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**The Vision to Prevail in an Economic Slowdown – Peripheral That Is**

**By Jim McCormick**

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It's Spring. It's warming. In the last few weeks, the temperature at jump altitude has moderated. The blast of air as we roll up the door on the skydiving plane at 15,000 feet is no longer frigid. Two days ago, it was even a relatively moderate 42 degrees (F).

We're no longer likely to feel the sting of ice crystals on our faces as we fall through a thin layer of frozen moisture. Jumpers are starting to leave their heavy, winter layers on the ground. Under canopy, it's mild. The time between freefall and landing is becoming more playful – to be enjoyed and not just tolerated.

From 1,000 feet in the air, you can start to notice a swath of orange and yellow emerging from within the fields of green. The wildflower seeds have weathered another winter. They are sending forth their glorious reminder of Spring, of another winter past.

Even in the midst of the adrenaline soaked sport of skydiving, while hurling ourselves from aircraft miles above the ground, while clamoring to arrest our freefall and save our lives, there is the opportunity to cherish the reminders of the coming of Spring and the hope it brings with it.

Few things focus ones attention better than the challenge of surviving a skydive. There is a joyous clarity of purpose in freefall. The balance of life's issues melt away.

But the single-mindedness that is required to survive a jump can also assure that the experience is nothing more than survived. It can take an extraordinary experience, one most people will never know, the closest a person can come to joining birds in flight and make it into a exercise of survival. But if we are willing to maintain our peripheral vision in the face of this life threatening challenge, a willingness to be more aware, it can be an adventure of the senses. It is our choice. It always is.

And this is much like weathering an economic slowdown. You will likely survive by keeping an absolute focus on surviving, or you can take advantage of opportunities by maintaining your peripheral vision.

## The Vision to Prevail in an Economic Slowdown – Peripheral That Is

In the midst of an economic lull, of a slump in sales, of a profit crunch, we become very focused. The challenge is clear. Revenues growth and profit margins must be restored. There is clarity of purpose.

But in the frenzy of single-mindedness, as all other goals become secondary, are you missing opportunities? Are you missing the signs of an economic Spring? You must not.

This economic slowdown will pass. And so far, it is barely a slowdown. It is more like a runner taking a welcome rest between sprints. When it has passed, what will be the state of your customer relationships? When optimism is restored, will devastatingly costly employee turnover increase? How about the vendor relationships you have worked so hard to develop. Will your extraordinary efforts that went into creating them be negated by short-term decisions during this time of uncertainty?

Yes, there is a clarity of purpose in a time of economic uncertainty. It may not be the time for new initiatives. But lapsing into a survival mentality, while perhaps successful at restoring revenues and profitability, comes at a potentially enormous cost.

Don't miss the signs for a economic Spring. Don't miss the inexpensive opportunities to bolster a client relationship or exploit a passing opportunity because your laser-like focus on improving profitability and revenues has cost you your peripheral vision. Be the one who sees the emerging Spring wildflowers first. Stay open the possibilities there to be noticed and developed. It will be a richer experience, more than just financially. You'll be taking a risk, but all great accomplishments require it.

Jim McCormick brings his motivational messages to business and association audiences nationally. He draws on his experiences as a World Record and North Pole skydiver and former Chief Operating Officer of an international design firm to help people take the critical risks that lead to improved personal and organizational performance. More information is available at <http://www.takerisks.com>.

### **Instant Relaxation Anytime Anywhere**

**By Peter Murphy**

If there was a way of relaxing quickly and easily in any situation would you want to know what it is?

Ancient cultures knew this secret, and followers of Hawaiian Huna used it to access altered states. In more recent times martial artists used it as a way to develop relaxed alertness, and today photoreaders use it to relax before reading books at speeds of 25,000 words per minute.

What is the secret? It has to do with how you use your eyes!

Pick a spot on the wall straight ahead and a little above eye level. Now continue to look at that spot with soft focus and after a few moments you will notice that the room seems to become fuzzy as you develop tunnel vision. This tunnel vision goes hand in hand with the worry, stress and anxiety you feel when you get fixated on getting what you want when you are under pressure.

## The Vision to Prevail in an Economic Slowdown – Peripheral That Is

If only you could snap out of that tunnel vision when it clouds your judgment then you could be more relaxed when you choose to be. You can in a moment if you know how to access your peripheral vision.

How to access your peripheral vision:

1. Pick a spot on the wall in front of you, slightly above eye level.
2. Extend your field of vision, little by little, to take in more of what you can see to the left and right. Continue like this until you are aware of what you can see out of the corner of your eyes on either side.
3. Let your awareness go even further. Use your sense of space to guide you all the way around behind you through 360 degrees.

When you stay in peripheral vision for a few minutes, you will notice that your breathing tends to slow down and even become deeper; the muscles of your face may have relaxed; and even the rest of your body may feel heavier and more relaxed.

When you use your peripheral vision your nervous system seems to automatically calm your body, mind and emotions.

- 4 Return to normal everyday awareness by letting your vision return to normal.

When you are speaking to a group or even to a large audience, accessing your peripheral vision is a valuable skill. It will let you relax immediately while also allowing you to see your entire audience and any small movements, consequently you can be more aware of reactions to your message.

Which do you prefer, tunnel vision with stress or peripheral vision with relaxation? The choice is yours. To have a choice when it matters you need to practice accessing your peripheral vision at will. Then the next time you feel anxious, scared or tense in front of other people you will be able to quickly and easily access your natural state of relaxation.

Peter Murphy is a peak performance expert. Would you like a free weekly ezine full of practical tips for communicating at your best under pressure? All new subscribers get a free ebook with powerful strategies for being at your best. To subscribe send a blank email to:

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