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## The Power of Using Your Strengths

Today I want to illustrate the importance of our strengths by talking about the Knights of the Round Table.

Hundreds of years ago, **King Arthur brought his most trusted knights to the roundtable.** It was here that they discussed critical topics like protecting their community, strengthening diplomatic ties with other communities, and key battle strategies.

Each knight was selected to **join the table because of a particular strength they portrayed.** It was the combination of all their unique strengths that together made the group so powerful.

The word that represented **each knight's strength was carved around the edge of the round table,** in front of the high backed chair they sat on.

When a topic was introduced, each knight **talked about how their unique strengths would carry them** through their mission. The other knights would add to the conversation with their observations of support to this strength. For example, if there was an unexpected threat to their kingdom, one knight's strength of communication coupled with another knight's strength of analysis, along with yet another's strength of being visionary, were combined to reduce the challenges of the threat and keep the community united.

They understood that merely being strong warriors and personable diplomats was not enough. Most armies and sentries did that. They understood that a group firmly rooted in understanding **the value of their strengths individually as well as in combination was their greatest weapon.** And it was, bringing great leadership and respected safety and security to their community.

**Today, strengths are still key components to a significant life.** They act as great supporters in times of challenge or conflict, presenting themselves as our inner advisors. We merely need to listen to and for them.

**Strengths show up as attributes** like: flexibility, focus, decisiveness, analysis, insight, humor, creativity, balance or a host of others to guide us in taking the most appropriate action. I just referred to two of mine this morning—calm and decisiveness—for a challenging situation in my own life.

Let me know what your top strengths are. **How do your strengths guide you in your life?** Where have you recently used them? Leave me a comment. **I would love to hear your thoughts on how you use your strengths.**

*Life is so much brighter when we focus on what truly matters...*



We have heard the phrase *“live each day like it’s your last”*. We updated it to *“live each day like it’s your best”*.



## This Month’s Offer:

For those of you in the Life Focus programs, we will provide an extra 20 minute call with Bhaj for a question or concern you might have about building your own significance.

This is in addition to your regular February call with Bhaj

Contact [grace@focusandsustain.com](mailto:grace@focusandsustain.com) to take advantage of this exclusive offer.

This offer ends on February 23, 2017

## Love is in the...

Here comes Valentine’s Day, a day that, purportedly started as a Christian liturgical day of feasting, and now a day engulfed in humor, love, expectations; with cards, texts, fears of being rejected, hopes of being selected, and plenty of surprises. Here are a few facts about this special day:

- Valentine’s Day purportedly honored the early saint, Valentinus, a 3rd century Roman. The Catholic Church removed his name from their calendar in 1969 while the Roman Catholic Church continues to recognize him. Will the Pope acknowledge him?
- Apparently, today’s **association with love and friendship derived in the fourteenth century** in England.
- Chocolate lovers look to Valentine’s Day as a warm up act. Chocolate sales are about 23% below Easter, and about 55% below Halloween, which is the biggest chocolate holiday in the US, per 2009 data.
- The **biggest day for Valentine’s day chocolate sales** is...drum roll PLEASE... **February 13**, followed by... and again, the drum roll please...**February 15**.
- Studies have not determined that women like chocolate more than men. I know one gentleman for whom chocolate is a major food group and unapologetically so.

*“You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have”*

*Bob Marley*

# Life Matters

## Quick Tips

### Life Focus

When we spend so much of our time going from one thing to the next, completing tasks, and getting things done, **we forget to reflect** on the “why” we are doing the thing.

The “why” is our motivator. It can clarify for us whether we are doing something because we want to or because we think we have to. It can **help us shed the trivial and the unimportant** in our lives.

A question to ask yourself, to understand your “why” is: “What is important to me about (fill in the blank with your action item.)”

Make it a habit of asking yourself this question. You may notice that once you understand your “why” you **become more committed** to the thing you are doing. You may also notice that when you realize your “why” is not compelling enough, the thing you are doing becomes less meaningful.



### Money Focus

How are you attending to the 5 S.I.D.E.S. of Money©? Are you spending so much that you cannot put money into saving, investing or donating?

This month, give yourself the time you need to **determine how you want to allocate money to all five categories**, saving, investing, donating, earning, and spending so that the 5 S.I.D.E.S of Money® become the way you interact with your money.

Spending should not be the area you attend to the most. Instead, it should join the other 4 areas so that they all contribute to your financial well-being.



### Legacy Focus

Connection is key in keeping families together for generations. This connection can be strengthened in different ways. The most common of them are:

- **Sharing a family history** through an appreciative understanding of what it took to create the family
- Participating in **philanthropy** as a cohesive team
- **Finding a purpose to the family** that all agree to and want to develop
- **Active mentoring** of next generations
- Finding a **purpose to the family money**.
- **Determining the family’s values**, that resonate with and have meaning to all family members.

Pick one that you would like to see developed in your family and ask the family to talk about how to make it a part of your family’s fabric.



# Life Matters

## N. Cog Takes a Break



I have been taking a “break” lately. As a long piece of wood, I have an advantage of having a long reach so, at night, when no one is in the office except me, I press a few keys on the keyboard. Just the other night, while browsing the internet, I found some products that seemed a little strange. I thought you would enjoy reading about them. Here are some of them:

**“Boyfriend Body Pillow®**-the original arm snuggle companion pillow.” It is even trademarked. You have 3 color options to choose from: pink/white, red/white, and yellow/white. As you snuggle up to the long pillow arm.

**“Ben and Jerry’s Euphori-Lock Ice Cream Pint Combination Lock Protector.** “ I understand wanting to enjoy your own ice cream any time, but putting a lock on it? Wow, I hadn’t thought of that. I think I’ll take it to the next level and put a **video monitor system disguised as a fridge magnet** on the freezer door. Now I’ll see what’s going on! Nobody takes my ice-cream!

I’m all about efficiency and I think I could order this next item as a birthday gift for Bhaj. She’d love them: **“Multi-Function Chenille Fiber Washable Dust Mop Slippers.”** I don’t even need to choose the color, it’s random. She can clean as she walks around her house. Or wait, maybe this is better: **“Wi-Fi Detector Shirt”** which lights up and changes its intensity depending on the strength of the signal(s) nearby.

But wait, this is starting to get complicated and difficult. I need to take a “break”



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*“It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end”*

Ursula KLe Quin