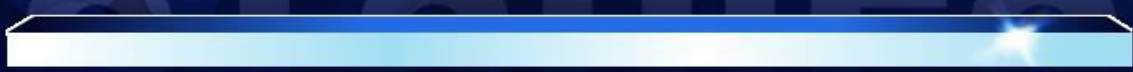


GREATEST

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**MOTIVATIONAL
STORIES**

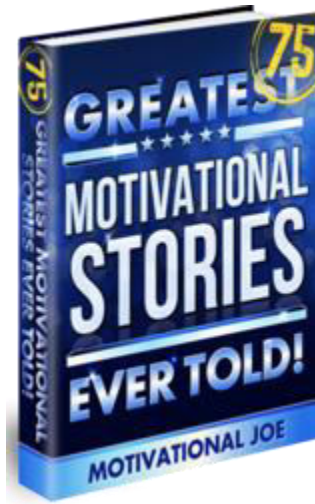


EVER TOLD!

MOTIVATIONAL JOE

75 Greatest Motivational Stories Ever Told!

by Motivational Joe



Published by:

www.MotivationalJoe.com

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Please visit: <http://www.MotivationalJoe.com/contact/>

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Welcome!

It's Motivational Joe here, America's Rapid Results Coach. I'm also the editor of this book and founder of www.MotivationalJoe.com.

Before you dive into these amazingly life-changing motivational short stories, I'd like to take a second to fill you in on a few details regarding how this book is constructed.

1) This book is NOT a countdown or count-up of the greatest motivational stories. I, of course, have my own favorites, but they are simply that: my favorites. It would be irresponsible and more than a little egotistical of me to rank these stories in any order of greatest. These stories are all great in their own right, but it's up to you, the reader, to determine which are your favorites or your "greatest." So with that said, I listed these amazing stories in no order at all. I simply numbered them for reference sake. Now all you need to do is pick any story, sit back, and prepare to be transformed!

2) I did NOT write any part of the first 74 stories in this book. I have been a lifelong lover of motivational short stories, and the ones I have selected for this book are the ones universally regarded as the best. If you know of a story that has motivated you but is not featured in this book, please contact me and let me know so it can be added to an updated version of this book in the future. You can contact me here: www.motivationaljoe.com/contact/

3) Yes, I have contributed my own original motivational story as the 75th entry in this book. I'm very proud of the way it turned out, and I hope you enjoy it too.

4) YES, please share ALL of these stories with everyone in your life including your loved ones, co-workers, clients, students, congregation, followers, readers, and everyone else you have the opportunity to motivate. I have added links at the end of each story to a page on my site where you can cut/paste 100% of each story to use however you would like. And, yes, of course it's all free.

5) Yes, your friends and family are all welcome to copies of this ebook. Please recommend all of them to my site to claim their free copy: www.MotivationalJoe.com

That's it for now, my friend. Please enjoy the "75 Greatest Motivational Stories Ever Told!"

- Motivational Joe

www.MotivationalJoe.com

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1) Nails In The Fence: A Story About Anger!

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper.

His Father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence.

He said, 'You've done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one.

... You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there and a verbal wound is just as bad as a physical one.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/nails-in-the-fence-story/>

2) Donkey In The Well: A Classic Short Motivational Story!

Once upon a time, there was a little donkey that lived on a ranch. The little donkey spent all of his time in a pen with his grandfather. One day, the little donkey said, “Grandpa, I want to grow up to be big and strong like you.

What do I have to do?”

Grandpa said, “All you have to do is learn how to shake it off and step up.”

That confused the little donkey so he asked his grandfather what that meant.

Grandpa said, “Let me tell you a classic short motivational story! One day, when I was just about your age, I was right here in this pen when someone left the gate open by mistake. Well, I escaped and started walking out on the prairie. I was admiring the big mountains and the huge sky.

Then, all of a sudden, when I wasn’t looking at where I was going, I fell into an old, abandoned well. I was trapped at the bottom of the well, scared to death, thinking I was going to die. I was the donkey in the well. Then, within a few minutes, I heard a truck and looked up and saw an old farmer. I thought he would surely save me. But he just looked down at me, shook his head, got back into his truck, and left.

“A few hours later, I heard what sounded like four or five trucks. I looked up and saw the farmer and several of his friends. The old farmer said, ‘Boys, the well’s abandoned and that little donkey ain’t worth anything, so let’s get to work.’

“They got their pick axes and shovels and started burying me alive. Now I knew I was going to die! The dirt started burying my hooves and then it started covering my lower legs and then I suddenly realized something — every time a shovel-full of dirt landed on my back, I could shake it off and step up on it. So I shook it off and stepped up, and shook it off and stepped up, and I continued shaking and stepping, and shaking and stepping, until I eventually shook off enough and stepped up enough that I was able to step out of the well and save my life!”

Then the grandfather looked right at the little donkey and said,
“Remember, if you want to grow up to be big and strong, you have to learn how to shake it off
and step up.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/donkey-in-the-well-short-motivational-story/>

3) How To Overcome: The Classic Carrot, Egg, and Bean Coffee Story!

You may never look at a cup of coffee the same way again!

A young woman told her mother how difficult things were for her.

She did not know how she was going to make it and felt like giving up.

Her mother took her to the kitchen and filled three pots with water. Soon the water started boiling. In the first pot, she placed carrots. In the second, she put eggs. And in the third, she placed coffee beans. She let them sit and boil.

In about twenty minutes, she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them on a plate. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a mug.

Turning to her daughter, she asked, “What do you see?”

“Carrots, eggs, and coffee,” her daughter replied.

Her mother handed her some carrots. They were soft.

The mother then asked the daughter to take an egg and break it.

After pulling off the shell, she observed that the egg was now hard boiled.

Then the mother asked the daughter to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma.

Then the daughter asked, “What does all this mean?”

Her mother said that each of these had faced the same adversity—boiling water. But each reacted differently.

“Which are you?” she asked her daughter. “When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?”

Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength?

Am I the egg that starts with an open heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit, but after a death, a break-up, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff?

Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water — the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you.

When the hour is the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate yourself to another level?

How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/how-to-overcome-coffee-story/>

4) Zen Martial Arts Academy Training Story!

A young boy traveled across Japan to the school of a famous martial artist.

When he arrived at the dojo, he was given an audience with the sensei.

“What do you wish from me?” the master of the zen martial arts academy asked.

“I wish to be your student and become the finest karateka in the land,” the boy said.

“How long must I train?”

“Ten years at least,” the master replied.

“Ten years is a long time,” said the boy. “What if I studied twice as hard as all your other students?”

“Twenty years,” replied the master.

“Twenty years! What if I practice day and night with all of my effort?”

“Thirty years,” was the master’s reply.

“How is it that every time I tell you I will work harder, you tell me that it will take longer?” said the boy.

“The answer is clear. When you have one eye fixed upon your destination, there is only one eye left with which to find the way.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/zen-martial-arts-academy/>

5) Merlin The Magician: The Magic Of Believing Story!

Once upon a time, there was a young man who dreamed of becoming a knight for King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table.

Before he could become a knight, he had to pass one last test – he had to slay a dragon.

The young man was scared to death.

He asked one of the knights what he should do about his tremendous fear.

This knight advised him to see Merlin the Magician because Merlin had a magic sword.

When the young man told Merlin about his problem, Merlin went to his back room and brought out a beautiful, gilded sword.

Merlin then instructed him, "This sword is magic and the day that you go out to slay your dragon, come see me and I will give you this magic sword. But make sure that your scabbard is empty. And remember that this sword only works its magic if you are in danger."

One week later, the would-be knight returned. He was dressed for battle and, as Merlin instructed, his scabbard was empty.

As Merlin went to the back room again, he told the young man to close his eyes.

Then Merlin returned and put the sword into his scabbard.

As the young man left, Merlin reminded him, "This sword will only work its magic if you are in danger."

The young man, now more confident, rode his horse out onto the plains where he confronted his dragon.

It was a fierce battle. The dragon was breathing fire. The dragon's tail knocked the young man off his trusty steed.

The young man was on the ground and the dragon came in for the kill.

Just at that moment, the young man remembered about the magic sword. He took the sword out of his scabbard and started slashing the dragon's legs.

The dragon was hurt and fell down. The young man jumped onto the dragon and put the sword into the dragon's heart and killed the dragon.

The young man returned home victorious.

The first person he went to see was Merlin.

He told Merlin about how the magic sword saved his life.

As he took it out of his scabbard to return it, he looked at it in amazement. "Merlin this isn't the same sword you showed me last week. This isn't the beautiful, gilded magic sword. It's just an ordinary sword!"

Merlin nodded and said, "There is no magic sword. The magic is believing."

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/merlin-the-magician/>

6) Punching The Balloon Clown: A Story About Bouncing Back!

A father took his young son into a toy shop to give him a chance to look at some special gifts he would like to receive from Santa Claus. The father told the boy to have a wander around on his own for a few minutes to see what he would like. At the back of the shop, his young son found a statue of a clown made out of lot of colorful balloons.

He looked at the balloon clown for a minute, and then he drew back his fist and hit him just as hard as he could. The balloon clown fell back and hit the floor, then rocked backwards and forwards and after a few seconds he stood upright again.

The confused boy backed off and looked at the balloon clown and then hit him again, as hard as he could. The balloon clown fell back once more and hit the floor, but was soon standing upright again.

The father saw his young son hit that balloon clown and asked, ‘Why do you think he comes bouncing back up when you hit him and knock him down?’

The boy thought for a minute and said, ‘I don’t know Dad, I guess it’s because he’s standing up on the inside.’

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/punching-the-balloon-clown/>

7) The King's Picture Of Peace: A Story About Calming The Heart!

There once was a King who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried. The King looked at all the pictures, but there were only two he really liked and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror, for peaceful towering mountains were all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains, too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky from which rain fell and in which lightning played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all. But when the King looked, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest in perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize? The King chose the second picture. Do you know why?

'Because' explained the King, 'peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace.'

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-kings-picture-of-peace/>

8) Which Wolf Will Win: A Cherokee Indian Legend!

An elder Cherokee Native American was teaching his grandchildren about life.

He said to them, ‘A fight is going on inside me . . . it is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One wolf represents fear, anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other stands for joy, peace, love, hope, sharing, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, friendship, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. This same fight is going on inside you, and inside every other person, too.’

They thought about it for a minute and then one child asked his grandfather, ‘Which wolf will win?’

The old Cherokee simply replied . . . ‘The one you feed.’

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/which-wolf-will-win/>

9) The Woodcutter's Axe: A Story About Being Busy!

Once upon a time a very strong woodcutter asked for a job in a timber merchant, and he got it. The pay was really good and so were the work conditions and for that reason, the woodcutter was determined to do his best.

His boss gave him an axe and showed him the area where he was to work and the first day, the woodcutter cut down 18 trees.

‘Congratulations,’ the boss said. ‘Go on that way!’

Very motivated for the boss words, the woodcutter tried harder the next day, but he only could cut down 15 trees. The third day he tried even harder, but he only could cut down 10 trees. Day after day he was cutting less and less trees.

‘I must be losing my strength,’ the woodcutter thought. He went to the boss and apologized, saying that he could not understand what was going on.

‘When was the last time you sharpened your axe?’ the boss asked.

‘Sharpen! I had no time to sharpen my axe. I have been very busy trying to cut down trees.’

.... Life gets like that. Sometimes we get so busy that we don't take time to ‘sharpen the axe.’

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-woodcutters-axe-story/>

10) The Guru's Directions: A Story About Success!

A man met a guru in the road. The man asked the guru -

‘Which way should I go to achieve success?’

The robed, bearded sage said nothing, but he pointed to a place in the distance.

The man, thrilled by the prospect of quick and easy success, rushed in the appropriate direction.

Suddenly, there came a loud ‘Splat.’

Soon, the man limped back, tattered and stunned, assuming he must have misinterpreted the message. He repeated his question to the guru. ‘Which way should I go to achieve success?’ The guru again pointed silently in the same direction.

