

## Joseph W. Gauld's Fall Family Weekend 2015 Parent Talk

THE THEME FOR THIS WEEKEND IS THE FIRST WORD ON THE HYDE PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE, CURIOSITY: I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY LEARNING. THE PATHWAY PROVIDES THE SEQUENCE TO DEVELOP THE FIVE CHARACTER WORDS.

THERE ARE TWO SIDES OF CURIOSITY: THE OUTER ONE OF LEARNING HOW THE WORLD AND LIFE WORKS, AND THE INNER ONE SOCRATES DEFINED AS “KNOW THYSELF,” PURSUING THE THREE QUESTIONS “WHO AM I?; WHERE AM I GOING?; HOW DO I GET THERE?”

BLUNTLY; CURIOSITY IS OUR PRIMARY MEANS TO REVEAL OUR UNIQUE POTENTIAL.

YET I SUSPECT CURIOSITY IS OUR WEAKEST QUALITY— HERE, HOME AND NATIONALLY.

I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT CURIOSITY WAS THE FOURTH WORD I THOUGHT OF WHEN I FIRST CAME UP WITH THE FIVE WORDS IN 1964, FOLLOWING COURAGE, INTEGRITY AND CONCERN.

I CHOSE CURIOSITY TO ENSURE OUR PROGRAM WOULD BE ACADEMICALLY RIGOROUS, JUST AS I CHOSE LEADERSHIP TO ENABLE OUR SCHOOL TO BECOME OUTSTANDING.

SO HOW DID CURIOSITY ULTIMATELY END UP TO BE 1<sup>ST</sup> ON THE HYDE PATHWAY OF EXCELLENCE? I THINK BECAUSE OF OUR FOUNDING PREMISE EACH OF US HAS A UNIQUE POTENTIAL THAT DEFINES A DESTINY.

THE EXTENT THAT WE DISCOVER AND DEVELOP IT — WHILE HEAVILY DEPENDENT UPON THOSE WHO RAISE US, PLUS TO SOME DEGREE ON THOSE WHO EDUCATE US — ULTIMATELY DEPENDS UPON OUR OWN EFFORTS. AND OUR EFFORTS PARTICULARLY DEPEND UPON ON HOW WELL WE GET TO “KNOW THYSELF”—WHICH PUTS THE PRIMUM ON THE INNER CURIOSITY OF SELF-DISCOVERY.

CHANGE IS THE PRICE TAG OF LIVING. JACK WELCH SAYS “CHANGE BEFORE YOU HAVE TO.” ROBERT QUINN WROTE THE BOOK “DEEP CHANGE,” IN WHICH HE STATES OUR CHOICE IS SIMPLY DEEP CHANGE OR SLOW DEATH.

THUS COMPLACENCY IS THE ENEMY OF OUR LIFE ITSELF, WHICH STAGNATES OUR UNIQUE POTENTIAL.

SO CURIOSITY IS A LIFE FORCE THAT PREVENTS COMPLACENCY AND INSURES CHANGE AND GROWTH. AND THE MORE CURIOSITY WE HAVE, THE BETTER OFF WE ARE.

HOW MUCH BETTER OFF? ALBERT EINSTEIN SAID, *I HAVE NO SPECIAL TALENTS. I AM ONLY PASSIONATELY CURIOUS.* ELEANOR ROOSEVELT SAID: “*AT A CHILD’S BIRTH, IF A MOTHER COULD ASK A FAIRY GODMOTHER TO ENDOW IT WITH THE MOST USEFUL GIFT, THAT GIFT WOULD BE CURIOSITY.*”

AND AS SOMEONE SAID, IF CURIOSITY KILLED A CAT, THEN THE CAT DIED AN HONORABLE DEATH.

UNTIL I PREPARED THIS TALK, I HAD NOT FULLY APPRECIATED THE ROLE CURIOSITY HAS PLAYED IN MY LIFE.

THAT NIGHT IN 1964 WHEN I THOUGHT UP THE 5 WORDS, I PUT COURAGE FIRST BECAUSE I HAD SEEN THE CRITICAL NEED FOR KIDS TO STAND UP FOR THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO BECOME TRUE INDIVIDUALS.

