

## **A tribute to Thomas**

You probably never heard of Thomas Leonard. But he cared deeply about you and helping you live your best life.

On February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, I attended a Coaching Marketing Intensive led by Thomas Leonard, the founder of Coach U, CoachVille, and the International Coach Federation. It was great and when I left, I hugged Thomas and told him I'd see him at the next one.

But I won't.

The following Tuesday, February 11, Thomas died of a massive heart attack at his home in Phoenix.

I was grieved to learn of his death, but even more shocked. Thomas was only 46 years old and took excellent care of himself. In fact he wrote a program for Coach U entitled, "Extreme Self Care." And he walked his talk.

As a tribute to Thomas Leonard, I'd like to share with you some of his legacy – tips from Coach U's "Personal Foundation" program, which Thomas designed. When I took this program, it changed my life for the better; all of his programs have done that, but this one especially.

Three of the 24 principles I want to touch on from his "Personal Foundation" program are: Zap your Tolerations, Create and Use 10 Daily Habits, and Restore Your Integrity. In fact, I will cover all of them in the next few columns. They will be of great benefit to you if you practice them.

### **ZAP YOUR TOLERATIONS**

"Tolerations" is a term that describes all those little things you've put off or behaviors and attitudes of others that you're putting up with. Thomas said, "Having tolerations keeps you from growing; every toleration is fixable; and as you fix each one, you lighten up."

Here's what to do: Make a list of 5 things you're tolerating in your home, your family/community, and your work – for a total of 15. Some examples could be: Home – unorganized closets, mortgage is too high, appliances need fixing. Family/Community – arguments with spouse, kids are too..., neighbors bug me. Work – tough boss; wrong line of work, industry, or field; inadequate pay.

Cross each item out as you handle it and you will be amazed at how much happier and less stressed you'll be and how much more energy you'll have.

This is not simply a "To Do" list; it's much, much more.

### **CREATE AND USE 10 DAILY HABITS**

The key to success with this program is to choose only habits you *want* to do, habits that give you energy. Never select things that you "should" do. "Shoulds" are those things that hang over our heads, often imposed by society; burdens that keep us from being who we really are – as, I "should" exercise every day. If it's not a joy, it's a "should" and will cause you stress. By the same token, it would be good for all of us if we learned to love or at least like exercising.

Some examples of 10 Daily Habits: Hug my family, do a crossword puzzle, take "fun" breaks, walk the dog, drink 8 glasses of water, listen to music, read.

The benefits of your 10 daily habits include having a healthy routine, giving you focus, having more energy, and making you feel good.

## **RESTORE YOUR INTEGRITY**

Leonard said, "Integrity refers to what is right/healthy for you. If you are out of integrity, you pay a price." He believed that integrity means strength of character, how our "personal life system is set up" so that we experience fewer problems and have a sense of well being.

This is the most important element of the Personal Foundation program in my opinion. It is the basic structure without which a strong foundation is impossible. To be in integrity, we must take responsibility for our actions and inactions and do what is right for us, not what others believe is right or good.

Some examples of being in integrity include (again) getting rid of the shoulds, coulds, woulds, and oughttas in your life; eliminate adrenalin "rushes;" stop hanging out with negative people; and let go of everything you know is not good for you. Make a list of 10 areas in which you are out of integrity, get to the source of each one and eliminate them. As you do these, your life will become aligned and balanced.

Next time we'll cover Setting Boundaries, Raising Standards, and Perfecting the Present.

For a free report to help you begin building your personal foundation, send me an email with the words "Clean Sweep" in the subject line.

We can thank Thomas for this, too.

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Annette Estes, Columnist

## **Personal Foundation 2: Boundaries, Standards, Present Perfect**

Coach U's "Personal Foundation" program, designed and written by its founder Thomas Leonard, who died in February, is one of the best personal and professional development programs I've ever seen. Three of its 24 elements we'll look at here are: Extend Your Boundaries, Raise Your Standards, and Perfect the Present.

### **EXTEND YOUR BOUNDARIES**

When we set boundaries, we are putting a stop to other people's behavior that is unacceptable to us. Leonard says, "Boundaries help you define who you are and are not" and that we need boundaries in order to be, and to be ourselves.