The man obediently walked off once more. This time the ‘splat’ was deafening.

When the man crawled back, he was bloody, broken, tattered, and irate.

‘I asked you which way I should go to achieve success,’ he screamed at the guru.

‘I followed the direction you gave me, and all I got was splatted!

No more of this pointing! Talk!’

Only then did the guru speak. What he said was:

‘Success is that way. Just a little past splat.’

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-gurus-directions/>

11) The Story Of Two Monks And A Beautiful Woman!

Two monks were returning to the monastery in the evening.

It had rained and there were puddles of water on the road sides.

At one street a beautiful young woman was standing unable to walk across because of a large puddle of water. The elder of the two monks went up to her, lifted her, and then dropped her off on the other side of the road. After that he continued on his way to the monastery.

In the evening the younger monk came to the elder monk and asked,
“Sir, as monks, we cannot touch a woman?”

The elder monk answered “Yes, brother.”

Then the younger monk asks again, “But then Sir, how is that you lifted that woman on the roadside?”

The elder monk smiled at him and told him, “I lifted her to the other side of the road, but you are still carrying her.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/story-of-two-monks/>

12) Journey of Awakening: A Life Saving Story!

“There was once a king who was going to put to death many people, but before doing so he offered a challenge.

If any of them could come up with something which would make him happy when he was sad, and sad when he was happy, he would spare their lives.

All night the wise men meditated on the matter.

In the morning, they brought the king a ring.

The king said that he did not see how the ring would serve to make him happy when he was sad and sad when he was happy.

The wise men pointed to the inscription.

When the king read it, he was so delighted that he spared them all.

And the inscription read...

“This too shall pass.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/journey-of-awakening/>

13) The Butterfly Predicament: A Story About Struggle!

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to squeeze its body through the tiny hole.

Then it stopped, as if it couldn't go further.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bits of cocoon.

The butterfly emerged easily but it had a swollen body and shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch it, expecting that any minute the wings would enlarge and expand enough to support the body, Neither happened!

In fact the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around. It was never able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was the restricting cocoon and the struggle required by the butterfly to get through the opening was a way of forcing the fluid from the body into the wings so that it would be ready for flight once that was achieved.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. Going through life with no obstacles would cripple us. We will not be as strong as we could have been and we would never fly.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/tough-love-parenting-butterfly-effect-story/>

14) No Risk No Reward: A Cautious Farmer's Story!

A backwoods farmer, sitting on the steps of his shack, was approached by a stranger who was passing through.

“How’s your wheat coming along?” asked the stranger.

“Didn’t plant any.” Really? I thought this was good wheat country.”

“I didn’t plant because I was afraid it wouldn’t rain.”

“How’s your corn coming along?”

“Didn’t plant any.”

“Really? I thought this was good corn country.”

“I didn’t plant any because I was afraid of corn blight.”

“What did you plant?”

“Nothing,” said the farmer, “I just played it safe.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/no-risk-no-reward/>

15) The King's Rock Story: Every Obstacle Is An Opportunity!

In ancient times, a king had a huge boulder placed in a roadway, then he hid and watched to see if anyone would remove it.

Some of the kingdom's biggest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around the boulder.

Many of them loudly blamed the king for not keeping the roads clear, but none of them did anything about getting the big stone out of the way.

Then a peasant farmer came along, carrying a load of vegetables on his back.

When he came to the boulder, he laid down his vegetables and began trying to move the boulder to the side of the road.

After much struggling and straining, he finally succeeded.

As he was picking up his vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been.

The purse contained many gold pieces and a note from the king indicating the gold was for the person who removed the stone from the roadway.

The farmer had learned what many others have learned since:

Every obstacle presents an opportunity.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/every-obstacle-is-an-opportunity/>

16) How To Climb A Mountain...or anything else: The True Inner Story!

Once upon a time there was a world-class climber who gave classes and lessons to a small number of students.

For several weeks, they studied the technical and safety aspects of the sport and conducted several climbs.

As the class came to an end, the instructor informed his students that there were more advanced classes, but that to get into the class they would have to do one last climb in which their performance would be evaluated.

On the day set for the climb, the students arrived at the appointed place. They were met by people who said the instructor was delayed and that they should begin the climb without him.

The route was a long and difficult one, and required all the skills they had learned during the class.

After several hours of exhausting climbing, each student reached what appeared from below to be the last face at the end of the climb.

As each one pulled himself up over the top of this face, they saw that the mountain continued to rise up before them.

The instructor, who was hidden from the students, watched the face of each student carefully as they realized that the climb was not over.

Many of them sighed with disappointment that they had yet more to do.

However, a few looked up with eagerness and anticipation that there were new heights to reach, and these were the ones the instructor accepted into the advanced class.

He wanted to climb with people who were attracted to higher and higher peaks in the world – and in themselves.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/climb-a-mountain/>

17) Smart Monkey: An Animal Experiment FAIL Story!

A team of research scientists had selected four groups of monkeys for a pharmaceutical experiment.

The animals in the first group were to receive a high dose of the drug being studied.

Those in the second group were to get a moderate dose.

The monkeys in the third group were scheduled to receive a low dose of the drug.

And those in the fourth group were to be injected with a placebo.

The day before the experiment was to begin, the monkeys in the high-dose group were deprived of food while those in the other three groups were fed as usual.

On the morning of the experiment, tests revealed unexpected nutrients in the blood of the fasting monkeys. The researchers were surprised. They decided to repeat the previous day's procedure, but this time they were going to observe the behavior of the monkeys at night when the lights were off.

The researchers made a touching discovery.

The monkeys who were being fed were passing their food to their hungry friends who were being deprived of food.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/smart-monkey-animal-experiment/>

18) The Pearly Gates Of Heaven: Saint Peter's Shoe Salesman Story!

One day an old man who, was an expert in the world of art, died and went to heaven where he was met by Saint Peter at the pearly gates.

The old man asked Saint Peter to introduce him to other people who were interested in art.

Saint Peter, standing at the pearly gates of heaven said, "See that man with the beard? He was the greatest artist who ever lived. Want to meet him?"

The old man said, "Saint Peter, I know that man and I know art. That man worked in his father's shoe store and he sold me all my shoes for years. And he's not an artist!"

Saint Peter still standing at the pearly gates of heaven replied, "Oh, he could have been the greatest artist who ever lived, but he thought he was a shoe salesman."

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/saint-peter-pearly-gates-of-heaven/>

19) Penguins Can Fly: A Knowing Vs Doing Story!

Once upon a time, there was a penguin who was surfing the internet.

He came across the website of a motivational speaker who specialized in teaching pigs how to fly with his seminar titled Pigs Can Fly!

The penguin was amazed and thought, “If this person can teach pigs to fly, maybe he can perform a miracle and also teach penguins to fly.”

The penguin emailed the motivational speaker and asked him if he had a seminar titled “Penguins Can Fly.”

“Of course. No problem,” The speaker responded.

The penguin then asked him if he would be interested in coming to the South Pole.

The speaker said it would be very expensive.

The money was raised.

The travel arrangements were made.

Everything was all set.

On the big day, 100 excited penguins showed up at a hotel for the “Penguins Can Fly” seminar.

The motivational speaker began the ”Penguins Can Fly” seminar by telling the penguins that there were only two things they had to do to fly:

#1. Flap your wings harder.

#2. Believe in yourself.

He started teaching them how to flap really, really, really hard.

The penguins learned how to flap harder, but not one of the penguins left the ground.

Then the motivational speaker had ladders set up all around the room.

He explained that he wanted the penguins to start on the first rung, jump off and flap really hard.

They started on the first rung. They jumped off and flapped.

And then they all fell flat on their beaks.

Next, then they progressed to the second rung.

They jumped off, flapped really hard, but no success.

When they got to the third rung, all of a sudden some one of the penguins yelled out,

“Look at Ralph! Look at Ralph!”

Ralph was up and flying for about 10 seconds.

That did it!

As soon as the penguins saw that it was possible, they started to believe!

One after another, they started flying. They were up in the air for five seconds . . .

10 seconds . . . 30 seconds . . .

By the end of the day, every single one of the penguins was flying for as long as they wanted!

The “Penguins Can Fly” seminar was a resounding success.

When it ended, the speaker didn’t just get a standing ovation – he received a flying one, too!

After it was all over, the most amazing thing happened.

When all the penguins left the hotel, each and every one of them walked.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/penguins-can-fly-knowing-vs-doing/>

20) The Art Of Asking: A Golf Instructor Story!

A few years ago, a struggling golf pro was hired for one week to go to the Middle East to instruct a rich Arab sheik how to play the game of golf.

The golf instructor was promised a large sum of money and offered an even larger bonus if the sheik could break 100 by the end of their week of lessons.

As soon as the golf instructor arrived at the sheik's private airport, he was treated like royalty. Anything he wanted was immediately given to him free of charge.

At the first session, the golf instructor and the sheik became friends almost instantly. They met for three hours every morning and three hours every afternoon.

By the end of the week, the sheik, who had never played golf before, broke 100. The golf instructor would get his huge bonus!

When the golf instructor was getting ready to leave, the sheik gave him his check for the week of lessons and the huge bonus.

And then the sheik said to the instructor, "I must also give you a present for your kindness and help. What would you like?"

The golf instructor said, "This is the most money I've ever made — you don't owe me anything."

The sheik said, "No, I must get you a present."

The instructor said "OK — just buy me a golf club."

The sheik said, "Consider it done."

After a few months had passed, the golf instructor received a registered letter in the mail. It was from a South Carolina law firm. The instructor opened the formal-looking letter. Inside was a legal document making him the owner of a golf club in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-art-of-asking-golf-instructor/>

21) How To Do Things: Moving The Big Rock Story!

One spring day, a small boy tried to move a big rock in his backyard so he could start his garden. He tried, and tried, and tried, but he couldn't budge the rock even a little bit.

His father watched from the porch, and finally he asked his son whether he was using all of his strength.

The boy said, "Yes, I am."

"No, you're not," said the father. "You haven't asked me to help you!"

T = Together

E = Everyone

A = Achieves

M = More"

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/how-to-do-things/>

22) Freedom To Choose: A Demolition Crew Story!

One day as I was walking around my home town, I saw a group of men tearing a building down. With a “heave” and a “ho” and a mighty yell, they swung a huge steel ball and a tall building fell.

And I asked the foreman, “Are your men skilled? Are they the ones you’d hire if you were going to build?”

“Oh no,” he laughed, “Oh no, indeed!
Just unskilled laborers are all I need.”

“These men can easily wreck in a day or two,
What it takes skilled builders many years to do.”

And I asked myself as I walked away,
“Which one of these roles do I want to play?”

Do I want to be known as one who constantly tears down,
As I waste my time spreading negativity around.

Or do I want to be known as one who skillfully builds with care,
In hope that my team will always be glad that I’m there?

Carefully using a positive plan
And putting it into practice the very best that I can.

Or am I a wrecker who roams the town
With the intent of just tearing down.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/freedom-to-choose-demolition-crew/>

23) First Time Flying: Story Of A Seagull Bird Named Seamus!

“Once on the west coast of Ireland there lived a seagull bird whose name was Seamus. Seamus was a healthy, handsome, and intelligent seagull bird, but he was not able to fly.

When he was just a wee seagull bird, Seamus’s parents and siblings had been lost in a severe storm and he had no one to teach him.

He grew older and decided to try to learn by himself. He watched other seagull birds and, imitated them.

He ran along the ground and flapped his wings and hopped up and down, trying to get into the air, but nothing would happen, and the young seagull birds laughed at him because Seamus looked so funny.

Some of the older seagulls tried to teach him, but each one told Seamus a different way of learning to fly, and Seamus tried to think of all the ways each of the seagulls had told him:

“Flap your wings more, get your feet back, head straight,” and all the other instructions.

He was thinking so hard about what everyone had told him that he wasn’t able to get off the ground. He began to believe something was wrong with him, that he would never fly.

He tried going to the top of a cliff and jumping off, but he simply fell to the bottom. He went to a higher cliff, over the sea, closed his eyes, and jumped.

