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## Trust Is Everything

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I trust that everything happens for a reason, even when we're not wise enough to see it.

-- Oprah Winfrey  
*O Magazine*

**I**N THE NOVEMBER ISSUE of *PEPonline*, I wrote about a very important subject: *Lying Destroys Integrity* [1]. Lying poisons us and erodes our souls. Lives are changed forever when in the presence of liars. Lying not only destroys integrity, it also destroys trust and productivity. As Luis Solisa [2] pointed out, “In a recent survey on the role of trust in innovation, more than 72% of respondent rated that ‘trust issues’ as a major obstacle to the free flow of intellectual capital at their organizations.” Not being able to trust is a big failure in life’s interactions. Just as trust is linked to sharing ideas, dreams, and the possibilities of a better future, not being able to trust destroys all three.

*So, who will lie? Anyone who is under pressure to do so, real or imagined, or anyone who expects to gain from it will lie.*

Yet, as they say, life goes on! Jennifer E. Lewis [3] may have said it best. “One way to cope with the loss of trust is to never stop believing that life will go on as it should. Eventually one of two things will happen. Either your circumstances will change to fit your needs or your needs will change to fit the circumstances.” While this belief helps, it doesn’t correct the violation of

lying when trust is suppose to be a way of saying to the world, "You can rely on me. "Trust and honesty are important. Establishing trust and a good professional reputation has always been important. People who are dishonest are always on guard to keep their faults from being exposed.

*A trustworthy person is someone in whom you can place your trust and rest assured that the trust will not be betrayed.*

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trustworthiness>

## **Trust, Lying, and The Truth**

There is no one thing that overshadows trust. It is either something you know about yourself or you don't. It is instinctive. You live it. As Kênia Sousa[4] said, "Trust plays even a larger role in the work environment. It is fundamental for everything to work smoothly." Without trust, life as we know it would be essentially impossible to live. That is why the pathetic person who deceives (or misleads) others diminishes trust between human beings. Without trust, how else is a person to make a free and informed decision about the matter? Trust is at the core of ethical conduct. Without trust, the liar's "...long-term credibility is at risk. He will probably suffer harm if he's found out...people are more likely to lie to him...and if he's found out he's less likely to be believed in future" [5].

*There is a meaning in every journey that is unknown to the traveler.*

*-- Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

Lying isn't good but strangely enough with persistence and hard work there is the gift in all things that hurt. The truth of this is often realized after years of being silenced, constrained, and left out due to the betrayal, the truth surfaces. Without a doubt, such conditions speak directly to Gen 50:20, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." This is the great hope that in a way something good comes from liars and cheats. God turns liars against themselves, which is in agreement with Christopher Kaczor's thinking, "False assertion creates

personal disintegration between the inner self and the outer self that is presented to others” [6].

No one walks through life 100% disconnected from their actions and toll on others. While the victims of untrustworthy individuals understands there is no way out but straight ahead, they also realize that liars often find themselves confused knowing they have betrayed friends and others. If only the victims of greed, power, and politics had read what Ben Sirach wrote in Ecclesiasticus, “Stay away from your enemies but guard yourself against friends.” Joan D. Chittister [7] said it somewhat differently, “Friends who protect us from our need to grow are not friends at all.”

*The Desert Monastics say that one of the disciples asked Abba Sisoës one day, “If I am sitting in the desert and a barbarian comes to kill me and if I am stronger than he, shall I kill him?” The old man said to him, ‘No, leave him to God.’”*

*-- Joan D. Chittister, The Rule of Benedict*

The inexpressible gift of a vision unites and transforms. It calls us both to hope and to endure as we wait in joyful expectation of exercise physiologists recognized as healthcare professionals. The quest for meaning is never done in isolation. It is done with friends. It is a process, not an event. It takes time, help, and care. The point of a vision is never to give up on it and never to doubt that every bit of kindness and effort to bring the vision into reality has meaning.

