



Special Self-Improvement Issue, 2003

# Communication No. 237

The Pleasant Places of Florida

Vol.7 No. 9

## *From the Papers on the Sundial:*

Who doesn't want to look better, read faster, work smarter and be able to leap tall buildings at a single bound? There's something everyone of us would like to change about ourselves. And if you think you've got it bad, just look at the characters in the Canon: governess-beaters, knuckle-walkers, step-daughter-deceivers, dog-abusers, coke-heads—if anyone needs a good shot of self-esteem, several years' worth of therapy and a twelve-step program, it's these people.

But do they get it? Noooo. They're hauled down to Scotland Yard and wind up with five to fifteen for tunneling underground to steal some French gold. These people don't need hard-time, they need some understanding, someone to talk to, some chicken soup for the breaker and enterer. And we're here to provide it.

And just remember: You can enjoy this issue, but only if you really want to.

## The Seven Deadly Habits of Highly Effective People

by Professor James Moriarty

*Ed. Note: The esteemed Professor James Moriarty is following up his wildly successful bestsellers, Winning Through Beating the Snot Out of Your Opponent, Unleashing the Criminal Within, and The Tao of a Cane on the Back of the Head with yet another blockbuster. The Professor has been gracious enough to allow us to print a short excerpt.*

Let's get to the point: You deserve what you get. If you go through life with a lackadaisical attitude and you get taken for a ride, you deserve it. You weren't paying attention. If someone takes advantage of you, you deserve it. You didn't stand up for yourself. And if you get ground under the wheels of a hansom cab, you deserve it. You didn't move fast enough.

It's not that life is Darwinian, it's that the other schmoees are too busy having a good time to pay attention to anything other than their wants. But if you make their wants part of your scheme, then you will indeed succeed. Because people basically look no farther than

the end of the sidewalk, a person with vision can stand in the road and pick their pocket.

Let me tell you a story:

A colonel plays cards. He plays to win. He has skill, gumption, a bit of good luck. But one night his luck turns. He draws against an inside straight and the next thing he knows he's holding that rare Ace-King-Three-Nine-Seven combination. He bluffs, but it doesn't work, and he is thrown out of the club—a not particularly elegant club, but a club nonetheless. Perhaps it could use some paint, perhaps some new wallpaper—certainly some drapes would help, and they really need to do something about the rug in the back hallway.

So the colonel purchases an air gun. Not a top-of-the-line model, but a good one nonetheless. So the scope is a bit out of alignment and the stock has a few scratches on it. What do you expect, he lost at cards. But he takes the gun anyway, and finds a dark, empty house in which to store it.

Not the story you were expecting, was it? Not much of a point is it?(continued on page 3)



**Dear Abey**  
**by Abe Slaney**

Dear Abey,

I am a single woman, blonde, small, dainty, well gloved and a good dresser. I come from a good family. Although I have met several men, they have all been scared off by my bodyguard who accompanies me, an Andaman Islander who carries a blowgun. I adore Tonga, and I promised my father before he died that I would keep him on in the family. But I am afraid that Tonga is scaring off any potential spouses that I might have. What can I do?

Lonely in Kensington

Dear Lonely,

First, give Tonga the afternoon off—there are some delightful Andaman Island restaurants in Darbyshire. Or there's a wonderful archery club that meets down on the Thames. Then, you must attire yourself appropriately—pearls around the neck are very alluring—and stroll through the parks in Kensington. And, I understand, there are many doctors in the area. If you are as "well-gloved" as you say you are, you cannot help but attract the proper attention. Only after you have secured his interest should you introduce him to Tonga.

Dear Abey,

I am a writer of modest talent who has enjoyed great

success with a certain fictional character of my invention. However, I have grown to hate this character as he has become so popular that that is all anyone wants to read from me.

How can I continue writing about someone I despise?

A Troubled Ophthalmologist

Dear Troubled,

You must ask yourself: Are you better off with this character or without him? If with him, you must allow him to flourish as no other character has. If without him, he must die horribly, preferably at the bottom of an obscure European waterfall.

