

FS News: Game Time Edition - Sept. 2022

Happy Fall, Co-creators!

It's a lovely time of year in the north: not too cold, not too hot...but just right. It's time to be outside, but it's also time to stay close to the radio or TV for exciting sports! Football is back and baseball will soon be heading to the playoffs.

Professional sports are a good metaphor for life. As long-time readers here know, I get frustrated with the current game of life. It's rigged, the rules are not fair, and yet we all have to play. It's been set up to mold us according to a specific set of rules. When we play the game...no matter if it's 1922, or 1962, or 2002 or today, the rules everyone is playing by are strict and unwavering when we are in the game. But, over time, the rules have changed, too! (Legal gambling, more designated hitters and now PitchCom, where the catcher can tell the pitcher and two other players what pitch is next!)

If we look at life this way, as hard rules about cost of living, mental and physical health and the promise of higher education or getting a job, we can know that we have to 'play by the rules' right now. And by being 'in the game', we can be a part of how the rules change for the future. We can try some rule-bending, like slides, and we can lobby for changes that will improve the game for everyone.

When I talk with never-incarcerated folks about reentry they immediately think I connect people with jobs. But a job like base hit. You're 'active'...and not on the bench, but you're not home. To get 'home' you'll move to all of the other crucial aspects to being a human! All team sports depend on the group, and life is like this, too. We might catch the ball and run for many yards (metaphor switch!)...but we need others to keep our path clear because there are so many forces coming at us to squash our progress!

Team sports also depend on groups of people who may not have similar world views. The team can all focus on the goal of winning, but they do not have to agree on, or meddle in, other areas of the team members' lives.

Could having a 'big picture' about life as a game help us make decisions for each play? Or even how we train, or eat, or reduce stress? Can we think of ways that we could make the game fair, so everyone gets to play and go 'home'? We can't complain from the sidelines; we have to be in the game to be heard! We don't control culture, but we can influence it. Let's make our game of life fun for everyone!

Happy Moon of Falling Leaves (October). Here's to the changes that it brings!

From the Fair Shake news desk:

### **THE LABOR SHORTAGE CONTINUES!**

I receive questions about employment and employers frequently. While no employer wants to hire a person who doesn't give a damn about anything, most organizations today continue to be 'fair chance' employers! Bring your skills, your confidence, your honesty and your gifts and you'll find that more companies than ever before will hire formerly incarcerated people. This does not mean you will earn a 6-digit salary immediately...but the first jobs will give you a chance to work hard, demonstrate your character, and build your resume by creating a list of

valid references. Relationships are everything; start building your reputation and then move on up, inch by inch. When you differentiate yourself from others – and employers can verify your claims - that's where the ladder-climbing begins!

Which occupations need workers badly now? Public works is huge (and city / county employers are often employers who've 'banned-the-box'). Other key industries include hospitality, education, and health care. (Jobs are available throughout the facilities, not just the professionals). Even with the additions this summer, more than 2.5 million jobs are currently available. Last but not least, rail transportation needs to fill 12,500 jobs, and they just got a new contract!

### **FREE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR REENTRANTS: G.I.F.T. Program**

The G.I.F.T. program offers many benefits including Zero-cost Blue Cross Plans, No-cost health plans, Free physicals, Prescription coverage for new and prior medications, Access to substance abuse treatment, Mental health counseling, Doctor and hospital visits, All pre-existing health conditions covered (i.e., asthma, diabetes, cancer, etc.), Benefit extends to household family members upon release, Preventive services, Pharmacy savings For more information please contact: Parks Insurance Agency, P.O. Box 1267, York, SC 29745 866-932-7200

**HEALTH INSURANCE FOR FAIR SHAKE** - Thank you to the donors who continue to share envelopes, stamps and financial support, as well as those who share suggestions, considerations and ideas. Eighty-three people shared reflections to for donors and potential donors to understand the value of their support in our work together. Thank you all for taking the time to help me reach them so Fair Shake can continue to provide support to all stakeholders! Between the art gallery, and the thoughtful reflections, potential donors, and existing donors will be able to get a good idea of what we're doing...together! Thank you!! Ubuntu!!!

### **ASK YOUR NEIGHBOR:**

And on that note, Albert asked: "Are there any book catalogs besides Hamilton books?" If your answer is YES, then please send the name(s) and the full address(es) to me. I will compile a list and offer it in the newsletter next month!

### **FOUR STAGES OF COMPETENCE** – It's not easy to learn new things.

Also known as the "conscious competence" learning model in psychology, the model reflects psychological states involved in the process of progressing from incompetence to competence in learning a new skill. But aptitude alone is not enough! Many skills require practice to remain at a high level of competence.

The stages that move us from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence are:

1. Unconscious incompetence - The individual does not understand or know how to do something and may not recognize the deficit and may even deny the usefulness of the skill. The length of time an individual spends in this stage depends on the strength of their desire to learn.
2. Conscious incompetence - The individual recognizes the deficit, and the value, of a new skill. Making mistakes can be integral to the learning process at this stage. (A great stone to sharpen your humility!)