As a modern saying argues, “There’s no way out but through.” The simple truth is that there are some things in life that must be done even among liars and those who have hurt you. A person’s vision can help contribute to a very significant way of life. It is not a privilege that is limited to just a few. It is a gift to be shared. Clearly, there are many causes nobler than destroying trust. Most importantly, the dignity of a person is violated when oppressed and/or manipulated [8]. There is simply never a reason to violate any person’s right to be treated with dignity.

It doesn’t hurt to be reminded that people deserve to be treated with dignity. This includes friends, colleagues, and others we encounter. How often have you done something for a friend only to be mistreated later? The outcome is difficult to

live with and hard to forgive, especially when colleagues ostracize other colleagues. It might include not sharing information that is necessary to do one's job effectively. It might also be talking behind someone's back, excluding someone from decision-making or going out to lunch with a group and purposely not inviting someone [9].

## **Bullying and Friendship**

Not only is workplace bullying a challenging issue for the workplace and especially for the employees, it is a legal issue as well. Einarsen and Raknes [10] define workplace bullying as "...repeated actions and practices of an unwanted nature that are directed against one or more employees." It doesn't matter whether bullying is done unconsciously or if it is done deliberately, trust is important. The simple truth is that causing humiliation and distress among colleagues isn't acceptable. It creates an unpleasant work environment in addition to the real possibility of devastating health problems for the victims of bullying [11].

*Change your thoughts and  
you change your world.*

*-- Norman Vincent Peale*

As Richard M. Gula [12] said, "We know our world is a rough place in which to live, so we are suspicious of give and take." Yet, it is absolutely imperative that we learn to trust regardless of the untrustworthiness of many. In fact, it is likely the only way to let go of fear and suspicion. Without trust, we would be terrified by anything new or uncertain. Trust is not something to be dismissed. It is the driving force behind new possibilities and finding meaning in whatever happens in life.

*Friendship creates a community where there is mutual challenge and correction to nurture the life-giving potential in each but not to diminish, destroy, or stifle the creative contribution anyone can give. It is a community that seeks to enhance the dignity of each and not manipulate, maneuver, or exploit anyone [12].*

Contribution to life and to one's destiny is important. Each new idea builds upon the previous ideas, so that over time, improvements over the old ones set the stage for incremental change. Contrary to most thinking, trust is necessary to keep on tweaking and fiddling with new solutions and improved ideas. A trusting thinker's philosophy is that "there is no such thing as not keeping a commitment to one's word." Sometimes the only thing that works is trusting in the heart's desire to go beyond yesterday's failed rhetoric. The key is to trust each other beyond the known or accepted thinking for a new way to see what is possible.

### **Trust Is Everything**

Trust is everything. This thinking is especially important at the personal level. How many times has a person said, "I can't do it" or "It can't be done." People fail to trust themselves by concluding they aren't "smart enough" or "sufficiently creative to eradicate the problem." Yet, it is clear that almost every new contribution to an existing way of life was ridiculed. Galileo and Socrates are good examples. "Progress is made only by those who are strong enough to endure being laughed at." Solutions to bad problems come from new ideas even if they are greeted with laughter and/or contempt [13].

Without trust no one would be able to share feelings and emotions. To trust a friend or colleague means that you have no doubt in your mind about his or her honesty, integrity and credibility. Relationships exist because there is trust, but as soon as the trust is lost the relationship is over. It is the same with cheating in a relationship, married, professional, or otherwise. Trust is delicate. It can be destroyed by a single action or misconception. Trust promotes creativity, empowerment, and teamwork during times of change. "Individuals who trust the people they work with are self-assured, open and honest, willing to take risks, less resistant to change, and inclined to act in a trustworthy manner" [14].

*Not only is there nothing wrong with failing, but failing is a sign of action and struggle and attempt – much better than inaction.*

*-- Robert Harris*

On the other hand, Dan Bobinski [15] said, “Intimidation creates fear and lack of trust.” It is obvious isn’t it? A culture of intimidation by friends and colleagues leads to lack of trust. That is why employees are often fearful of their jobs. If you dare speak up or speak freely about an issue, you may lose your job. Such an obvious adversarial climate is destructive and damaging to students. That is why businesses, academic or otherwise, must control the damage that can be done to everyone involved. It is the only to help build morale and encourage an environment that leads to success.

