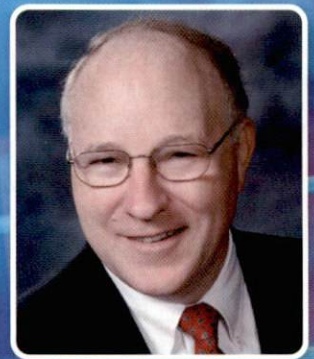


TOASTMASTER

SEPTEMBER 2004

The Benefits are Long-Term

From teacher to Toastmaster
to TV Anchor



Meet Jon Greiner, DTM
TI's 2004-2005
International President

Defeating
Procrastination

Changing Lives, One at a Time

American automotive pioneer Charles F. Kettering wrote, "Change is the only thing that has brought progress." We all joined Toastmasters for our own reasons. Each of us experienced increased levels of growth and success as a result of our involvement.



One of my favorite Toastmaster success stories is about Art, whom I met at a club meeting in October 1977. Art was born in Hungary and immigrated to the United States at age 21. He worked hard to improve his English-language skills and got a job with a large manufacturing company, where he joined a Toastmasters club.

Despite his challenges with English, Art soon earned both his CTM and ATM awards and eventually began to participate in speech contests.

Art's club met near the home of the late U.S. Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen, who was widely known as the "Golden-Tongued Orator" for his ability to deliver long, flowery speeches on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Each year, Senator Dirksen's home town held a festival that included a speech contest intended to highlight the importance of public speaking in Senator Dirksen's success. The overall theme of the contest remained the same each year: "What is the Meaning of Freedom?"

After much encouragement from his fellow club members, Art agreed to participate in the contest. It was during the contest that I began to clearly understand the power of the Toastmasters program to change lives. That evening, Art told us the "rest of his story." When he was 18 years old, his country was invaded and he was taken from Hungary to a labor camp in Siberia. After three years of hard labor, he was liberated and immigrated to the United States. Art moved his audience as he spoke of his personal experiences in the labor camp with lack of freedom – forced labor, lack of adequate food and housing, and extremely cold weather. With that background, he went on to explain what the freedoms we in the Western world take for granted meant to him. To quote an old phrase, "There was not a dry eye in the house." Art won that contest. And his life – as well as the lives of those in his audience – was forever changed that day.

Art is but one example of how the Toastmasters program can positively affect lives. That's why my chosen theme for my term in office is "Toastmasters: Changing Lives, One at a Time."

Our organization truly does change lives, one at a time. So why not accept the challenge of sharing the benefits of this great organization with those around you. In the process, you will experience life-changing benefits yourself. Good luck!

Jon R. Greiner

Jon R. Greiner, DTM
International President

The TOASTMASTER

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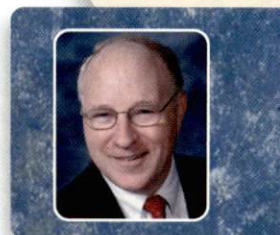
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The Toastmasters Vision:

Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

A Night to Remember

In response to International President Ted Corcoran's June column, where he mentioned how he enjoyed attending the charter dinner for Killarney Toastmasters club, I would like to briefly say what it meant for us, the members.

After eight months in existence as a Toastmasters club, we were just beginning to grasp what Toastmasters is all about and what it means to be a member. As we began to organize the charter night, we suddenly realized what it meant to have the International President present as a member of our club – a chance in several million that somebody who was born and grew up among us would come back as International President to attend our charter dinner!

We pulled out all the stops to ensure it would be a night both he and the club members would remember. And so it was! We were thrilled and honored to have a man of Ted Corcoran's caliber and standing presenting our club with the banner. We intend to continue to work hard to make our club one with a standard of excellence.

The members of Killarney Club 590632 • Co. Kerry, Ireland

Cleverness Is Not Always Appropriate

Clichés make me cringe, so I enjoyed John Cadley's article, "The Things People Say, and Say, and Say" (July), but I take exception to his inclusion as offensive the phrase "You're in our thoughts and prayers" to the bereaved. It may be that Mr. Cadley has never experienced a devastating death in the family, which leaves friends, relatives and mourners searching for words of comfort. When I have had occasion to be told that phrase, it has prompted me to say "thank you," not

snap back with a statement casting doubt on the sympathizer's beliefs. Yes, some phrases may be time-worn but still welcome. Cleverness is not always appropriate.

Laura Bosnak, ATM-S • BRP Masters 9068 • Stilwell, Kansas

Humor Needed

"It's now what you say, but how you say it," is another one of those "Things People Say, and Say, and Say." However, in response to this article, I feel it needs to be said again. I think the author makes many interesting points, but presents them in a negative manner. Although he says he wrote the article because he is "a lover of the creative use of language," I question his tolerance and understanding for those of us who don't have his gift for the use of language. Had article been written from a humorous point of view, the ideas may have been better received, at least by me. I believe many phrases due to frequent use have become expected and accepted and because of this, help us feel connected.

In Toastmasters we stress the value of positive, motivating evaluations. Maybe the author, in trying to persuade others to adopt his point of view, should consider that you can catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar.

Shirley A. Mitchell, DTM
Success Builders Club 4540
Detroit, Michigan

Hooray for Morning Clubs

I just read Craig Harrison's article in the July issue, "In Celebration

of Morning Clubs." Hooray for everything he says in his article!

My club has been meeting since 1959 at 7 a.m. on Saturdays. It has consistently maintained the largest membership and weekly attendance (average of 20) in our area in District 19.

Craig points out that getting up early in the mornings and attending a meeting sets the tone for the day and makes him ready to take on the world. That is especially true on a Saturday morning. Our meeting helps set the tone for the entire weekend, which certainly is as important as a work day.

Three cheers for Craig's article. As he says, "Try it; you'll like it!"

Jere C. Maddux, ATM • Town and College Club 875 • Ames, Iowa

An Expert Agrees

I couldn't agree more with Dena Harris' article "Making Connections with the Personal Commercial" (July 2004).

As a career consultant, I encourage my clients to use this strategy during networking and job interviews. Along with her suggestion of practicing in front of a mirror, I also recommend practicing with a friend or family member.

Joan Runnheim, CL • Rise N' Shine Club 7443 • Hudson, Wisconsin



"That's our new mission statement."

Small challenges are mile-markers to improvement.

The Winding Road

† WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU challenged yourself to try something different in a speech; to stretch yourself in a new direction? Small challenges are your mile-markers to improvement.

For many people, their creativity and daring stops at being Table Topics-master. When it comes to speeches, they take the safe route. Their topics may be wonderful, but they use the same delivery techniques. After all, the tried and true are dependable. They improve at a slow, consistent speed rather than in the fast lane.

But Toastmasters is about growing. Try using a new opening or a closing. Attempt a new form of speech organization. Use humor, new types of gestures, or alliteration. Look at any Toastmasters manual and you'll see that Toastmasters is about trying new things; each manual challenges us many times. You may find some speech projects difficult, but that's OK! The idea is to not create cookie-cutter speeches.

As Toastmasters, we don't want to be education-rich and experience-poor. Improvement comes from what we do with what we know – the key is in the doing. I consider Toastmasters a laboratory. It's a place to take chances. We're among friends; what better place to try new things? We must remember to stay true to ourselves and adopt our own style. Our ability and willingness to be flexible in our speeches allow us to develop our style and to grow as speakers.

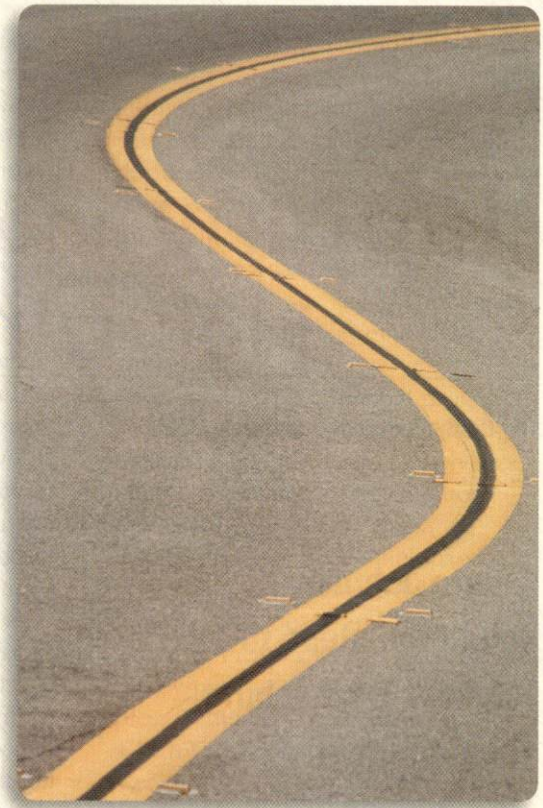
My inspiration to experiment in my speeches came from a new Toastmaster named Ted. After a few meetings, Ted started signing up for various roles. His first attempt at every new

job was a disaster. The first night he served as General Evaluator, he turned it into an impromptu motivational speech. Ted appeared to put no forethought into his assignments. Failing didn't bother him – in fact, it was his starting point. When Ted tried that role again, he did an excellent job. His learning style was completely different from mine. He was willing to say "yes" first and then grow from there.

In one of my early speeches, I repeated a key line several times. Looking back, I realize that I overdid it. My evaluator was honest and fair. I value that experience. It helped me be more willing to attempt new ideas and to learn from a forthright evaluation.

You must be willing to take the risk of failing. You may be uncomfortable trying new things in your speeches – it's hard enough to keep the speech straight in your mind. Take heart from my friend John. John was a speaker who won our Area International Speech Contest. He used several props, including a lit candle. John had never used props before. He gave a terrific speech, and I congratulated him on his win and on taking the chance of appearing foolish. He said, "You know, that was exactly what I was thinking when I was driving to the contest – that I was going to make a fool of myself." He didn't and he won!

You may not agree with every speech technique you've read. For instance, you may think that using a quote to open a speech is a bad idea. Still, go for it! Actors do this all



the time. They play characters they don't agree with, sometimes characters they absolutely hate. They keep challenging themselves.

I recently completed my second CTM. This time around, I chose completely different types of topics for the speech projects and challenged myself to try many different speaking techniques. Many times, my evaluator or my audience didn't recognize my small experiments. However, I derived great satisfaction from making the attempt. At this point, I'm more proud of my second CTM than my first one!

