

Add More Spark to a Chug-Along Life! (i-mail saga)

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By Doug C. Grant

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ADD SPARK TO A CHUG-ALONG LIFE!

(another chapter from the i-mail saga)

by Doug C. Grant

"Sailing pretty high today, are we?"

It was another i-mail from Other-Self. An interruption as usual.

I was reading a generously kind e-mail from a reader when the i-mail arrived, internally of course. And I knew that to ignore it would only increase the frequency and nagging of future i-mails.

So I answered. "If you mean by sailing high' that I'm enjoying these few kind words sent by a reader then you're right. Does that offend you?"

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"Not at all. I merely wanted to point out that success is not success in one or two areas of life. That is hardly any success at all."

"You want more success? Well let me remind you that I enjoy a strong marriage, exercise three times a week, have a successful business and go to church...at least sometimes. I believe that even you will have to admit that I'm relatively well-rounded."

From somewhere down below came a snort. "I might agree with you if I wasn't looking at this layer of fat plastered around your waist. You may exercise your body but you certainly don't exercise discretion over your diet. I don't call that success."

"As for your social life, you have a number of acquaintances but no real friends. No success there. And

the only time you conduct a meaningful discussion with God is when things are on the slide. Even then, the only reason for doing so is to dump on Him. Hardly a successful spiritual walk."

"Oh come now! I'm not super-human. Maybe a few areas of my life could do with a bit of sprucing up. But all in all I consider myself well-rounded and successful."

"That's absolute foolishness. You will never be more successful than the least of your achievements. Allow me to illustrate. Your car has six cylinders and therefore six spark-plugs. If only three spark-plugs were firing, would you say you had a successful engine?"

That's one of the things that annoys me about Other-Self. He can come up with the most ridiculous illustrations. "I suppose you're trying to tell me that if I lack a spark in some area of my life I'm less than successful. That's cute. A stupid example but cute. If this is your message, I'm sorry to inform you that I've neither the time nor talent to become successful in all things."

"That is not my message. You always insist on reading things into my i-mails that are not there. Let me put it this way. A spark is a small thing. However it initiates an action that powers your car. All I'm saying is that you could easily add a few sparks to your life that would help power your success."

"For example, you could put a watch on some of the stuff you send down here. I'm not suggesting a big diet overhaul. Maybe just 10% less fat and an equal increase in vegetables and fruit. No big deal."

"As for friends, you could start becoming a friend to a few people. So what if it takes a little time. A lunch here. A phone call there. It's a great way to enjoy life."

"And to develop a stronger faith walk you need only invest a mere half-hour a day. Read the Bible or any good spiritual book. If you're not comfortable with that, read a self-improvement book. Remember, the taller you walk the closer to God you become."

I was beginning to see some wisdom in what Other-Self was saying but I was still skeptical. "Somehow I get the feeling that you're trying to make all this sound more simple than it is. For example, I find it hard to believe that small efforts, or sparks as you call them, can contribute to a large success."

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"Fine. Believe what you want. But before you give up on the idea you might try out this simple exercise.

"Make a list of all the key areas in your life such as Career, Financial, Marriage, Friendships, Spiritual and Health. You might even add one or two of your own.

"Select any areas that are generating only a weak spark or none at all. Be honest. You know which areas these are.

"Then write a list of a few small forward steps to take in each area during the next two weeks. No big deal. No heavy stuff. Just small actions."

"Okay...sounds easy enough. But promise me this. If these small action steps turn me into a highly successful and totally well-rounded person, will you stop nagging me with your annoying i-mails?"

"Dude...you won't live that long."

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Read more i-mail articles' at <http://www.douggrant.com> . And be among the first to read each new chapter in the continuing saga of the nagging i-mails. Subscribe free to the EMPOWERED MATURITY PAGE. No obligation, ever. And you can unsubscribe anytime. Join the fun and give your life a self-improvement boost on a regular basis. Subscribe by clicking this e-mail link: <mailto:empoweredpage@smartautoresponder.com> Do it now. Don't miss the next nagging i-mail from Other-Self.

Doug C. Grant retired from a successful career as a nationally recognized business writer & marketing consultant. He now helps members of the Over-50', crowd live healthier, happier and more productive lives through his Empowered Maturity Web Site (<http://www.douggrant.com>) and an on-line interactive seminar.

### **Family-Friendly Spring Break Tips**

**By Kent Krueger**

You want to take the family on a nice vacation in the Spring but you don't want Junior to learn what "chug, chug, chug, chug" means yet. You want to have a nice "family" vacation without getting caught up in the "Girls Gone Wild" atmosphere that traditionally surrounds Spring Break. Here are some tips.

Try to take your vacation when most college students are still in school. Spring Break for college students can be from the end of February to the end of March, but most colleges have vacation the first two weeks of March. Plan your vacation after the first two weeks of March.

Avoid the traditional Spring Break college destinations: Jamaica, Cancun, Acapulco, Montego Bay, the

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Bahamas, South Padre Island off of the state of Texas, Daytona, South Beach, Key West and Panama City, which are all in the state of Florida. Basically anyplace warm, with sand and with beer. However you don't have to bring your family to Nome, Alaska either. Again, the off-peak college spring break times these destinations can be great, but that doesn't account for the high school kids who have left the parents at home.

Choose a destination that is "family friendly" such as Disney World in Orlando. There could be a few college students donning a pair of mouse ears completely wasted but since Orlando is far from the beach it is more likely to be a fluke. Look for vacations advertised as "family friendly", a ski vacation, Disney Land in California, or a trip to Colorado or Destin, Florida as these are all good possibilities. You can also check out your state tourism web sites for ideas of where to go where the drinking age is not an issue. Check out magazines like "Family Fun" which feature family vacation destinations every month for ideas.

Finally, remember — if you happen upon a partying college student, relax, one day it will be Junior's turn.

Kent Krueger has been in the travel industry over 3 years. He has advised individuals and corporations on travel ideas, savings and marketing vacation rentals. Kent is President of The Rental Network ( ) and eVaca.com.



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