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Balancing Act: The Newsletter (No. 217, September 2017)

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TECHNIQUES
FOR BALANCE

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Balancing act is in four sections this month:

1. Techniques for Balance
2. Musings
3. The Human Condition: Tentativity
4. ORTIYKMWOYBNT-O Department



MUSINGS

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Every day I provide 3-5 brief, pithy pieces of advice for growth. Join the thousands who read these "quick hits" every morning. Over 7,800 followers! Why aren't you among them?



THE HUMAN
CONDITION

AND FIND ME ON



See Writing on the Wall, featuring Koufax the Wonder Dog.

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Monthly, fast advice on consulting techniques with case studies.

Listen to my new, free Podcast Series on iTunes or on ContrarianConsulting.com: The Uncomfortable Truth



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TECHNIQUES FOR BALANCE

- Cancel a business meeting before you go to it in poor health or under stress. You can make up a cancellation but not a poor performance.
- The IRS in the US *never* calls anyone, they use only hard copy mail. Don't be tricked by the scammers claiming you're being audited or sued.
- When you buy a new car, stipulate the service requirements you prefer as part of the deal, e.g., your car is picked up and delivered, you always receive a loaner, you want roadside assistance, and so forth.
- The acting in soccer over "fouls" is as bad and boring as anything in the World Wrestling Entertainment.
- Good learners learn, period. I am unaware of any empirical evidence showing that students at Ivy League and other prestige, expensive universities are more successful in life than those who attended state universities or small colleges.
- Watching people play poker on TV is about the most boring activity imaginable to me.
- You can't blame Michael Phelps for making money by racing a fake shark. You can't blame the people who came up with the idea to try to make money, or the advertisers who decided to fund it to sell their stuff. I do blame anyone who watched it and complained that it wasn't a real shark or a close competition. They must believe The Survivor or The Bachelor isn't scripted.
- If you need to know the mileage a car gets, or the utility costs on a house, you can't afford them.
- Knowing what we now know, do you allow your child to play football or head a soccer ball?
- I always assume the other guy is not going to stop at the stop sign or yield the right of way in traffic. That kind of defensive driving saved the Bentley from being T-boned by a moron in a pickup truck on Nantucket.



If you stop expecting so much from others, you won't be disappointed.

Alan Weiss

MUSINGS

Con Ed (Consolidated Edison) was once a client of mine. This was the company running New York City's vast, ancient system of electrical, natural gas, and steam (yes, *steam*) lines under and above ground. Their ubiquitous trucks hovered over open manhole (person-hole?) covers while men descended into the gloom of the bowels of Manhattan.

And always on the roadway was the wonderful admonition on their sign, "Dig we must for a greater New York."

They had reason to dig, as do oil exploration companies, gardeners, and those who lay building foundations. But it seems as if mankind (this is a guy thing) has a propensity, a calling, a tropism—to dig. Nowhere is this as apparent as on the beach.

I've been in the Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean, Tyrrhenian, Indian, and Aegean Oceans and Seas. I've been on beaches all over the world, where it's easy to play ball, toss a frisbee, join a volleyball match, or play that annoying paddle game. But more often than not, guys are digging in the sand. Sometimes, when they choose to dig in front of me instead of in front of their own claimed patch, I ask them to move. The holes are dangerous and people have broken legs stepping into them in the dark or after one too many Coronas.

They build fortresses, dams, palaces, all based on excavating holes in the ground, often with intricate attempts at diverting the inevitable high tide. At 8 am on the beach at Point Pleasant, NJ, a man created two parallel walls about a half-foot high, tapering off to draining pits at the ends. (He might have been former military, afraid of being flanked.) He then built a series of redoubts beyond the walls, finally placing two chairs and beach paraphernalia as if in a castle keep.

It was a hell of a construction job, but it was also a good 50 yards from the breakers and the only thing that would have approached his silicon Maginot Line would have required a modern Noah.

All social classes dig in the sand, as do all ages. Over the course of a week I watched one guy, on the same vacation schedule as my own, consistently dig huge holes with his son, even though his son always quickly grew bored by the exercise and went to play in the surf. Every night the ineffable ocean obliterated his work, and every morning he labored again, Sisyphus-like in his grim determination.

I finally asked him one morning why he dug these huge holes every day even though his son was uninterested and the elements didn't respect his work. He had to think for a moment, never letting go of his plastic shovel.

"I don't know," he said, "but I think it's because it's the only thing my own father did at the beach."

To be tentative means to do something without confidence, or refuse to do something because of that lack of confidence. Technically, this would be termed “tentativeness.” But I need a neologism, because that term is, well, too tentative. So I created “tentativity.”

Tentativity is related to the laws of inertia, equally Newtonian. If an object at rest tends to stay at rest and an object in motion tends to stay in motion, people with tentativity tend to remain tentative. Like a barnacle’s calling to cling to a ship hull or a piling, or like the dreadful TV show The View’s participants’ belief that they have some higher moral standing, it is an inherent guidance system that always points to caution.