When you come to that bend in the road, keep going. As you try new speech techniques, you'll find out what works for you. Your confidence and growth will increase. Move your comfort-zone from the parking lot; it's more fun on the road! There will be some unexpected curves and bumps, but you will become a better speaker and a better Toastmaster. †

Neil Passingham, CTM, is a member of Oakwood Orators Club 5192-62 and Hospitable Club 8992-62 in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.

Tapping into Her Dreams

By Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM

Laurie Johnson found the steps to success by teaching them to others.

When Laurie Johnson was growing up, she seemed destined to follow in her mother's footsteps – literally. Her mother Adele, founder of the Adele Johnson School of Performing Arts in New York City, had Laurie tap-dancing from the time she could walk, and playing the djembe – a West African hand drum – by her early teens.

"There were nine of us children," Laurie recalls. "We didn't participate in normal after-school activities. We were either taking a dance class, teaching a class, accompanying a class, or preparing for a show."

So it's no surprise that Laurie ended up where she did. The surprise comes from the steps she took to get there, what she left behind to move ahead, and the role Toastmasters continues to play in the music of Laurie's life.

With her 200-watt smile, abundant energy and infectious laugh, it's easy to envision Laurie doing what she

does best – helping audiences all over the world reach their creative, financial and spiritual dreams. What's difficult to imagine is Laurie sitting behind a colorless corporate desk 14 hours day.

Yet, until recently, that's exactly what she did. And strangely enough, her own dance-instructor mother had led her there.

"Growing up, I did poorly in school," Laurie says. "So the last thing I wanted to do after graduating from high school was to pursue more education. I wanted to dance, I wanted to drum. No parent, grandparent or elder relative of mine had ever gone to college. It was a shock when my mother told me I should go."

Laurie resisted. Her mother insisted. In fact, when her mom dropped her off at State University of New York, Laurie literally ran after the car, begging to be taken home.

Her mother stopped the car, but didn't open the door. Instead, she leaned out the window and said, "You don't have to stay forever. Give it a week. That way, you'll never say you didn't have the chance to go to college."

The "week" lasted four years. Because instead of giving up, Laurie determined not to fail. She studied hard. She got good grades. She did so well, in fact, that she was invited to transfer to one of America's most prestigious institutions, The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

There Laurie entered a whole new world.



"Socially, that's where my life began. I was living on my own, had an internship on Capitol Hill, and was developing skills I couldn't have developed at home," she says. Her fellow students, by comparison, seemed to come equipped with a wealth of knowledge and experience Laurie didn't have. "I'd never followed the stock market, knew practically nothing about politics. I didn't have their command of standard English, so I wasn't able to express myself as they could. But you either cower to it, or you do something about it. I wasn't going to go down in defeat."

Laurie carefully choreographed her new life. For days at a time, the only tapping she did was on a computer keyboard, learning to move to a different beat.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in political science, Laurie worked at a telecommunications company for several years before deciding to move on to graduate school. She enrolled in University of Texas, Austin, and leaped into studies in business administration.

That's where she first found Toastmasters.

"We were required to give a lot of speeches in school, and that was my

real weakness," she says. Toastmasters, she had heard, could provide a safe environment in which to hone her skills.

She quickly joined the campus club. "But all I remember was doing a few Table Topics. It was very informal, very secure – but not very challenging."

Graduating with a master's degree in business administration, Laurie was snapped up by the Sara Lee Corporation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She was now a "brand manager," responsible for packaging, product specifications and distribution of a specific segment of the Sara Lee line. She was earning more than \$100,000 a year, living the dream she had crafted for years.

"And I was suffering miserably," she says.

Every Monday morning Laurie attended mandatory staff meetings. "I was so afraid to speak, to give my analysis on how my brand was doing, that I would hand my report to someone at the last minute and say, 'I don't feel well, can you do this for me?'" Shaking with fear, Laurie retreated to her office, trying to muster the strength to speak.

Isolated from friends and family, captured in a corporate cage of her own creation, Laurie continued to suffer. And from her rented-by-the-week motel room, Laurie reflected on the rhythm of her life.

"I had no passion, no interest," she recalls. "My days felt empty."

Returning to her desk one morning, Laurie pondered the Post-It note she had stuck to her computer monitor. On it were Mark Twain's words: "Nothing is really work unless you'd rather be doing something else." That morning, five months after entering the corporate world, Laurie packed her things and left. Behind her was a six-figure-a-year job. Ahead was the dream of doing what she loved.

Laurie moved to Los Angeles, where she struggled to find work, and found herself gripped by the fear of failure. "I was so afraid early on," she admits. "And fear is a great immobilizer." In fact, when she got her first big break – an invitation to perform on the nationally syndicated *The John Walsh Show* – Laurie nearly lied and said she was already booked. "Then I wanted to say 'I'd lost my tap shoes!'" she admits with a laugh. The performance altered Laurie's life.

"After it was over, I decided not to be afraid anymore. I realized that all the time I spent being afraid I could spend being creative. And as soon as I said, 'I am ready,' wonderful things began to happen." Among them were performances on *Good Morning Texas*, CNN's *Real Life*, and a once-in-a-lifetime tap duet with the late great Gregory Hines. She also found the Toastmasters club she'd been searching for. "When I walked into this group, I said, 'This is where I belong.'" Burbank Club 1320 became her finishing school.

"They allowed me to learn in an informal, safe environment. I learned to eliminate slang, to find a solid ending, to make eye contact, to use gestures." Sharpening those skills was important, because Laurie had decided to take her career to a new level: She wanted to motivate others to reach their fullest potential.

"And my Toastmasters group was so supportive!" she says. "They insisted I bring in tapes of my television performances, and helped me as I developed my motivational program."

The "Passion Principles" Laurie put together were based on her own experiences. And she has written a book, *Rich by Choice, Poor by Habit*, to inspire others to pursue their passions.

"I talk about persistence, preparation, passion, peace and prosperity," she says. Prosperity, she insists, is the by-product of all the other principles. "When you make every choice a Rich Choice, you achieve financial wealth. It comes from knowing that you are doing your own work – not just doing it for a paycheck."

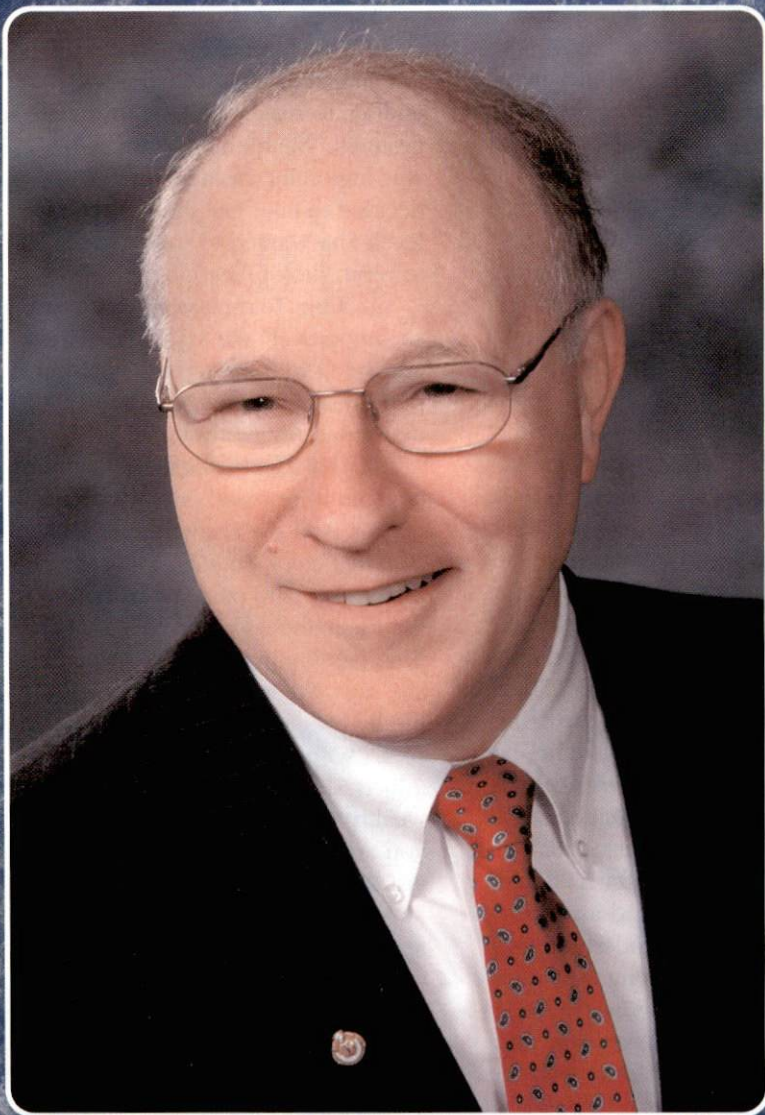
Laurie now tours 25 weeks a year, teaching dance and the steps to success to young people all over the country. "And I know it's my life's passion, because I'd do it for free," she says.

Wherever she goes, she touts Toastmasters. "I'm always pointing folks to the TI Web site so they can find a club, or taking them along to meetings with me," she says. And Laurie, who serves as the club treasurer, says seeing is believing. "Once they've attended, they almost always join. And I get the satisfaction of knowing I've really helped someone achieve success. That," she insists, "is what it's all about." ■

Laurie Johnson can be reached at www.lauriejohnson.com.

Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM, is a freelance writer from Clarksville, Tennessee, who also hosts a regional cable television show. She is a frequent contributor to this and other publications. Want to share your own success story? Reach her at inkwell1956@aol.com.





Changing Lives, One at a Time

**Meet Jon R. Greiner,
Toastmasters' 2004-2005
International President.**

Newly elected International President Jon Greiner, DTM, is excited about taking office in the year the organization celebrates its 80th anniversary and records an all-time high of 200,000 members in 10,000 clubs in 80 countries. A Toastmaster for 32 years, he knows first-hand the power the organization has to change lives. He will serve as its highest ambassador during the coming year, promoting the benefits of club membership to everyone he meets. Jon lives with his wife, Belinda, in Dunlap, Illinois. They have five adult children and four grandchildren.

Tell us about your hobbies and interests outside of Toastmasters.

