what separates an ethical results driven leader from everyone else.

Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S. Chief Results Officer
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Uphold Your Authenticity ***Judy Rienzi***

In any kind of relationship, whether it is business, family, friend or client, certain “unspoken rules” must be upheld in order for the relationship to continue. Integrity, honesty, trust and respect are a few of these rules that are expected by all those involved in the relationship.

What about our relationship with ourselves? Do we uphold these same values with regard to how we treat ourselves? How we treat ourselves reflects how we treat others.

We live a lie when we misrepresent who we are. Most business ventures fail because by being inauthentic. The same holds true for us as individuals when we do not uphold an authentic life, we tell ourselves and others, *that who we really are is not acceptable*. We lose our self respect and the respect of others.

In living and authentic life, ask yourself these questions:

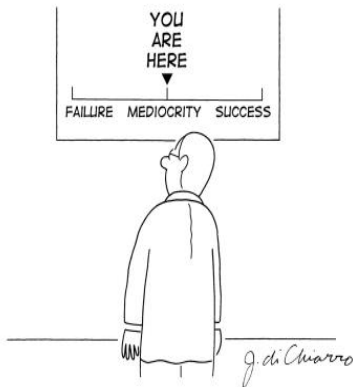
- *Am I honest with myself about what I am feeling?*
- *Do I stick up for myself and honor my needs and interests?*
- *Do I fake beliefs to win acceptance?*
- *Do I fake modesty?*
- *If I am wrong do I admit this simply and candidly?*
- *Do I pretend to be less than I really am/Do I pretend to be more than I really am?*
- *Is my internal person the same person I present to the world?*
- *Do I take responsibility for my actions?*
- *Do I blame others for my mistakes?*

When we do not take responsibility for ourselves, our choices or our actions, we give power to everyone else except ourselves. When we uphold our authenticity we make choices that reflect who we are, what we believe and take responsibility for the choices we make.

“How to Raise Your Self-Esteem”
Nathaniel Branden

“The importance of healthy self-esteem lies in the fact that it is the foundation of our ability to respond actively and positively to the opportunities of life-in work, in love and in play”.

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What do You Uphold?

Laura Canter

*The meaning of things lies not in the things themselves,
but in our attitude towards them.*

Le Petit Prince,
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Following last month's discussion of Augmentation – to strengthen – I feel that the word “Uphold” is a perfect follow up to January.

As Laura mentioned above, the word **Uphold** can mean *to inspire*. Now that you have resolved to make a real change in the New Year – what was your original inspiration for change? What inspires you to become a better version of yourself? Or just simply, what inspires you?

To maintain your momentum and motivation to change, you may be surprised to learn that knowing what inspires you can help you discover your Character Strengths. Once you have clearly identified your personal *Character Strengths* and *Virtues*, you can cultivate them to aid you in your journey for true and authentic change.

So, I'll ask you again – What inspires you? What do you **Uphold** about yourself, others, and where you are at this present moment in time? Knowing the answers to these questions can help you bridge the gap between where you are now and where you want to go in the future. It can also help you to see that you need to pay attention to those “*ah-ha*” moments that everyone speaks about. For example, I know that one of my *Character Strengths* is “*Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence*.” For me, this means that I can find inspiration almost anywhere. Even if I am feeling low, out-of-whack, or even out-of-control, I can - **STOP** - remember my personal strengths, and bring myself back to the present moment. For me, it means that I actually live everyday – not just exist. I rarely feel like I “go through the motions of life.”

Today was a lazy Saturday (well, I guess it wasn't so lazy – I did write this article). But, I wasn't just all work. I accomplished the goals that I needed to, but then I took time to “*Appreciate Beauty and Excellence*” in my own small way. Today, that was laying out bird seed and discovering that I have no idea what each different type of bird that came to my window was called. Not only was I mesmerized by the myriad of birds that came to the bird feeder, but all the birds had the most beautiful colors and markings on their feathers. Plus, I got a wonderful opportunity to giggle at my ignorance of ornithology.

Now many people might see this as frivolous – I could have been doing other chores, other work, “getting ahead”. Fair enough, but all of that stuff means nothing if you are not **INSPIRED**. Once you reach your goal, how do you feel? Are you happy, satisfied,

content, confused, depressed, angry, or anxious? I find that many people go through *Aspirational Regret* when they reach their goals.

Aspirational Regret is when you actually reach your dream, goal, wish, etc. – but you are not completely happy or satisfied with reaching it. I personally believe that by taking those little moments to appreciate the things that inspire you, you actually live your life. You are in control of your life; you are the one wielding the power over your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors – you do not just exist.

The most successful and happy people in life, *Uphold* those things in their life that personally inspire them. This helps to drive that desire to become a better version of yourself – by upholding those things that inspire you and cultivate your personal character strengths and virtues.

“He who rows the boat doesn’t have time to rock it.” – Chinese Proverb



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Whose values do you uphold? Stephen Sisselman

Over the past few years there has been an increase in the amount of stories that are being told in the news about the behaviors of people with either political, sport, or entertainment status. Inevitably they speak of values and what is perceived as a lack there of. This month's topic of "uphold" directly relates to our values. Upholding our values means to live by them. However, with what has been recently released in the media I challenge people to reflect upon their own values rather than the values that have been forced upon us since birth.

We become all too quick to judge others behaviors before we even take a look at our own values and if we would not have made the same choices if put in similar situations. There is one specific story that has grabbed my attention this past month that I'd like to use as an example and this is of John Edwards and his wife Elizabeth.

Mr. Edwards was running for the office of president of the United States of America as we all know and during that time he made the choice to act on his desires (I am making an assumption here because one can never know anyone's true reasoning for making a choice) and created a child with a woman who was not his wife. The media has decided to make judgments on him for us and make this the central story of many articles and clips. From an evolutionary stand-point we as human beings have been given the amazing ability to think and make choices. We act upon those choices which have usually been made using the values that we live by. There are times when we make choices that we may decide were wrong in hind-sight based upon our values. That being said, because we are human we have the opportunity to come back from these choices that we decide may have been wrong. If we did not have this evolutionary ability every time we made a wrong choice we would have been dead.

Mr. Edwards made a choice and the outcome of his choice was a beautiful child. From an evolutionary point that is a successful choice. We can not judge him as we do not know the circumstances of his choice. We become forced at times by the media to judge how a person upholds his values without even looking at the fact that the same people who are making these judgments have made similar choices in their lives.

One of the most beautiful choices and acts of upholding one's values comes from his wife Elizabeth. According to the news reports I listened to, she invited the new child to spend time with her children, the new child's half siblings. What an amazing action, to try and make sure that this child does not suffer for what many perceive as a mistake. My sympathy lies with this child for having to listen at some point to the stories in the media from her birth.

For this month, I'd like to suggest that you make the choice to with-hold judging anyone for their actions and values. But rather, inspect your own.

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Question for the month

"Whose values do you uphold?"