Dear Abey,

I do not know where to turn, being a foreigner in your country, although for quite some time. My husband has lost interest in me. I have done everything that I can think of to ignite his interest, but yet he still ignores me. I suspect that he has turned his attentions to our governess, although I have never caught him looking at her. I have tried talking to him, but he says there is nothing to talk about.

Please tell me what I should do. I am crazy in love with my husband, but I am afraid he no longer feels the same way about me.

Desperate in Hampshire

(continued on page 7)

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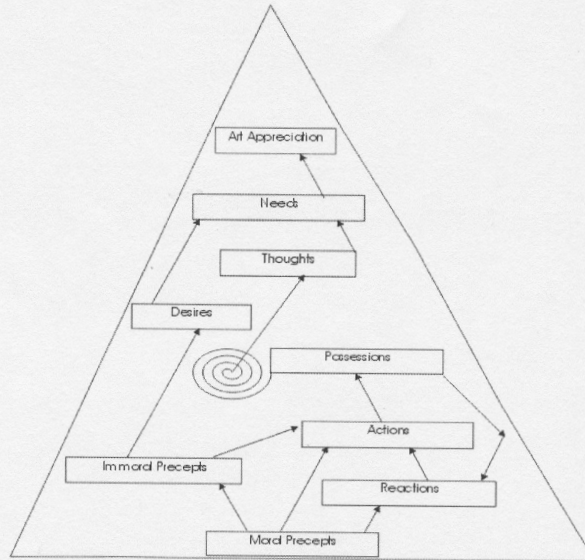
**OLD SOLDIERS WELCOME!**



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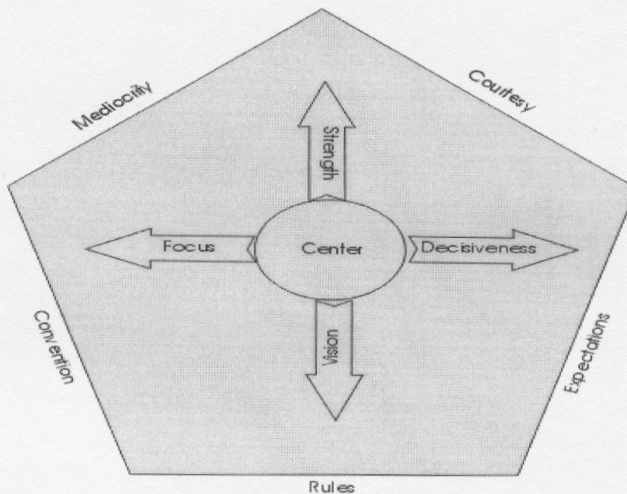
But that is *just* the point: Nothing ever goes the way we expect it to go. Why? Because the other schmoes get in the way. They have the cards; they have the club; they have the air rifle; they may even have their finger over the glass in the scope we want.

Recall our pyramid—which looks an awful lot like a triangle, but that’s just because you’re only looking at one side:



Everyone has their own pyramid. You, me, the laundry lady—even the cheesy slimebucket who has his finger over our scope. But suppose you want a part of someone else’s pyramid—or perhaps the entire structure.

Now, recall our paradigm:



(continued on page 5)



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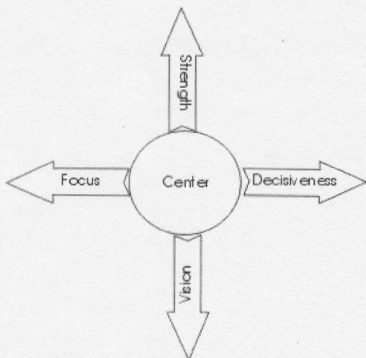




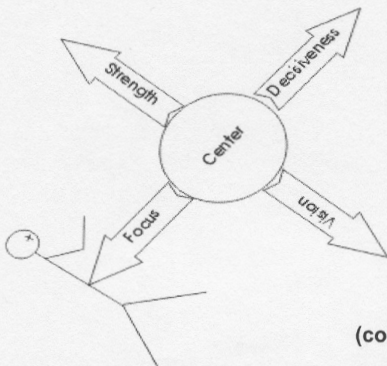
(continued from page 3)

Society surrounds us, forces us within ourselves, forces us to subjugate our needs for the good of its own perpetuation. Convention, Courtesy, Rules, Expectations and—the worst of all—Mediocrity hem us in on all sides—as long as there are no more than five sides.