I became involved with music at a young age, taking both piano and accordion lessons for several years. In high school, I played drums and percussion. I later taught myself to play the guitar and played in a rock band briefly during my college years. Over the last few years, my interests have moved more toward folk and old-time country blues guitar.

“I get great satisfaction from mentoring brand new Toastmasters – to watch those new members or Speechcraft students grow rapidly during their first few speeches.”

– Jon Greiner, DTM



Belinda and I also enjoy ballroom dancing – it's great exercise and we've finally learned how to avoid stepping on each other's feet.

You are the Global Product Support Manager for Caterpillar Inc's Global Mining Division. What are your responsibilities?

I handle tactical day-to-day support for Caterpillar's mining product support activities in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (Russia and other former Soviet republics.) This involves making sure that parts, tools, service information and maintenance facilities are available through Caterpillar dealers so these large mining machines can operate 24 hours per day 365 days per year in some of the most remote places on earth. The job also includes global strategic-planning responsibilities for key mining product support areas.

How does your Toastmasters training benefit you at your job? Do you often give speeches?

Because of the broad scope of the job, I work with a wide variety of both internal and external groups. I depend on the skills I've learned in Toastmasters to convince these diverse groups in various parts of the world to do what needs to be done. I'm often in the leadership role, giving speeches to groups ranging from customers to dealers, from marketing companies to Caterpillar's executive office. With Toastmasters training, preparing and giving these presentations has become a less challenging part of the job than it once was.

What caused you to visit a Toastmasters club all those years ago? Why did you join?

I grew up in Kansas in a very remote and small town of 300 people that didn't offer much opportunity for interaction with people. After being hired by a big company like Caterpillar, I found that making presentations, even to small groups, was difficult. While playing bridge one

evening in September 1972, a friend, Jim Rolka, asked me to go with him to a Toastmasters meeting in Decatur, Illinois. I was impressed with the quality and professionalism of the meeting and continued to attend. Several previous bad experiences with public speaking in high school and college motivated me to join. Although I was just starting my career, I knew I would be giving presentations on the job for many years to come.

Why have you remained a member ever since?

Early in my career, my interests were primarily in technical areas. As I progressed, I began to realize that there were better opportunities in the non-technical areas of the company. However, to be successful in those other areas, a serious improvement in presentation skills was necessary. So I stayed in Toastmasters, which soon led to involvement in leadership roles. This combination of communication and leadership training opened doors that were closed prior to my Toastmasters experience. Today, I've progressed to the point where my job is primarily long-range strategic planning. That is also one of the things I enjoy most in my leadership role in Toastmasters.

What aspect of Toastmasters do you like best?

I get great satisfaction from mentoring brand new Toastmasters – to watch those new members or Speechcraft students grow rapidly during their first few speeches. I can think of nothing more satisfying than to know that, in some way, I enabled someone to overcome a lifelong fear and become a more complete and confident person.

Tell us about your worst speaking experience.

My worst speaking experience occurred just recently at the Region 5 Conference in June 2004 during training of the incoming Top 3 District officers. On Saturday morning of the training, the panel of immediate past district governors shared what they learned during their term as district gov-



error. On this particular occasion, Past District 54 Governor Del Calderini, known throughout Region 5 as the Empress of Enthusiasm, was the last speaker of the session and had just delivered an impassioned plea to the incoming officers about the importance of having a passion for Toastmasters.

Following her speech, I introduced each past district governor with carefully constructed comments specific to

commitment to Toastmasters. It was delivered without a hitch and the final, compelling words of that speech still ring in my memory today.

Do you have any role models when it comes to public speaking – if so, who?

I had a very articulate high school basketball coach who, because of his public speaking skills, became a leader in both the sports arena and the community. He was adept at using a multitude of sports stories to motivate his athletes and to entertain the community. In retrospect, he was admired by all because he was a leader, but most importantly because he was an outstanding speaker. He influenced me to always reach for something more – a characteristic I still possess today.

Tell us about some leaders you admire, and why.

Abraham Lincoln stands as a leader among leaders. He had a vision of what America could become that was years ahead of its time. He was also years ahead of other public speakers of the time and crafted what has become one of the greatest speeches of all time, the Gettysburg Address. It took many, many hours of study and multiple rewrites of the speech before he was satisfied that the message was clear, simple, easy to understand, and appropriate for the occasion. Many of the techniques used in the Gettysburg Address

“As we become better communicators, we become more capable of handling difficult leadership challenges.”

each of them; then I awarded each a Certificate of Appreciation for their efforts as panelists. When it came time to introduce Del, I wanted to introduce her as the Empress of Enthusiasm, but the phrase would not come to mind. Del had just finished being very passionate about Toastmasters, so on this occasion, I introduced her as the “Madam of Passion.” Fortunately, Del has a great sense of humor. Needless to say, the remainder of the Top 3 training was quite lively...

Is there a speech that stands out in your mind as your favorite?

I'd have to say my speech announcing my Presidential theme during the February 2004 Board of Directors meeting is both one of my best and one of my favorites. A lot of thought and work went into crafting that speech. Every word of it was important and necessary to deliver the intended message. It contained stories and personal experiences that clearly reflected what I've learned through the years, which is that Toastmasters changes lives, one at a time. The speech was challenging to deliver because it told of experiences that deeply affected my own life and

were adopted by later speakers and are still in use today. Lincoln endured chaos, communication problems, lack of performance by his team, and political infighting. He rose above those challenges then and is still admired today by people around the world for his leadership and vision.

In Toastmasters we say we teach “communication and leadership,” although we are mainly known for teaching public speaking. Tell us why leadership and communication go hand in hand.

Communication is the foundation for leadership. Before we can lead, we must be able to persuade and inspire others to act. That requires communication skills. Participating in a leadership role exposes us to new communication challenges, in turn leading to further development of those skills. As we become better communicators, we become more capable of handling difficult leadership challenges. It's a process where communication is first the enabler for leadership development, then leadership becomes the platform for further communication development, and so on. Clearly, communication and leadership are inextricably intertwined.

Explain the reasons for your theme, "Changing Lives, One at a Time."

Through the years in Toastmasters, one of the things that has continued to impress me is the power of Toastmasters to change people's lives. As I was considering alternatives for my theme, it became clearer that the product of our Toastmasters program is, indeed, a changed individual. It was an easy step from there to the theme "Toastmasters: Changing Lives, One at a Time." After all, that's exactly what we do in Toastmasters!

Tell us how your life has changed because of Toastmasters.

During the early part of my career, I spent considerable time in a large account management group where communication with our customers' superiors was vital. Toastmasters provided the communication and leadership skills to be successful in that very visible job. Success in that job provided a platform for continued promotion and opportunities throughout my career.

How do you define success?

Success is being happy with who you are. Toastmasters provides a laboratory for helping us discover who we are. As a result of our involvement, we grow our "emotional intelligence" and our ability to interact with a more diverse group of people. Continued involvement furthers the process of self discovery, increases our self esteem, and adds to our confidence. The end product of this process is a changed individual and a feeling of success.

What's your dream for your term in office?

My dream is that every Toastmaster will achieve his or her individual dreams. I can't think of anything more important to continued organizational growth and progress than


belief by each member that Toastmasters has helped them achieve their dreams and changed their lives. I want to play a role in positioning the organization for the future so that we can continue to satisfy our members' needs and change our members' lives for years to come.

What are your specific goals for the organization this year?

We need to make our organization more effective in changing the lives of our member and potential members. We can accomplish this by:

- Continuing to focus on improving the quality of the services provided by every one of our clubs. I believe every club can be a Distinguished Club.
- Focusing on improving our leadership at all levels of the organization. I believe that every leader at every level should be trained in the fundamental roles and responsibilities of his or her position.
- Providing more people the opportunity to improve their lives through both club and membership growth. A membership of 210,000 in 10,500 clubs is achievable. This can be accomplished if we build one new club per area.
- Continue to improve district operations and effectiveness. This can be accomplished if every district becomes a Distinguished District.

If you had a message for every Toastmaster, what would that be?

You *can* change your life, you *can* realize your dreams, you *can* be the person you want to be! I see many people go through life without setting goals, then wonder why they are not making the progress they desire. Toastmasters provides a step-by-step template, the Communication and Leadership Program, for changing our lives. Let's make certain we take advantage of it to help ourselves and others become the best we can be. 

Are You GOOD ENOUGH to be a PRO?

Toastmasters' Accredited Speaker Program is now accepting applications for 2005.



The Accredited Speaker Program is designed to recognize those Toastmasters who have attained a professional level of excellence in public speaking.

To qualify, you must be an Able Toastmaster or Advanced Toastmaster Bronze and a member in good standing of

a Toastmasters club. You must have completed a minimum of 25 speaking engagements outside the Toastmasters club environment within the past three years. Then, you must pass a rigorous two-stage judging process.

Those Toastmasters who earn the prestigious title of Accredited Speaker will receive widespread recognition both inside and outside Toastmasters International. They will have taken the steps that can launch them on exciting careers as professional speakers.

Only a handful of Toastmasters have what it takes to become Accredited Speakers. If you think you're one of them, write to World Headquarters for details on how to apply.

The deadline for the 2005 Accredited Speaker Program is November 1, 2004.



The Benefits are Long-Term

By Amy Walton, ATM

**My journey from
teacher to
Toastmaster to
TV anchor.**

“Are you a local TV anchor?”

I would have laughed if I’d thought the woman was joking, but she asked a second time in response to my stunned silence.

“You’re so polished and professional. Aren’t you on local TV?”

Me? A television anchor?

I had just finished hosting a school district awards ceremony two years ago when the well-meaning lady approached me to inquire about this possibility. While I was flattered that she thought I was good enough to be on television, I honestly explained

that I had never done television, but the thought had crossed my mind.

“So what’s your secret to being such a good public speaker?” she asked.

I barely took a breath as I launched into a discussion about the greatest learning adventure of my life, Toastmasters International. As I shared my experiences, I began to realize that a decade of active membership in the organization had instilled in me a medley of leadership and communication skills that I never would have had were it not for Toastmasters. In fact, I still slightly tremble when I think how close I

came to saying no to the wonderful opportunities that awaited me in the world's leading public speaking and leadership group.

I'll never forget that fateful day when a local Toastmaster visited a class I was teaching. After speaking of the many ways his organization could help people become more effective communicators, the man handed me a brochure and invited me to attend a club meeting. I thought to myself, "What? I'm a teacher who stands here everyday and speaks to these students. I could probably teach *you* a thing or two about communication."