Boundaries are imaginary lines we draw around us to protect ourselves. Most of us have a rule that another person may not physically harm us. But do we set boundaries that another may not raise their voice at us?

It takes courage to set boundaries and let others know what behaviors you will and will not accept from them. Here are two exercises you can do to extend your boundaries:

1. Make a list of 10 things people may no longer do or say to you. For example, they may not: Belittle you in private or in front of others, discipline your children without your permission, be late for appointments, leave dirty clothes lying around, lie to or about you, or gossip about others to you.

2. Make a list of 10 ways in which you are violating others' boundaries. Resolve to stop doing them.

Have you ever noticed that often the behaviors we dislike most about others are the same behaviors we don't like in ourselves? When setting boundaries, tell the person what you will no longer accept and remind them when they violate your requests. You may have to use strong language if they ignore your wishes, or even remove yourself from their lives if they refuse to respect your boundaries.

### **RAISE YOUR STANDARDS**

Where extending boundaries is about others, raising standards is about you. It's about improving your own behavior so you can feel good about yourself and cause fewer problems for yourself and others. Some examples are always telling the truth, being fair to all, keeping yourself and your surroundings clean, eating only foods that are healthy, and paying your bills on time. Make a list of 10 standards you want to improve and start working to raise them today.

One of the most important elements of this step in the program is to do these three things in this order: Always put INTEGRITY first, NEEDS second, and WANTS third.

### **PERFECT THE PRESENT**

This may be the best thing you've ever done for yourself if you can learn this principle and practice it. Volumes of books and poems have been written on this subject by spiritual, mental health, and even business leaders.

Lesson 8 of Dr. Gerald Jampolsky's book, *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, is entitled "This Instant Is the Only Time There Is." Jampolsky says, "Peace cannot be found in the past or future, but only in the present." He advises us to stop dwelling in guilt from the past or worrying about what's going to happen in the future.

Ralph Waldo Emerson says, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Our ability to enjoy the present moment at all times lies within us; all we need to do is practice believing that the present is perfect. Then when we come to the end of our days, we can say we had a wonderful life because we truly enjoyed every moment. Living in the present is the only way to do that.

Coach U's Personal Foundation program teaches that "when you 'get' that the present is perfect, so are you." Animals do this easily. They don't worry about where their next meal is coming from; they just go out and get it. Guilt and worry are purely human traits.

Make a list of things in your life you feel are not perfect. Beside them write how they *are* perfect. And when you look ahead to the future, make a list of things you can make perfect tomorrow even though it isn't yet here.

Next time we'll look at simplifying your life, getting clear of the past, and handling money.

For a free report to help you begin building your personal foundation, send me an email with the words "Clean Sweep" in the subject line.

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## **Personal Foundation 3: Simplify, Clear the Past, Protection**

Coach U's Personal Foundation program is life changing for those who go through it. In this column we'll look at three more highlights of this personal and professional development program: Simplify Your Life, Get Clear of the Past, and Be Well-Protected.

### **SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE, DRAMATICALLY**

Are you controlling your activities, or are they controlling you? If it's the latter, it's time to Simplify. Your mission, should you agree to accept it, is to immediately and permanently cut out three projects, tasks, duties, routines, habits, and even goals that are not necessary and no longer serve you. Some examples are volunteering/joining organizations in order to get business, cleaning house or repairing things yourself, doing things for others they could and should be doing for themselves, social events which no longer satisfy you.

Then make a list of twelve time-consuming tasks, activities, or habits that waste your life. Write down the activity on the left side of a page and then write the solution to it on the right. Next to each one write the letter E, D, or S depending on whether you plan to Eliminate, Delegate, or Systematize it. Streamline your To-Do list, setting up automated reminder systems for each task. Coach U's founder, Thomas Leonard, says stop having a personal To-Do list altogether. It takes some effort, but can be done. Leonard says, "It's better to live your days in the present, by responding to what is next rather than running your life according to a to-do list." I'll admit I have difficulty with this one, because if I don't write it down I'll forget it. I'm getting better, though. If you have a To-Do list, make it just for today. Don't include things you plan to get around to in the future.