Tentativity means that we don’t follow up with the client for an overdue check because we fear that the buyer will be upset; that we hover over the buffet items for half an eternity because we’re not sure which type of lettuce will be more fulfilling; that we never do take that island vacation because, well, there are just so many islands that we might choose one that isn’t as good as some others.

I view a “don’t walk” sign as advisory, not as a *fait accompli*—if there’s no traffic within sight and it’s raining, I’m walking. I regard a late payment from a client as akin to a violation of sacrosanct values, and I mount my dragon (well, I rent one from Khaleesi) and rain fire on accounts payable. If a sign says “Take one” I take two because I may lose one.

If you want the front (and best) seat on the roller coaster, the best view of the sunset, a fast agreement from a buyer, or better attention from a medical staff, you can’t allow tentativity to direct your behavior. “Nice guys finish last,” observed baseball great Leo Durocher. That may not be true. But tentative people do.

Take definite, assertive action. You can always correct it. But you can’t correct tentativity. Because unlike a wrong direction, it’s no direction.



When we drive up to Hyannis to get the ferry to Nantucket we go very early to avoid the traffic. Our habit is to have breakfast at a place on a hill overlooking the marina and await our boat.

This year, my wife sat down and I headed to the men’s room. I entered to find it completely redone, and was amazed that it was so, well, feminine, for a breakfast joint. Then I realized there were no urinals, and rushed out of what was, of course, the women’s room. Thankfully, no one observed this as I entered the men’s room next door.

Now at the urinal, I heard a strange sound from the stall behind the wall, where the door was open. The sound stopped, and a woman sauntered out with a plunger and said, “Pardon me.”

“Sure,” I stammered.

NEW: THE MASTER CLASS

I ran Master Class in June and it was so successful that many of the participants have signed up for the next installment in June of next year. But you can attend a repeat of this past one, 12 people only and 10 seats are open, by going here: <https://www.alanweiss.com/growth-experiences/the-master-class-workshop>



Here's an example of the feedback, from Colleen Francis:

[Learn More >](#)

- The Master Class worked us hard. I was particularly struck on Friday morning when a new exercise left us all dumbfounded, with no answers.
- The role plays were extensive, sudden and provided excellent learning points on delivery, reframing and communication style.
- We need to be outrageous but not ridiculous and there is a fine line.
- Being prescriptive in the sales process helps us to get to true value faster and more accurately.
- We need to think bigger - like raising my fees 2.5x bigger.

Best event of the year so far! I'll be back in June of 2018.
Thanks Alan!

Join us: [The Master Class](#)

NEW: THE RIFF

Many of you like me to "riff" on certain subjects, extemporaneously and spontaneously. With clients and prospects it can make you an instant object of interest. Socially, you can stand out in a crowd. With the media, you become a highly desirable interview subject. At this session, I'll show you how to Riff, which does have a process to it. In a small group we'll practice and you'll see astounding results that are useful in almost any situation.

Don't wait, go here: [The Riff](#)

NEW: SHAMELESS MEETS SOCIAL

How to leverage social media to grow dramatically with less labor

Lisa Larter, master social media marketing strategist, and I are hosting a brand new experience in Naples, which includes:

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- NEW: THE RIFF
- How to “live” in a shameless social media mindset. Do you really think about “going on to the electrical grid” every time you turn on the toaster? Why would social media marketing be any different?
 - How to easily create a one-minute shameless Facebook live stream video that you can use over and over again on any platform. And you’ll do it with us and your colleagues after we demonstrate it.
 - How to create dramatic IP quickly *and daily*, and shamelessly promote it on social media to accelerate business growth
 - Five shameless strategies you probably haven’t considered using on social media to elevate your brand immediately.

Limited attendance! Go here for far more details on a program that can accelerate your business immediately: [Shameless Meets Social](#)

NEW: EVERGREEN RELATIONSHIPS AND MILLION DOLLAR CLIENTS

Colleen Francis, the global sales strategy thought leader, joins me for an intense session on creating annuity clients which, over the years, provide seven figures in income. Consultants believe that the key to building a huge, fulfilling practice is signing six-figure deals with every new customer. Just like baseball hitters who only swing for home runs, they also lead the league in strikeouts. The truth is that hitters who simply get on base score more runs.

The fastest path to annuity clients (clients generating strong seven-figures during your relationship) *begins with five figure deals*. The secret is knowing *who to target and how to grow your perceived value and, consequently, their business with you*.

Limited attendance! Learn more and register here: [Evergreen Relationships and Million Dollar Clients](#)

NEW: LIVESTREAM WORKSHOPS 2018

Join me for one or both of my new monthly series in 2018: The Genesis of the Sale, and Exponential Growth. There will be live questions during the broadcasts from global viewers, and they’ll be recorded for viewing at your leisure, as well. Both occur on the same day, consecutively, each month (except July and August).