Keeping those thoughts to myself, however, I graciously accepted the information, smiled and thanked him for addressing my class. Two weeks later, I walked out of work one day, humiliated by my failure to assert myself in a job-related situation, and I realized that maybe I did need to hone certain skills I thought I'd mastered.

Within the next few days, I walked into a Toastmasters meeting, and my life has never been the same.

It's one thing to teach pupils who are younger and less worldly than you. It's a different game altogether when you are speaking to a group of peers who represent a variety of educational, work and travel experiences. I was amazed by the varied members of my first club. Attorneys, CEOs, homemakers and college students were a part of the supportive network that evaluated and coached me in those early days. My Icebreaker speech was given at my club's anniversary dinner, and our city's mayor was in attendance. Although I was told by many people that I didn't appear nervous, I felt as though my heart would beat right through my chest. I'd never felt this way as a student or as a teacher. I gave that speech, however, and the immediate feedback encouraged me to get going on my second speech.

From those humble beginnings, I spent the next 11 years or so as a

member and sponsor of four clubs in two states, earned my ATM, served as a club president and competed in and won several speech contests. I delighted in the challenges of such advanced manuals such as *Storytelling* and *Communicating on Television*, and I fretted when the Ah counter reported my often numerous and unacceptable utterances. I thrived on leading my club to various awards and achievements, and I set my goals higher with each little victory.

Toastmasters became for me a creative outlet, a social club where

"Would you rather face a group with the skills Toastmasters helps you to develop, or would you rather face it on your own?"

I'd gather with different, yet like-minded individuals; a place where I could sharpen my leadership skills while learning many new things from the speeches presented by the diverse membership.

As my sons entered their early teens, they required more of my time with their increasing participation in sports and music. I began to slowly cut back on my Toastmasters activities, finally making the difficult decision to leave the organization indefinitely. When I reluctantly stepped back, I couldn't help but reflect on the many ways I had grown in my years as a Toastmaster, especially in my leadership development and in speaking before large audiences. I didn't realize, though, just how far I *had* come since that day I failed to assert myself.

It wasn't until much later that I started to recognize the long-term benefits of having been an active Toastmaster for so many years. During my time as a Toastmaster and in the years since I left the organization, I have been a keynote speaker, a speech coach for political candidates, a PTA president and a public-speaking instructor. I've served as an on-camera narrator for training videos, and

I've conducted numerous workshops within my jobs. I don't get flustered when a microphone malfunctions, I cringe when some ignorant soul refers to a lectern as a podium, and I find myself frequently counting the "ums" and "ahs" of talk show guests (and hosts, too). Then, too, there have been those frequent occasions when I've exceeded a school or work-related program and I've started to address the audience as "fellow Toastmasters." Old habits die hard!

Other long-time members echo my feelings. Emmy nominee Ali

Marie Matheson, DTM, says that her involvement with Toastmasters has helped her conquer her fear of public speaking (Yes, even television producers have sensitive nerves!) and her use of *er*, *uh* and *ya know*.

"Toastmasters was – and continues to be – one of the most vital parts of my life, and I am grateful for all I have learned," says the Vancouver-based executive producer and writer, a Toastmaster of nearly 15 years.

Frank Roth, a grants policy specialist with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, agrees with Matheson. "Toastmasters has been very good to me over the years. Because a large part of my job involves crafting policy for the Agency, I must communicate the purpose and meaning of the policy to a number of different audiences," says Roth, a Northern Virginia resident. He believes the combination of leadership and communication skills he's developed in his years as a Toastmaster have definitely carried over to his professional life. "Would you rather face a group with the skills Toastmasters helps you to develop, or would you rather face it on your own?" he asks rhetorically.

Last year a friend informed me about an audition for a television

anchor position at a local station. With her encouragement, I scheduled my appointment and reluctantly went for my on-camera audition.

Surrounded by anchor "wannabes" who had years of broadcasting and acting experience, I suddenly felt as though I'd made a huge mistake, and I actually contemplated backing out.

Since I'd taken the time to be there, however, I decided to do the audition and to chalk it up as experience. Six weeks later, a producer phoned to tell me I'd been selected as one of the four anchors for the show! As I sat there holding the phone, trying to absorb what I'd just learned, I heard the producer say, "Your Toastmasters experience has served you well."

I've now been a TV anchor for nearly a year, and I feel very strongly

that the confidence I gained and the challenges I met in Toastmasters helped me to reach this point of being able to present local news and to show my face on countless of television sets. There is still plenty of room for improvement, but I can revert back to my countless times as an evaluator in Toastmasters, finding my strengths and the areas in which I need some fine-tuning.

Who knows? I may very well return to Toastmasters in the future. The lifelong lessons and skills one learns and nurtures are invaluable to both personal and professional growth, and no one should ever deprive himself or herself of those opportunities. I've known several people who reached a plateau in the program and dropped out, returning at a later time to seek and to share

new experiences. I don't think it really matters how long you're a Toastmaster; it's what you do for yourself and your fellow members that makes the difference. The benefits you gain will definitely have an impact on your life.

When people approach me these days, asking if I'm the woman on local television, I'm now in a position to confirm their hunches. If they inquire as to how I became involved in speaking and communications, my reply is always the same. "Let me tell you about Toastmasters...." **T**

Amy Walton, ATM, is a freelance writer living in Virginia Beach, Virginia. She anchors the show *NewsCan* on VBT Channel 48. Reach her at awltm@aol.com.

HALL OF FAME

DTM

🏆 Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Distinguished Toastmaster certificate, Toastmasters International's highest recognition.

Steven R. Smith 416-F, Pasadena, California
 Araceli F. Adamo 2495-F, Buena Park, California
 Alfonso Harkelijn 8938-U, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
 Doris Dunn 8186-1, Los Angeles, California
 Christopher R. Harner 597395-2, Bellevue, Washington
 Richard Plemond 9509-2, Monroe, Washington
 Trish L. Blackwelder 9961-3, Tempe, Arizona
 Joel C. Sibert 1372-4, Menlo Park, California
 Roslyn I. Atwood 276-5, Vista, California
 Dorothy Cottingham 751-7, Portland, Oregon
 Bob Glidewell 9940-8, Columbia, Missouri
 Brad Robinson 7562-9, Post Falls, Idaho
 Linda Friedman 1219-13, State College, Pennsylvania
 Charles J. Wilson 1219-13, State College, Pennsylvania
 Mary T. Rogers 7132-13, State College, Pennsylvania
 Evelyn Hawkins-Howe 1384-16, Tulsa, Oklahoma
 Neil J. Deutsch 1991-19, Des Moines, Iowa
 True A. Wheelton 3049-19, Des Moines, Iowa
 H. Digby Clarke 1882-21, Victoria, BC, Canada
 Darrell SC Peregryn 6008-21, Langley, BC, Canada
 Patch Hutchinson 6884-21, Vernon, BC, Canada
 Frances M. Thiessen 6952-21, Port Alberni, BC, Canada
 Wayne William Goruk 614459-21, Salt Spring Island, BC, Canada

Mark S. Hjelle 1796-24, Omaha, Nebraska
 Carol G. Pace 821-26, Denver, Colorado
 Nancy A. Swartz 6839-26, Colorado Springs, Colorado
 George S. Monat 2685-31, Brockton, Massachusetts
 Lawrence G. Muller Jr. 3508-33, Fresno, California
 Julie Ann Mock 9203-33, Santa Barbara, California
 Robert A. Fonarow 639047-33, Cambria, California
 Steve Roberts 3263-36, Laurel, Maryland
 Willie H. Griffin 5162-36, Washington, D.C.
 Sheryl R. Kuhn 296-37, Franklin, North Carolina
 Rosemarie E. Bily 8215-37, Asheville, North Carolina
 Minnie L. Mitchell 585095-37, Greensboro, North Carolina
 Neale B. Buxton 3119-45, Dartmouth, NS, Canada
 Julian Hernandez 6445-46, Union City, New Jersey
 Amelia L. Abad 7890-46, New York, New York
 Reginald G. Hutcherson 529-47, Winter Haven, Florida
 Doreen Wagner 7306-47, St. Petersburg, Florida
 Sakura Brigid Kong Ing Hwa 7011-51, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
 Sivanganam Rajaretnam 7211-51, Kulim, Malaysia
 Robert E. Thurmond 3228-54, Bloomington, Illinois
 Salvador M. SeBasco 6755-55, Austin, Texas
 Andrea Warnholtz De Malo 8281-55, Edinburg, Texas
 Jill Rowlands 3189-56, Houston, Texas
 Brij N. Srivastava 8276-56, Houston, Texas
 Cynthia St. Dennis 9693-56, Houston, Texas
 Peter Corona 362-57, Walnut Creek, California
 Kathleen Ann Hubbard 4976-57, Emeryville, California
 James D. Carpenter 7048-58, Columbia, South Carolina
 Margaret L. Horne Benton 7960-58, Charleston, South Carolina
 Andreas J. Schmidt 5095-59, Munich, Germany
 Mike J. Donnelly 2816-60, Sudbury, ON, Canada
 Michael D. McGauley 4447-60, Etobicoke, ON, Canada
 Rene Kakou 606-61, Montreal, QC, Canada
 Chris K. Ford 8684-61, Manotick, ON, Canada
 France Vezina 9105-61, Ottawa, ON, Canada
 Charles H. Albright 3429-63, Franklin, Tennessee
 David H. Kendall 2375-64, Winnipeg, MB, Canada

Richard J. Major 580-65, Syracuse, New York
 Jeffrey Jones 9041-66, Norfolk, Virginia
 Arthur B. Hammond 234-68, New Orleans, Louisiana
 Robert A. Simpson 6030-69, Nerand, QLD, Australia
 Maria Gesler 8501-70, Sydney, NSW, Australia
 Sue Warner 501-71, London, England
 Tony Ran Keegan 3593-71, Auckland, New Zealand
 Dennis Talbot 5839-73, Midland, WA, Australia
 Daniel J. Van Heerden 5729-71, Rustenburg, South Africa

Anniversaries

75 YEAR

Pasadena Club 6 6-F, Pasadena, California

70 YEAR

Santa Monica 21-1, Santa Monica, California

65 YEAR

Joseph P. Rinnert 141-1, Los Angeles, California

60 YEAR

South Bay 280-1, Torrance, California
 Grand Forks 273-78, Grand Forks, North Dakota

55 YEAR

Malaspina 738-21, Nanaimo, BC, Canada
 Nationwide Insurance 753-40, Columbus, Ohio

50 YEAR

Thursday Noon 1647-8, Decatur, Illinois
 Addison & Elmhurst Area 1604-30
 Des Plaines 1645-30, Des Plaines, Illinois

45 YEAR

Vicksburg 2052-43, Vicksburg, Mississippi

40 YEAR

Warren 2260-28, Warren, Michigan

35 YEAR

Lawrence 1814-22, Lawrence, Kansas
 Washington 1854-37, Washington, North Carolina
 Innisfail 2689-69, Innisfail, QLD, Australia

Friends, Romans, Toastmasters

† WILL YOU LEND YOUR EARS TO THE pitiable six percent of me that is, for lack of a better phrase, content related? Will you listen even though I cannot shout or whisper or speak any faster or slower? Will you ignore the lack of body language accompanying this column?

