

FS News: Lifewide Learning Edition

Greetings Fair Shake Peers ~

I'm sending warm greetings from the northish and centerish of the nation where the sun now sets at 7:45 pm (after setting at 9 pm in early July). For some reason, summer's end always comes as a surprise to me. I can watch the pages peel off the calendar, but just before Labor Day, I suddenly realize how early the sun is setting and I start to panic.

I get anxious when the end of summer arrives and I still have so many unfinished summer projects! I find myself feeling like snow is right around the corner. All of this is made up in my mind, of course, but it's hard to shake the projecting part of my brain that wants me to hurry up and get ready...while the deep old sentimental part of my brain wants to feel sad about losing summer. And, all the while, the part of my mind that I consider 'rational' loves the excitement that comes with change. I have to chuckle when I think back on these times, but when I'm in them, they are no laughing matter. Thankfully, I've learned a little trick: sometimes I simply do not believe myself. I know that there are times when my feelings are correct, but I also know that, just as often, my feelings are just old fears and stories that I need to try to let go of. I devised a plan when I was feeling good to go into action when I'm feeling anxious, fearful, disappointed, etc. I look for those old voices that didn't want me to succeed, and I insert my own voice to remind them, as I have for more than 50 years, that I am doing fine. I'm capable, and caring, and I can handle everything that comes my way.

WHY WE DON'T QUESTION OUR FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS (in a nutshell):

"Think of it like this, when you're born everyone around you starts handing you little notes. Tiny scripts. These notes represent their ideas about the movie called life; especially how not to stand out, how to be acceptable to others on the movie set, and stay safe and secure. The notes define what's good and bad, right wrong. There are 'how to' notes and 'how not to' notes, 'what to do' and 'what not to do' notes, and before long these notes start piling up and become too numerous to consciously hold on to and carry around. So you categorize and organize them. And then you memorize the script and turn it over to your unconscious mind. Some of the notes were valuable like the one called 'Halloween', but most were b*****, like "you can't do that" or "you shouldn't do that". But those scripts are really strange. At first you hate them... "stop handing me those damn notes!" ...then you start to accept them, and get used to them, and then enough time passes and you find yourself depending on, and even defending those scripts! How else would you know what to do, right?" - Tom Asacker

This autobiographical narrative integrates memories from our past with our perceived present in our imagined future...very much like a movie...with various characters, props, imagery, settings, plot points, themes, a dramatic life story with goals and conflicts, and heroes and villains, and a causally connected beginning, middle and end. We make a narrative of our lives, and stopping the movie, to analyze the story, is very difficult!

Other characters in our story are often reluctant to stop with us. And it's not easy to question the little notes we've been absorbing since before we were able to speak. After all, most of the notes kept us safe and fed! But some of the notes that made sense when we were young, are not serving us any more so, like spring cleaning, it's helpful to look at them every now and then to clear out the ones that are holding us down and make room for others that will lift us up...like belief in our capabilities and our inherent value! When we expand our understanding of ourselves and of the world, we'll be able to achieve greater efficacy, and create satisfaction throughout our lives, including the lives we touch.

If you're interested in learning about Script Journaling, please start a new message to me with Script Journal in the subject line, and I will share Tom's technique! In Tom's words: "Script journaling is a systematic approach of narrative inquiry designed to help you create a different relationship with your feelings and thoughts. The point is not to deconstruct and solve particular problems, but rather to outline them, explore their context, and reveal your story-creating mind in action. And through that process of

seeing yourself act in your self-created movie, to eventually free you to step out of that paradigm and live a dynamic, compassionate, and authentic life.

What is essential in life is invisible to the eye. ~ Fred Rogers

Thanks to all of our AMAZING DONORS, Fair Shake has not purchased an envelope or stamps since March! I send out 80-100 letters each month to the folks who write to Fair Shake from all around the country. Sometimes they will write again after receiving the information just to tell me how rare it is hear from organizations these days. Sadly, as I search the internet to find resources to add to the Resource Directory, I find the same thing: most organizations do not even list an address anymore; they want us to use the internet to 'make an appointment' or 'fill out forms'. COVID accelerated all of this, but we were already heading in that direction. THANKS to our donors, Fair Shake can keep reaching everyone with vital reentry information. Your support in money, stamps and art ensures the newsletter can reach 3400+ newsletter readers each month, too!!

I also want to THANK the folks who've sent in CORE VALUES ideas to grow the list. I received many additions and learned a lot through thoughtful reflections.

Ubuntu, Donors! We are building the future, and it's fun!