Again, he fell.

Other seagulls took pity on Seamus and tried to take care of him.

But this made him feel more discouraged than ever . . .

One day, a very old and wise seagull flew in to the western coast where Seamus lived. He listened to Seamus’s problem and told him to climb to the top of a special cliff, the highest and steepest one. On the top of this cliff he would find a large boulder, and on this boulder was

written a secret message. This was the message Seamus needed in order to fly, the wise bird told him.

No seagull had ever climbed such a steep cliff before. Seamus had to tie starfish to his feet to help him with the suction. He climbed slowly, painfully, and finally reached the top. He saw the large boulder.

On it was written:

What you believe — you can do!

Seamus looked down from the dizzying cliff and was terrified, but he closed his eyes and jumped. He started to drop, and as he did, he remembered to say to himself, “I believe I can fly, I believe I can fly.” He was so busy saying it that he forgot to doubt himself.

Instead of paying attention to all the different things he’d been told to do, he just did it. And he found himself flying — flying like any other seagull birds, with wings outstretched, gliding on the winds. It was his first time flying! It was the most wonderful moment of his life. He flew and dipped and never once wondered if he was doing it right. Far below on the sand, the other seagulls, who were watching him, heard him sing out, “I can fly! I believe!”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/first-time-flying-seagull-bird/>

24) Houdini Magic: The Best Trick Your Mind Story!

It's fascinating to read the stories, many of them legendary, about the late Houdini. That masterful magician was probably a better locksmith than he was a magician. He had a standing challenge that he could get out of any locked jail in 60 minutes, providing they would let him enter in his regular street clothes and not watch him work.

One of the stories is about a little town in the British Isles that decided to challenge (and perhaps embarrass) the great Houdini. This town had just completed an escape-proof jail, and so the townsfolk invited Houdini to come to see if he could break out.

He accepted the challenge. He was allowed to enter the jail in his street clothes. People said they saw the locksmith turn the lock some strange way, and then with the clang of steel, everybody turned their backs and left him alone to work. Houdini had hidden a long flexible steel rod in his belt, which is what he used to try to trip the lock. He worked for 30 minutes. He kept his ear close to the lock – 45 minutes, and then an hour passed; he was perspiring. After two hours, he was exhausted. He leaned against the door, and to his amazement, it fell open. They had never locked the door! It was their trick on the great escape artist!

The door was locked only in Houdini's mind. That's the only place it was locked! Some of you think that you can't overcome your problem. The only place where it is impossible is in your thinking. That's the only thing that's locked! Trick your mind!

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/houdini-magic-trick-your-mind/>

25) Life Moves Fast: The Flying Bricks And Jaguar Story!

An extremely successful young executive was traveling a bit too fast down a neighborhood street in his new Jaguar.

He was closely watching for kids darting out from between parked cars and slowed down when he thought he saw something.

All of a sudden, a brick smashed into the Jaguar's side door!

He slammed on the brakes and backed-up his car to the spot where the brick had been thrown.

The angry driver then jumped out of the car, grabbed the nearest kid and pushed him up against a parked car and screamed, "What are you doing?"

The young boy was apologetic. "Please mister, I'm sorry. I just didn't know what else to do. I threw the brick because no one else would stop."

With tears dripping down his face, the young boy pointed to a spot just around a parked car.

"It's my brother," he said, "He rolled off the curb and fell out of his wheelchair and I can't lift him up. I think he's hurt."

Now sobbing, the boy asked the stunned executive, "Would you please help me get him back into his wheelchair? He's too heavy for me."

The young executive hurriedly lifted the boy back into his wheelchair, then took out his fancy handkerchief and dabbed at the fresh scrapes and cuts. A quick look told him everything was going to be okay.

"Thank you and may God bless you," the grateful child said to the stranger.

Too shook up for words, the man simply watched the little boy push his wheelchair-bound brother down the sidewalk toward their house.

It was a long, slow walk back to the Jaguar.

The damage was very noticeable.

Years passed and the young executive never bothered to repair the dented side door.

He kept the dent there to remind him of this message:

Don't go through life so fast that someone has to throw a brick at you to get your attention.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/life-moves-fast-jaguar-repair/>

26) Buy Me That Shark In The Window: A Story About Limitation!

One day a woman went on a shopping spree in South Beach.

She stopped outside a store because she became interested in the big red sign in the window that said “Sharks.” She thought it might be a new clothing or shoe store, so she walked in.

She didn’t find any clothes or shoes inside — only aisles and aisles of live sharks! On the right were small bowls of water with small sharks, in the middle big aquariums with big sharks, and on the left there were even bigger tanks with even bigger sharks.

Everywhere she looked, she found sharks in various sizes!

She went out back and there was a pool with eight, ten and twelve foot sharks.

She was astounded.

She tracked down the manager and asked, “How can you afford to import all these different-sized sharks?”

The manager replied, “Oh, you’ve got it wrong — we only have one distributor. You see, sharks grow to the size of the vessel they’re in. The ones we put in the small bowls will stay small while the ones in the bigger tanks will grow bigger. If we put them in a pool out back – there is no telling how large they will get!”

“You’re pulling my leg,” the lady responded. “I know a little about sharks and that’s just not true.”

The manager said, “Lady, you’re pretty smart! I’ve been using that story since I opened the store eight months ago, and you’re the first person ever to call me on it! You are right — it isn’t true about sharks, but it certainly is true about people.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/jaws-6-shark-killing/>

27) A Life Lesson From The Little Girl In The Park Story!

Last spring I was walking in a park. A short distance ahead of me was a mom and her three-year-old daughter. The little girl was holding on to a string that was attached to a helium balloon. All of a sudden, a sharp gust of wind took the balloon from the little girl. I braced myself for some screaming and crying.

But, no!

As the little girl turned to watch her balloon go skyward, she gleefully shouted out, “Wow!”

I didn’t realize it at that moment, but that little girl taught me something . . .

Later that day, I received a phone call from a person with news of an unexpected problem. I felt like responding with “Oh no, that’s awful.”

But remembering that little girl, I found myself saying, “Wow, that’s interesting! How can I help you?”

One thing’s for sure — life’s always going to keep us off balance with its unexpected problems. That’s a given. What’s not preordained is our response. We can choose to be frustrated or fascinated.

No matter what the situation, a fascinated “Wow!” will always beat a frustrated “Oh, no.”

So the next time you experience one of life’s unexpected gusts, remember that little girl and make it a “Wow!” experience. The “Wow!” response always works.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/a-life-lesson-the-little-girl/>

28) The Power Of Perspective: The Depressed Bucket Story!

One day, two buckets met at the well in the center of town.

One of the buckets was down and depressed.

“What’s wrong?” the other bucket asked concerned.

“I can’t take it any longer,” said the depressed bucket. “I get so tired being dragged to this well every day. No matter how full I am when I leave here; I always come back here completely empty. I find it so depressing.”

“If you look at it that way, no wonder you’re depressed,” the second bucket said. “The way I see it is that no matter how empty I am when I come back here, I always leave here completely full. I find it so invigorating!”

“You are 100% responsible for how you choose to respond to everything that happens in your life.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-power-of-perspective-bucket-story/>

29) Who Killed Grabwell Grommet: A Fatal Mistake Story!

On the morning of his 42nd birthday, Grabwell Grommet awoke to a crack of particularly ominous thunder. Glancing out the window with his bleary eyes, he saw written in fiery letters:

“SOMEONE IS TRYING TO KILL YOU, GRABWELL GROMMET!”

With shaking hands, Grommet lit his first cigarette of the day. He didn't question the message. You don't question messages like that. His only question was, “Who?”

At breakfast as he salted his fried eggs and buttered his toast, he told his wife, Gratia, “Someone is trying to kill me.”

“Who?” she asked with horror.

Grommet slowly stirred the cream and sugar into his coffee and shook his head, “I don't know,” he said.

Convinced though he was, Grommet wasn't going to the police with his story. He decided his only course was to go about his daily routine and hope somehow to outwit his would-be murderer. He tried to think on the drive to the office. But the frustration of making time by beating lights and switching lanes occupied him wholly. Nor, once behind his desk, could he think a moment what with jangling phones, urgent memos and the problems and decisions piling in as they did each day.

It wasn't until his second martini at lunch that the full terror of his position struck him. It was all he could do to finish his Lasagna Milanese. “I can't panic,” he said to himself, lighting his cigar. “I simply must live my life as usual.”

So he worked until seven as usual, drove home fast as usual and then studied business reports as usual. And he took his usual two sleep capsules in order to get his usual six hours rest. As days passed, the man fully stuck to his routine. And as the months went by, he began to take a perverse pleasure in his ability to survive.

“Whoever’s trying to get me,” he’d say proudly to his wife, “hasn’t got me yet. I’m too smart for him.”

“Oh, please be careful,” she’d reply, ladling him a second helping of beef stroganoff. The pride grew as he managed to go on living for years.

But as it must to all men, death came at last to Grabwell. It came at his desk on a particularly busy day. He was 53.

His grief-stricken widow demanded a full autopsy. But it showed only emphysema, arteriosclerosis, duodenal ulcers, cirrhosis of the liver, cardiac necrosis, cerebrovascular aneurysm, pulmonary edema, obesity, circulatory insufficiency and a touch of lung cancer.

“How glad Grabwell would have been to know,” said the widow smiling proudly through her tears, “that he died of natural causes.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/who-killed-fatal-mistake/>

30) How Can I Change The World: A Positive Mind Story!

If you're reading this story – you want to do something BIG!

You want to leave your mark.

You want your life to stand for something.

You want to change the world.

Here's some advice written by an unknown monk in 1100 A.D.:

“When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world.

I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation.

When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town.

I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family.

Now, as an old man, I realize that the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family.

My family and I could have made an impact on our town.

Their impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have changed the world!”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/how-can-i-change-the-world/>

31) A Great Magician And His Disappearing Ship Story!

Once upon a time, there was a great magician who made his living by performing on cruise ships.

The magician had a parrot who was part of his act.

The parrot used to get laughs by telling the audience how the magician was doing his tricks.

The parrot would say things like, “The card is up his sleeve,” or “He’s going to steal your watch.”

One day the cruise ship hit a rocky reef and sank. Luckily, the parrot and the magician got on a life raft together. They drifted at sea for several days.

Day after day, the parrot just sat and stared at the magician in total silence.

Finally, the parrot said, “Okay, I give up. What did you do with the ship?”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/great-magician-disappearing-ship/>

32) Solve The Mystery Of X: A Story About Getting Lost!

Solve the following story for “X.”

Here’s the story . . .

Once upon a time, Fire, Water, and “X” were hiking deep in the woods.

The conversation turned to what they should do if they got separated from one another.

Fire said, “If we get separated, look for the smoke – that’s where you’ll find me.

Water said, “If we get separated, look for the green grass and flowers – that’s where you’ll find me.

“X” said, “You’d better not lose me because if you lose me you might never find me again.”

BE A DETECTIVE! Who or what is “X”?

Is “X” a person, place, or thing?

Is “X” a character trait?

.
. .
. .
. .

“X” = TRUST

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/solve-the-mystery-king-of-macedonia/>

33) Teaching Baseball: A Father, A Son, And The Hall Of Fame Story!

“During the winter of 1993, workers at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, made a remarkable, heartwarming discovery.

While renovating a section of the museum, they found a photograph that had been hidden in a crevice underneath a display case.

The man in the picture has a bat resting on his shoulders; he’s wearing a uniform with the words “Sinclair Oil” printed across the chest; his demeanor is gentle and friendly.

Stapled to the picture is a note, scribbled in pen by an adoring fan.

The note reads:

“You were never too tired to play ball.

On your days off, you helped build the Little League field.

You always came to watch me play.

You were a Hall of Fame Dad.

I wish I could share this moment with you.”

Your son,

Peter

.... Peter found a way to put his Father in the Hall Of Fame.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/teaching-baseball-hall-of-fame-story/>

34) Proof Of Heaven And Hell: The Samurai Monk Story!