If you believe what several academic researchers say they have found, nobody much cares what you say as long as you are a good platform performer. According to this research (taken as gospel by people who make a living coaching others in public speaking), the three components that go into securing an audience's approval are weighted as follows:

- tone of voice, 62%
- body language, 32%
- content, 6%.

In other words, content barely moves the needle at all. It's those other things. So, if a genie tells you that you can look and sound like

“The low-ball number assigned to the value of content in speeches defies common sense.”

Charlton Heston, or think and write like William Shakespeare, don't hesitate. You want to be Charlton Heston.

Or do you?

Could it be that the people who bandy these numbers about are biased, or just plain silly?

As a speechwriter, I have one dog in this fight, and those who do coaching have another. Most people suppose (however wrongly) that they have a natural flair for putting their thoughts into words. It is easy for speech coaches to flatter their clients on that score, and to tell them that they need to improve only their

presentation skills to become great communicators.

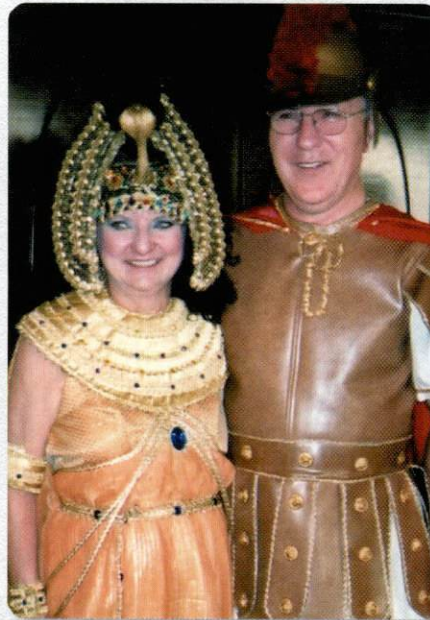
In working for the CEOs of big companies, the two of us (the speechwriter and the coach) may complement each other, but we also compete – for share of mind and market.

But you – fellow Toastmasters – are above the fray. You are going about the business of becoming better speakers the old-fashioned way – doing it in your own free time, without a safety net, and without hired help of any kind. I really believe there is no better way to do it. I have pushed myself into giving speeches because I believe it will make me not only a better speaker,

but a more informed and therefore better speechwriter.

So it is to you as colleagues – and to the fine spirit of independence and impartiality that exists within a club – that I address my remarks.

Without getting into the dubious research used to support it, the low-ball number assigned to the value of content in speeches defies common sense. We all know that good acting – even great acting – will not elevate a poor script into a great movie anymore than talented musicians can turn a poor score into great music. To think otherwise is to engage in



◀ Newly elected International President Jon Greiner and his wife, Belinda, campaigned for office with a strong message and regal body language.

the alchemist's fantasy of turning lead into gold.

On the face of it, it is silly to regard content, or inner quality

of a work (including a speech), and the performance of the work as independent variables. As anyone experienced in public speaking knows, the confidence you have in a subject gives you the energy and conviction you need for its successful delivery.

Equally true is the reverse: If you are reading a speech you don't believe in, your

tone and manner will betray you.

Ex nihilo nihil fit (Nothing comes from nothing). The essential starting point for a successful speech or presentation is a set of strong arguments well crafted in your language and expertly targeted for the audience and occasion. The rest – for a practiced speaker – comes naturally. ■

Andrew B. Wilson, a freelance speechwriter in St. Louis, Missouri, regularly writes for the CEOs of several large and well-known companies. Contact him at www.abwilson.com.



Defeating Procrastination

By Charles Downey

Are you a dilly-dallying foot-dragger in need of an attitude adjustment?

If once a man indulges himself in murder; very soon he comes to think little of robbing. And from robbing he comes next to drinking and Sabbath-breaking, and from that to incivility and procrastination."

— THOMAS DE QUINCY



It might not be as serious as murder, but procrastination can be deadly in just about every aspect of your life, from your career to your personal life.

Even though a major deadline at work is approaching, an important exam is coming up, receipts for tax returns need to be organized or perhaps the bathroom needs to be wallpapered – you just can't get started. All you can do is come up with reasons the task should be put off. And put off and put off some more.

Ever since Hamlet wandered around Ellsinore Castle putting off avenging his father's murder, business people, retirees, students, homemakers and others have been getting around to it – someday.

Well, stall no more. Mental health professionals have closely observed procrastination and offer hope for those prone to delay. California psychologists Jane Burka and Lenora Yuen have extensively researched this human condition of inertness and have found that sterling intentions

of "buckling down and doing it" aren't enough.

Doctors Burka and Yuen, authors of *Procrastination: Why You Do It; What to Do About It* (Addison-Wesley Boston), say if you're one who lets things slide, your most carefully hammered-out schedule will be blissfully ignored as you fluctuate between sitting idle, doing the wrong thing and feeling a creeping panic over the anticipated consequences of lingering inaction.

Almost everybody dillydallies at one time or another, but for some it's a way of life, making their lives and that of others miserable to one extent or another. However, there's much more than laziness or poor organization involved.

"Procrastinators use delay as an unconscious strategy," says Dr. Burka, who serves as a get-it-done-now consultant to businesses. "Some chronic delayers are afraid of both failure and success. Others use delay as a way to resist authority by saying to themselves, 'No, I won't do such-and-such until I'm good and ready... or maybe not at all!'"

For some foot-draggers, procrastinating allows them to avoid any real test of their true abilities. A tiny but convincing internal voice whispers: "If you wait long enough

to start the task, all you can be judged on is your skill at 'brinksmanship.'" You can then criticize yourself for being weak or lazy... but not stupid. The procrastinator then gains a false sense of brilliance if he or she does manage to pull things off at the 11th hour. Some people delay action because they've set such high standards for themselves, any result that's viewed by others as less than perfect becomes a demoralizing put-down.

"Many people have 'low frustration tolerance,'" says Dr. John Boyd, Ph.D., a former University of Virginia psychology professor who has led workshops on overcoming procrastination. "Many want things simple and easy and they also may lack self-discipline."

Often, though, just the opposite is true – a person can have an inflated sense of his own self-worth. He or she arrogantly thinks, "I shouldn't have to do that job, so I'll just put it off." And then there are some procrastinators who tend to be impatient and exaggerate all the negatives in life.

Irrational attitudes lurk behind each assumption. For instance, the person who links his self-worth to his performance should realize he doesn't have to be great in everything he does to be a worthwhile person. He must give up the desire to produce a masterpiece each time out and concentrate on getting the job done in a competent – not perfect – fashion.

"If you have a low tolerance level, you're frankly refusing to accept reality," Dr. Boyd says. "Nobody ever said life was easy or hassle-free."

In business, people can dawdle as a means to protect themselves from the emptiness between finishing one project and starting another, and from making important life decisions or commitments.

"In retirement, the most common procrastination is, 'I'm too old,'" Dr. Boyd says. "But research shows the biological aging process doesn't take that much away from the quality of life. Rather, the psychological aspect of being in the doldrums or giving up on life is the most limiting thing. Actually, the years beyond 70 are very productive for many. Because of the graying of our population, geriatric research is booming, so there's no reason at all older people should put off learning new skills, getting in and staying in shape, or taking up new sports or interests."

Observes Helen Dennis, book author and lecturer at the Andrus Gerontology Center at the University of Southern California: "When I ask most new retirees what they would've done differently before leaving work, I hear one thing over and over: 'I wish I hadn't put off planning for retirement so long.'"



A Plan of Action

Whether it's retirement planning, quitting smoking, starting a diet, attending to neglected household repairs, writing that novel you've always had in mind or starting a new business, procrastination can drain your energy and prevent you from even starting.

So how, exactly, do you overcome procrastination? Dr. Boyd has devised a seven-point program to defeat procrastination – "that thief of time" as Shakespeare called it.

- **Set up an action plan.** Set a specific time and a particular place to start whatever it is you've been putting off. For example, say to yourself: "Tuesday at 7:30, I'll start hanging the wallpaper in the bathroom."
- **Create a system of positive reinforcement.** When you complete an important project, reward yourself with a nice dinner out or a weekend away.
- **Make a public commitment.** "Tell everybody you're going to do the thing you've been putting off," Dr. Boyd suggests. "If you don't do it, you're going to be terribly embarrassed."
- **Use reminders.** Put a list of things to do in a conspicuous place – taped to the refrigerator door, for example. Cross off the items as you go and you'll be able to measure your progress.
- **Ride the wave.** If you're one of those long-suffering writers who has been putting off the Great American Novel, and you feel a tide of words rushing at you at three in the morning, get up and write.
- **The five-minute plan.** If you've been putting off a particularly onerous task, commit yourself to working at it for five minutes only. You may quit after five minutes, but chances are good you'll stick with it longer once you've started.
- **Do the easy part first.** "That gets you started, and you just may see it through to completion," says Dr. Boyd.