SCHOOL DAZE History Corner: The 100th Anniversary of the phrase "Manufacture of Consent" American journalist Walter Lippmann (b. 1899) coined this phrase in 1922. He believed that the management of public opinion was necessary for our democracy to survive. He did not think the American public was / is capable of participating in our governance. He thought we should remain spectators "so that each of us may live free of the trampling and the roar of a bewildered herd." Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky wrote a book called Manufacturing Consent in 1988, to help us see that we are still being treated like a 'bewildered herd' in government policies and also in marketing products. Freud's nephew - Edward Bernays, used the 'engineering of consent' to entice people to want things that they do not need. Today we are encouraged to pay for products that claim to be smart, while the manufacturers of the products legally enter our private lives to mine and sell our data to the 'engineers'. After 100 years, how is this working for us? One look at the news, and we know the answer. We are more divided and less happy. We are much more anxious, depressed, physically ill, lonely, and frightened. It's not too late to learn history with our friends, neighbors and children so we are better prepared to build a healthy future!

nobody but you (excerpt) by Charles Bukowski
nobody can save you but yourself.
you will be put again and again into nearly impossible situations.
they will attempt again and again - through subterfuge, guise and force
to make you submit, quit and/or die quietly inside.
nobody can save you but yourself
and it will be easy enough to fail so very easily
but don't, don't, don't.
just watch them. listen to them. do you want to be like that?
a faceless, mindless, heartless being?
do you want to experience death before death?
nobody can save you but yourself - and you're worth saving.
it's a war not easily won but if anything is worth winning then this is it.
only you can save yourself.
do it! do it!

REENTRY SERVICE NEWS Fair Shake draws the line.

I've been contacted by several nation-wide organizations in the past year to 'contract' with, or even give access to, large 'reentry' organizations. I use the " " marks because the companies that contacted me are

all focused on managing you, not supporting you. They make money by measuring your actions and influencing your behavior. They are organized as 'non-profits' (They are neither donor funded or grass roots. They care about data, not about people. They claim data is the best way to manage people.) From what I've seen, they all care only about numbers; and getting your number is their goal. They want to 'help you' by tracking you and nudging you. They've found famous people to endorse them. Turns out that even Democrats and activists support this perspective. I don't relate this 'news' because I believe it's not good or helpful news. Very few organizations support freedom, self-determination or agency. Fair Shake will never tell you what you need. We will we never track or nudge website visitors or software users.

"What gets measured, gets managed." - Recidiviz (They are talking about complex human beings here, not tire pressure, or belt size, or humidity.)

READING IS A FORM OF TRAVEL - says poet Jenny Xie

"Reading is migratory, an act of transport, from one life to another, one mind to another. Just like geographic travel, reading involves estrangement that comes with the process of dislocating from a familiar context. I gather energy from this kind of movement, this estranging and unsettling, and I welcome it precisely because it's conducive to examination, interrogation, reordering. Travel, imaginative or physical, can sharpen perception and force a measuring of distance and difference." Source: The Self Is a Fiction

A lot of reentry preparation is focused on getting a job...but we will only spend 25% of the 168 hours in each week at work. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum raises an important question for us to think about, whether we are at work or not at work:

"WHAT DOES A LIFE DESERVING OF HUMAN DIGNITY REQUIRE?"

In her book CREATING CAPABILITIES, Martha tells us "a life of dignity requires, first of all, the opportunity to live a full life. It requires access to health care, bodily autonomy and integrity, and an educational environment that develops our senses, imagination, and thoughts. It requires the capability of having and expressing our emotions, developing and exercising our understanding of what is good, true, and beautiful, and the space for develop belief and faith. It requires the opportunity to find communities where we feel a sense of belonging and respect. It requires being able to recognize and respect the dignity in all humans, as well as in other members of the natural world. It requires being granted some amount of control over our environments, through political, economic, and social participation. And lastly, perhaps enabled by all of the above, a life deserving of human dignity requires the space and security necessary to laugh and try and play and have time for silliness and recreation."

FAIR SHAKE DIFFERENCE

Potential donors would love to hear your thoughts about Fair Shake. They want to hear from people, not statistics, why Fair Shake is worthy of their support. If you're willing to take a minute to share your thoughts, even if it's just a couple of 'core value' words, the future donors and I will both be grateful to hear your perspective!

QUOTES

"Everybody can be great because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love." - Martin Luther King Jr

There is one world in common for those who are awake, but when men are asleep each turns away into a world of his own. – Heraclitus

"Feel the feeling, drop the story." - Pema Chodron

“The more you give your feelings a narrative, the more the more they make a home in your body. Allow feelings to be what they are: a passing sensation.” - Sah D'Simone

“If human life is again to become tolerable, mankind must acquire two things which are at present increasingly disappearing: loving kindness and scientific impartiality.” - Bertrand Russell

“The failure to transform education continues to steal the futures of generations of young people, confining them to the prisons of poverty, unemployment, and growing inequalities at all levels.”
- Mamphele Ramphele

“The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.”
- Steve Biko (In memoriam: 12 Sept. marks the 45th anniversary of his murder.)

To our successful transitions. Happy Equinox!

Ubuntu! ~ sue

Fair Shake PO Box 63 Westby, WI 54667

As always, when you are released, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo:
2-1-1 Fairshake.net HelpYourselfTherapy.com FindHelp.org

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.