“A big, tough Samurai once went to see a little monk.

“Monk,” he said in a voice accustomed to instant obedience, “teach me about heaven and hell!”

The monk looked up at this mighty warrior and replied with utter disdain, “Teach you about heaven and hell? I couldn’t teach you about anything. You’re dirty. You smell. Your blade is rusty. You’re a disgrace, an embarrassment to the samurai class. Get out of my sight. I can’t stand you.”

The samurai was furious. He shook, got all red in the face, was speechless with rage.

He pulled out his sword and raised it above him, preparing to slay the monk.

“That’s hell,” said the monk softly.

The samurai was overwhelmed. The compassion and surrender of this little man who had offered his life to give this teaching to show him hell!

He slowly put down his sword, filled with gratitude and suddenly peaceful.

“And that’s heaven,” said the monk softly.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/proof-of-heaven-and-hell-samurai-monk/>

35) Talking The Talk vs. Walking The Talk: The 3 Cowboys Story!

Late one night out on a lonesome Texas prairie, three cowboys were sitting around a campfire.

Then the stories began . . .

The first cowboy said, “I must be the meanest, toughest cowboy in the world. Just the other day, a bull got loose in the corral and gored six men to death. I immediately jumped over the fence and wrestled the bull to the ground with my bare hands.”

The second cowboy not wanting to be outdone said, “That’s nothing! I must be the meanest, toughest cowboy in the world. Just the other day, I was walking down a trail when a 15-foot rattlesnake slid out from under a rock and made a move toward me. When he was just about to bite me, I grabbed the snake by the neck and choked him to death with my bare hands.”

The third cowboy listened intently and remained silent while he stirred the orange-hot coals in the campfire with his bare hands.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/talking-the-talk-walking-the-talk/>

36) Personal Motivation: The Classic Mountain Baby Story!

There were two warring tribes in the Andes, one that lived in the lowlands and the other high in the mountains. The mountain people invaded the lowlanders one day, and as part of their plundering of the people, they kidnapped a baby of one of the lowlander families and took the infant with them back up into the mountains.

The lowlanders didn't know how to climb the mountain. They didn't know any of the trails that the mountain people used, and they didn't know where to find the mountain people or how to track them in the steep terrain.

Even so, they sent out their best party of fighting men to climb the mountain and bring the baby home.

The men tried first one method of climbing and then another. They tried one trail and then another. After several days of effort, however, they had climbed only several hundred feet. Feeling hopeless and helpless, the lowlander men decided that the cause was lost, and they prepared to return to their village below.

As they were packing their gear for the descent, they saw the baby's mother walking toward them. They realized that she was coming down the mountain that they hadn't figured out how to climb.

And then they saw that she had the baby strapped to her back. How could that be?

One man greeted her and said, "We couldn't climb this mountain. How did you do this when we, the strongest and most able men in the village, couldn't do it?"

She shrugged her shoulders and said, "It wasn't your baby."

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/personal-motivation-mountain-baby/>

37) Secret To Getting Someone To Fall In Love With You Story!

Once upon a time, there was a young woman who had two boyfriends, Bill and Charlie. Both of them were madly in love with her. Every Friday night she would go out with Bill and every Saturday night she had a date with Charlie.

This young woman knew that one day she would marry either Bill or Charlie, but she was in no rush to take the next step. One weekend, everything abruptly changed.

It started on Friday when she was having dinner with Bill. Right before dessert, Bill proposed to her. The woman was so startled that all she could say was, “Let me think about it.” Bill was so disappointed that he took her home immediately.

Saturday night, she had her usual date with Charlie. Right after dessert, Charlie proposed. She was so startled that all she could say was “Let me think about it.” Charlie was so disappointed that he took her home immediately.

Later that night, the woman realized that she had to make the biggest decision of her life. Suddenly, the only person who could help her magically appeared—her Fairy Godmother.

The young woman explained her dilemma and asked the Fairy Godmother if she could help. “Of course I can help,” the Fairy Godmother said. “Here’s what you have to do. Get a sheet of paper and a pen. Next, figure out the one thing you love most about being with Bill and write it down. Then, figure out the one thing you love most about being with Charlie and write it down. Then read what you wrote about Bill, and read what you wrote about Charlie, close your eyes, and the name of your future husband will magically pop into your mind.”

The woman did exactly what her Fairy Godmother said. When she closed her eyes, the name “Charlie” popped into her mind. The woman was ecstatic! She realized that Charlie was the right choice.

Just then her Fairy Godmother reappeared and asked, “Did my magic work?”

“Oh, it worked like a charm and I discovered that I’m going to marry Charlie.”

The Fairy Godmother wanted to know what she had written about Bill.

“When I’m with Bill, he makes me feel like he is the most wonderful person in the whole world.” The Fairy Godmother was confused. “I don’t understand,” she said. “You wrote that when you’re with Bill, you feel like he’s the most wonderful person in the whole world. So why are you going to marry Charlie?”

“Oh, that’s easy,” the woman replied, “When I’m with Charlie, he makes me feel like I AM the most wonderful person in the whole world.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/getting-someone-to-fall-in-love-with-you/>

38) Secret Of Motivation: The Carnival Strongman Story!

The carnival was in town again. As always, there were rides and games and food, but this year there was a special added attraction — a strongman.

Hundreds of people were at his show. He bent steel with his bare hands. He smashed bricks with his forearm. He arm-wrestled all comers. But for the grand finale, he simply squeezed a lemon.

All the juice from the lemon dripped onto the stage.

Then he made a brazen offer. “I’ll give \$10,000.00 to anyone who can squeeze just one more drop from this lemon. Who’ll be first?”

Two high school football players with bulging biceps jumped up on stage. They squeezed and squeezed and squeezed . . . but not even a trace of a drop.

Several other huge men tried it . . . nothing.

Then the strongman said, “Time for one more. Who will it be?”

A small, middle-aged woman raised her hand and asked if she could try.

“Sure you can, ma’am. Come on down.” As he welcomed her onto the stage, there were snickers from the crowd.

The woman grabbed the lemon and held it up in front of her. More snickers.

With total focus and determination she squeezed and squeezed and squeezed . . . and one little drop fell onto the stage. The audience gasped and then broke into wild applause.

Then the huge strongman put his arm around the little woman and said, “Ma’am, I’ve done hundreds of shows just like this one, and thousands of people have tried for the money, but you’re the only one ever to win it. How in the world did you do it?”

“Well,” the woman said, “when you have a husband who’s sick in bed and can’t work and you have eight mouths to feed and you have to pinch every penny; squeezing a lemon for \$10,000 ain’t too hard.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/secret-of-motivation-carnival-strongman/>

39) Honor And Integrity: The Priceless Ingredient Story!

In the city of Baghdad lived Hakeem, the Wise One, and many people went to him for counsel, which he gave freely to all, asking for nothing in return.

There came to him a young man, who had spent much but got little, and said, “Tell me, Wise One, what shall I do to receive the most for that which I spend?”

Hakeem answered, “A thing that is bought or sold has no value unless it contains that which cannot be bought or sold. Look for The Priceless Ingredient.”

“But, what is The Priceless Ingredient?” asked the young man.

Spoke the Wise One, “My son, The Priceless Ingredient of every product in the marketplace is the HONOR and INTEGRITY of him who makes it. Consider his name before you buy.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/honor-and-integrity-priceless-ingredient/>

40) Be Your Best Self: The Classic Dangers Of Plastic Surgery Story!

One day a woman in her early fifties had a massive heart attack.

She was rushed to the hospital in an ambulance.

Unfortunately, she died in the emergency room.

She went to heaven and was met by God.

God said, “What are you doing here? This is a huge mistake – you’re not supposed to be here for 30 years, four months, and five days. I’m sending you back to earth right now.”

Instantly, the woman was back in the emergency room. The doctors had paddles over her heart and they were shocking her.

She came back to life — a miracle!

The next day while she was in the recovery room, she called a nurse over and said, “Do you do cosmetic surgery here?”

The nurse said, “Of course! We can do anything you want and it’s just down the hall.”

The woman was transported to cosmetic surgery, where she had a total makeover – a tummy tuck, breast enlargement, skin abrasion, hair implants, caps on her teeth, etc.

When she finally left the hospital, she looked like a million dollars.

After she was home for a few days, she realized that she needed a brand new wardrobe.

While she was driving to the mall, she got into a horrible accident. She was crushed to death by a huge dump truck.

She died again.

She returned to heaven and she stormed into God’s office.

“God, just the other day you told me that I had 30 years, four months, and five days left and you killed me again. What’s the story?”

God said, “Please just give me a second. I need to get your file.”

God got her file and looked at her picture and then he looked at the woman.

He looked at the picture again and he looked at the woman.

He looked at the picture a third time and then looked at the woman.

Then God said, “I’m very sorry. I didn’t recognize you!”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/be-your-best-self-dangers-of-plastic-surgery/>

41) Don't Judge Yet Ye Be Judged: A Surprising Truth Story!

A 24 year old boy seeing out from the train's window shouted...

"Dad, look the trees are going behind!"

Dad smiled as a young couple sitting nearby looked at the 24 year old's childish behavior with pity as he suddenly again exclaimed...

"Dad, look the clouds are running with us!"

The couple couldn't resist and said to the old man...

"Why don't you take your son to a good doctor?"

The old man smiled and said...

"I did and we are just coming from the hospital,
my son was blind from birth, he just got his eyes today.

Every single person on the planet has a story.

Don't judge people before you truly know them.

The truth might surprise you.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/dont-judge-yet-ye-be-judged/>

42) The Elephant and the Rope Story!

As a man was passing the elephants, he suddenly stopped, confused by the fact that these huge creatures were being held by only a small rope tied to their front leg. No chains, no cages. It was obvious that the elephants could, at anytime, break away from their bonds but for some reason, they did not.

He saw a trainer nearby and asked why these animals just stood there and made no attempt to get away. “Well,” trainer said, “when they are very young and much smaller we use the same size rope to tie them and, at that age, it’s enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe they cannot break away. They believe the rope can still hold them, so they never try to break free.”

The man was amazed. These animals could at any time break free from their bonds but because they believed they couldn’t, they were stuck right where they were.

Like the elephants, how many of us go through life hanging onto a belief that we cannot do something, simply because we failed at it once before?

Failure is part of learning; we should never give up the struggle in life.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-elephant-and-the-rope-story/>

43) A Dish Of Ice Cream: A Gratitude First Story!

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10 year old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him.

“How much is an ice cream sundae?”

“50 cents,” replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied a number of coins in it.

“How much is a dish of plain ice cream?” he inquired. Some people were now waiting for a table and the waitress was a bit impatient.

“35 cents,” she said brusquely.

The little boy again counted the coins. “I’ll have the plain ice cream,” he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away.

The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and departed.

When the waitress came back, she began wiping down the table and then swallowed hard at what she saw.

There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were 15 cents – her tip.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/a-dish-of-ice-cream/>

44) The Starfish Story: You Too Can Make a Difference Now!

There was a man taking a morning walk at or the beach.

He saw that along with the morning tide came hundreds of starfish and when the tide receded, they were left behind and with the morning sun rays, they would die.

The tide was fresh and the starfish were alive. The man took a few steps, picked one and threw it into the water. He did that repeatedly.

Right behind him there was another person who couldn't understand what this man was doing. He caught up with him and asked, "What are you doing? There are hundreds of starfish. How many can you help? What difference does it make?"

This man did not reply, took two more steps, picked up another one, threw it into the water, and said, "It makes a difference to this one."

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-starfish-story/>

45) Socrates' Ultimate Secret to Success Story!

A young man asked Socrates the secret to success.

Socrates told the young man to meet him near the river the next morning. They met.

Socrates asked the young man to walk with him toward the river. When the water got up to their neck, Socrates took the young man by surprise and dunked him into the water.

The boy struggled to get out but Socrates was strong and kept him there until the boy started turning blue. Socrates pulled his head out of the water and the first thing the young man did was to gasp and take a deep breath of air.

