

Great Expectations

(An article written in an internal company newsletter from the owner to the team)

I'm learning to appreciate the tough stuff. To be clear, I don't want more of it. But when it comes, I'm finding it's the tough stuff that forces out some of the most important words and interactions. When things get difficult and when emotions run high, we take more risks and say the things we might not otherwise have the courage to say. I'm grateful for the moments given to me by the tough stuff...

Like dropping my daughter off at college. I'm convinced it was the leading up to the goodbye that was the most painful. There was anxiety. There were moments where I had to try to swallow my tears because I knew what she needed from me was evidence of strength, not emotion. But when the day turned to dusk and she and I both sat alone in her apartment, all fully set-up for her new chapter... we both knew it was time for the goodbye. And the tears came. And the words came. And we both said things that should have been said years ago, but for whatever excuse we saved them for this difficult moment. The challenge created an opportunity for greater love and tenderness to be shared than perhaps ever before. I'm grateful for the moments given to me by the tough stuff...

This month has brought opportunities to really examine our business, and it's brought some tough stuff. But so many of the conversations I've had with members of this team as a result of that "tough stuff" are moments I wouldn't trade for the world.

I sat down with one of our team members this week to talk about our team's culture. We talked about heart and assuming positive intent. We talked about being stronger together. And we envisioned the culture we both knew was the necessary aim if we're to be sustainable as a business.

Our conversation landed on expectations. She asked a series of what ifs. What if we just set the expectations at the standard where we need them to be? What if we just all agreed that we're on board, no matter what the event or goal... and we all just committed to it? If there's an event on the calendar, we just expect everyone to be there and bring guests... if there's a team meeting, we all just show up... if there's work to be done we all just do it...

I smiled and said, "I'd like that very much. We need that very much."

That conversation, and several others like it, encouraged my spirit. It's helpful to know that no matter what we're feeling, there is always someone else who can relate. And in this case, for me it took coming to a place of believing I stood alone to really be able to have the conversations that would reassure me that here, in this little corner of the world at our office, we operate together. We are a team. And we hunger for health and want to take the initiative and try big things and dream big dreams.

So, to the warriors and dreamers, along with anyone who's spent most of their time on the sidelines, I make this challenge:

BE the change you wish to see in our team.

Ok, so that isn't entirely original material, but it comes from original experience.

If we collectively want (and ultimately need) a culture where we operate with high standards; if we need to be a team that can be counted on to be COMMITTED to our collective efforts, each one of us must embody that culture.

YOU must embody that culture. Be the team you want to work with.

I'm grateful for the moments given to me by the tough stuff. It's helped remind me that an exceptional standard is alive and well here, and I have both great faith and great expectations.