### **GET YOURSELF CLEAR OF THE PAST**

This involves eliminating unresolved matters in your life by handling them or letting them go mentally. For example, a nasty remark or action from another person, an unrequited love, tolerating actions you haven't taken such as finishing your education. As Nike advises, "Just Do It!" When we hang onto unresolved issues it drains us and keeps us from moving forward. If you have feelings of guilt, shame, anger, or sadness when you think of a person or situation it isn't resolved and you can't live in the present. Leonard says getting clear takes two things: Conversation and Action. Talk with the person with whom you have an unresolved issue, taking four steps: Inform them of what the issue is, Describe how you see it, Clarify by asking what happened from their point of view, and Resolve the issue by coming to an agreement and setting boundaries. Then stick to your guns and take the necessary action on your part to resolve the issue.

### **BE WELL-PROTECTED**

Last time I said we'd talk about handling money, but I'm saving that for later.

Being well protected is self-explanatory. It means having systems in place that protect you, your family, and your lifestyle. It means such things as having insurance, maintaining your car, installing alarms and smoke detectors, and taking care of your health by eating right and exercising. These are support structures you set up to protect you from others, your environment, and even yourself.

Make a list of ten systems you have that keep you safe. Make another list that identifies and creates ten key aspects of your lifestyle as you want them to be, including where and how you live, what you do to relish life, and keeping a reserve of savings. Leonard says, "Without a reserve of cash, it's not possible to have a strong personal foundation, no matter how hard you try."

Next time we'll look at Handling Money, Creating Reserves (not just of money), and Choosing Your Work To Be YOU.

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Annette Estes, Columnist

## **Personal Foundation 4: Money, Reserves, Ideal Work**

Most of us tend to solve problems by tackling the problem. However, there's a simpler way to handle challenges, which can make them easier to resolve. It's true we can't solve a problem at the level of the problem. The solution is to work on yourself and build your personal foundation. When you do, you'll find the things you want come easier and your problems aren't as severe.

Here are three more elements of Coach U's Personal Foundation program, which can help you achieve a higher level of personal and professional growth.

### **HANDLE THE MONEY, HONEY**

Coach U's founder, the late Thomas Leonard, says, "The money lesson is the simplest of all 25 Personal Foundation lessons. All you need to do...is to be consistently saving between 10% and 25% of your income." Simple, but perhaps not easy. Here are some suggestions for achieving financial independence:

- Find an extra source of income earning you \$100 a day. Utilize a talent you're not using to make money or develop a sideline business.
- Drastically simplify your life and cut your budget by 50%. Leonard strongly suggests hiring a coach to help you.
- Double your current income by getting a higher paying job; get retrained if need be to enter a profession that pays more.
- Save, save, save.
- Invest in yourself.

All of us can find ways to cut costs without significantly lowering our standard of living. The biggest drawback to having enough money is fear of not having enough or losing what you have. Develop a prosperity consciousness and trust in yourself and your Creator. Here's an affirmation to say everyday: "Clients and money abundantly flow to me now." Believe it, then take action to achieve it.

### **CREATE A RESERVE**

The PF program teaches we need reserves in ten areas: Time, space, money, energy, opportunity, love, information, wisdom, Self, and integrity. Leonard says, "A reserve is far, far more than you need and with a reserve, you are at choice."

Choose three of these areas for which you'd like to develop reserves. Write them down and identify what the "full" level of having this would be for you. For example, with money it would be a certain amount, with time it could mean having more time to do the things you most love to do, with Self it could be doing only those things which you know are for your highest and best. Then write down the steps to take to achieve these reserves. When you've gotten there, pick three more areas and do the same.

### **CHOOSE YOUR WORK TO BE YOU**

In my new book, which is soon to be published, I urge readers to be sure their work is an extension of their values. Leonard suggests we reorient our entire lives around our values and I agree. Questions to ask yourself – and answer – are: How satisfying is my job? Does my career path have a real future? Is my work a form of play for me? Am I an entrepreneur, professional, technician, or sales-type of personality? How much does money play in my choice of work? What skills do I need to upgrade? What's standing in the way of my success at work, today? And most importantly, "Does my work express my personal values?" Or choose other questions about areas important to you. Then design a mini-project that will strengthen your personal foundation in the career area.

Next time we'll look at Getting your needs met, Reorienting around your values, and Improving your attitude.

