

90-Day Prosperity Experiment Lab Report

Day 71 — *The Law of Influence*

“If you want to live a long life, focus on making contributions.”

— Hans Selye

Today’s Message

The Third Law of Stratospheric Success, we learn in reading *The Go-Giver*, is the Law of Influence: **Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people’s interests first.**

In *The Go-Giver*, the main character, Joe, has trouble understanding how putting other people first can be a law of success. His mentor, Pindar, is quick to explain: “Because if you place the other person’s interests first, your interests will always be taken care of. Always. Some people call it enlightened self interest. Watch out for what other people need, with the faith that when you do, you’ll get what you need.”

Even so, Joe still has a bit of trouble grasping what Pindar is telling him. And for good reason. Such an attitude seems almost foreign in an environment where money, power and accomplishments are traditionally thought to be the characteristics of the influential. But as Pindar goes on to explain, having money, power and accomplishments does not make one influential. Being influential is what attracts the power, the money and the ability to accomplish those things we want.

The reasoning behind this is actually very simple. To understand it, however, we must first recognize that we are hard-wired to focus attention on self. Our self-interest is an emotional muscle we’ve exercised daily and as such, is the strongest muscle we have, with reflex responses that are lightning quick.

When you consider that throughout our infancy and early childhood, most of our demands are met without question, our preoccupation with self is easy to understand. In a scientific study done several years ago, researchers taped conversations between six-year-olds and their mothers. The pronouns most often used by the children were “I,” “me,” and “we.” “You” was typically reserved for command phrases, such as “You do this (for me).”

When you consider the training we receive as young children under our parents tutelage -- from infancy to age six -- is almost all centered on self, it is easy to understand why, by the time we reach puberty, self-centeredness is not only a natural inclination, it is an unconscious one. Anytime we are confronted with a circumstance that calls for us to choose between our own interest and the interest of others, our automatic response will be to choose self. Like breathing in and breathing out, we don’t even have to think about opting for self. It is a natural and expected response.

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Putting the interests of the other person before our own, on the other hand, is a choice we have to make consciously. First, we must choose to set aside our own personal wants and desires in favor of the other person, and then we must overpower that natural desire to tend to self. Overpowering a natural inclination is never easy. Try holding your breath until you lose consciousness, for instance, and you'll see how quickly every part of your being tries to get you back to "normal." When we turn away from self, it is as if we're cutting off our own air supply and our immediate inclination is to give up completely, take a deep breath, and fall back into self-preservation mode.

Because we must override our natural tendencies for self-preservation, when we do choose to favor others above self, we are doing something that is not only noteworthy, it is actually quite extraordinary and automatically makes us stand out. *Because choosing others above self is so uncommon, our willingness to put self aside makes us exceptional individuals, and as exceptional beings, our ability to influence others is automatically heightened.*

If you doubt this, then think of the people who have been most influential in your own life. Have they positively influenced you by telling you how important they are to you, or by convincing you that you are important to them? Have they emotionally touched you in some way by talking about themselves? Or by talking about you, your needs and your concerns? Have caused fear to rise within by magnifying the power of a perceived enemy and making you feel too weak to fight it on your own, or have they made you hopeful by revealing how powerful you are in your own right?

Pick up any book on being a good conversationalist and you'll soon learn that it is not the ability to recite facts and figures that is the mark of an excellent conversationalist but the ability to get others to talk about themselves. The key to being influential is the same. Tell someone how what you want them to do will benefit you, your family, your company, or even your country and they'll pay you little attention. Show someone how what you want them to do will benefit them, and chances are very good you'll win them over. This law works universally, whether it is with your neighbor, your boss, your child or even your family pet; the moment you disclose the benefits that the other will receive, you become a person of influence.

It was an unruly calf and a young housemaid who taught this lesson to 19th Century American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. As he wrote in his journal, Emerson and his son, Edward, were trying to get a calf into the barn. The calf was resistant. Emerson gritted his teeth, tightened his muscles and leaned against its backside, trying to push the calf forward. While the father pushed, the son grabbed the calf by the neck and tried pulling it into the barn. Though the two men were determined and gave it their all, the recalcitrant calf didn't budge.

