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THE TERROR FROM WITHIN

Our newspapers and magazines are filled with stories of terror. Suicide bombings killing massive numbers of people, injuring hundreds and reigning terror throughout those regions in which these patterns predominate. Thusfar those types of terrorist episodes are occurring outside of our Country but Homeland Security anticipates that it may not be long before we might see such attempts and is preparing to prevent them from happening. The very word “terror” strikes fear into our hearts and rightly so. Unfortunately, our future will be resplendent with such threats requiring ultra vigilance.

This article, though, is not about the threat of terror running rampant throughout the world. It is about another type of terror which has already invaded our own United States and, I believe, is deserving of some attention. Some call it “moral decadence” while others term it an undermining of our basic principles that founded this Country. I want to examine this phenomenon in the light of what seems to be its roots.

I wrote a self-help book on managing stress in our lives entitled Guide to a Life Management Process. In it I refer to the terms “guiding principles” as those values, priorities and beliefs that guide us through life. As our society has developed over time our belief systems and priorities have changed. Whereas a sense of self-discipline and the rule of law were common features previously embedded in the fabric of our society, those elements gradually were substituted by sayings like “you can have it all”, “go for it” and “go now, pay later”. The “common good” has been replaced by the rights of individuals. I believe that at some point you could order a hamburger in a fast food chain and if it didn’t appear within a certain amount of time, you received one free. The element of postponing pleasure resulting in maturity seems to have disappeared and people are looking for ways of looking good and staying young as obesity and suicide are on the upswing.

Now, don’t get me wrong. There have been many benefits derived from some of the changes that have occurred over time. Technology has certainly improved and we are doing marvelous things that were unheard of previously. We have made significant advances at controlling disease and exploring the void of space. I’m not sure that any of

the changes that have happened are intrinsically bad or harmful. What I have found is that people have a tendency to carry a good thing to extremes which may end in a bad result. Those extremes are what might be determined as being the “terror from within”. Going to extremes brings a sense of imbalance and frustration that can bring on anger and even violence as we seek our answers in those states of mind. Going to extremes can oftentimes mean that we carry our right to self-determination to a point where we might forget that there are responsibilities associated with that right.

Should we return to the “good ‘ol days”? I’m not sure about that if it means regressing. But we can begin to reign in our attempts at having it all and begin to realize the value of what we do have with an appreciation that will help us to take note of our progress. There is certainly nothing wrong with always having something to look forward to but that perception can be accompanied by an appreciation of what has come beforehand. That sense of balance might help set us straight and begin to minimize the terror from within. I often tell my clients that too much of a good thing is not good for us. What are your views on this topic? This newspaper and I are looking for and would welcome your feedback.

Some points to consider:

- How well have your guiding principles served you?
- Are you able to “live in the moment”?
- What can you do to bring more balance into your life?
- What changes that you resolved to make this new year will help you to achieve greater balance?

A Brief Biographical Sketch

After an over 40 year career as a professional psychotherapist and Director of The Sports Stress Clinic in Amherst, NY, Charles Bonasera came to Florida and decided to use the benefits of his previous professional experiences in his new roles of Consultant in Life Management and Business Coaching as well as his expertise as a Motivational Speaker. He once again became involved with athletes in different sports training them with his techniques to help them develop and maintain focus as well as staying in their zone. Much of his training methods are derived from the CD collection he developed under the heading of WIN-WIN SECRETS as the President of Personal Identity Controls. This collection consists of thirty-six programs dealing with vital issues in the management of stress.

Another role that he adopted to add to his professional career was that of Author. Early in the 1980’s he wrote Guide to a Life Management Process which he has re-written as a workbook to successfully help people manage their stress which includes his own Working Model. As a result in his interest in golf and realizing that it was essentially a “mind game”, he wrote The Mental Side of Golf which can benefit the beginner as well as professionals playing the game of golf.

He then compiled over five-hundred sayings that he had developed in the course of his professional career as stimuli to help people change patterns in their lives entitled How to Stay Well and Live Life to the Fullest. This was followed by a book documenting case studies around disruptive life patterns including ways to change them under the name of How in the Hell Did This Happen to Me? Both his personal involvement in sports as a participant, coach, manager and in his role in officiating, inspired him to write a primer for parents and coaches entitled The Legend of Little League.

Charles invites you to view his website at www.charlesmbonasera.com as well as to write with your comments and questions to his e-mail address (charles@charlesmbonasera.com). He would also be very happy to communicate with his readers by telephone should they desire. His professional motto is “seeking alternative methods to happiness” and wishes those touched by his words to practice the three secrets to a happy life: “enjoy life and enjoy it thoroughly ... develop and maintain a sense of humor ... bring as much love into your life as possible.