Need a few inspirational hints for starting down a new path? Dr. Stanley Frager, Ph.D., a psychologist and professor at the University of Louisville who teaches motivational techniques to teams and athletes, offers these tips:

- **Use the "Swiss Cheese Plan."** A seemingly huge task can be done by putting small holes in it. If you have an overwhelming job, break it into smaller chores. For instance, if you've been putting off painting the house because it's going to take so long, spread out the job over four weekends instead of one. "Chopping a big job into little pieces makes it seem much less ominous," Dr. Frager says.
- **Break patterns.** If you're watching television when you should be doing neglected tasks, simply stop watching TV and do something else – even if it's not the thing you've been putting off. "Merely breaking a pattern of idleness will help you to eventually get around to doing what needs doing," advises Dr. Frager.
- **Ask for help.** Some people seem lazy because they don't like working alone. House cleaning or wallpaper hanging is much easier if everybody in the family pitches in. If you feel slowed at work, don't hesitate to ask for a hand. That'll at least help you get started.
- **Get proper instructions.** "Many times we just don't know how to start the task," Dr. Frager says.

Some people have been known to embrace procrastination and purposely put things off. Napoleon Bonaparte, for instance, instructed his secretary to leave all his letters unopened for three weeks. The French conqueror then smugly observed how a large part of his correspondence disposed of itself and no longer required an answer. St. Augustine, one of the founders of the Catholic Church, once wrote in his book *Prayers* about his attitudes as a young man. One of his prayers was, "Give me chastity and continence, but not yet."

But if your instincts still insist procrastination is your natural lifestyle, if you like living on the edge and being judged on your brinksmanship skills, there's an organization just for you. It's the 36-year-old Procrastinators Club of America. The 4,000-member club celebrates Christmas in July and protested the War of 1812 in 1967.

Membership is open to anyone who doesn't fill out and return an application too soon. Once you do send it in, you'll receive "Last Week's Newsletter" – when someone at the club gets around to it, of course. **T**

Charles Downey is a freelance writer living in Hemet, California.

Get Off Your *But / And* Now!



By Susan E. Schwartz, CL

Do you get task “B” done only when it’s to avoid task “A”?

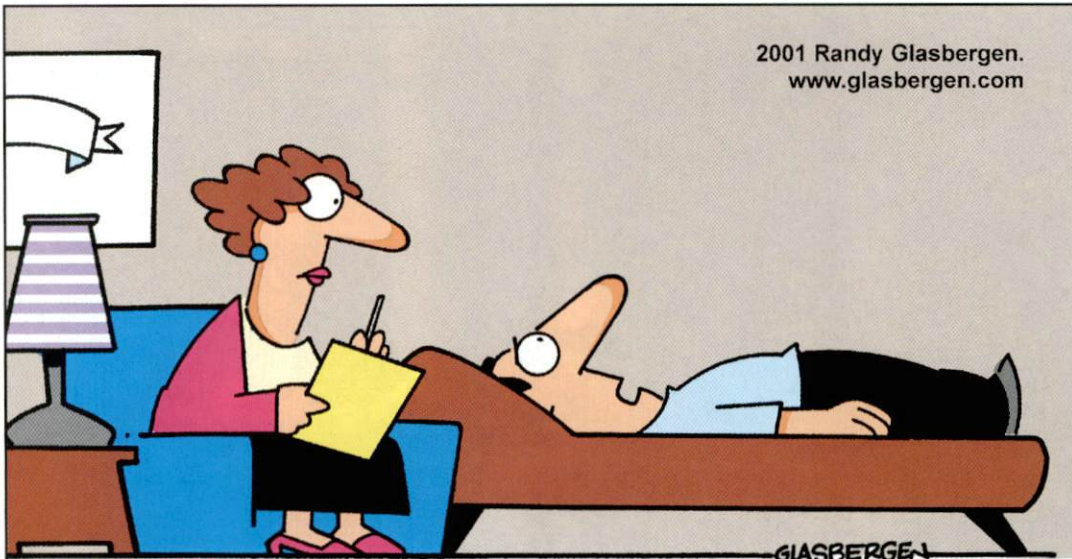
I have a big presentation to give tomorrow. I’m not ready. I have the material. The handouts are at the printer. But I’m still finessing the opening. The hours are ticking by, and my nerves are making my heart blast its way out of my chest: a perfect time to sit down and write a piece about procrastination.

Since agreeing to this article assignment more than a month ago, I’ve tried to write it several times, but I could never get it started. Only now that I have something else much more pressing to do is writing this article a blessed relief.

It sounds crazy. But many people reading this will be glad to find they’re not the only ones who manage to get task B done only when it’s to avoid task A.

Are we wired backwards, so that we can only achieve one goal as a result of running from another? Are we stuck in some sort of lifetime enactment of *The Perils of Pauline*... constantly bringing ourselves to the brink, only to prove that we really can come through under pressure against all odds? In my case, and I imagine most of yours, the answer is no. There are

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**“Opportunity paged me, beeped me, linked me,
e-mailed me, faxed me, and spammed me.
But I was expecting it to knock!”**

lots of reasons we procrastinate. Trying to gain superhero status is probably not one of them.

From my experience, and the observation of others who have similar habits, I believe the main motivation for procrastination can be summed up in one word: *but*. I have a big *but*. And it stops me from doing things I should do, would do, even things I want to do in a timely manner.

The funny thing about having a big *but* is that it can be exceptionally sneaky. If it always took the same form, it would be easy to get rid of. But no! My *but* is a master of disguise. Sometimes it lingers in the background and whispers in my ear. Sometimes it laughs at me. Other times, it just stares me down in an extraordinarily intimidating way. And that's when I run in the other direction.

My *but* has gotten quite a workout at Toastmasters, because there is always a new challenge. When my club nominated me to be president, my *but* was at my side, questioning: “*But* where will you get the time?” When I signed up for the International Speech Contest, it

sneered, “*But* do you really think you'll be competitive with *that* talk?” When I achieved my CTM, my *but* was right there: “Yes, *but* it'll be years before you get your DTM.” You get the idea.

I believe my *but* thinks it's trying to protect me. Without my *but* there to watch out for me, I might run myself ragged, or make a fool

“If you're not happy procrastinating and you want to be accomplish more, I have some suggestions for 'but reduction.'”

of myself in public, suffer major disappointments and disappoint others. How much better to have a one-size, one-word-fits-all excuse that easily insulates me from any unpleasantness, actual or imagined! At least that's what my *but* tells me.

The truth is, if I always gave in to my *but*, or if you exclusively listened to yours, neither one of us would get anything done. Fortunately, that's not the case. We manage to talk back to our *buts*. It's just that the foe we're fighting is usually

not the one in front of us at the time. If I have a presentation to give tomorrow, and my *but* is screaming that I'll never be ready, I may tend to agree. The more I fight it, the stronger my *but*'s argument becomes. However, if I turn my attention to a different task, my *but* doesn't have time to sneak up, and I can make some progress. Avoiding A allows me to get B done.

If you have a big *but* like mine, you may feel the weight

of it sitting on you right now. Perhaps you are reading this article aloud to your focused friends saying, “See! It's not my fault! I have a big *but*!” And you're happy to leave it there. But if you're not happy procrastinating and you want to accomplish more, I have some suggestions for “*but* reduction.”

The first thing is that, no matter what you do, your *but* won't go away. Your *but* is trying to protect you from the doubts, fears and anxieties that every person experiences. Mark Twain observed, “Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.”

When you acknowledge that your *but* will always be there, you can stop trying to go up, over or around it. The trick is to dance with your *but*. Move with it. Take it with you, rather than trying to leave it behind.

Then, every time you feel a big *but* coming on, put an *and* in its place. "I want to go to the Toastmasters conference, *and* I don't have the money!" An *and*

"I have a big *but*. It stops me from doing things I should do, would do, even things I want to do in a timely manner."

says, "I hear you. I understand the situation. I recognize the danger. I know what I'm doing. I'm going to feel the fear and move on it anyway." You will be surprised at the difference *and* makes in your attitude and your actions. If you are torn between two positives, you can unburden yourself from having to choose between this or that. "I want to be in the Tall Tales contest and I'm already going for International." With *and*, you challenge yourself to imagine how you can have and do both!

How different these responses sound!

- "I'd like to judge at the contest, *but* I've never done it before." (Read: I can't, because I don't know what to do and I'm afraid I'll do it wrong.)
- "I'd like to judge at the contest *and* I've never done it before." (Read: I have some questions about the procedures. I'll need some help.)

- "I'd be happy to be your evaluator, *but* I'm busy that night." (Read: I'm looking for an excuse. If I really wanted to, I'd be there.)
- "I'd be happy to be your evaluator, *and* I'm busy that night." (Read: Both things are true. I'm sorry I can't be there for you.)

- "I'd like you to be Tall Tales Toastmaster, *but* I know you did

it last time." (Read: There's nothing to even be discussed here.)

- "I'd like you to be Tall Tales Toastmaster, *and* I know you did it last time." (Read: In recog-

nition of your fine performance last year, would you consider doing it again?)

And keeps the conversation going. It allows two things – even two diametrically opposed situations – to be true at the same time. "I have a speech to give tomorrow, *and* I'm not ready," makes me think about what I must get done. I have to decide on an opening, pick up my handouts and spend some time rehearsing. *And* gives me the space and time to expand my thinking about how I'm going to handle this, rather than worry that I won't.

Train yourself to listen to all the different times and ways your *but* comes up. Ask people to point it out to you, the same way they would if you were attempting to eliminate "ums" and "ahs." You have to notice it before you can do anything about it.

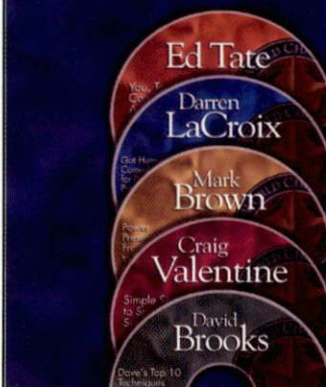
I'd be happy to write more about procrastinating, *and* I'd like to be ready for my speech even more. So I'll end this piece here. If you have some ideas of how you deal with your *but*, I'd love you to e-mail me. *And* the sooner, the better! **T**

Susan E. Schwartz, CL, a branding coach and professional speaker, is a charter member and former President of Pro-Toasties Club 7146, in San Mateo, California. She was also the 2003 winner of her division in the International Speech Contest. Reach her at SuWho2@rcn.com.

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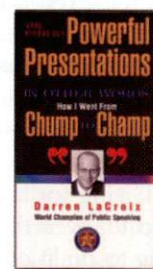
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Why are we
so reluctant
to say "no"
when that's
exactly what
we mean?

