

# Monday Morning

Motivation 4/11/2011



THE POSITIVE PLACE. SALES MOTIVATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH

## Clothing ourselves in courage.

A member of my family (I'd never mention that it's my wife) used to have a deep-seated fear of heights. When we would take a glass-enclosed elevator, she'd go to the front of the elevator, look up at the numbers, and refuse to get anywhere near the glass. She was terrified of heights.

But now, here on the bulletin board to the side of my desk, I have a newly-posted photograph of her standing on a construction site. There are no walls on the building, she's about a foot from the edge, and although there's a cable railing, it probably wouldn't do a whole lot of good. She's standing on what I make out to be the 44th floor, with the rest of the construction rising behind her.

The difference? One, it's now her job. Two, she wears a uniform.

It's funny to think about it, but many times, a lot of us will "clothe" ourselves in a uniform of some sort, and it will allow us to do things that would otherwise scare the living daylights out of us. Businesspeople do it by wearing a business suit. The suit somehow turns them into a different person. At home, they may be easy-going or mild-mannered, but when they put that suit on, they are transformed into a take-no-prisoners, go-for-broke kind of person who would frankly scare the of the people at home.

What can we learn from this that will help us in our lives? It's this simple -- if we've got big fears (and who doesn't have some fear that falls into that category,) then we can conquer it just by deciding to put on our "uniform." It can be a metaphorical uniform -- we just decide that we're in "confrontation mode" now -- or it can be something simple that we can add to our wardrobe to provide a little bit of an extra "oomph" to add to our resolve.

For example, the late writer Og Mandino referred to a "Rag Picker" in one or two of his books. The Rag Picker was a person who made helping other people his life's work, turning the discarded individuals (the rags) around him into great individuals. The book told how we could show our dedication to becoming a Rag Picker ourselves, and suggested keeping a small piece of unwanted cloth in our pocket or pinned inside our

suit coat. For several years after I read that book, I had such a piece of cloth pinned inside my suit coat, as a reminder to myself of who I wanted to become. That little addition helped me become a better person, because it acted as a sort of uniform that helped me overcome fears I had when dealing with strangers.

The "rag" has since gone away -- I think my wife threw it out when she sent that coat to the laundry -- but the memory of it remains, as does the dedication of trying to help other people. We can use a similar method to help us mentally put on a new "uniform" to help us deal with our fears. Find something simple, put it in your pocket, or pin it somewhere inconspicuous (or if you want to explain what you're doing, pin it somewhere conspicuous), and then mentally shift into the new "unformed" mode.

Militarily generals have know for years that the uniform makes a difference -- that's why they stress the way the uniform looks. It binds the person to the group, it induces personal pride, it identifies a person as part of the military, and most importantly, when the person puts on that uniform, it changes their mindset and helps them gain courage.

If you're going through a rough time, or looking for a method to confront your fears, try changing your uniform, either mentally or physically. Put on a different set of clothes, and put on a different point of view.

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