Socrates asked, 'What did you want the most when you were there?' The boy replied, "Air."

Socrates said, "That is the secret to success. When you want success as badly as you wanted the air, then you will get it." There is no other secret. A burning desire is the starting point of all accomplishment.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/socrates-ultimate-secret-to-success-story/>

46) The Deadly Singing Lark Story!

Once there was a lark singing in the forest.

The lark stopped him and asked, “What do you have in the box and where are you going?” The farmer replied that he had worms and that he was going to the market to trade them for some feathers.

The lark said, “I have many feathers. I will pluck one and give it to you and that will save me looking for worms.”

The farmer gave the worms to the lark and the lark plucked a feather and gave it in return. The next day the same thing happened and the day after and on and on until a day came that the lark had no more feathers.

Now it couldn't fly and hunt for worms. It started looking ugly and stopped singing and very soon it died.

What is the moral of the story???

The moral is...what the lark thought was an easy way to get food turned out to be more difficult after all. Isn't the same thing true in our lives?

Many times we look for the easier way, which really ends up being the hard way.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-deadly-singing-lark-story/>

47) The Little Boy And The Puppy: A Story Of Empathy!

A boy went to the pet store to buy a puppy.

Four of them were sitting together, priced at \$50 each.

Then there was one sitting alone in a corner. The boy asked if that was from the same litter, if it was for sale, and why it was sitting alone. The store owner replied that it was from the same litter, it was a deformed one, and not for sale.

The boy asked what the deformity was. The store owner replied that the puppy was born without a hip socket and had a leg missing. The boy asked, “What will you do with this one?” The reply was it would be put to sleep.

The boy asked if he could play with that puppy. The store owner said, “Sure.” The boy picked the puppy up and the puppy licked him on the ear. Instantly it was love at first sight and the boy decided that was the puppy he wanted to buy.

The store owner said “That puppy is not for sale!”

However, the boy insisted and the store owner finally agreed.

Excitedly the boy pulled out \$20 from his pocket and then ran to get another \$30 from his mother. She obliged and it was a done deal. The puppy now belonged to the boy.

As he reached the door with his new best friend the store owner shouted after him, “I don’t understand why you would pay full money for this one when you could buy a good one for the same price.”

The boy didn’t say a word. He just lifted his left pant leg to expose a large clunky brace. The pet store owner was speechless. The boy finally spoke saying, “I want this puppy and only this puppy at full price; because I know how he feels.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-little-boy-and-the-puppy-story/>

48) The Monkey Trap Story: Power Of Letting Go!

Monkey-hunters use a box with an opening at the top, big enough for the monkey to slide its hand in. Inside the box are nuts. The monkey grabs the nuts and now its hand becomes a fist.

The monkey tries to get its hand out but the opening is only big enough for the hand to slide in, it's not large enough for a fist to come back out.

Now the monkey has a choice, either to let go off the nuts and be free forever or hang on to the nuts and get caught. Guess what it picks every time? You guessed it. He hangs on to the nuts and gets caught.

... Are we humans any different in this regard? We all hang on to some nuts that keep us from moving forward in life. We keep rationalizing it by saying, "I cannot do this because . . ." and whatever comes after "because" are just the nuts that we are hanging on to which hold us back.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-monkey-trap-story/>

49) Legend Of The Village Wise Man: A Story About Perceptive!

There is a legend about a wise man who was sitting outside his village.

A traveler came up and asked him, “What kind of people live in this village, because I am looking to move from my present one?”

The wise man asked, “What kind of people live where you want to move from?”

The man said, “They are mean, cruel, rude.”

The wise man replied, “The same kind of people live in this village too.”

After some time another traveler came by and asked the same question and the wise man asked him, “What kind of people live where you want to move from?”

And the traveler replied, “The people are very kind, courteous, polite and good.” The wise man said, “You will find the same kind of people here too.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/legend-of-the-village-wise-man/>

50) The Man Who Sold Hot Dogs: A Story About Perception!

There is a story about a man who sold hot dogs by the roadside.

He was illiterate, so he never read newspapers. He was hard of hearing, so he never listened to the radio. His eyes were weak, so he never watched television.

But enthusiastically, he sold lots of hot dogs. His sales and profit went up. He ordered more meat and got himself a bigger and a better stove. As his business was growing, the son, who had recently graduated from college, joined his father.

Then something strange happened. The son asked, “Dad, aren’t you aware of the great recession that is coming our way?” The father replied, “No, but tell me about it.” The son said, “The international situation is terrible. The domestic is even worse. We should be prepared for the coming bad time.”

The man thought that since his son had been to college, read the papers, and listened to the radio, he ought to know and his advice should not be taken lightly.

So the next day, the father cut down his order for the meat and buns, took down the sign and was no longer enthusiastic.

Very soon, fewer and fewer people bothered to stop at his hot dog stand. And his sales started coming down rapidly. The father said to his son, “Son, you were right. We are in the middle of a recession. I am glad you warned me ahead of time.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-man-who-sold-hot-dogs/>

51) The Drunken Sailor Story: A Misrepresentation Of Truth!

There was a sailor who worked on the same boat for three years. One night he got drunk. This was the first time it ever happened.

The captain recorded it in the log, “The sailor was drunk tonight.” The sailor read it, and he knew this comment would affect his career, so he went to the captain, apologized and asked the captain to add that it only happened once in three years which was the complete truth.

The captain refused and said, “What I have written in the log is the truth.”

The next day it was the sailor’s turn to fill in the log. He wrote, “The captain was sober tonight.” The captain read the comment and asked the sailor to change or add to it explaining the complete truth because this implied that the captain was drunk every other night.

The sailor told the captain that what he had written in the log was the truth.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/drunken-sailor-story-misrepresentation-of-truth/>

52) A Story Of Blood Brothers: “I Knew You Would Come!”

There were two childhood buddies who went through school and college and even joined the army together. War broke out and they were fighting in the same unit.

One night they were ambushed. Bullets were flying all over and out of the darkness came a voice, “Harry, please come and help me.” Harry immediately recognized the voice of his childhood buddy, Bill. He asked the captain if he could go. The captain said, “No, I can’t let you go, I am already short-handed and I cannot afford to lose one more person. Besides, the way Bill sounds he is not going to make it.”

Harry kept quiet. Again the voice came, “Harry, please come and help me.” Harry sat quietly because the captain had refused earlier. Again and again the voice came. Harry couldn’t contain himself any longer and told the captain, “Captain, this is my childhood buddy. I have to go and help.”

The captain reluctantly let him go. Harry crawled through the darkness and dragged Bill back into the trench. They found that Bill was dead. Now the captain got angry and shouted at Harry, “Didn’t I tell you he was not going to make it? He is dead, you could have been killed and I could have lost a hand. That was a mistake.” Harry replied, “Captain, I did the right thing. When I reached Bill he was still alive and his last words were; Harry, I knew you would come.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/story-of-blood-brothers-i-knew-you-would-come/>

53) The Real Difference Between Heaven and Hell Story!

A man died and St. Peter asked him if he would like to go to heaven or hell.

The man asked if he could see both before deciding. St. Peter took him to hell first and the man saw a big hall with a long table, lots of food on it and music playing. He also saw rows of people with pale, sad faces. They looked starved and there was no laughter. And he observed one more thing. Their hands were tied to four-foot forks and knives and they were trying to get the food from the center of the table to put into their mouths. But they couldn't.

Then, he went to see heaven. There he saw a big hall with a long table, with lots of food on the table and music playing. He noticed rows of people on both sides of the table with their hands tied to four-foot forks and knives also. But he observed there was something different here. People were laughing and were well-fed and healthy-looking. He noticed that they were feeding one another across the table.

The result was happiness, prosperity, enjoyment, and gratification because they were not thinking of themselves alone. The same is true of our lives.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/difference-between-heaven-and-hell/>

54) Two Sons With A Bad Father: A Story Of Rising Above!

This is a story of two brothers.

One was a drug addict and a drunker who frequently beat up his family. The other one was a very successful businessman who was respected in society and had a wonderful family.

Some people wanted to find out why two brothers from the same parents, brought up in the same environment, could be so different.

The first one was asked, “How come you do what you do? You are a drug addict, a drunk, and you beat your family. What motivates you?” He said, “My father.”

They asked, “What about your father?” The reply was, “My father was a drug addict, a drunk and he beat his family. What do you expect me to be? That is what I am.”

They went to the brother who was doing everything right and asked him the same question. “How come you are doing everything right? What is your source of motivation?” And guess what he said? “My father.”

When I was a little boy, I used to see my dad drunk and doing all the wrong things. I made up my mind that that is not what I wanted to be.”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/two-sons-with-a-bad-father/>

55) The Drowning Man: A Story Of Questionable Faith!

A flood was threatening a small town and everyone was leaving for safety except one man who said, “God will save me. I have faith.”

As the water level rose a jeep came to rescue him, the man refused saying, “God will save me. I have faith.”

As the water level rose further, he went up to the second story, and a boat came to help him. Again he refused to go, belying, “God will save me. I have faith.”

The water kept rising and the man climbed on to the roof. A helicopter came to rescue him, but he said, “God will save me. I have faith.”

Well, finally he drowned.

When he reached his Maker he angrily questioned, “I had complete faith in you. Why did you ignore my prayers and let me drown?” The Lord replied, “Who do you think sent you the jeep, the boat, and the helicopter?”

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-drowning-man/>

56) How Much Land Does a Man Need: A Story Of Greed!

There is a story about a wealthy farmer who was once offered all the land he could walk on in a day, provided he came back by sundown to the point where he started.

To get a good start, early the next morning the farmer started covering ground quickly because he wanted to get as much land as he could. Even though he was tired, he kept going all afternoon because he didn't want to miss this once in a lifetime opportunity to gain more wealth.

Late in the afternoon he realized the condition he had to fulfill to get the land was to get back to the starting point by sundown. His greed had gotten him far enough. He started his return journey, keeping an eye on how close he was to sundown. The closer it got to sundown, the faster he ran. He was exhausted, out of breath and pushed himself beyond the point of endurance. He collapsed upon reaching the starting point and died.

He did make it back before sundown, but he never enjoyed his windfall.

He was buried the next day and all the land he needed was a small plot.

Whether the farmer was wealthy or not, any greedy person would have ended the same way.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/how-much-land-does-a-man-need/>

57) My Dog Can Walk On Water: A Story About Negativity!

There was a hunter who bought a bird dog, the only one of its kind in the world. That could walk on water. He couldn't believe his eyes when he saw this miracle.

At the same time, he was very pleased that he could show off his new acquisition to his friends. He invited a friend to go duck hunting. After some time, they shot a few ducks and the man ordered his dog to run and fetch the birds.

All day-long, the dog ran on water and kept fetching the birds. The owner was expecting a comment or a compliment about his amazing dog, but never got one. As they were returning home, he asked his friend if he had noticed anything unusual about his dog. The friend replied, "Yes, in fact, I did notice something unusual. Your dog can't swim."

... No matter what some people will always see the negative side.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/my-dog-can-walk-on-water/>

58) The Black Balloon: A Story About Equality!

There was a man who made living selling balloons at a fair.

He had all colors of balloons Including red, yellow, green. Whenever business was slow, he would release a helium filled balloons into the air and when the children saw it go up, they all wanted to buy one. They would come up to him, buy a balloon and his sales would go up again.

He continues this process all day. One day, he felt something tugging his jacket. He turned around and saw a little boy who asked,” If you release a black balloon, would that also fly?” Moved by the boy’s concern, the man replied with empathy.” Son, it is not the color of the balloon, it is what inside that makes it go up.”

...It’s what’s inside that counts.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-black-balloon-story/>

59) The Oyster And The Pearl: A Story About Aggravation!

There once was an oyster whose story I tell,
who found that some sand had got into his shell.

It was only a grain, but it gave him great pain,
for oysters have feelings although they're so plain.

Now, did he berate the harsh workings of fate
that brought him to such a deplorable state?

Did he curse at the government, cry for election,
and claim that the sea should have given him protection?

