

Learnings

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a newsletter edited by **Walt Hopkins, Ph.D.**
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MOVING ON

LEARNING: *I can choose what to do—instead of not do, and what to keep—instead of not keep.*

Despite—or perhaps because of—my wide ranging work in the area of life design and life planning, my various desks (five) in various offices (three—not counting the garment bag) are usually somewhere between disorder and chaos. While working with a client today on how to get rid of things like letters and files that just pile up, I realized that one way is to focus on what I most want to do. Rather than spend all my time trying to figure out what to throw away, I can just grab something that I definitely want to keep and go to work on that.

FEELINGS ARE PRIORITIES TOO

LEARNING: *My gut-level priorities are at LEAST as vital as my head-level priorities—and MUST be included in my priority chart.*

While working with a client several months ago, I was checking up on the results of a priority chart that did seem to include a wide range of factors. She was not that satisfied with it and I asked why. She said that she really felt at the gut level that her son's chance to stay in the same school for the rest of the year was important to her. I told her to put it on the list. Interestingly, it did not change her final decision to move in mid-year to a new job in a different state. But she did feel much clearer about her decision and readier to accept the tradeoffs because she had included all the factors in her decision.

YES-NO OR YES-YES

LEARNING: *Priority charts are more useful decision tools than "either-or" or "pro-and-con" lists.*

Those of you who saw "Kramer vs. Kramer" will remember the scene in which Dustin Hoffman follows his lawyer's suggestion to make a list of pros and cons for keeping his son with him. He immediately lists half a dozen cons but is stuck for a way of expressing any pros. So he scratches the page out and goes to hug his son. Clearly love for his son is the number-one priority. But by leaving all the other issues on the con side he doesn't make any progress. If he were to take all the negative aspects of the situation, convert them to positive terms, and then put all the factors through a priority chart, he would no doubt still end up with love as the top priority. But he would also end up with the others—in order. If privacy, or more time for his job, or some other factor is second, then he can concentrate his energy on changing that one factor so that he gets his top two or even three—instead of only one, and that one battered by all the other negatives. I used this process in deciding what to do about my office—and in a series of priority charts gradually established the factors that are most important to me. The pro and con list left me frustrated. The priority list gave me a clear image of what I want so that I can work toward that.

WRITE SOON—FOR CREDIT

Our next Writing Workshop is coming up at the end of July and it will be a special one. We will be together for five days instead of just a weekend and we will be offering credit in the form of Continuing Education Units. The four CEU credits will enable some of you to get professional credit or salary credit and will also give you more grounds for convincing your organizations to pay your way. For answers to your questions about the workshop, please turn the page.

WHAT'S NEXT

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 30 June
to
2 July | LIFE AND CAREER PLANNING
Three-day residential retreat workshop at Shadybrook House
Call 953-1050 |
| 27 July
to
31 July | INWARD AND OUTWARD WRITING
with George Simons
Five-day residential retreat workshop at Shadybrook House
Call 953-1050 |

As you can see from the short list above, almost all of my work now comes through direct contracts with organizations, such as corporations, universities, school systems, social agencies, and government agencies. Some of the programs—such as the ones listed above and several more coming up this fall—are open to the public.

I work with a dozen colleagues from around the country with whom I design and present programs. Because of who we are and what we believe, we emphasize affirmative action and equal opportunity. We work in the general areas listed below under Programs for Organizations—although we prefer to adapt each program to your particular organization. For more information about any of these programs, please write or call.

PROGRAMS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Inward and Outward Writing
Increasing Productivity
Stress Management
Life and Career Planning
Life and Career Planning with Minorities
Life and Career Planning with Women
Developing More Modes of Communicating
Positive Power and Influence Program
(available through Situation Management Systems, Inc.)
Developing a Professional Support Network
Making Effective Use of a Support System

WHAT WHERE WHO

Copies of WHAT WHERE WHO, which I designed to introduce people to three basic processes of life planning in as little as an hour, are still available for \$.75 a copy if you send a stamped addressed envelope or a dollar a copy if I handle the mailing. Quantity discounts are 5% for 51 to 100, 10% for 101 to 500, and 20% over 500.