BUT NOW I REALIZE THE EVEN MORE PRIMAL QUALITY OF CURIOSITY PUSHES US OUT OF COMPLACENCY INTO LIFE’S CURRENT. AS JAMES STEPHEN SAID, *CURIOSITY WILL CONQUER FEAR EVEN MORE THAN BRAVERY WILL.*

IN MY CASE, WHILE I DON’T THINK I DEVELOPED AN OUTER CURIOSITY UNTIL MY ADULTHOOD (WHEN I’VE HEARD MYSELF DESCRIBED AS “*A GUY WHO ASKS A LOT OF QUESTIONS*”) I BELIEVE MY LIFE REFLECTS A VERY STRONG INNER CURIOSITY.

MY EARLIEST MEMORY REFLECTS CURIOSITY: AGE 2, CRAWLING UNDER A FENCE IN THE BACK YARD, LIKE CONQUERING THE FEAR OF VENTURING INTO A NEW WORLD.

THEN AT AGE 5, I HAD MY FIRST CHARACTER LESSON:

WE MOVED TO A CHICAGO APARTMENT BUILDING WHERE SOME OLDER KIDS USED ME TO TAKE STUFF FROM WOOLWORTHS. SO I BEGAN LOADING UP STUFF FOR MYSELF IN MY LITTLE WAGON, WHICH I KEPT IN THE BUILDING'S BASEMENT—UNTIL THE JANITOR BROUGHT THE TOYS TO MY MOTHER.

MY STEPFATHER TOOK ME AND MY LOADED WAGON TO THE STORE, CALLED FOR THE MANAGER, AND TOLD ME TO APOLOGIZE IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE OF SHOPPERS. I WAS CRYING SO HARD I COULDN'T GET THE WORDS OUT.

THAT WAS MY FIRST LESSON FROM THIS MAN. I INTERNALIZED EMPATHY AND COMPASSION FROM MOM, BUT MY STEPFATHER'S RELENTLESS DISCIPLINE AND INTEGRITY FORMED MY CHARACTER. WHILE I REACTED TO HIM THE WAY SOME OF YOUR KIDS REACT TO HYDE, HE CHANGED ME IN A WAY MY FATHER NEVER WOULD HAVE.

OUR CHILDHOOD CURIOSITY INITIATES THE UNIQUE POTENTIAL PROCESS. THE DISCOVERY OF OUR DEEPEST DREAMS AND DESIRES EMPHASIZES THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR INNER, MORE SUB-CONSCIOUS SELF, WHICH WE COME TO KNOW THROUGH SUCH TOOLS AS DAYDREAMING, INSIGHT, INTUITION AND ULTIMATELY, CONSCIENCE.

DAYDREAMING IS OUR PRIMARY CHILDHOOD MEANS TO KEEP THIS INWARD FOCUS. TO BE EFFECTIVE, IT NEEDS PRACTICE IN ORDER TO DEVELOP OUR IMAGINATION, THE MOST POWERFUL SOURCE OF OUR CREATIVITY.

AS CHILDREN, OUR IMAGINATION EXPRESSES OUR DEEPEST DREAMS AND DESIRES.

OUR PARENTS CONTROL OUR LIVES, BUT WE CONTROL OUR IMAGINATION, WHICH NEEDS TO BECOME A VITAL PART OF OUR CHILDHOOD WORLD. OUR SENSE OF INTEGRITY AND SELF-CONFIDENCE MAY ULTIMATELY DEPEND ON HOW WE HANDLE OUR DEVELOPING PERCEPTIONS TOGETHER WITH THE REALITIES TAUGHT BY OUR PARENTS—AND THEN LATER WHEN DEALING WITH OUR PEERS.

I WAS AN ADDICTIVE DAYDREAMER AS A KID AND MY OPTIMISTIC IMAGINATION MADE ME VERY GULLIBLE. I REMEMBER THE DAY AT THE BEACH WHEN MY BROTHER AND SISTER SET UP A RUSE WITH FRIENDS TO DIG FOR BURIED TREASURE, WITH ME AS THE TARGET.

DURING THE WHOLE TIME I KNEW IT WAS A SCAM, UNTIL WE FINALLY FOUND A MAP THAT LOCATED THE TREASURE—OUT UNDER THE OCEAN. THEN EVERYONE THREW UP THEIR HANDS. BUT THE NEXT MORNING AT BREAKFAST, I CAREFULLY EXPLAINED TO THE FAMILY HOW WE COULD HIRE A STEAM SHOVEL, BUILD A WALL AND PAY FOR IT WITH THE TREASURE!