No – he said to himself as he lay on a shell,
since I cannot remove it I shall try to improve it.

Now the years have rolled around, as the years always do.
and he came to his ultimate destiny, a stew.

And the small grain of sand that had bothered him so,
was a beautiful pearl all richly aglow.

Now the tale has a moral, for isn't it grand
what an oyster can do with a morsel of sand?

What couldn't we do if we'd only begin,
with some of the things that get under our skin?

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/oyster-and-the-pearl-story/>

60) In A Dilemma: A Classic Story Of Empowerment!

Many years ago in a small village...

A farmer had the misfortune of owing a large sum of money to a village moneylender. The moneylender, who was old and unattractive, fancied the farmer's beautiful daughter.

So he proposed a bargain.

He said he would forgo the farmer's debt if he could marry his daughter.

Both the farmer and his daughter were horrified by the proposal.

So the cunning moneylender suggested that they let Providence decide the matter.

He told them that he would put a black pebble and a white pebble into an empty money bag. Then the girl would have to pick one pebble from the bag.

1. If she picked the black pebble, she would become his wife and her father's debt would be forgiven.
2. If she picked the white pebble she need not marry him and her father's debt would still be forgiven.
3. But if she refused to pick a pebble, her father would be thrown in jail forever.

They were standing on a pebble strewn path in the farmer's field. As they talked, the moneylender bent over to pick up two pebbles. As he picked them up, the sharp-eyed girl noticed that he had picked up two black pebbles and put them into the bag.

He then asked the girl to pick a pebble from the bag.

Now, imagine that you were standing in the field. What would you have done if you were the girl?

If you had to advise her, what would you have told her?

Careful analysis would produce three possibilities:

1. The girl should refuse to take a pebble.
2. The girl should show that there were two black pebbles in the bag and expose the money-lender as a cheat.
3. The girl should pick a black pebble and sacrifice herself in order to save her father from his debt and imprisonment.

Take a moment to ponder over the story....

The above story is used with the hope that it will make us appreciate the difference between lateral and logical thinking.

The girl's dilemma cannot be solved with traditional logical thinking.

Think of the consequences if she chooses the above logical answers.

What would you recommend to the girl to do?

Well, here is what she did . . .

The girl put her hand into the moneybag and drew out a pebble. Without looking at it, she fumbled and let it fall onto the pebble-strewn path where it immediately became lost among all the other pebbles.

“Oh, how clumsy of me,” she said. “But never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked.”

Since the remaining pebble is black, it must be assumed that she had picked the white one.

And since the moneylender dared not admit his dishonesty, the girl changed what seemed an impossible situation into an extremely advantageous one.

... Most complex problems do have a solution.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:
<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/in-a-dilemma-classic-story/>

61) What am I: A Tale About Blame!

What am I?

I am seldom considered, though I do more to influence everything about you than virtually any one thing in your life. I often control the time you get up in the morning, the time you go to sleep, what you eat and drink and the very thought that runs through your head. I can make you happy or sad, loving or hateful, cheerful or remorseful, congenial or spiteful and in doing so, control the very capacity that you have for success.

No, you don't often think of me instead you BLAME the problem I create on the shortcoming of others, or the state of the economy, or your family or a million other reasons. Often at times unable to find anyone else to BLAME you look for shortcomings within yourself on which to lay the BLAME.

When my impact on your life fully is considered in your every thought and action, when you are mindful of my awesome power, when you nurture and groom me for positive use in your life, I can become more contagious than the most prolific disease ever witnessed by man. My influence will spread to every person you come in contact with.

Groomed and nurtured in a positive manner there will be no person or obstacle that can stand in the way of my success or fail to be impacted for the better.

'I Am Your Attitude'

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/what-am-i/>

62) The Parable Of The Marbles And The Bag!

Once upon a time, there was a foolish boy who had a bag full of beautiful marbles.

Now this boy was quite proud of his marbles. In fact, he thought so much of them that he would neither play with them himself nor would he let anyone else play with them.

He only took them out of the bag in order to count and admire them; they were never used for their intended purpose. Yet that boy carried that coveted bag of marbles everywhere he went.

Well, there was also a wise boy who wished he could have such a fine bag of marbles. So this boy worked hard and earned money to purchase a nice bag to hold marbles. Even though he had not yet earned enough with which to purchase any marbles, he had faith and purchased the marble bag.

He took special care of the bag and dreamed of the day it would contain marbles with which he could play and share with his friends.

Alas, the foolish boy with all of the marbles didn't take care of the marble bag itself, and one day the bag developed a hole in the bottom seam. Still, he paid no attention and, one by one, the marbles fell out of the bag.

The Parable Of The Marbles And The Bag...

It didn't take long, once the foolish boy's marble bag developed a hole, for the wise boy to begin to find those beautiful marbles, one at a time, lying unnoticed on the ground. And, one by one, he added them to his marble bag. The wise boy thus gained a fine bag full of marbles in no time at all. This boy played with the marbles and shared them with all of his friends. And he always took special care of the bag so he wouldn't lose any.

Because the foolish boy was selfish and careless, he lost all of his marbles and was left holding the bag.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-parable-of-the-marbles-and-the-bag/>

63) The Secret Of The Touchstone: A Story About Opportunity!

When the great library of Alexandria burned, the story goes, one book was saved. But it was not a valuable book; and so a poor man, who could read a little, bought it for a few coppers.

The book wasn't very interesting, but between its pages there was something very interesting indeed. It was a thin strip of vellum on which was written the secret of the Touchstone!

The touchstone was a small pebble that could turn any common metal into pure gold. The writing explained that it was lying among thousands and thousands of other pebbles that looked exactly like it. But the secret was this: the real stone would feel warm, while ordinary pebbles are cold.

So the man sold his few belongings, bought some simple supplies, camped on the seashore, and began testing pebbles.

He knew that if he picked up ordinary pebbles and threw them down again because they were cold, he might pick up the same pebble hundreds of times. So, when he felt one that was cold, he threw it into the sea. He spent a whole day doing this but none of them was the touchstone. Yet he went on and on this way. Pick up a pebble. Cold – throw it into the sea. Pick up another. Throw it into the sea.

The days stretched into weeks and the weeks into months. One day, however, about mid-afternoon, he picked up a pebble and it was warm. He threw it into the sea before he realized what he had done. He had formed such a strong habit of throwing each pebble into the sea that when the one he wanted came along he still threw it away.

So it is with opportunity.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-touchstone-story/>

64) The Trouble Tree: A Story About Problems!

A carpenter I hired to help me restore an old farm house has just finished a rough day on the job. A flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric saw quit and now his ancient truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he sat in stony silence. On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family.

As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands.

When opening the door, he underwent an amazing transformation. His tanned face was wreathed in smiles and he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss. Afterward he walked me to the car. We passed the tree and my curiosity got the better of me so I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier.

‘Oh, that’s my trouble tree,’ he replied. ‘I know I can’t help having troubles on the job, but one thing for sure, troubles don’t belong at home with my wife and the children. So I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home. Then in the morning I pick them up again.’

‘Funny thing is,’ he smiled, ‘when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there aren’t nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before.’

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-trouble-tree-story/>

65) An Interesting Funeral: A Story About Limiting Beliefs!

One day all the employees of a very unusual company reached their office and all saw a big sign on the main door which said this:

‘Yesterday, the person who has been hindering your growth in this company passed away. We invite you to join the funeral in the room that has been prepared in the gym.’

In the beginning, they all got sad for the death of one of their colleagues, but after a while they started getting curious to know who was that person who hindered the growth of their colleagues and the company itself?

The excitement in the gym was such that security agents were ordered to control the crowd within the room. The more people reached the coffin, the more the excitement heated up.

Everyone thought – ‘Who is this person who was hindering my progress?’

One by one the intrigued employees got closer to the coffin, and when they looked inside it, they suddenly became speechless.

They all got to stand near the coffin, and all ended up shocked and in silence, as if someone had touched the deepest part of their soul. There was a mirror inside the coffin: everyone who looked inside it could see themselves! There was also a sign next to the mirror that said. . .

‘There is only one person who is capable of setting limits to your growth and IT IS YOU!’

...Your life does not change when your boss changes, when your friends change, when your parents change, when your husband or wife changes, when your company changes, when your church changes, when your location changes, when your money changes, when your status changes.

Your life changes when YOU change, when you go beyond your limiting beliefs.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/an-interesting-funeral-story/>

66) Dust If You Must: A Story About Living Life!

A house becomes a home when you can write ‘I love you’ on the furniture. I can’t tell you how many countless hours that I have spent cleaning. I used to spend at least 8 hours every weekend making sure things were just perfect – ‘in case someone came over.’ Then I realized one day that no-one came over; they were all out living life and having fun!

Now, when people visit, I find no need to explain the condition of my home. They are more interested in hearing about the things I’ve been doing while I was away living life and having fun. If you haven’t quite figured this out as yet, please heed this advice.

Life is short, so enjoy it! Dust if you must, but wouldn’t it be better to paint a picture or write a letter, bake a cake or plant a seed, or even ponder the difference between want and need? Dust if you must, but there’s not much time, with rivers to swim and mountains to climb, music to hear and books to read, friends to cherish and life to lead. Dust if you must, but the worlds out there with the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair, a flutter of snow, a shower of rain. This day will not come around again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind, old age will come and it’s not kind. And when you go – and go you must, you, yourself will make more dust! It’s not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived ... and remember, a layer of dust protects the wood beneath it.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/dust-if-you-must-story/>

67) A Father Son Conversation: Story About Making Time!

A man came home from work late again, tired and irritated, to find his 5 year old son waiting for him at the door.

‘Daddy, may I ask you a question?’

‘Yeah, sure, what is it?’ replied the man.

‘Daddy, how much money do you make an hour?’

‘That’s none of your business! What makes you ask such a thing?’ the man said angrily.

‘I just want to know. Please tell me, how much do you make an hour?’ pleaded the little boy.

‘If you must know, I make \$20.00 an hour.’

‘Oh,’ the little boy replied, head bowed. Looking up, he said, ‘Daddy, may I borrow \$10.00 please?’

The father was furious. ‘If the only reason you wanted to know how much money I make is just so you can borrow some to buy a silly toy or some other nonsense, then you march yourself straight to your room and go to bed. Think about why you’re being so selfish. I work long, hard hours every day and don’t have time for such childish games.’

The little boy quietly went to his room and shut the door.

The man sat down and started to get even madder about the little boy’s questioning.

How dare him ask such questions only to get some money.

After an hour or so, the man had calmed down, and started to think he may have been a little hard on his son. Maybe there was something he really needed to buy with that \$10.00, and he really didn’t ask for money very often.

The man went to the door of the little boy’s room and opened the door.

‘Are you asleep son?’ he asked.

‘No daddy, I’m awake,’ replied the boy.

‘I’ve been thinking, maybe I was too hard on you earlier,’ said the man.

‘It’s been a long day and I took my aggravation out on you. Here’s that \$10.00 you asked for.’

The little boy sat straight up, beaming. ‘Oh, thank you daddy!’ he yelled.

Then, reaching under his pillow, he pulled out some more crumpled up bills.

The man, seeing that the boy already had money, started to get angry again. The little boy slowly counted out his money, then looked up at the man.

‘Why did you want more money if you already had some?’ the father grumbled.

‘Because I didn’t have enough, but now I do,’ the little boy replied.

‘Daddy, I have \$20.00 now. Can I buy an hour of your time?’

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/a-father-son-conversation/>

68) Sleep When The Wind Blows: A Story About Being Prepared!

Years ago a farmer owned land along the Atlantic seacoast. He constantly advertised for hired hands, however, most people were reluctant to work on farms along the Atlantic. They dreaded the awful storms that raged across the Atlantic, wreaking havoc on the buildings and crops.

As the farmer interviewed applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals. Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer. ‘Are you a good farm hand?’ the farmer asked him.

‘Well, I can sleep when the wind blows,’ answered the little man. Although puzzled by this answer, the farmer, desperate for help decided to hire him.