Behavior that destroys trust is not acceptable. The responsibility for setting a trusting attitude, where leaders are accountable for the actions of the employees, extends to others. All relationships are based on responsibility and accountability. As Brownell [16] said, “A climate of chaos is created by lack of accountability.” People must be held accountable for their actions towards a personal or collective vision and/or possibility thinking. Chaos is demonstrated by the untrustworthiness of friends and/or colleagues.

*Many would agree that Lying has to be one of the most destructive and deliberate forms of manipulation there is. It destroys trust. It destroys friendships, families, and relationships. It destroys credibility. It shows contempt, disrespect and hatred for others....Friendship betrayed through lies and deception is rarely brought back to a deep level of trust again, although caring for one another is not lost. This is not to say it cannot be restored over time, but it can take a long time to prove one is honest and can be trusted with one’s friendship [17].*

## **Honesty and Trust**

Honesty is a concept in the tradition of the Christian that has been nurtured by doctrine and tended to by decades of experience. Often with reflection one fails to see the connection between honesty and freedom. To be honest with friends requires eternal vigilance. Without honesty and trust, there is no assurance of friendship. Without friendship, the scope of man’s awareness is diminished. This is the

profound significance of the concept so integral to caring for one another, as suggested by the term “trust.” Without it, no one cares to speak up or to share thoughts and/or feelings. It is the lack of trust that allows for what was once valued to become an endless task of work without passion, wasted thoughts that with just a little cultivation would have been useful, and feelings of gladness lost in the mixed emotions of spineless dealings.

*I am in this fight with you  
because I know that since  
success is greatly determined  
by how credible your college  
degree is I am aware of the  
hurt suffered by the  
indifference of others.*

Trust means everything and more. The ultimate goal should be that no person shall be deprived or disinherited from a trusting environment. Like all goals of importance, the process of trusting is a continuing one. The struggle to trust cannot end. It must never end for all the obvious reasons. The

aspiration to trust must look beyond present conditions else trusting is impossible. For certain, it cannot be purchased at the expense of ill-dealings and exploitation at the cost of integrity. Indeed, one can read many stories of men and women who have affirmed their position on the backs of friends. This of course speaks to the fuller meaning of the opposite of trust and freedom which is the corollary of a trusting and free democracy.

Freedom to trust should mean the right and opportunity to strengthen those areas in life that most authentically and profoundly reflect goals and dreams. Adler [18] said, “There can be no democracy when where there is no freedom for diversity of opinion.” Stated slightly differently, there can be no trust when there is no freedom for diversity of opinion. Trust is symbolic of democracy for it is the very foundation of the “freeness of speech.” Jefferson called it the liberty which “guards all other liberties” and, therefore, understandably the first casualty of a dictatorship is the freedom of speech. Restricting freedom of expression is basic to contradicting the principles of democracy. It befuddles and befouls the individual’s rights and, therefore, endangers the very fabric of society.

Weak and spineless people start at the wrong end of thinking. As a result, they have a habit of hitting harder than they need to. They are therefore easy victims of

their own greed, thinking of course any problems they experience must be caused by conditions created by others. Together, with similar personal struggles to feel alive and important, they grapple with right and wrong. As always with the puffed-up, more often than not the great event in the history of their short time on Earth is held captive to oppression or debasing others. Their big lie is driven by an exaggerated dignity or self-importance, resulting ultimately in purposeful blindness to responsible adult behavior.

Paradoxically, the honest man is not free to oppress or debase others. Such a man is not free to steal from another, for such behavior blinds and destroys those who do. The warrior-like insensitivities and dishonest actions of dishonest men that deprive others aren't as enduring as loyalty is. The problem is eventually they find themselves a pathetic likeness of their perceived character, which imposes a great responsibility on those who understand. Hence, the honest man must be possessed by the conviction that life and passion go on. They get that trust is the opposite of chaos and the ashes of what was once good, unified, and outstanding.

*Trust serves as an important bridge between man and his brother.*

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