NEEDLESS TO SAY, PEOPLE SELDOM TOOK ME SERIOUSLY AS A KID. I HAD BUILT MUCH MORE IMAGINATION AND MUCH LESS REALITY IN MY PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE, WHICH PUT ME OUT OF STEP WITH SCHOOL—AND MY STEPFATHER’S EXTENSIVE DISCIPLINE. HOWEVER HIS RELENTLESS QUESTIONS DID LEAD ME TO FINALLY UNDERSTAND MATH AND LEARN I COULD ACTUALLY THINK.

BUT I WAS STILL IN MY DREAMWORLD EVEN AFTER I CAME BACK FROM WWII, SIMPLY FOLLOWING MY BROTHER IN GOING TO COLLEGE WHERE I MAJORED IN PARTYING AND POKER.

I WAS SO WISHY-WASHY MY WIFE HAD TO PROPOSE TO ME UPON GRADUATION!

I THEN FOLLOWED CLASSMATES INTO BUSINESS TO BECOME RICH AND FAMOUS. MY DREAMWORLD FINALLY HIT REALITY WHEN I FOUND MYSELF LOOKING AT MY WATCH AT THREE IN THE AFTERNOON. MY LACK OF MOTIVATION FINALLY TOLD ME I WASN’T CUT OUT FOR THIS.

SO WHAT WAS I CUT OUT FOR? THE BEST THING I HAD EVER DONE WAS THE SUMMER I WAS A CAMP COUNSELOR. I KNEW MY INNER SELF WAS PAINFULLY TELLING ME I WAS A TEACHER.

I FELT HUMILIATED—“THOSE THAT CAN—DO; THOSE THAT CAN’T—TEACH.” MY BOWDOIN CLASSMATES WOULD PLAY IN THE BIG LEAGUES AND I’D BE STUCK WITH A BUNCH OF KIDS. SO TO SOOTHE MY EGO, I PROMISED MYSELF I’D MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF MY STUDENTS.

IN SPITE OF BEING A POOR STUDENT AND ATHLETE IN COLLEGE, I FOUND I LOVED AND EXCELLED AT TEACHING AND COACHING. I WORKED HARD, GAINED AN MA IN MATHEMATICS, ATTENDED COACHING CLINICS, ENDLESSLY STUDIED FILM AND FOUND SURPRISING STRENGTH IN MY INTUITION.

THEN ON NEW YEAR'S EVE IN 1962, I SUFFERED A CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE. I REALIZED I WAS PART OF AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM THAT WAS FAILING TO EFFECTIVELY PREPARE KIDS FOR LIFE. THE MOST COMMON EXAMPLE I USE:

IN MY CALCULUS CLASS, I HAD TOLD A LAZY, ARROGANT AND SELF-CENTERED 14-YEAR-OLD GENIUS THAT HIS ATTITUDE WOULD CRUCIFY HIM IN LIFE. YET I WAS GIVING HIM MY HIGHEST GRADE! THEN I TOLD A DEDICATED BUT DEEPLY DISCOURAGED VERMONT FARM BOY TO IGNORE HIS FEELINGS (“I WORK TWICE AS HARD AS EVERYBODY ELSE AND GET HALF AS MUCH OUT OF IT.”) AND TRUST THAT HIS CHARACTER WOULD ENSURE HIS GOAL OF BECOMING A TOP ENGINEER. YET I WAS GIVING HIM MY LOWEST GRADE!

(YEARS LATER, THE VERMONT BOY DID BECOME A HIGHLY RESPECTED ENGINEER, WHILE THE GENIUS BECAME UNEMPLOYED, IN SPITE OF GRADUATING FROM MIT AT 18 WITH AN A AVERAGE.)

SO I MADE A COMMITMENT TO FIND A BETTER WAY. I BECAME HEADMASTER AT BERWICK ACADEMY, AND INTRODUCED THE UNIQUE POTENTIAL/CHARACTER PROGRAM. I WAS ENCOURAGED BY ITS SUCCESS, BUT SOON RECOGNIZED I WAS ENVISIONING CHANGE BEYOND WHAT THE TRUSTEES WOULD ACCEPT. RATHER THAN COMPROMISE THE PROGRAM, I RESIGNED AFTER A YEAR.

I KNEW MY ONLY RECOURSE WAS A NEW SCHOOL. MY COMMITMENT ENABLED ME TO TRANSCEND THE REALITIES OF LITTLE MONEY OR EXPERIENCE TO FOUND HYDE SCHOOL.