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## **Personal Foundation 5: Needs, Values, Attitude**

It's been said, and I agree, that when you're feeling satisfied your needs are being met. When you're feeling fulfilled, your values are being met. Three more lessons in Coach U's Personal Foundation program, designed by the late Thomas Leonard, are Get Your Needs Met, Reorient Around Your Values, and Improve Your Attitude.

These are three important elements to master in building your own personal foundation, which can help you achieve a higher level of personal and professional growth.

### **GET YOUR NEEDS MET**

The basic levels of personal needs, as we learn from Maslow's Hierarchy, are physical – food, shelter, clothing, etc. To feel truly satisfied we must get all of our needs met. A need is something we require to have a great life. Our needs control us until we handle them.

The first step is to identify your needs. Make a list of ten things you honestly need to be happy. Some might include being respected, free, balanced, safe, embraced, cherished, listened to, appreciated, useful, or influential. The list can be long.

From this list, pick the top four and start working to get them met. It's good to keep in mind that if you respect other's needs, they'll be more inclined to respect – and fulfill yours. If you need attention, give your attention to others. Getting your needs

met is your responsibility, yet you'll have to get the cooperation of family and friends to do so. Have an honest, open, and direct conversation with the people in your life about what you need from them. And show them exactly what you need them to do. Life is made up of partnerships. Make them work for you in getting your needs met.

### **REORIENT AROUND YOUR VALUES**

Your values are what you want most in life. They are what you are naturally inclined or drawn to do. They are your passions. The Personal Foundation program teaches us to base all of our personal and professional goals on our values. If you must be creative, make sure your job allows you to fulfill that value. Don't feel guilty if you'd rather work in your garden than take computer classes or do charity work. As Shakespeare said, "To thine own self be true."

Look at your goals and see if they're oriented around YOUR values. If not, toss them out and set new ones that allow you to be truly YOU.

### **IMPROVE YOUR ATTITUDE**

In my book, *Why Can't You See It My Way?* values and attitudes are synonymous. Your values determine your worldview, your attitudes toward the important issues of life. If you value knowledge above everything else, you'll tend to have some conflict with (a negative attitude toward) those who place a low value on gaining knowledge.

Coach U's Personal Foundation lesson defines your attitude as your "come-from," your perspective on life. These definitions are similar and teach that having a deep understanding of your values – attitudes – will help you design your best life.

The goal of this PF lesson is for you to start seeing yourself and life as great. It says, "The lesson here is to start getting how perfect life is and start coming from that place so that you can more readily bring YOUR life in line with Life."

This requires making a shift in your attitude, more than just changing your behavior. For example, if you want to be more successful in your work you might make a "to-do" list: I will work harder or longer, I will join more networking groups, I will take professional development courses. Those are things that focus on what you want or need to change. A shift in attitude would be a list that might read, "I am someone who is naturally successful," or "I love my work and it shows," or "My ideal clients are naturally attracted to me." See the difference?

Action to accomplish success is necessary and becomes easier with a shift in attitude.

The more you work on yourself – your personal foundation – the sooner you will get your needs met, live by your values, and improve your attitude.

Next time we'll look at Your Body, the Temple; Strengthen Your Family; and Deepen Your Community. For a free report to help you begin building your personal foundation, send me an email with the words "Clean Sweep" in the subject line.

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## **Personal Foundation 6: Health, Family, Community**

Training and experience have taught me that having a strong personal foundation is the key to happiness and success in any endeavor. Coach U's Personal Foundation

lessons teach us to make both internal and external shifts in our thinking and actions, which helps us be our authentic selves. This time we'll look at "Your Body, the Temple," "Strengthen Your Family," and "Deepen Your Community."

### **YOUR BODY, THE TEMPLE**

I saw a TV news feature once about a group of women taking an exercise/weight loss program at a church. The class leader said, "Our bodies are supposed to be God's temples, not God's cathedrals."

Forget baseball – losing weight seems to be America's pastime. Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight loss and level of fitness is one element of this Personal Foundation lesson. But that's just the beginning. The key point in this lesson is that your body is just your body. It's not you. The lesson teaches, "When your mind, heart and soul are well taken care of, your body can just be your body, needing very little attention and energy."

The first thing to do is eliminate addictions. The program lists three substances to stop ingesting. (It assumes you're not taking illegal drugs.)

