

District Deputy Grand Master's Official Visit

Wardrope Lodge No. 555

Accompanying Lodge - Seymour Lodge No. 272

Masonic Centre of Hamilton

Monday October 27, 2008

Brethren, for those of you that were at my official visit to Hugh Murray last week, you will remember that I made a reference in my talk on Effective Leadership to an idea attributed to the late Peter F. Drucker, an American Management Consultant, that you can't predict the future, but you can create it.

Well tonight I will build on that and talk to you about **The Challenge of Change**.

Change is never easy. It is sometimes forced upon us or sometimes we simply choose to make a change. But change is inevitable. It is the very essence of change that drives the engine of creative good in the world. We constantly have to anticipate challenges, identify opportunities, be flexible, and react quickly.

For a minute let me relate this idea to the lodge. Maybe not so much now, but I'm sure in the past, the Worshipful Master may have thought that he had all the answers. He may have then, but not anymore. The 'macho Master' image of "I can do it all myself" doesn't work anymore. Things are too complex and they're changing too fast. It's all the people out there that have the best idea of what's going on. To survive, the Master had to give up control and involve and trust the other members and work together. These days there is far more information, a far greater need for interdependency, and a far greater rate of change than ever before. All this challenges us to change old patterns, to experiment and

take risks, to depend upon others for support, and to produce “more for less”, or the other way of saying this is by the phrase “**Playing to Win**”.

In my researches I came across a picture and quote from Will Rogers, an American Humorist. The picture shows a person lying across a railroad track and a train coming towards her. The caption states, “**Even if you’re on the right track, if you just sit still, you’ll get run over**”. It is not hard to see the truth in this. So what can we do? Well, there are three choices:

- **Change by Crisis** - a crisis in your life can lead to change, for example, you may have a health issue like a heart attack, your spouse leaves you or there is a death in the family (spouse, child), the loss of a job. These are wake-up calls. Your response to any of these events is to cope. The cost of changing by crisis is usually very high.
- **Change by Evolution** - you notice people around you changing, so you change with them. You adapt and the environment provides the primary motivation to change. The problem with this change is that you often can’t react fast enough to stay ahead.
- **Change by Anticipation** – You take a mental journey into the optimal future and create a vision of where you want to go. Then you compare where you are now to your vision, and use the gap between the two to propel yourself into your future. In other words you create your future by seeing change as a challenge and as an adventure. Or as Peter Drucker is quoted, “**The Best way to predict the future is to create it**”.

I mentioned earlier the phrase **Playing to Win**. This isn’t about beating someone or reaching a goal, it is about going as far as you can using all that you’ve got. It’s seeing change as a challenge. It’s taking risks and getting out of your comfort zone. It’s

letting go of old patterns and behaviors. It's breaking through fears. In reality, Playing to Win is learning, growing, and continuously improving. In my studies, I also came across a picture of Winston Churchill, in uniform, cigar in his mouth, and two fingers held up and this quote, **“Play for more than you can afford to lose, and you will learn the game”**. However, taking risks and getting out of your comfort zone could also result in failure. Failing is part of the learning process. In fact, if you don't have failures, you're probably not learning and you're not taking enough risks. By encouraging risks and expecting some failures is not to suggest that you encourage failure. Rather, it is the idea that if you are going forward into uncharted territory, you are a pioneer. Let's remember, **“If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten”**. When you **Play not to Lose**, you are using a defensive strategy based in the past. You try to maintain the security and comfort of what you are used to (what was) by avoiding what you fear may happen in the future (what might be). When you **Play to Win**, you are using a strategy based in the future. You let go of the security of the past to reach for the promises and opportunities of the future.

WHICH GAME DO YOU WANT TO PLAY?

Brethren, I could go on with this topic; however, I think I will close and I will you with this saying by Helen Keller, an American Author and Educator who was blind and deaf: **“Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing”**

Thank you