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Fact or Opinion?

By Nan S. Russell

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"You ain't going nowhere, son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck." What if Elvis believed this Grand Ole Opry manager's critique after his 1954 performance? Or the Beatles listened in 1962 when Decca Recording Company responded, "We don't like their sound. Groups of guitars are on the way out."

What if Rudyard Kipling quit writing when the San Francisco Examiner told him, "I'm sorry, but you just don't know how to use the English language." Or as a struggling artist, Walt Disney took seriously the words of a prospective employer to "try another line of work" because he "didn't have any creative, original ideas."

What if ten year old Albert Einstein believed his teacher's words, "you will never amount to much." Or opera star, Enrico Caruso, gave up singing after his first vocal teacher counseled, "your voice sounds like wind whistling through a window."

Thankfully, they didn't believe what they were told. But many of us do. We accept someone else's opinion as our fact. We allow others to determine what we believe about ourselves, what we aspire to achieve, what we dream and what we become. Others people's limiting beliefs about us become our own as we give them power over our life.

But, Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen didn't. Their "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series, now with 65 titles, has sold more than 80 million copies in 27 languages. Not bad for an anthology rejected by 33 major publishing houses in the first month, receiving more than 140 total rejections before their agent gave it back to them saying "I can't sell this book." Only by going booth to booth and pitching their vision to editors at a booksellers' convention did they finally find a small publisher who said yes.

Their passion about their work and its message kept them going. Passion kept Disney and Einstein and Kipling going, too. That's because passion is the most powerful self-motivator any of us can have. It's what drives us to use our talents and abilities. It's the one criteria I've found most helpful when selecting people in my twenty years of management. You can teach most skills. But you can't teach

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passion.

People who are winning at working believe in themselves and their dreams. They're not likely to view setbacks as failures, roadblocks as dead-ends, or negative critique as fatal. It's their passion that keeps them going when others give up. It's their passion that provides strength of purpose, resilience, persistence and the confidence to keep trying. It's their passion that helps them differentiate between opinion and fact about who they are and what they can do with their life. It's their passion that guides them.

Like Babe Ruth said, "It's hard to beat a person who never gives up." When you are passionate about your work, your dreams and your life, you don't give up.

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Sign up to receive Nan's free eColumn, *Winning at Working*, at www.winningatworking.com. Nan Russell has spent over twenty years in management, most recently with QVC as a Vice President. Currently working on her first book, Nan is a writer, columnist, small business owner, and instructor.

Use Your Imagination to Create the Self You Want

By Gerri D Smith

"Every prayer – every thought, every statement, every feeling –is creative. To the degree that it is fervently held as truth, to that degree will it be made manifest in your experience." –Neale Donald Walsch

In your business and in your personal life, if your mind was a huge, blank sheet of paper, what would you fill the space with? Would you use it to create positive or negative thoughts?

Using your mind as a blank sheet of paper gives you the chance to create new goals, and to reach for new heights. A blank page gives you an important guide that pushes you toward self motivation and inspiration.

You can change your blank page at any time. Your God given imagination is there for your to use to create the business and personal life you want. You can create a new beginning. It's your choice and not anyone else's. You can use it to erase any negative thoughts, feelings, or opinions.

When someone tells you you can't do something, can you separate the fact of their statement from their opinion? Use your imagination to create a better, more useful outcome. Understanding that there is a great distinction between the two may decide your success or failure.

How valuable is their opinion? What is the truth behind the statement? Being able to determine the difference between facts and opinions when you hear them is important. Always consider the cost of having someone else's opinion prevent you from doing something that is not based on facts. Do the

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facts out–weigh the opinions? Or, are the opinions more important than your desire to be the self you want?

This is like knowing that just because it's raining outside, it doesn't have to be a bad day. One is fact; the other is an opinion. Use this guidance whenever you find yourself hesitating to make a decision in your business or in your personal life.

When someone gives you a negative opinion, you can accomplish more by not getting discouraged. Knowing that an opinion is nothing more than a comment of what, or how, a person feels and believes, is also important. Most of the time, it is not what they know to be true.

Where does imagination come from when you need it? Imagination plays a big part in creating your self–confidence. Try filling your mind with thoughts of not letting other people=s negative voices affect your self–confidence. Develop an attitude of not letting their negative opinions or actions destroy your self–esteem.

Another good defense mechanism would be to build up a series of little successes. Even small successes will build the confidence and self esteem that you need for bigger and better successes in your business and your personal life. Then you=re more armed to deflect the negative opinions that

come your way.

Imagine yourself succeeding. With the little successes that you accomplish, remember to give yourself credit to feel good about them. Prepare your mind for the bigger successes. Then, build on the confidence and the strength that comes from succeeding.

Use your imagination to succeed and to create the self you want. After all, imagination is the power of the mind to form images – good, bad, or indifferent; positive, loving, or negative; funny, sad, or happy. Which ones do you choose?

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Gerri D Smith is publisher and host of multiple Gateways to inspiration, motivation, and information for individuals, small business owners, and entrepreneurs. Gerri's internet business resource helps individuals create ways to unlock the doors to success and income. Helping others through online information to reach more of their personal and financial goals is one of her passions and purposes. A Free Monthly Newsletter is available for anyone ready for a new business adventure. For details, visit:

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