The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk, and the farmer felt well satisfied with his work. Then one night the wind howled in loudly from offshore. Jumping out of bed, the farmer grabbed a lantern and rushed next door to the hired hand’s sleeping quarters. He shook the little man and yelled, ‘Get up! A storm is coming! Tie things down before they blow away!’

The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, ‘No sir, told you, I can sleep when the wind blows.’

Enraged by the response, the farmer was tempted to fire him on the spot. Instead, he hurried outside to prepare for the storm. To his amazement, he discovered that all of the haystacks had been covered with tarpaulins. The cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coop and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down. Nothing could blow away. The farmer then understood what his hired hand meant, so he returned to his bed to also sleep while the wind blew.

... When you’re prepared spiritually, mentally and physically, you have nothing to fear.
Can you sleep when the wind blows through your life?

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/sleep-when-the-wind-blows/>

69) The Zen Archer: A Story About Concentration!

After winning several archery contests, the young and rather boastful champion challenged a Zen master who was renowned for his skill as an archer. The young man demonstrated remarkable technical proficiency when he hit a distant bull's eye on his first try, and then split that arrow with his second shot. 'There,' he said to the old man, 'see if you can match that!'

Undisturbed, the master did not draw his bow, but rather motioned for the young archer to follow him up the mountain. Curious about the old fellow's intentions, the champion followed him high into the mountain until they reached a deep chasm spanned by a rather flimsy and shaky log.

Calmly stepping out onto the middle of the unsteady and certainly perilous bridge, the old master picked a faraway tree as a target, drew his bow, and fired a clean, direct hit. 'Now it is your turn,' he said as he gracefully stepped back onto the safe ground.

Staring with terror into the seemingly bottomless and beckoning abyss, the young man could not force himself to step out onto the log, no less shoot at a target. 'You have much skill with your bow,' the master said, sensing his challenger's predicament, 'but you have little skill with the mind that lets loose the shot.'

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-zen-archer-story/>

70) When You Thought I Wasn't Looking: A Former Child's Story!

A message every adult should read, because children are watching you and doing as you do, not as you say.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator and I immediately wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you feed a stray cat, and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make my favourite cake for me and I learned that the little things can be the special things in life.

When you thought I wasn't looking I heard you say a prayer, and I knew there is a God I could always talk to and I learned to trust in God.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick, and I learned that we all have to help take care of each other.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you give of your time and money to help people who had nothing and I learned that those who have something should give to those who don't.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when you didn't feel good and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw tears come from your eyes and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's alright to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw that you cared and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I learned most of life's lessons that I need to know to be a good and productive person when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked at you and wanted to say, 'Thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking.'

... Each of us influences the life of a child.

How will you touch the life of someone today?

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/when-you-thought-i-wasnt-looking-story/>

71) The Richest Man In The Valley: A Story About Wealth!

A rich landowner named Carl often rode around his vast estate so he could congratulate himself on his great wealth. One day while riding around his estate on his favorite horse, he saw Hans, an old tenant farmer. Hans was sitting under a tree when Carl rode by.

Hans said, 'I was just thanking God for my food.'

Carl protested, 'If that is all I had to eat, I wouldn't feel like giving thanks.'

Hans replied, 'God has given me everything I need, and I am thankful for it.'

The old farmer added, 'It is strange you should come by today because I had a dream last night. In my dream a voice told me, 'The richest man in the valley will die tonight.' I don't know what it means, but I thought I ought to tell you.'

Carl snorted, 'Dreams are nonsense,' and galloped away, but he could not forget Hans' words: 'The richest man in the valley will die tonight.' He was obviously the richest man in the valley, so he invited his doctor to his house that evening. Carl told the doctor what Hans had said. After a thorough examination, the doctor told the wealthy landowner, 'Carl, you are as strong and healthy as a horse. There is no way you are going to die tonight.'

Nevertheless, for assurance, the doctor stayed with Carl, and they played cards through the night. The doctor left the next morning and Carl apologized for becoming so upset over the old man's dream. At about nine o'clock, a messenger arrived at Carl's door.

'What is it?' Carl demanded.

The messenger explained, 'It's about old Hans. He died last night in his sleep.'

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-richest-man-in-the-valley-story/>

72) Treasures in Clay Vessels: A Story About Face Value!

A man was exploring caves by the seashore. In one of the caves he found a canvas bag with a bunch of hardened clay vessels. It was like someone had rolled balls of clay and left them out in the sun to bake.

They didn't look like much, but they intrigued the man, so he took the bag out of the cave with him. As he strolled along the beach, he would throw the clay balls one at a time out into the ocean as far as he could.

He thought little about it, until he dropped one of the clay balls and it cracked open on a rock. Inside was a beautiful, precious stone!

Excited, the man started breaking open the remaining clay vessels. Each contained a similar treasure. He found thousands of dollars' worth of jewels in the 20 or so clay balls he had left. Then it struck him.

He had been on the beach a long time. He had thrown maybe 50 or 60 of the clay balls with their hidden treasure into the ocean waves. Instead of thousands of dollars in treasure, he could have taken home tens of thousands, but he had just thrown it away!

It's like that with people. We look at someone, maybe even ourselves, and we see the external clay vessel. It doesn't look like much from the outside. It isn't always beautiful or sparkling, so we discount it.

There is a treasure in each one of us. If we take the time to get to know that person, then the clay begins to peel away and the brilliant gem begins to shine forth.

May we not come to the end of our lives and find out that we have thrown away a fortune in friendships because the gems were hidden in bits of clay.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/treasures-in-clay-vessels-story/>

73) The Original Stone Soup Story!

Many years ago three soldiers, hungry and weary of battle, came upon a small village.

The villagers, suffering a meager harvest and the many years of war, quickly hid what little they had to eat and met the three at the village square, wringing their hands and bemoaning the lack of anything to eat.

The soldiers spoke quietly among themselves and the first soldier then turned to the village elders.

‘Your tired fields have left you nothing to share, so we will share what little we have - the secret of how to make soup from stones.’

Naturally the villagers were intrigued and soon a fire was put to the town’s greatest kettle as the soldiers dropped in three smooth stones.

‘Now this will be a fine soup’, said the second soldier; ‘but a pinch of salt and some parsley would make it wonderful!’

Up jumped a villager, crying ‘What luck! I’ve just remembered where some has been left!’

Then off she ran, returning with an apron full of parsley and a turnip. As the kettle boiled on, the memory of the village improved: soon barley, carrots, beef and cream had found their way into the great pot, and a cask of wine was rolled into the square as all sat down to feast.

They ate and danced and sang well into the night, refreshed by the feast and their new-found friends.

In the morning the three soldiers awoke to find the entire village standing before them. At their feet lay a satchel of the village’s best breads and cheese. ‘You have given us the greatest of gifts – the secret of how to make soup from stones’, said an elder, ‘and we shall never forget.’

The third soldier turned to the crowd, and said: ‘There is no secret, but this is certain, it is only by sharing that we may make a feast’, then off the soldiers wandered, down the road.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/the-stone-soup-story/>

74) The Farmers Fortune Or Misfortune: A Story About Meaning!

One day while working out in the fields the farmer's son fell and broke his leg. The villagers came to the farm and said, 'My, that's a great misfortune. Your son has broken his leg: now he can't help you in the fields.'

The farmer said, 'It is neither a fortune nor a misfortune.'

A day later, the government troops came to the village looking for young men to conscript into the army. They had to leave the boy behind because his leg was broken. Again, the villagers came to the farm and said, 'My, that's a great fortune.'

The farmer replied, 'It is neither a fortune nor a misfortune.'

Then one day the farmer's only horse jumped the fence and ran away. The villagers came to the farm and said, 'What a great misfortune that your horse has run away.'

The farmer said, 'It is neither a fortune nor a misfortune.'

Two or three days later, the horse came back with a dozen wild horses following behind him. The villagers came to him and said, 'It's a great fortune that your horse came back with twelve others.'

The farmer replied, 'It is neither a fortune nor a misfortune.'

... You see the farmer was wise enough to know that everything that was happening had a purpose and meaning beyond the simple appearance of the event that had occurred. So many times we are trapped by the emotion of the events in our lives. Remember the teaching of the Tao . . . 'nothing is long or short, hot or cold, good or bad.'

If you define it as good or bad, you always must ask yourself 'Good in relation to what or bad in relation to what? Until we decide what the event means to us there is no meaning.

To Cut/Paste This Story Visit The Official Page Here:

<http://www.motivationaljoe.com/farmers-fortune-or-misfortune/>

75) Tuning For Achievement:
An Original Tale About Breaking Free From Negative Beliefs!
by Motivational Joe (DePalma)

The uncommonly happy boy with old sneakers, a dirty cap, and a smile on his face that seemed to stretch from ear to ear had just turned eight years old. It was about a month or so after his birthday, and he was walking with his Dad through the local Salvation Army store that his family knew so well. That is when he saw the most beautiful vision his young eyes had ever seen. Up in front of the store, in the window behind the register, was a beat-up old guitar. However, the boy didn't see the scratches, the chips, and the dents on the guitar. He saw past all that and envisioned himself playing the sweetest music that anyone ever heard. He saw people driving from miles around to watch him play, and he saw the smiles on their faces as he strummed and plucked away at his six-string.

“Oh Dad, please can I have that guitar? Can I have it? Please, oh Dad, please.”

Quickly, the boy's father, who had no knowledge of musical instruments, examined the guitar because he had never heard his son so excited about something. In fact, the father couldn't even remember the last time his only child asked for something in a store. As the father located the price on the back of the guitar, he looked over into his young boy's pleading brown eyes as he clasped his hands under his chin.

“This isn't a toy you know? This guitar is for big boys and it costs \$43. That's a lot of money, you know.”

The boy looked down with a perplexed expression on his face as he did some calculations in his head. “Forty three whole dollars?” he asked his Dad.

“Yes champ, I'm afraid this guitar costs \$43, and I don't have any extra money at this time. I'm sorry, but I'm sure we'll see something you'll like even better very soon.”

The boy looked back at his father and said something that took him very much by surprise.

“Dad, I still have the \$40 that I made on my birthday at home. If I use that, and borrow three dollars from you, which I’ll do extra chores for, can I buy the guitar?”

The boy’s Dad was now in a tough spot; should he allow his son to buy the guitar with his beloved birthday money which he stretched out for months last year, and risk it all on something that may only frustrate him and lead him to abandon it in a closet?

The boy’s father finally spoke. “Well, you know we can’t afford any guitar lessons for you, and I don’t know how to teach you how to use it. Wouldn’t you rather buy a baseball bat or a video game?”

The boy was undeterred. He looked up over the counter and spoke to the older man who was working the register and passively listening to the conversation.

“Excuse me sir, do you know how to play the guitar? If I come back tomorrow with my money and buy that guitar in the window, will you teach me?”

Before the old man behind the register could answer the little boy’s request the father intercepted, and with a pleasantly shocked and slightly embarrassed smile, he said to the older man behind the register, “I’m sorry. My son is just excited. He doesn’t usually act this way. I’m not sure what’s gotten into him.”

Then, before the boy could muster up another round of please, please, please, the old man said, “Oh, I’m all too aware of what’s gotten into him my friend. It seems he’s caught the bug. You see that look in his eyes? I had that look a long time ago. It was many, many years ago when I saw my first trumpet. Ya’ know, some people don’t believe in love at first sight. But I do. I saw it shining like a new penny when my uncle opened his case. Then he took it out and handed it to me. I caught the bug that day. I couldn’t play one note, but I didn’t care. And I’ve had that bug ever since. Over the years, I’ve played just about every instrument there was, including the guitar.” He continued, looking down at the boy, “I tell you what; if you come back tomorrow with your \$43, we’ll see just what we can do with ya. Is that a deal?”

The little boy looked astonished as he nodded his head vigorously, unable to say a word.

“But you must be good to your Dad and do extra chores, okay?” Said the old man as he winked to the boy’s father.

With almost a feverish excitement, the little boy yelped out, “OKAY!”

