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Balancing Act: The Newsletter (No. 213, May 2017)

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Balancing act is in four sections this month:

1. Techniques for Balance
2. Musings
3. The Human Condition: Piling-on
4. ORTIYKMWOYBNT-O Department

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See Writing on the Wall, featuring Koufax the Wonder Dog.

Two new podcasts every week.
Special cigar smoking room.

Every day is a sunny day if we're capable of producing our own light.

Alan Weiss

- Stop judging others. It consumes great energy and is often unfair. (The cell phone being viewed in church has a prayer on it.)
- Trust your gut. Chemistry trumps credentials.
- Faith isn't a walk in darkness, it's a journey in what light we can see.
- People will continue to engage in the behaviors you enable.
- Saying "thank you" to anyone is never demeaning but rather ennobling.
- If you're uncertain, ask the captain or sommelier for their recommendations.
- I understand being allergic to certain animals, but simply not liking animals is sufficient cause for my never wanting you as a friend or colleague.
- People who ask the insurance costs, or utility costs for a house can't afford the house. (When people ask me what the insurance rates or gasoline mileage is on my cars, I just laugh.)

- A station is a stop along a train (or bus) route. A terminal is the last stop. (I love airline flight attendants, who classically bash the English language, announcing, "We're in our terminal descent." I hope not! Just as this is not my "final destination.")
 - Don't sell your ideas short. People are putting \$3 in vending machines to purchase a small bottle of water.
-

I've been thinking (okay, "musing") about why some people are so naturally nasty or non-responsive in the exact same position or job as others who are warm and accommodating. If someone is ugly and rude at 7:30 in the morning in an airport newsstand, what are they like by noon?

If you factor out the "bad day" that all of us have on occasion, and you focus on people who are continually unpleasant, there's an inevitable conclusion to be drawn: They are miserably unhappy—with themselves.

I know that some jobs are difficult. Hell, I once assembled pens in a sweatshop, worked in the basement of a discount store that was rat and roach infested, and painted mailboxes in 100° heat. I know that some lives are difficult, burdened with debt, or illness, or loss. But even allowing for every excuse you can, there are people who are naturally unpleasant even though they have jobs that deal with other people every day.

And the reason is, they are angry at and unhappy with themselves.

Self-anger can destroy you through overwhelming stress, so it is usually redirected outward. When you see people who are always angry, they are those who are constantly angry with themselves for something they did, failed to do, or did poorly.

I've met hostesses in fine restaurants who are inattentive, or have zero personality, or who are outright rude. Who on earth hires a hostess with those traits? There isn't anything similar to rocket science in hostessing. Hire enthusiasm and personality, not someone's niece or someone who shows up at the right time. At a great hotel, all the doormen are terrific. They represent the first and last impression of the hotel for a guest, and the hotel is careful about whom they hire and how they're trained and rewarded.

The problem, of course, is that when someone in a service position treats us, the customer, as though we're interfering with their rest or making an unreasonable demand for prompt service, we become angry with ourselves for choosing the place or not saying something to obtain better service. Then we direct that anger outward, and maybe not at the cause of it but at a partner or someone else.

It doesn't cost anything to be nice, and it costs a great deal not to be nice. Watch flight attendants. They all do exactly the same job, but some with flair and personality, some with bureaucratic rigor, and some with a chip on their shoulder. You can tell just by observing them which ones have happier lives.

What are people thinking about you?

There was once a penalty in football called for "piling on." Those were the

days when you didn't just tackle someone and bring them to the ground, but they had to be prevented from getting up and moving again until the referee blew the whistle. Some teams were over-zealous in preventing movement, hence, "piling-on."

In modern times it became "unnecessary roughness" (which was a tad effete) and today it's simply a "personal foul."

There is a human tendency, however, to "pile-on." The recent United Airlines absurdity (if you've been living under a rock, it involved a passenger physically dragged off a plane so that company employees could be flown to their next assignment), which is despicable, is nonetheless noteworthy because United is *not* yanking people off of planes in this fashion with any regularity.

In fact, the vast preponderance of United flights all over the world reach their destinations without incident, safely, and on time. Yet we take a rare and bizarre exception—caused by the poor judgment of local supervisors—and condemn the airline as if the airline board of directors had decided to pull this poor person out of his seat.