By Judith Tingley,
Ph.D., ATM-G

No, NO and NO Again

As the Toastmaster read my introduction, raising her voice slightly as she announced the title of my speech, "No, No and No Again," I looked out and saw audience members cringe, draw in a quick breath or look slightly alarmed. Those words

sound so negative, abrasive, even hostile. They violate the "think positive" values of our culture, the upbeat approach of Toastmasters, the concept of collaborative teamwork.

Many of us are uncomfortable using "no." Even contemplating saying the "n" word can strike fear in the heart of loyal Toastmasters, even when it's exactly what we mean and want to say. Giving (or taking) a no isn't a process we look forward to, even though logically we recognize it's the right thing to do at certain times. An Internet search produces evidence that saying no causes anxiety for a broad spectrum of individuals. Take for example a U.S. booklet, *How to Say No and Still be Cool*, aimed at kindergarten through fifth-grade students, or a U.K. stress-management resource proposing "Saying yes is not for the best." Amazon.com offers 56 books that show "saying no" in their title. It must be a problem.

Dale Dauten, a newspaper columnist, says that saying no assertively may be the most underused business tool avail-

able. I agree and extend the opinion to personal relationships as well. In my book, *Say What You Mean, Get What You Want* (AMACOM 1996), I maintain that being able to say no, as an initiator and a responder, is the first prerequisite to being assertive and gaining control of your life. Yes, there are plenty of activities in life that we can't say no to, even if we want to. We must do some things because of ethics, responsibilities, roles, consequences. But there are many other requests that we don't have to grant, even if the only reason is that we don't want to. "How about going out for Mexican food tonight?" "No, no and no again" we think. But we say, "Sure, if that's what you'd like to do." "Can you complete this report for me by tomorrow afternoon?" your team leader asks. "No, of course not. You're out of your mind. That's impossible," you think. But instead you say, "I'll see what I can do."

Why are we so reluctant to say no when that's exactly what we mean? We're afraid to hurt people's feelings. We're concerned that we'll be judged as rude or selfish. We don't want to be labeled a poor team player. We don't want to damage or lose a relationship. Will retaliation result? Maybe no one will ever again help us if we say no to a request. Is total rejection a possibility? Will we be fired, not hired or demoted? Probably no catastrophe will ensue if we begin to say the "n" word more frequently. But when you finally say no for the first time, and you've previously been overly accommodating to others, your lis-



teners may not believe you, may push you hard, become annoyed, and could even withdraw from you for a while.

So why would you want to risk possibly unpleasant, although not ruinous, consequences? Learning to say no, as an initiator and a responder, can be one of the most freeing experiences that life provides, particularly if you have been imprisoned for months or years by your fears about setting firm limits. When you gain confidence in your ability to say no and stick with it, in an assertive not aggressive manner, you can count on yourself to be a strong parent, a motivating manager, a solid, dependable team player, a respected member of any organization.

I still recall the first time I said no firmly and clearly. My children were in elementary school. I had volunteered to supervise them and their classmates twice a month while they ate lunch in the cafeteria and their teachers enjoyed a deserved midday respite. After eight months of calming obstreperous kids, slipping on jello cubes, shampooing spaghetti sauce out of my hair, sponging soup and chocolate pudding from my clothes, I'd had it. I just didn't like the job.

The phone call came. "Good morning, Dr. Tingley. Just calling to sign you up for cafeteria duty for next year. You are planning to continue?" I was ready. I had taken an assertive-communication class. I had rehearsed. My response came quickly. "No, I'm not going to continue next school

year." There was a pause and the volunteer supervisor said, "Oh, I'm surprised. Why not?" I answered simply, "I didn't enjoy the job." A slight gasp and a longer pause followed. "I've been director of this program for three years and no mother has ever said no to me." I responded, "Oh." The conversation ended quickly. She wasn't happy. I was elated. I experienced no guilt or angst, just exhilaration at extricating myself from something I didn't have to do, didn't want to do, but had no valid excuse not to do, other than I didn't want to do it. I was free!

"You too can learn how to be a comfortable naysayer."

If saying no produces images of guilt and fear for you, you too can learn how to be a comfortable naysayer when you're in the position of not having to or wanting to do something that you're being asked to do. Learning this skill is the first

building block in the assertive communication repertoire that Daniel Goleman says is an essential part of emotional intelligence.

The best way to start is by conquering our own internal monologue. What does that mean? You know the little voice in your head that is always giving you advice and suggestions, some good and some bad: The voice that says, "I can handle this, just one step at a time. I'm making progress." Or sometimes, "Don't tell him no. He'll be ticked off and it'll ruin the relationship." That monologue can get in the way of your doing what you want to do, or

more importantly, of not doing what you don't want to do! Here are two suggestions:

1 Find a supportive statement that you can use as a substitute for your own intimidating monologue. Repeat it to yourself until you feel more comfortable and convinced. For example, "I have the right to say no sometimes." "I can say no, I'm going to say no, and I will say no more frequently." "Saying no more often is a way to take good care of myself and others." You can develop substitute statements on your own that will help you overcome the old guilt- and fear-producing monologue. Make them brief and specific, repeating them to yourself like a robot, even if you don't really believe them at first.

2 Practice saying loudly and firmly, "No, no, and no again." Say it in your closet, in the shower, alone in your car, out hiking in the wilderness. Of course this is an exaggeration of what you'll actually say when the big moment presents itself and you're ready. But the practice will help you feel more comfortable and confident with the downsized no! you'll put forth when you're in the actual situation. Once you're comfortable enough with your internal voice, and you've had some private loud practice, pick a person and a situation that seem relatively easy as your first target no. For example, start with a friend who always wants you to go out for Mexican food, which you don't like, rather than with your boss who's asking you to work overtime once a week. When you're ready to start, here are the techniques:

- **No is the first word out of your mouth, followed by one brief reason;** not an excuse, not an apology, not multiple reasons, just one reason. In a simple form you might just say, "No, I just don't want to eat Mexican food tonight," or "No, that's not something that I want to do," or "No, I'm staying home tonight," or "No, I feel like having a big tuna salad for dinner." With this quick approach, you are easily understood, more likely to be taken seriously, and not sounding lame by coming up with multiple excuses, such as "I'd really like to, but my dog is sick and I have to take him to the vet right after work. And then I promised my mother I'd stop by, and I hate to eat late since I have to get up so early to work out."

When no is the first word out of your mouth, you're more confident that you won't end up waffling as you keep on talking. The hardest part is over.

- If the person you're responding to pushes and prods you more, **just give the same response over again, perhaps in slightly different words.** Your friend says, "Oh come on, you can have a hamburger at La Siesta if you want, instead of tacos." You can say, "No, that isn't going to work for me tonight," or "No, I'm looking for a quiet night at home." Now if all this still seems harsh to you, there are some techniques you can use to soften your approach but still hold your ground as a naysayer.

- You can **add some empathy to the beginning of your no statement.** "No, I know you are craving chicken enchiladas, but I'm set for a big salad at home." **Or you can add some sympathy at the end.** "I'm not going to be able to help you this time. I am sorry that you're in such a tight crunch."

- **Sometimes there's room for negotiation,** provided you're sure it's something you want to do. "No, I'm not going to be able to finish the report and the budget by Tuesday afternoon. Yes, I could finish the report Tuesday afternoon and then the budget Wednesday afternoon." Your friend is still pushing about the Mexican restaurant. You might say, "No, not tonight. Early next week would work if your schedule is clear then."

- A tactic that may make it easier for you to say no is to **say it preventively, as an initiator instead of as a responder,** particularly when you anticipate being asked by someone you usually can't turn down. You might say to your boss, "Joe, I wanted to let you know ahead of time that I'm taking Spanish classes every Tuesday and Thursday evening this spring, so I won't be able to work late either of those days for the next 16 weeks." Or to your enchilada aficionado, you could say, "I promise to take you out to dinner at your favorite Mexican restaurant every year on your birthday. The rest of the year I'd like to try other kinds of restaurants." You've set the agreement up front, which ought to release you from many "no" necessities in the future. You also are establishing a different pattern of interaction. You become the person initiating the action instead of being the nay-saying responder.

In your Toastmasters club as well as in mine, there are many opportunities to say yes and no to a variety of requests: "Can you substitute for me as a speaker tomorrow?" "Can you be Toastmaster for me Thursday?" "The Ah counter didn't show up this morning. Would you fill in?" "How about running for club president?"

When we say yes when we really mean no and need to say no, we don't do a good job because we don't have time, energy or the commitment. We then end up exactly where we don't want to be – viewed as unreliable, flaky or unenthusiastic and not feeling good about ourselves.

There are already plenty of times we have to say yes when we'd prefer to say no. In those situations where you have the flexibility to say no, even if it's just because you don't want to, grab the opportunity and enjoy the freeing feelings. When you learn to say no with firmness, finesse and grace, you'll improve your relationships in Toastmasters, in your personal and work life, and even with yourself. **T**

Judith C. Tingley, Ph.D., is an ATM-G and an area governor. She is also a psychologist and freelance writer. Visit her at www.gendersell.com.

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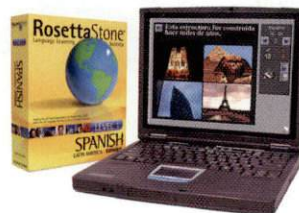
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I WE HAVE ALL HEARD OF THE SUBCONSCIOUS mind, yet very few of us understand how to use it. Many people even disregard its existence because they cannot see, touch, hear, smell or taste it. The successful individual not only knows of its existence, but knows how to “program” the subconscious mind for success.

The human mind, as we know it, consists of two levels of activity: the conscious and the subconscious. Your conscious mind is the logical, reasoning portion of your mind. It uses the five senses to gather information and come to logical conclusions by both deductive and inductive reasoning. Just about everything we know of as “thinking” is done with the conscious mind.

Here is the interesting part – more than 90 percent of your mental activity is subconscious. This is the “work” done that you are not even aware of. The subconscious works 24 hours a day with no breaks. It is the part of the mind that controls your autonomic functions such as breathing, digestion and the beating of your heart. It is the same part of the mind that takes over activities once they become second nature to you, like riding a bike or doing simple math.

As new Toastmasters, we have to consciously think about avoiding fidgeting, verbal pauses, pacing and other evils of public speaking. As we progress, however, many of these once conscious thoughts become subconscious thoughts – we no longer actively think about avoiding them, we just don’t do them.