As father and son walked out of the store, the boy’s father was in amazement of the deal his eight year old son just made without his help, and simply stated to the old man, “Thank you. I guess we’ll be seein’ you tomorrow.”

As the boy looked back over his shoulder for the guitar, he finds it’s no longer in the window. The old man had it saddled across his lap, and the instant the boy’s eyes caught the old man’s, he heard a quick blues riff ring out of that old beat-up guitar. His smile exploded as he heard the old man say, “I’ll be seeing you tomorrow, bright and early I’d guess. Bring your \$43. Not a penny less.”

The boy, on cloud nine, waved back at the old man as the store’s door closed behind them. The little boy and his father drove home in near silence as the boy dreamed of the new life that awaited him only one quick night’s sleep away.

The next morning the boy got up, dressed, and was sitting in the front seat of his father’s truck with his \$40 in hand before his Dad was even awake. The boy, excited beyond words to take ownership of his new guitar, honked the horn to hurry his father along. Moments later, Dad emerged from the house and got behind the wheel.

“Do you have the \$3?” the boy asked before his father could put the keys in the ignition.

“Yup, I have it,” Dad replied with a smile. With those simple four words, the boy turned to gaze out the window in anticipation of what lay ahead of him. Dad, looking over at his young son with a continuously astonished expression asked, “Are you hungry? We can stop for a quick...”

“No thanks, Dad,” the boy replied suddenly, cutting off his father’s inquiry. “I want to get my guitar.”

“Ok son, we’ll eat later.”

Both father and son jumped from their trunk parked right in front of the Salvation Army store just as the image of a wrinkled yet confident hand emerged from behind the store's front window to turn a sign from "closed" to "OPEN." The boy raced to the door, and all in one movement, he opened it and entered the store, leaving his father on the curb outside.

"Well, well, well, good morning, Bugs," The old man bellowed with a laugh. "I'm gonna call you Bugs, 'cause you have most definitely caught the music man's bug. "How are you today?"

The boy answered as his father finally strode in behind him. "I'm good!"

The old man spoke again, "Well, I guess you're looking for this," as he pulled out the old and weathered six string. The boy became speechless as his eyes lit up. "Do you have the money?"

The boy quickly pulled out his little wallet, and there next to his library card were two crisp 20 dollar bills. He yanked the money from his wallet and handed it to the old man. He then turned to his Dad, who already had the \$3 out, and handed the money to the happy old man.

"Well, well, well, Bugs. It seems you're a man of your word. I like that. It shows strong character. And I, too, stand behind my word, so here you go."

The old man lifted the guitar over the counter and handed it to its new owner. The boy was mesmerized as if he'd just met Santa Claus, The Easter Bunny, and Mickey Mouse all at once: pure glee as he pondered the possibilities of the instrument in his hands.

"Now a deal is a deal," said the old man. "Let me teach you a how this lady sings." For the next four hours, the old man showed the boy all the secret tricks of the trade as his father took notes. This lesson only stopped when the old man was forced to step away and ring someone up on the register, but then right back to teaching he went. After a while, the father couldn't tell who was having more fun: his son learning a new craft, or the old man teaching it.

"Ok," the old man said. "Did you get it all?"

The boy with an amazed look stammered... "Yeah, ahhh, yeah, I mean I think I got it."

“HAHAHAHAHAH, good,” the old man replied. “Now go home and practice over and over again until you can do all of it without thinking about it. Ok?”

“Ok!” said the boy as he thanked his faithful teacher and ran out to start playing for passers-by on the side walk. Both the father and old man laughed.

As the father thanked the old man for his time, the old man said, “It’s my pleasure, my friend. It’s up to him now. Only he can keep the fire burning within himself, but I have a good feeling about him. Also, you should know that that guitar was once mine. I donated it to the store. If that guitar were your truck outside it would have about a million miles on it with rust and the whole nine yards. It may not last him too long as its sweet sounds will start to wander very soon. At that point, if he’s still playing it every day but it’s sounding worse and worse even though he’s getting better at strummin’ and pluckin’, I got an idea for you.”

The old man pulled the father towards him and whispered a secret plan into his ear. The father at first looked puzzled, but then smiled from ear to ear. He thanked the old man again for his time and walked out to join his son on the sidewalk. But as the father opened the door to leave, his son came rushing back in and asked the old man, “Can my Dad and I come back and play a concert for you someday?”

The old man let out a deep laugh. “You do that Bugs. I’ll be here.”

Hours turned to days, days to weeks, and weeks to months as the boy spent most of his free time playing and learning the ins and outs of his prize guitar. Most of his friends were playing video games and trading baseball cards, but not our young music man. The bug he had inside his gut for music just kept getting bigger and louder.

Time clicked by at a fast pace as the boy ventured deeper and deeper into the labyrinth that is learning a musical instrument. He went to school, did his homework, finished his chores, and played his guitar. That was his whole routine. He lost some friends who rathered he play football in the mud with them, but he quickly gained new ones who have “musical bugs” of their own.

However, the boy was getting smarter and started to not only play his instrument, but feel it as well. He began to realize that the more he played and learned his chosen craft, the more his precious guitar was not responding as he believed it should. The guitar was slipping out of tune more frequently and the tones didn't seem to be resonating as they should at times. Yet, the boy pushed through and treated his beloved six string as if it were the aging family dog that was now having trouble walking up the steps. In a manner of speaking, the band played on, even though it was raining.

Then one day, the boy's Dad walked into his son's little room while he was frustratingly changing the guitar strings as he frequently did in hopes of keeping it sounding as best as he could, and said, "You've been playing that guitar just about every day for about a year now haven't ya?"

The boy replied without looking up as he plucked the high E string and struggled to lock it in key, "Yeah, I guess so."

Dad paused for a moment as he watched his son handle the guitar with a precision of someone twice his age, and said, "I think you've been spending too much time with that thing, and it's clearly on its last legs. You should look into doing something else for a while. In fact, John from down the road said that we could have his son's old mini dirt bike. All we would need to do is fix it up a bit. It will be great! Just give me your guitar and we'll go and pick up the bike. You trust me right?"

The boy looked up, surrounded by old strings, wrenches, tuning keys, and a host of other guitar repair odds and ends that weren't easily identifiable and said, "Wow, I know that bike. That would be awesome, but can't I give you something else, Dad? How about my skateboard? You know I trust you."

Dad turned and left the boy's room as he said, "That's ok son, I'll just tell John he can give the bike to someone else." For a second the boy thought about getting up and leaving his guitar frustrations behind, but then without a word to his Dad, who was secretly hiding just on the other side of the bedroom door, he returned to battle against the high E string.

About a week later, the boy was greeted by his Father as he returned from another trip to the local music shop where he spent his allowance, again, on various replacement guitar parts. “Hey son, you look down. What’s wrong?” he asked, as if didn’t know).

The boy answered, “I’m ok, it’s just that I spent my allowance again on more parts for my guitar, and the man in the store said the guitar isn’t even worth all the money I’m spending on it and that I should buy a new one. But new ones are way too expensive, Dad. We can’t afford one.”

Dad replied, “I understand son. It’s ok. I still think you’re spending too much time and energy with that instrument anyway. How about you trust me with it and I’ll take you down to the ball field. Ya’know, Coach T. called again last night and wants you to come and join the team. He said he’ll make you co-captain if you’ll devote the time to leading the other players. What do you say?”

The boy quickly thought it over and replied, “No thanks, Dad. You know I trust you, but I want my guitar to sound just right again.”

As the boy walked inside the house his Dad watched him with an ever increasing smile on his face.

Another week or so passed until Dad re-entered his sons room, only this time he found his son sitting on the corner of his bed with a couple of tears running down his cheeks. “What’s wrong son?”

“It just won’t play right, Dad. I can’t explain it. I’ve tried to fix it every way I can. It just won’t play right.”

Dad heard the careful frustration in his only son’s voice and said simply, “Do you trust me?”

“Yes, Dad, I trust you,” the boy replied.

“Then give me your guitar and we’ll see what opens up for you. Sometimes in life, my son, you can’t move forward until you let something go.”

The boy seemed to understand his father's truth with a combination of young knowledge and blind trust. He picked up his favorite thing in the world, and, as a tear dripped off his chin, he handed his guitar over to his father. "Here, take it, Dad."

The boy's father took the guitar, looked it over with a secret gleam in his eye, and said, "That's good son. Now you get a good night's sleep and I'll see you in the morning."

As the sun came up the very next morning, the boy awoke and left his room after a difficult night's sleep. However, the boy's father was nowhere to be found. The boy searched the house for his father, but came up empty. Then, the boy looked outside to see his father's truck parked quietly in front of the house as it always was, yet there was something different in the air. Something wasn't as it was yesterday, and the boy was getting anxious to discover what it was. He ran from the back of the house to the front and found nothing. He then ran outside and around to the backyard calling for his Dad when he saw his guitar leaning up against the huge oak tree towards the very back of the property. He ran over to the tree, and as he got within about 10 feet of its huge base, his Dad emerged from behind the other side. "Good morning my son," said the Dad in a very cheerful voice.

The boy, looking surprised, happily shouted, "Dad! What's going on? Why are you out here and why is my guitar up against the tree?"

The Dad stepped forward and said, "What did I say to you last night before you handled your guitar over to me?"

"Ahh, you said that sometimes in order to move forward, you have to give something up. Is that right?"

"Yes son, that is exactly right. You must understand that life will not allow you to carry everything you want with you forever. And if you try, you'll keep yourself from advancing to where you ought to be. Do you understand?"

"Yes Dad, I understand. That's why you took my guitar right?"

“Indeed son, that’s why I asked to take your guitar, but you had to come to that understanding on your own. First, you proved your loyalty and passion by not trading your guitar for the mini bike or the sports team. Then, you proved your trust in me as well as your acceptance in life by letting go of something you desperately wanted to hold onto. Those are all strong qualities to have, son. Passion, trust, and acceptance; you’ve displayed them all. You’re a very special boy. I’m proud of you. It came time for you to cut down a tree in order to better plant an orchard. And you did. Now, look up my son.”

As the boy took in all that his father had said with an understand that most young people don’t have, he followed his instructions and looked straight up into the branches of the mighty tree. That was when he saw it. Resting between two branches no more than three or four yards above his head was a brand new shiny, black Gibson guitar!

“WOW!” The boy stared in amazement. Then, just as he appeared unable to move from the shock of such a discovery, he leaped onto the tree and climbed up to retrieve his treasure. In a matter of seconds, the boy had the new guitar in his hands. “Can I keep it, Dad? Is it really mine?”

“Yes son, it’s yours. You’ve earned it.”

As the boy touched ground with his new guitar he immediately hugged his Dad tightly. “Thank you, Dad. This guitar costs so much money. We can’t afford it.”

“It’s been taken care of, my son. I know we don’t have much, but this is something you should have as your own. Your Mother would have wanted it this way.”

The boy replied through his tears of joy, “I won’t let you down Dad. I’ll practice all the time and I’ll be a great guitar player. I promise.”

“I know son,” Dad replied. “I know you will. But there’s one last thing we need to do. Remember, you promised the man in the store you’d return and play for him. I think it is time for you to keep that promise.”

“Great!” the boy exclaimed. “I’ll bring my new guitar.”

“No son, you should bring the old one and give it back to him. You see, the old man in the store saw something in you which I couldn’t. That’s why he called you Bugs. He told me exactly what was going to happen with your old guitar, but told me to not allow you to get a new one until you proved yourself worthy. He said there’s a cycle to it all which cannot be rushed. And now the final part of that cycle is giving back. You must return your old guitar to the store and allow someone else to start their cycle. Do you understand?”

“Yes, Dad, I understand; and I will give a free lesson to whoever gets the guitar next!”

* Tuning For Achievement:

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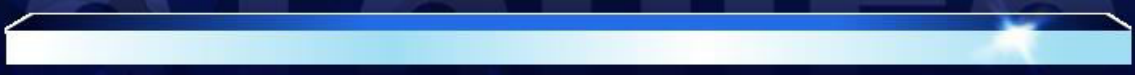
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