1. Nicotine
2. Sugar
3. Caffeine
4. I would add refined flours and Aspartame.

In addition to healthy foods, the lesson says our bodies need three things to function well: Massage (to flush toxins and keep circulation moving), the absence of adrenaline (stop worrying and rushing), and movement (exercise).

One of the worse things we can do is to allow ourselves to wallow in a state of inertia. If you're in that state now, finish reading this column, then get up and DO something productive. Notice how much better you feel.

Love your body. Realize your body, mind, heart, and soul are connected.

### **STRENGTHEN YOUR FAMILY**

The Personal Foundation program offers these steps to strengthening your family:

- "Get" that your family members are people and are not perfect – they need your love and support.
- It's OK not to spend time with family members who pain you.
- Own up to your role in problems with your family.
- Operate from choice, not duty or obligation, when doing things for your family.
- Have nothing negative or unresolved with your:
  - Children
  - Your spouse/mate
  - An ex
  - Your parents
  - A relative
  - A sibling

To achieve these steps, design three mini-projects that will strengthen your personal foundation in the family area. And take action to achieve them.

### **DEEPEN YOUR COMMUNITY**

Your community consists of people from both within and without your immediate family. It also includes friends, co-workers, colleagues, neighbors, church groups, and others. The most nurturing members of your community are those who share your interests, beliefs, and passions.



To deepen your community, make a list of those groups that would make up your ideal relationships. Write the type of people who get to “play” in your community and the qualities they must have. Then write down who you will become because of your community – what qualities, skills, accomplishments, etc. you will attain from being a part of your chosen community. Cherish these people, and yourself.

There are four lessons left. Next time we’ll look at “Start Attracting vs...” and “Become a Problem-Free Zone.”

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## **Personal Foundation 7: Attraction and problem-free zone**

As we come near the end of this series on Personal Foundation, we’re going to look at two of my favorite concepts that most people find hard to believe. One is attracting what we want so that our desires are fulfilled without our having to chase after them. The other is organizing our lives so that we don’t have problems. Sound impossible? Let’s examine the possibilities.

### **START ATTRACTING VS...**

The law of Attraction is one of the most appealing lessons I’ve learned, and am still learning. The premise is to attract the good we want instead of having to chase it. Wouldn’t you rather have customers naturally come to you to buy your products and services rather than having to go out and “sell” them? Who wouldn’t?

The principle in this lesson is for us to become “Irresistibly Attractive.” Attraction is the opposite of using seduction, promotion, or manipulation to get what we want.

This lesson teaches us how to make people, opportunities, money, and love come to us. Here are three items for your “Irresistible Attraction” checklist:

1. Show people you care. Connect with them emotionally and, in business, professionally. Want more for them than they want for themselves, then share it. Remind people of who they really are.
2. Be somebody. Master your craft, be an adult, and have a well-balanced life.
3. Be a model. Live up to high personal standards, have extensive boundaries, and realize that the present is perfect. Believe in and be true to yourself.

Write down three things you can do differently or additionally to become measurably more attractive and do them.

### **BECOME A PROBLEM-FREE ZONE**

This Personal Foundation lesson teaches us that it’s normal, yet unnecessary to have problems – that we can design our lives to become a Problem-Free Zone. The formula for achieving this is Integrity + Boundaries + Standards = PFZ. As we’ve said before, integrity always comes first.

The key to becoming a Problem-Free Zone is widening our boundaries – the limits we set on others so they won't intrude in our space. For example, most of us don't allow others to hit or physically harm us. The next step is not to allow others to yell at us. Next, don't allow others to belittle or criticize us. Then we don't allow others to be disturbed around us or blame us for their problems. And finally, we expect others to be unconditionally constructive, honest, and positive around us.

Resolve your current problems and make a list of things you can do to stop having problems in the future.

Dr. Gerald Jampolsky, author of *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, once said, "It's not the situation that's causing your stress; it's your reaction to the situation." And he reminds us we always have the power to *choose* how we will respond.

Nothing nor no one can make you angry or cause you problems unless you choose to let them. If someone treats you badly, remind them of your boundaries. Realize their bad behavior is coming from *their* stress and is no reflection on you.