3. Conscious competence - The individual understands how to do something, but demonstrating the skill requires concentration. They may need to break the skill down, into steps.

4. Unconscious competence - The individual has had so much practice with a skill that it has become "second nature" and can be performed easily. As a result, the skill can be performed while executing another task. The individual may be able to teach it to others, depending upon how and when it was learned. > This highly-edited info was gleaned from Wikipedia. <

### **PREPARING FOR RELEASE? WATCHING TV TO “GET” THE ‘NEWS’?**

Beware Deep Fakes and Artificial Intelligence! We're swimming in a deep pool of incomplete information and half-truths, including stories that are being written by bots, which you can employ to write what you want, too! In fact, many students use AI to write papers for school. AI is also being employed as 'therapists' – and other areas in health care are very excited to engage it also. Combined with Deep Fakes...human faces that are 100% computer generated...we could be getting our 'news' from a non-human telling us stories written by a bot with an agenda.

AI is disturbing and is having a strange 'role-reinforcing' impact on society. I hear critical thinkers say 'she' when they are talking about Siri. Newspaper articles will also say "she", and then change their text to 'the program' following reader pushback. Even journalists forget that the computer-generated voice is not a person...so what can we hope for from the 'news'?

Clearly, we are easily fooled. For many reasons, which marketers, politicians and corporations understand...but we do not...we will 'anthropomorphize' (attribute human characteristics or behavior to non-humans) technology. And why not? We have been anthropomorphizing our pets, plants and – in my case, cars – for the past century, at least. The trick, for all of us, will be to balance critical thinking with getting information: separating persuasion techniques from human care. Caveat Emptor!

### **WRITING OPPORTUNITY: CAPTURED WORDS, FREE THOUGHTS**

This publication is now accepting submissions for consideration. "We publish poems, short stories, letters, testimonials, editorials, and art of all kinds." If you think you'd like to send a submission, please start a new message to me with FREE THOUGHTS in the subject line. I will have to send you their 'permission form' to include with your work. This information was shared by Stephen J. Hartnett, Professor, Department of Communication, University of Colorado - Denver 1201 Larimer Street, Denver CO, 80204

<https://clas.ucdenver.edu/communication/research-creative-work/captured-words-free-thoughts>

### **VISITING VAN SERVICE FROM MKE!**

DRW Enterprises contacted me to let you know that there is now a transportation service from Milwaukee to Waupun, Oshkosh, Taycheedah, Kettle Moraine, Redgranite and Racine Correctional Institutions. They can accommodate special requests to other institutions based on availability and would be honored to provide transportation to you when you're released. The October schedule is listed on their website and is also on the Fair Shake website under "Reentry Guides." Please let your supporters know they can find out more at [www.drwenterprisesllc.com](http://www.drwenterprisesllc.com).

**BOOK of the MONTH: THE END OF EDUCATION** Redefining the Value of School - by Neil Postman (1995) Postman feels American education has drifted away from its founding narratives of democracy and Individual rights and replaced them with narratives of economic utility and the belief that technology is progress. Postman believes that today's schools fail to

inspire and often fail to communicate anything at all. Chief among the failures is the view that the school's main concerns today are simply preparation for the workplace. Schools create society; schools today fail to encourage society to reach its potential. An education that is mainly *about* economic utility mocks one's humanity. We will not create a better society if we do not teach humanness in our schools. (Which is why we have to teach humanness at home until we can get the schools to serve our citizens!)

"At its best, schooling can be about how to make a life, which is quite different from how to make a living." - Neil Postman

## QUOTES:

"When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice, you have not done what I asked." - Haleigh Lovel

"A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality" – Yoko Ono

"We don't just passively perceive the world. We actively generate it. The world we experience comes as much, if not more, from the inside out as from the outside in. In fact, we're hallucinating all the time, including right now. It's just that when we agree about our hallucinations, we call that reality." – Anil Seth

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, "What are you doing for others?" – Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Can you value others in their inherent dignity, beauty and wisdom?" – Christine Robinson

"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming "Wow! What a ride!" - Hunter S. Thompson

"The difference between what we are doing and what we are capable of doing would solve most of the world's problems. – Mohandas Gandhi

"I believe in standardizing automobiles. I do not believe in standardizing human beings. Standardization is a great peril which threatens American culture." - Albert Einstein

"All help is a form of colonialism." (i.e.: we know more than the person we are 'helping') We are "colonized by consumerism and patriarchy"... (which is 'helping' us with the problems that consumerism and patriarchy gave us in the first place!) - Peter Block

To our successful transitions ~

Ubuntu! ~ sue

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As always, when you are released, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo:

2-1-1 Fairshake.net HelpYourselfTherapy.com FindHelp.org

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.