



Seeing True to Break Through

Thoughts from Ron Chapman

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Hola!

As a result of continuing positive feedback in response to the recent theme of inspiration, as well as a few stories from readers, it appears we're not yet done with the subject.

A long time reader, James, writes that the movie *The Outlaw Josey Wales* provides him with a mantra he has used for many years. For those of you unfamiliar with the film, Clint Eastwood plays a man wronged who seeks revenge against a band of outlaws. During his journey he encounters a Native American man who becomes his traveling companion. The old man cites advice he was given by white men ... "endeavor to persevere." While he uses the phrase with irony, James adopted it as guidance which serves him quite well when he is faced with adversity. Persevere ... no matter what.

As I was recounting the feedback from James to a friend, she and I almost simultaneously recalled a poignant scene from *Cast Away*, a more recent film showcasing Tom Hanks as a man trapped on an island after a plane crash. After he is rescued, he discusses the ordeal with a friend. In describing how a solution washed up on shore in the form of debris, Hanks affirms beginning each day never knowing what the tide may bring. While hardly optimistic, it is a notion that can allow us to launch forth each day ... despite not-knowing-ness.

Some would say such motivational schemes are nothing more than delusion. Yet an older friend once credited what he calls divine delusion as his primary strategy in coping with difficult times. And he adds, "If it works ... it works."

I have long practiced my own attitude, consistent with my self described naïve optimism. No matter the circumstances unfolding in my life, I assume it is progress. Why? No better reason than my insistence that somehow it must be progress. It is a core belief which carries me forward despite challenges.

What is the link between these coping mechanisms and inspiration?

In my second book, *Seeing True: Ninety Contemplations in Ninety Days*, there is a piece entitled "Courage," which offers credit to all those who labor through difficulties. The basic theme is that life itself is an act of courage, that the simple act of going through those inevitable and exceedingly difficult days is inspiring.

As I type this piece, I am high above Texas flying homeward. A young woman, a former stranger, sleeps with her head on my shoulder. She is deploying to Iraq and flying frightens her. So she fortified herself with two drinks, and at my invitation, cuddled up next to me with her battle buddy (Kermit the Frog clad in desert camouflage) tucked beneath her arm.

Her willingness to risk is inspiration in action, the ordinary resilience of humanity daily facing life on life's terms. We need only open our eyes and hearts for it to find us.

Nothing but the best ... always!

Ron

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