SO STARTING OUT AS A DAYDREAMER OUT OF STEP WITH REALITY, BUT IN STEP WITH MY DEEPER SELF, ULTIMATELY LED ME TO A LIFE THAT FULFILLED THE SPIRIT OF MY CHILDHOOD DREAMS AND DESIRES.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE, IGNORE YOUR EGO, AND LEARN TO LISTEN TO YOUR DEEPEST SELF.

WE ARE BORN WITH A SPIRIT. OUR IMAGINATION IS CRITICAL TO EXPRESSING THAT SPIRIT, WITH CHILDHOOD DAY DREAMING A MEANS TO EXPRESS OUR IMAGINATION. WHILE WE NEED PARENTS TO PREPARE US TO DEAL WITH REALITY, IT IS CRITICAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR SPIRIT THAT OUR PARENTS ALSO ENCOURAGE OUR IMAGINATION—WHICH EXPRESSES OUR INNER CURIOSITY.

MOM CERTAINLY ENCOURAGED MINE. SHE TOOK ME TO CHILDREN'S PLAYS AND PIANO LESSONS, ULTIMATELY LEADING ME TO CONSIDER A CAREER IN MUSIC AND SERIOUSLY SEEKING TO PUBLISH A SONG.

WHEN I ORGANIZED A NEIGHBORHOOD BASEBALL TEAM, SHE TRANSPORTED THE ENTIRE CHEVY CHASE TEAM TO PLAY US. I LATER TRIED OUT FOR A MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM.

I EVEN LET HER TAKE ME TO TAP DANCING LESSONS IN 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE—THE ONLY BOY IN THE CLASS!

I WAS A GOOD HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE AND FAIRLY POPULAR, BUT FELT I WAS BASICALLY A SUPERFICIAL PERSON, PRETTY MUCH OUT FOR MYSELF—A FEELING PERHAPS REINFORCED BY MY STEPFATHER’S RIGOROUS STANDARDS AND MOM’S ALCOHOLISM.

BUT I HAD ONE STRANGE EXPERIENCE DRIVING HOME FROM A DATE AT AGE 17. NOTICING GLASS IN THE ROAD, AND IMAGINING SOMEONE GETTING A FLAT LATE AT NIGHT, I STOPPED AND PICKED UP THE GLASS.

RETURNING TO THE CAR, I SAT THERE STUNNED. NO ONE HAD SEEN ME DO THIS AND IT MAY HAVE MEANT NOTHING. I COULDN’T REMEMBER EVER DOING SUCH A CONCERNED ACT. I SAID, “JOE, MAYBE YOU DON’T KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE.”

LOOKING BACK, I THINK THE EPISODE REVEALED MY STRONG INNER FOCUS ON THE POWER OF OUR INSIGHT, INTUITION AND ULTIMATELY—OUR CONSCIENCE. THAT THE ACT SO SHOCKED ME REVEALED THE IMMATURITY OF MY OUTER SELF—I REALLY WAS A VERY LATE BLOOMER.

FORTUNATELY, OTHERS COULD SEE IN ME WHAT I COULD NOT SEE IN MYSELF. BLANCHE, MY HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEART, WAS BOTH VERY ATTRACTIVE AND VERY MATURE. I ONCE ASKED HER WHY SHE MARRIED ME, AND SHE SAID WITHOUT HESITATION, “BECAUSE I KNEW YOU’D DO SOMETHING FINE.”

I FURTHER CREDIT SUMNER HAWLEY, MY CLOSE FRIEND AND CO-FOUNDER, WITH HELPING ME DEVELOP THE CONFIDENCE TO BECOME THE LEADER I AM TODAY.

I BELIEVE MY LIFE REAFFIRMS THE STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN IMAGINATION/CURIOSITY AND LEADERSHIP. OUR UNIQUE POTENTIAL IS TRULY WHAT WE HAVE TO GIVE TO OTHERS AND THE WORLD. I HOPE MY STORY BETTER APPRECIATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPRESSIONS OF OUTER AND PARTICULARLY INNER CURIOSITY.

A COUPLE OF POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- PRESENT SOCIETY HAS LITTLE INTEREST IN CURIOSITY. SO WE PARENTS NEED TO OVER EMPHASIZE INNER AND OUTER CURIOSITY IN OUR CHILDREN.
- OUR CURIOSITY FOR WHO OUR CHILDREN REALLY ARE, IS ALWAYS FAR GREATER THAN WHO WE WOULD LIKE THEM TO BECOME.
- FINALLY, I LOOK FORWARD TO MY CONFERENCES WITH YOU. GOOD LUCK!