As the two pushed and prodded and tried to force the poor animal into doing what it clearly did not want to

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do, Emerson's housemaid stood at a distance watching these two brilliant men losing their battle with the dumb beast. Finally, she walked over to the calf and quietly put her finger in its mouth. The calf suckled the finger as the housemaid gently led him to the barn.

Most of us tend to be like the calf. You might even say we're bullheaded. We can't be poked, prodded, pushed or lectured into taking any action we don't want to take. If you want to motivate us, you have to first make us understand why it would be in our best interest to move. And the best way to do this is to put our needs first. When we know you have our best interests in mind, like the calf with the housemaid, most of us will follow without question.

While you're leading, however, it is important to understand that putting the other person's interests ahead of your own is not a caretaker's role, but a partnership role. Though it is seldom seen that way, the caretaker's role tends to be one of domination, wherein one person exerts a certain amount of control over another. Even if that control is deemed to be in the best interest of the one being cared for, the fact remains that the actions taken are most often at the discretion of the caretaker, much like the housemaid who led the calf where she wanted him to go. A partnership role, on the other hand, is one of mutual consideration and respect and is based on an awareness of both universal law and the mutual sacredness of all life. In this role, the other person's interests genuinely must come first.

So how does putting what someone else wants first benefit us?

To answer that, let's first look back at the final few words of Pindar's explanation to Joe: "Watch out for what other people need, *with the faith that when you do, you'll get what you need.*" What we give out comes back to us multiplied. That is a fundamental law of the universe and like the law of gravity it is unailing. It doesn't work sometimes and not work other times. It always works. When we put others first, essentially giving ourselves, then what we have given will be given back to us. The universe will return to us what we want, what we need, what we dream of and imagine and desire with all our hearts. It is not doing so because we are being extraordinarily unselfish. It is doing so because by working for the benefit of others, we are working with the law in a way that will eventually benefit us.

In many ways, putting others first is as much a matter of faith and trust as it is a willingness to give. But as we begin to understand that every particle of energy we send out into the world is going to be reflected back to us in more ways than we might fathom, we realize that putting the other person first is actually as much a selfish act as it is a selfless one. By putting others first, we are putting ourselves into harmony with the spiritual law and alignment with universal flow. By giving of ourselves we are actually assuring that we will be given to.

As we endeavor to live and work in partnership with our fellow man, we are bringing both the Law of Influ-

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ence and the Golden Rule into play.

We all want to be first.

We all want to believe we matter.

We all want to feel that what we say and think and do is important.

When we choose to put ourselves, even momentarily, in the other fellow's shoes and give the gift of putting him first, letting him know he matters and that what he says and thinks and does is important, we are following the Golden Rule to the letter. And we are making a significant difference in the world.

We are, in fact, becoming extraordinary individuals who not only do influence those around us, but who can and do make a significant difference on the world.

Today's Affirmation

By putting others first, I always prosper. By putting others first, I change the world.

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Today's Action Steps

1. Re-read your Prosperity Business Plan and if you have not done so already, add your ability to give to your **Eleven Things Gratitude List**.

2. Take a moment to stand firmly with one arm raised to the heavens, the fist clenched as firmly as if you were holding on to the hand of God. Now either mentally or vocally affirm:

As God as my witness, I am powerful today, I am brave today, I am strong today, I am fearless today, I prosper today. And I am living each moment of this day embracing my true nature and moving closer to becoming the person I am destined to be. For today and every day from this point forward this is my truth.

Note: If possible write this affirmation on a card that will fit in your wallet or purse and carry it with you so you can refer whenever you feel doubts or fears arising. And each time you repeat this affirmation, say the words with as much feeling and emotion as you possibly can, spending at least one full minute imagining every aspect of your life as you want it to be.

3. Place today's allotment of money in your container and read the affirmation on the container three times. Expect to receive in return.

4. Bless those around you, including your fellow participants in this experiment. See those you bless prospering and surrounded by good. Then bless yourself and see the same. You may also want to continue blessing those on the blessing request list. Reading the responses will give you an opportunity to see for yourself.

5. Return to the blessings requests and read the responses being posted by those who have been blessed. (you'll find a link at the bottom of this email, or simply go to bettertobless.com and click on "Request a Blessing") Your blessings are making a difference. Reading the responses will give you an opportunity to see for yourself.