In condemning the whole for the sins of a small part we are involved in a weird synecdoche, a truly strange interpretation of facts. It would be as if someone pointed out that, because you walked across a lawn that said "Keep off the grass" you are a criminal, or if you change lanes without using your blinker you should be jailed. It's not a far stretch to claim that if one of your kids disturbs others in class then the family has no standards.

It's dangerous and invalid to extend an instance into a pattern and to assume an exception is a rule. None of us could stand that scrutiny, nor should anyone have to. Wider scandals, supported by many others—Wells Fargo and Enron come to mind—deserve to be condemned for mass criminality. But those are rare exceptions.

Airlines are not going to make money and please their investors by alienating passengers. And a ridiculously egregious application of local poor judgment doesn't reflect on the company's policy. And if you're unhappy with legitimate, everyday policy—you feel the seats are too small or the fees too high—you can fly another airline or spend more on your accommodations. Those are choices.

It's also a choice to "pile-on," and it's an addiction of the media. But it remains a penalty, and we ought to blow the whistle.

I was smoking a cigar in my library and had to keep track of time. The peculiar, rounded small clock my designer had provided for the table had wobbled to face away from me. As I reached to turn it around, I nearly spilled my drink. Recovering, trying again, I knocked cigar ashes onto my newspaper. Cleaning that up, I noticed I was wearing a watch.

LIFESTORMING

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live and enjoy the good life. The fee is \$15,000, and includes all meals, lodging, and ground transportation, but I'm offering a \$3,000 discount prior to May 7 for Balancing Act readers. Write me to apply: alan@summitconsulting.com

NEW: LIFETIME GROWTH ACCESS

My collected IP in text, video, audio, workshop, and electronic availability, about \$75,000 worth from the past decade and more, is available for one payment for lifetime membership. This was formerly up to \$4,500 annually, and is now \$2,500 for lifetime access, and we are continually adding new IP. Register by May 7 and I'll take \$500 off.

Go here: [Lifetime Growth Access](#)

NEW: Master class

June 21-23, 2017, Castle Hill Inn, Newport, RI

Join a very small group of high flyers who will spend dynamic days and evenings raising their professional and personal bar to new levels. All new material on branding, abundance, control, influence, advisory work, etc. We're in beach cottages at Castle Hill Inn. Feel free to call or write to see if you qualify: <https://www.alanweiss.com/growth-experiences/the-master-class-workshop/>

Thought Leadership 2017

October 4-6, 2017, Four Seasons, Palm Beach

We sell-out every year and for our next one I've secured Harvard's Dan Gilbert, the expert on happiness, as my special guest for a discussion as well as dinner. His TED talk has been viewed by over 15 million people thus far. Three seats remain.

Endorsed Programming

I offer fabulous resources through global experts in areas such as positioning, wealth building, fitness, social media excellence, coaching, and other areas, all of whom I personally work with and support. Consider this your "galaxy of expertise."

NEW: LIVESTREAM WORKSHOP

I've run two free pilots to test the technology, and now we're off and running in 2017. Watch a one-hour workshop, rich in content, and ask questions while in progress, no matter where you are in the world. They are also recorded, in case you can't make the live event or want to retain the actual broadcast. I'm offering six, as detailed below, at \$75 each, or \$400 for all six. You can register here:

Schedule:

- Feb. 23, 2017: The Strategist - How to set strategies for organizations or individuals (Completed but available on recording)
- Apr. 18, 2017: The Innovator - A methodology for systematic innovation
- Jun. 13, 2017: Creating 6-figure Projects - Consistently and effectively
- Sep. 19, 2017: The Advisor - Advisory work as your primary intervention
- Oct. 17, 2017: Abundance - The mindset of success, happiness, and growth
- Nov. 16, 2017: The Expert - How to command a room, discussion, and direction

NEW: THE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH

My new podcast series, twice monthly, on iTunes:

#1: Control: How to maximize control of your life and not surrender your future.

#2: Energy: How the Second Law of Thermodynamics can erode your business and your life if you don't renew yourself.

#3: Fear Not: Roosevelt was right, and we ought to stop being frightened by everything that goes "bump" in the night.

#4: Marketing Magic: A manifesto on marketing—and buying—realities and why usage trumps functionality.

#5: Myths: A memorial service to the many friends you lost when they went swimming 55 minutes after having lunch.

#6: Polarization: The vast, ignorant error in believing people who disagree with you are stupid.

#7: The Aggrieved: Why whatever you perceive your condition to be doesn't warrant a vote in Congress or a newscast.

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