

## **THE NEXT 365 DAYS**

By Wade Younger, CSP

**W**hat did you learn from last year. This has been my favorite conversation starter lately. Think about it for a minute - what life lessons did you learn last year?

I learned to stop trying to make people into more than they are. This has been a tough lesson for me. I realized many of my relationships were with people who were never going to be happy or were never going to get closer to me or were never going to be anything other than exactly what they were. I used the pruning method I talk about so often.

I would think - "If I can just get them to see their true potential, they would leave the job they hate or they would go back to school or do something to make themselves happy". About someone else I would think - "I'm being too hard on them, I should give them another chance, they can't have judgment this poor". And on and on and on. Nope, most people are just what they are and they will continue to be that way. Maya Angelou said it best "When people show you who they are, believe them - the first time."

If they are unhappy when you meet them, they will continue to be unhappy. Don't waste your precious energy trying to make them happy. It will only drag you down. And some people have poor judgment. They make decisions that mess up their lives and they will continue to make such decisions. You can't change them; only experience and their desire to learn from it will change them. As Dr. Phil says "The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior."

The people in your life have a dramatic impact on it. Hang out with unhappy people and it will steal your joy. Hang out with people who make poor life decisions and you'll eventually get caught up in their drama. You cannot afford to let this happen! These bad relationships are taking up precious time you could be spending with new people! I read a stat that just blew me away. Your salary is the average of the five people you spend the most time with. WOW! Do you need new friends or what? There are so many happy, well-adjusted people just waiting to lift you higher! Be strong enough to walk away from the losers and go meet some winners. It will change your life.

How do you do this? Join a club (start a club - I've met lots of awesome people through the hiking club), take a class, take a trip, and get out there! Once you find one quality person, one person who is happy and loves life, the two of you will attract more people like yourselves.



So what did YOU learn this year? People I've asked this question of have given me a variety of answers. Some included: realizing the importance of their health, deciding to work less and enjoy life more, learning the importance of balance, a few even said they didn't learn anything. I think if you didn't learn a single life lesson last year, you wasted 365 days. Sometimes I find myself struggling to learn certain lessons. These include:

- Happiness and joy only come from within.
- Actions always speak louder than words.
- Pay attention to what someone DOES not what they say.
- There are no guarantees or securities in this life. Those are illusions.
- Always trust your gut.
- You can choose to be miserable or to be joyous.
- The greatest freedom is walking away from what hurts you.
- Action is the only thing that changes anything. Just do it!
- The quality of your life is in your hands - every day your choices determine your destiny.
- Your life is exactly what you make it.
- Keep learning those lessons - wisdom is the trade-off for youth.