

Are You Fighting the Wrong Enemy?

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By Monty J. Sharp

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By Monty J. Sharp, Certified Comprehensive Coach

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I read many articles weekly written by respected authors who give their impression of what holds people back from achieving success in life, business, whatever. The number one obstacle listed by most?

Fear.

Fear of failure. Fear of success. Fear of any or all of a dozen or more things – real or imagined. Fear, it would seem, is the enemy we must conquer in order to reach the "Promised Land" of our dreams and goals.

I respectfully disagree.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer."

Everyone has fears – even the extraordinarily successful. In fact, fear can be a quite useful thing. Many times it keeps us from doing things that could prove harmful – or just downright stupid. So why then do some achieve their dreams while others do not? I believe the secret lies in knowing the right enemy to conquer.

You see, I do not believe that fear is the real enemy, but rather what fear produces in us – that is the real enemy we must conquer. What does fear produce in us that becomes the enemy to our achievements and accomplishments?

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— A belief in the "fundamental lie". The fundamental lie is that false assumption, misunderstanding or inaccurate life formula that dictates many of our thoughts and actions and, therefore, results. Our fear screams to us, "What if you fail?" The fundamental lie whispers, "You will fail. There's no use in trying." Our actions are based on what we believe as truth in the moment.

— Complacency. Quite simply stated, we settle for the mediocre. The status quo. It has been said that before any meaningful change can occur, we must become wholly dissatisfied with the status quo. Fear often produces in us a complacency that far outweighs our dissatisfaction with the status quo, so we settle for less.

— "Paralysis by analysis". Our fear often produces an overwhelming need to "figure it all out", to get all of our "ducks in a row". Don't misunderstand me here, I'm not suggesting that there's something wrong with planning and weighing options. However, there's a vast difference between strategic planning and in

trying to work out every conceivable scenario that may occur. The former is followed by strategic action. The latter is followed by more analysis and ultimately, inaction, meaning, "We're 'stuck'."

— Hopelessness. The ultimate enemy that fear can produce in us is hopelessness. It is the felling that says, "There's no use." This is the enemy that most often deals the fatal blow to our dreams and aspirations. When you have hope, you have the power to act. When you are hopeless, you are powerless.

Are you fighting the wrong enemy? Stop trying to overcome your fear and look rather to what it may be producing in you. That is the real enemy.

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

– Sir Winston Leonard Spenser Churchill (1874–1965)

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Monty J. Sharp is a team–development expert who, along with his partner, Laura Terrebbonne, have over 25 years of combined experience in team management. Laura and Monty coach clients through change management, business development, visioning and leadership, sales and productivity. Their clients include Fortune 500 companies, regional and local companies, executives and managers, professionals, and small business owners.

The Politics of Freedom

By Kathy Simcox

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The war on terror should not be a political war. It should not be a war pitting Republican against Democrat or Christian against Muslim. The war on terror is a war on evil. There have been countless wars in our world that to some extent have protected against some level of evil. But this evil we fight today is an evil more bitter, more deadly, than anything you or I have ever lived to see. It is an evil so deeply rooted in hatred that it will take a very long time, if ever, to defeat. I am against war not because I am a Democrat or a peace-loving hippie, but because my Christian values tell me killing is wrong; because my Christian values tell me to love my Muslim brothers and sisters even though they worship God differently than I do; and because my Christian values tell me that its wrong to kill millions of innocent people, on both sides, because of those differences. I support the war on terror not because I am a Republican or a conservative bigot, but because I am an American who holds the value of freedom very near my heart; because I am an American who wants to live within the protective walls of that freedom for as long as I can, the very same protective walls so many young people have sacrificed their lives to keep standing; and because I want so very much for the rest of the world to know how wonderful that freedom feels and the peace that freedom brings.

I support our President not because of any hidden agenda or foolish conspiracy, but because he is an American like me who despises the enemy of freedom and the enemy of his faith; because he despises the enemy of ALL faiths, including that of true Islam; and because he despises the enemy of humanity. I am a free American, and I believe in all who fight for that freedom.

About the Author Kathy Simcox, Columbus, Ohio, United States hrdude28@hotmail.com Kathy works as an Administrative Assistant in the College of the Arts at The Ohio State University. She holds a BA in Psychology and is currently working on a second BA in Religious Studies. In addition to writing, her passions include hiking, biking, kayaking, photography, and singing in her church choir. She is also known to read an occasional book.

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