

Okay, so you just got one of these messages from us yesterday. What could be so important that it takes another one today? Well, we didn't tell you about one of the most important activities we have been engaged in for weeks.

Every morning for slightly over three weeks, we have been getting up at 5 a.m. to watch three hours of television coverage beginning at 5:30 a.m. Good grief, what could possibly be worth watching for that long at that hour? The answer: Lance Armstrong and Le Tour de France. Since we do not ride bicycles or follow bicycle racing (except for the Tour) you might think we're a little nuts.

By now most of you must be aware that this amazing young man from Texas has had an incredible accomplishment. In 1996 Lance was an up and coming professional bicycle racer when he was diagnosed with testicular cancer that had spread to his abdomen, his lungs, and his brain. Certainly most people with that diagnosis would have thrown in the towel. Lance, on the other hand, held a press conference and announced that he would not only beat the disease, but that he would then return to professional bicycle racing. LANCE MADE THE DECISION TO BELIEVE THAT HE COULD.

He did get well and went on to win the Tour de France seven consecutive times. No one in the 102 year history of the sport has ever come close to this accomplishment and it's likely that no one ever will.



Without belief, we would be left with nothing but an overwhelming doom, every single day. And it will beat you. I didn't fully see, until the cancer, how we fight every day against the creeping negatives of the world, how we struggle daily against the slow lapping of cynicism. Dispiritedness and disappointment, these are the real perils of life, not some sudden illness or cataclysmic millennium doomsday. I knew now why people fear cancer: because it is a slow and inevitable death, it is the very definition of cynicism and loss of spirit... So, I believed.

Lance Armstrong

All accomplishment begins with BELIEF. The belief that you can. The belief that you have the courage, the talent, the knowledge, and the drive to deal with and solve problems as they arise. The belief that you can, allows you to focus on solutions. Without such belief, you focus on the problems. Most of life's problems can be readily solved. The sad part is that so few people actually look for the solutions.

We believe that our spirit is uplifted and that we gain perspective and courage by witnessing examples of great achievement. We don't think it matters whether the achievement is in athletics, science, the arts, or any other discipline. True accomplishment always requires common traits, i.e., courage over fear, truth over lies, honesty over dishonesty, and BELIEF over doubt.

Whether you believe you can or you believe you can't, you are correct.

When we watch Lance overcome huge problems, it helps us to believe we can solve our small problems. We have left the security of our home and businesses to travel the U.S. We still have debts, no jobs, and no real plan for financial security. Many of our friends think we're crazy, but the truth is, we have made the decision to BELIEVE that we can live this adventure. We believe that we have the courage to do it, and the confidence to solve whatever problems that come up.

Our path in life is not fixed. Our beliefs control our destiny, and we can choose whatever belief system we wish. Witnessing greatness drives home this truth. Getting up early every morning is a very small price to pay to acquire a huge increase in belief.

Until next time, home is where you park it.

Chuck & Donna