See the detailed agenda and sign up here: [Livestream Workshops 2018](#)

NEW: THE FOURTH MILLION DOLLAR CONSULTING® CONVENTION

April 18-20, 2018, Boston

Featuring my special guest Chip Bell, general sessions by Suzanne Bates and Dorie Clark, 12 concurrent sessions, networking events, cocktail reception, and...me! We already have nearly 100 people on board, join us for what participants call "the best event of its kind in the world":

Sign up here: [The Fourth Million Dollar Consulting® Convention](#)

NEW: LIFETIME GROWTH ACCESS

My collected IP in text, video, audio, workshop, and electronic availability, about \$75,000 worth from the past decade and more, is available for one payment for lifetime membership. This was formerly up to \$4,500 annually, and is now \$2,500 for lifetime access, and we are continually adding new IP.

Go here: [Lifetime Growth Access](#)

BARGAIN EXPERIENCES!

September 8, 2017, October 19-20, 2017, Boston

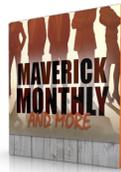
Join me for a day in Boston on September 8 for a workshop on being a Maverick. Only \$750. Or, join me in Boston on October 19-20 for two days on general business growth, from marketing to fees, proposals to reduction in labor. Only \$1,400.

For either, write to at alan@summitconsulting.com.

MAVERICK MOB

You can receive a twice-monthly video on Maverick ideas, and/or a weekly, one-minute podcast, and/or a full day with me, and/or bonus downloads! We began January 1, and you can catch up.

Don't wait, go here: [Maverick Mob](#)



[Learn More >](#)

Thought Leadership 2017

October 4-6, 2017, Four Seasons, Palm Beach

-We sell-out every year and for our next one I've secured Harvard's Dan Gilbert, the expert on happiness, as my special guest for a discussion as well as dinner. His TED talk has been viewed by over 15 million people thus far. One seat remains.



[Learn More >](#)

Endorsed Programming

I offer fabulous resources through global experts in areas such as positioning, wealth building, fitness, social media excellence, coaching, and other areas, all of whom I personally work with and support. Consider this your "galaxy of expertise." Note that we now offer self-publishing ranging from ghost writing to editing, from artwork and design to printing.



Learn more: [Endorsed Programming](#)

[Learn More >](#)

LIVESTREAM WORKSHOPS 2017

Watch a one-hour workshop, rich in content, and ask questions while in progress, no matter where you are in the world. They are also recorded, in case you can't make the live event or want to retain the actual broadcast. I'm offering six, you can join any time and receive past episodes, as detailed below, at \$75 each, or \$400 for all six.

You can register here: [Livestream Workshops](#)

Schedule:

- Feb. 23, 2017: The Strategist - How to set strategies for organizations or individuals (Completed but available on recording)
- Apr. 18, 2017: The Innovator - A methodology for systematic innovation
- Jun. 13, 2017: Creating 6-figure Projects - Consistently and effectively
- Sep. 19, 2017: The Advisor - Advisory work as your primary intervention
- Oct. 17, 2017: Abundance - The mindset of success, happiness, and growth
- Nov. 16, 2017: The Expert - How to command a room, discussion, and direction

FREE PODCASTS: THE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH

My new podcast series, twice monthly, on iTunes:

#1: Control: How to maximize control of your life and not surrender your future.

#2: Energy: How the Second Law of Thermodynamics can erode your business and your life if you don't renew yourself.

#3: Fear Not: Roosevelt was right, and we ought to stop being frightened by everything that goes "bump" in the night.

#4: Marketing Magic: A manifesto on marketing—and buying—realities and why usage trumps functionality.

#5: Myths: A memorial service to the many friends you lost when they went swimming 55 minutes after having lunch.

#6: Polarization: The vast, ignorant error in believing people who disagree with you are stupid.

#7: The Aggrieved: Why whatever you perceive your condition to be doesn't warrant a vote in Congress or a newscast.

#8: Conservatism: Why we are far too timid in our lives and work and how to stop playing a "prevent defense."

#9: Degradation: How standards begin to erode and what we can do to correct it.

#10: Overprotection: The cossetting of youth, and how it's leaving them vulnerable in the real world.

#11: Overkill: Pounding away until the point is crushed under the weight of redundancy.

#12: Denial: Why we make ostriches' behavior in the face of threat seem reasonable.

#13: Selecting: We "settle" in stead of deliberately choosing what's best for us, and we need to stop that.

#14: Contrarianism: Why taking an opposite view is a public service and how to do it.

#15: Who Loves You?: Who's got your back and how you can tell, and why it's important.

#16: No, You Can't: A different perspective on the popular—and incorrect—belief that you can do whatever you think you can.

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