Here are ten actions the PF program teaches to prevent problems in the future:

1. Complete the PF program
2. Have a coach
3. Get your energy from a source other than problems.
4. Stop hanging around people who give you problem or who like problems.
5. Have a Reserve of cash, time, energy, and space so that problems will generally stay away.
6. Have better stuff to during your day and lifetime than solving problems.
7. Be focused on a project or on your life in such a way that there is no opening for problems.
8. Stop tolerating anything and everything
9. Delegate the problems you come across to a proven problem-solver.
10. Stop causing problems for yourself.

Once you've become a Problem-Free Zone, teach others how to do it. As Coach U founder, the late Thomas Leonard said, "Listen, they are only problems! They are not YOU, at all! And, there is ALWAYS a solution, if you are willing to use it."

Next time we'll look at "Your Choice!" and "Invest in Your Life." For more information on Coach U's Personal Foundation program or to get a free report to help you begin building your personal foundation, send an email with the words "Clean Sweep" in the subject line.

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## **Personal Foundation 8: Choice and Investment**

This is the last in our series of Personal Foundation programs designed by Coach U's founder, Thomas Leonard. It's my hope you've found some nuggets in these columns that will help you build your own personal foundation and get closer to living your ideal life.

The final lessons are "Your Choice" and "Invest in Your Life."

**YOUR CHOICE**

This lesson is for you to design yourself. Choose three areas of your life that need strengthening, write them down and begin working on them.

Step One: write down each area, then write down three questions to ask yourself about this lesson. For example, if you choose losing weight as an area, your questions might be:

- Why am I struggling with this?
- What is a realistic ideal weight for me?
- Who can help me design the perfect eating plan for me?

Step Two: write down coaching tips, either how you can coach yourself or what your coach would say to help you succeed and reach your goal. For example:

- I can write down all I eat.
- I can plan my meals ahead of time.
- I can enlist the help of someone who will encourage me.

Step Three: write down three benefits you will gain from doing this.

Step Four: write what you are going to do to implement/learn this lesson. For example:

- I will hire a coach.
- I will join a weight loss program.
- I will believe I can do it and tell myself so.

When you have achieved success, give yourself a reward – something you really want (only in this case, it might be best not to have a banana split – unless that’s what you really want!).

### **INVEST IN YOUR LIFE**

This final lesson in the Personal Foundation Program gives us three specific areas in which to invest in ourselves, and provides a checklist of how to do it. The areas to invest in are:

#### **1. Your ability to earn or make money.**

Here are three areas in which to invest your time and money.

- Your marketable skills. What do you provide that other people want? These skills include the obvious ones – computer skills, management, and other technical skills. They also include problem-solving, good judgment, and the ability to communicate clearly.
- Your ability to attract the right people and opportunities. Some of the skills to invest in to attract success include the way you relate with others and the affect you have on them. Understanding other people’s communication style and adapting to them is an important area in which to invest. Build your Personal Foundation so you’ll attract the best because you are the best.
- Your ability to manage and reinvest what you earn. This investment is usually best handled by hiring experts, such as a Financial Advisor, Executive Team, Managers, and Board of Directors.

#### **2. Your advanced personal development**

Choose the areas or parts of you that you want to develop and improve. These could include listening, relating, health, time management, and spirituality.

#### **3. Your quality of life, today.**

This refers to how and what you are doing, feeling, being, and accomplishing each day.

Once you’ve identified the areas in which you want to invest, make a list of the specific skills you want to learn or improve, how much time and money you will invest, and who is qualified to teach you these skills.

Do the same for your advanced personal development, choosing one area to work on first, and who will help you with that. Write down how you will know when you've reached this place.

Then write down one Big Change you need to make in order for you to be on your way to achieving a High Quality of Life, and write the benefit you will expect to get from making this change.

Make this fun, enjoy your investments, and expect a lifetime of investment return.

For more information on Coach U's Personal Foundation program or to get a free report to help you begin building your personal foundation, send an email with the words "Clean Sweep" in the subject line.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst and Personal Developer. She helps companies hire, keep, and develop the best people. She is also a professional speaker and author of *Why Can't You See it My Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Contact her at [Annette@CoachAnnette.com](mailto:Annette@CoachAnnette.com) or call The Estes Group at 864-244-1156.

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