



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Speak Up

The television commercial stood out, catching many people by surprise. It's focus and message were unique. No selling, no limited time offers. Just one message - "We need more of God's love so we can love each other better." How strange for a major battery manufacturer to develop an ad about our need for more love! Then again, maybe not.

Norm Miller, chairman of Interstate Batteries, was troubled by the ongoing evidence of man's inhumanity to man. Rather than just being troubled, he responded by developing an ad that carried his message of a better way. For the moment, batteries could wait. He needed to speak out on something that was important to him.

How many of us would have responded similarly? Now, Norm responded in a way that was familiar to him. But how many of us are inclined to speak up about issues that matter to us?

To be sure, there are those of us who have an opinion about most everything and are not shy about expressing it. Others of us, however, are inclined to withhold our comment or opinion. We allow the quilt of conversation to develop without the contribution of our insight or perspective.

Why is this? There are many possible reasons. Some of us:

- were raised to "be seen and not heard"; to obey without reasoning or questioning
- haven't taken the time to clarify our own values or beliefs
- aren't sure why we hold the beliefs and values we do, and are concerned we wouldn't be able to defend them if need be
- fear being labeled as intolerant, or ignorant, or out of touch because of our beliefs
- have lost touch with open, respectful discussion, and only know competitive, antagonistic debate which feels too much like fighting
- must keep the peace above all else
- doubt the importance or power of our own message.

What ever the reasons, today is a good day to challenge those beliefs, fears, doubts, and habits that silence our voice and neutralize our impact on the world. Today, more than ever, the world needs the wisdom of our thoughts, the nudge of our vote, the light of our smile, the warning of our shout, the encouragement of our touch, the strength of our resolve, the support of our presence, the accountability of our watch, and our line drawn in the sand. Today, more than ever, we need to recognize the value of our contributions and the

power they have to enrich and improve not only our own families and relationships, but also our nation and the world we share.

Where might our voice be heard? Consider a few possibilities.

- Speak out an opinion when asked where you would like to go or what you would like to do.
- Speak up at meetings you attend (family, civic, church, corporate) with the gift of your perspective.
- Speak up to acknowledge, encourage, and reinforce all that is commendable.
- Speak up to ask for what you need, and to offer what you can give.
- Speak up for "the poor, the fatherless, and the widows" - anyone who might be vulnerable or unable to speak for themselves.
- Speak up against injustice, corruption, waste, abuse, prejudice, or neglect in all areas of life.
- Speak up to claim and share your spiritual faith, the core of who you are.
- Speak up through activities and decisions that give clear evidence of the values and beliefs you verbally proclaim.

Just as there is a time to keep silent, there is a time to speak up. Let's strike the balance and make a positive difference!



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NEW CONTACT INFO

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work..

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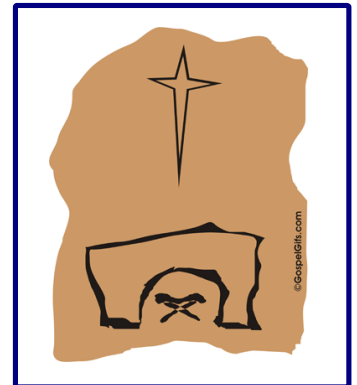
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Discuss, Debate, or Declare War

The power of speaking up is complimented by the ability to be quiet and truly listen. When these two elements come together, *discussion* can occur. Discussion is one constructive alternative to antagonistic debate or aggressive gamesmanship, especially for those who share a relationship or a common purpose.

What are the marks of a healthy discussion? Let's note just a few.

- 1) Discussion is a dialogue between two or more people. All participate, and speaking is balanced with active listening.
- 2) The goal of discussion is not to convince, but to share and learn - to share your perspective and to learn the perspective of others.
- 3) There are no winners or losers in a discussion. Success is measured, if at all, by the level of mutual learning and understanding achieved.
- 4) Discussion does not demand agreement.
- 5) Healthy discussion is saturated with genuine interest in, openness to, and respect for each other.
- 6) Each participant has the right to maintain, alter, or totally replace their original perspective based on what is shared. This is a personal decision and must be respected as such.



Merry Christmas!!

"All that is necessary for evil to succeed is for good men to do nothing."

- Edmund Burke