In terms of success, the subconscious mind is like a computer program that controls our thoughts, habits, beliefs and convictions. Most people do not like the fact that they can be “programmed” like a computer or a robot, nor do they like the fact that the subconscious mind can control their actions and thoughts. However, we ultimately control our subconscious mind, and we have the ability to reprogram it for success.

Our mind’s programming started early in life by our parents, friends, teachers, siblings, TV and media. These same influences continue to program most people today because we are not aware of their power. Advertisers certainly are. A perfect example is beer commercials. They begin with beautiful people frolicking in slow motion on a white sandy beach on a perfect day. The people all appear happy, healthy, successful and sexy. Then the name of the beer is displayed on screen. Granted, almost everyone who watches these commercials is reasonable enough to know that drinking beer is not going to turn them into the people in the commercial. So why do these commercials work so well? The subconscious mind cannot reason. It interprets images, words and feelings literally. The commercials do exactly what the advertisers want them to do – associate positive feelings and images with their products. This is mental programming.

We can program our own subconscious minds for success simply by doing the same things: associate great

feelings with all of the things we want from life. Use positive, successful statements when talking and thinking while avoiding negative talk and thought. We do exactly this in Toastmasters. Most of us came to Toastmasters with the fear of public speaking. We faced our fear and delivered speech after speech. After each speech, we got positive feedback from our peers in the form of formal evaluations and friendly comments. Eventually, we began to associate these great feelings with public speaking, both consciously and subconsciously.

The subconscious acts like an unlimited-size hard drive that stores every image, sound, feeling, taste and smell we have ever encountered. This is why hypnotism allows us to recall memories in such detail from the past. It is important to know that you don’t really forget things; you are just unable to recall them. This fact alone will improve your confidence and help significantly with recalling details from memory. Once you believe you’ve forgotten something, you are right.

Once you realize the power of the subconscious and its influences, you can make an effort to avoid the negative influences and seek more of the positive. Understand the power of the subconscious mind, and you will become an expert “programmer” before you know it. **T**

Bo Bennett, ATM-G, is a member of three clubs in Massachusetts. He is the author of *Year to Success*. Contact him at bo.bennett@yeartosuccess.com.



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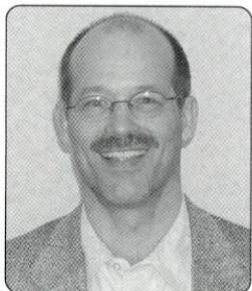
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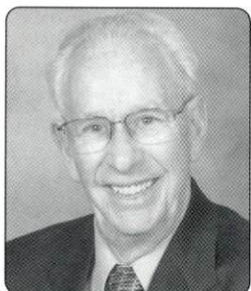
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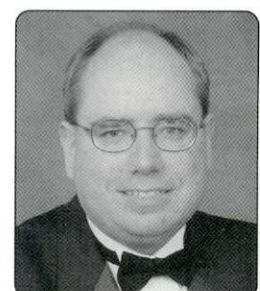
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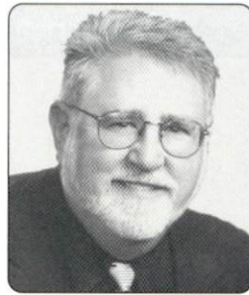
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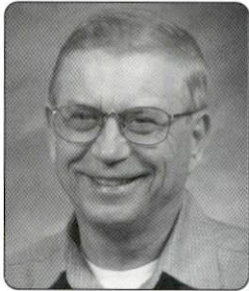
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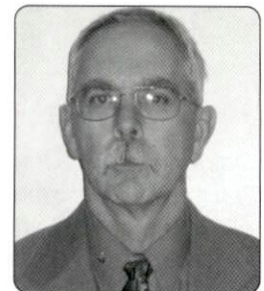
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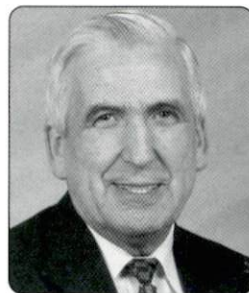
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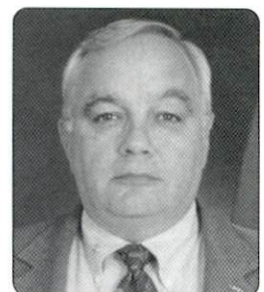
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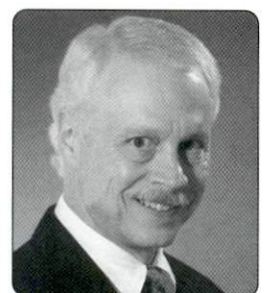
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72 Colin Perfect, DTM
Northland, New Zealand



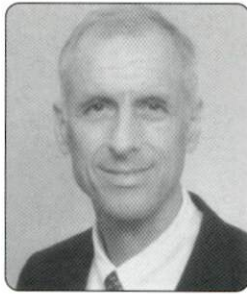
73 Marlene Sinclair, DTM
Croydon South, VIC, Australia



74 David Sutcliffe, DTM
Assagay, South Africa



75 Michael Chua, DTM
Metro Manila, Philippines



76 Ludlow Gibbons, ATM-S
Kita-Ku Osaka, Japan



77 George Senicz, DTM
Birmingham, AL



78 Richard Fasching, DTM
Bozeman, MT



79 A. Imtiaz Ahmed, DTM
Dubai, United Arab Emirates



80 Gea Ban Peng, DTM
Singapore



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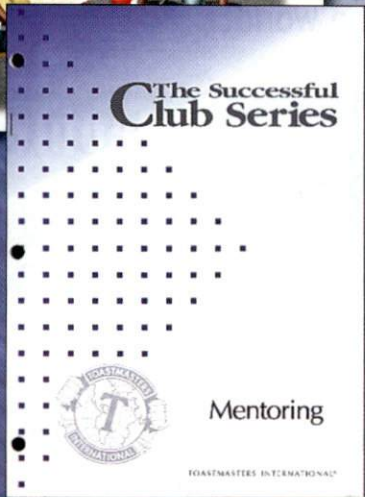
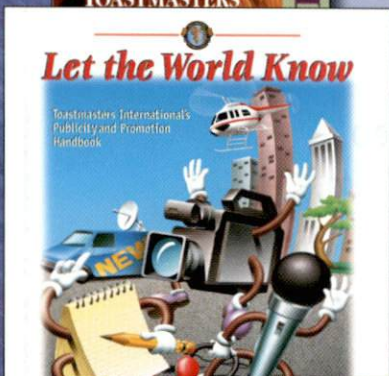
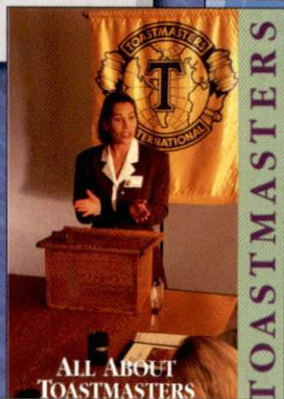
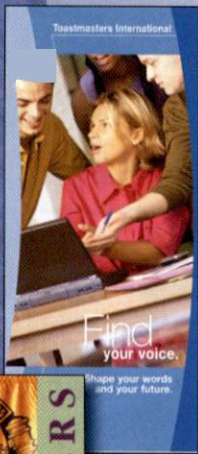
First Aid

for your

Club

Membership
Growth
Materials

All Toastmasters clubs need new members. Even though your club may currently enjoy a healthy membership roster, a few months from now that could change as members move, change employment, or reach their speaking and leadership objectives. Toastmasters International has created a variety of materials to help:



QTY	<u>BROCHURES & FLIERS</u>	
___ 101	Confidence, The Voice of Leadership	20 free*
___ 99	Find Your Voice	20 free*
___ 103	Bringing Successful Communication into Your Organization	50 cents
___ 124	All About Toastmasters	25 cents
___ 114	Toastmasters: Because Public Speaking Skills Aren't Debatable (Pkg of 50 fliers)	\$2.50
___ 115	Toastmasters Can Help (Pkg of 50 fliers)	\$2.50
___ 116	How Confident Are You? (Pkg of 50 fliers)	\$2.50
___ 367	Toastmasters. It's More Than Just Talk (Five full color posters)	\$4.00
___ 108	From Prospect to Guest to Member	3 free*

QTY	<u>SUPPORT MATERIAL</u>	
___ 84	Guest Book	\$8.95
___ 231	Guest Invitation Cards (set of 25)	\$3.50
___ 348	Invitation to Membership (set of 25)	\$5.25
___ 400	Membership Applications (pad of 20)	1 free*
___ 405	New Member Profile Sheet (set of 10)	\$1.00
___ 401A	Membership Cards (set of 50)	\$1.00

*Your club can order the specified number of copies free of charge every six months when placing an order. Additional copies are available for an additional charge.

QTY	<u>MANUALS AND KITS</u>	
___ 1158	How to Rebuild a Toastmasters Club manual	\$1.00
___ 1159	Membership Growth manual	\$2.25
___ 1160	Membership Building Kit	\$5.00
___ 1162	New Member Orientation Kit for Clubs	\$5.00
___ 1140	Let the World Know—Public Relations manual	\$2.50
___ 1150	Public Relations & Advertising Kit	\$18.00

QTY	<u>MEMBERSHIP CONTESTS/PROGRAMS</u>	
___ 1620	Annual Membership Programs Flier	3 free*
___ 1621	A Simple Membership Building Contest	3 free*
___ 1622	Membership Building 101	3 free*

QTY	<u>MODULES & TRAINING PROGRAMS</u>	
___ 290	The Moments of Truth (club self-analysis)	\$12.95
___ 291	Finding New Members for Your Club (short seminar)	\$4.50
___ 293	Closing the Sale (short seminar)	\$4.50
___ 294	Creating the Best Club Climate (short seminar)	\$4.50
___ 296	Mentoring (create a mentoring program in your club)	\$17.95
___ 4007V	Everybody's Talking about Toastmasters (promotion video)	\$5.95

See your club's copy of the Toastmasters International Supply Catalog for complete details about each item.

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

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10.01 to 20.00	4.75	150.01 to 200.00	15.00
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For orders shipped outside the United States, see the current Supply Catalog for item weight and shipping charts to calculate the exact postage. Or, estimate airmail at 35% of order total, though actual charges may vary significantly. Excess charges will be billed. All prices subject to change without notice.