We must throw off custom. We must tell society in no uncertain terms what they can do with their good graces. We must show society that we are the masters of our fate, the creators of our destiny. We must dissolve the pattern of society that surrounds us, like so:



Now you can see how clean our lines are, how unfettered they are. Our focus and vision guide us; our strength and decisiveness force us forward. Once we are free of the grip of society, it is an easy matter to turn our own personal compass in whatever direction we wish to go. In fact, we need tip it only a few degrees before it becomes as lethal a weapon as our scope-deficient air gun. Like so:



(continued on page 6)

## Being pushed around? Low Self-esteem? No energy?

Then you need

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(continued from page 5)

Now, society is at our mercy, and their pyramid is as good as ours. But the best part is that this lucrative venture is also immensely fun. You see, by making others subservient, we make their souls squirm. Have you ever heard a soul squirm before? It is a most sweet sound—perhaps the sweetest sound in the universe—apart from an asteroid slamming into a glacier and releasing torrents of steam and rocks all over a village of screaming innocent yokels whose entire lives are now ruined.

When you have made their souls squirm, you are one step away from possessing them. When the soul squirms, it shifts position, and once it has shifted, it is an easy matter to capture it. And when you have captured the soul, your wants are their wants, your schemes, their schemes. Your pyramid becomes their pyramid.

There are those who say that taking on society is sheer nonsense, that no one can fight Parliament, that it takes five to foxtrot. I say “poltroon” to that. I take issue with the glad-handlers and the bureaucrats and the sweet-smelling Shakespearean-quoting bums who peddle their pencils and disappear in the night. I take issue with the Scotland Yard buffoon-piping yip-yappers who have nothing better to do except haul innocent urban dwellers into the dark confines of a mold-infested cell. I take issue with the government consultants who leech off the hard-earned taxes of their fellow Londoners, all the while snoring and snivelling in their leather high-backed chairs and, once awake, partaking of the oil-soaked rags that call themselves newspapers.

I take issue with the soul of society. Not only do I take issue with it, I take aim at it, and it matters not that my scope is awry and that the soft-bellied, managerial hoodlums who pass as university presidents have their fingers over the glass. Society is so large that all you have to do is shoot and you will hit something. All you have to do is aim your focus or your strength or your vision or your decisiveness and you will hit something.

Society is self-perpetuating. I say it is self-extracting. I say we are doing it a favor when we stand in the street and extract society’s purse from its well-cushioned backside. Let me show you how.

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(continued from page 2)

Dear Desperate,

First, do nothing in haste. Remember that you are a creature of worth. You must tell your husband that you should both see a counselor, either together or separately. Your marriage depends on it. If he refuses, then you should sue for divorce and take him for

everything he's got.

Dear Abey,

I love my husband of many years, but I have found myself oddly attracted to a disfigured street beggar with an unusual vocabulary. I am afraid to speak to him, and am utterly unsure what to tell my husband.

Confused in Kent

Dear Confused,

It is normal for spouses to long for something new after years of marriage, but are you ready to throw away those years? Perhaps if you ask your husband to wear a beggar's coat that smells vaguely of anchovie guts and cheap merlot he will understand. Good luck to you.

**ARE YOU AFRAID OF WOMEN? DO YOU MISTRUST THEM? IS YOUR PERSONALITY BASICALLY MISOGYNISTIC? THEN, LET THE PLEASANT AND ABLE STAFF OF THE HOLMESIAN CLINIC FOR THE FEMALE CHALLENGED BE YOUR GATEWAY TO HAPPIER, HEALTHIER RELATIONSHIPS.**

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*founded in 1972  
by Leslie Marshall, B.S.I. (dec.)*

**Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood, B.S.I.**

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David McCallister, Master of the House,

(Master of Ceremonies at most gatherings, host of the annual Wessex Cup)

Carl Heifetz, Representative (both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople),

<microdoc@gte.net> (Correspondent & Communication)

Wanda & Jeff Dow, The Papers on the Sundial,

(Communications, Bookkeeping)

Please make note of the date after your name on the mailing label. This is the expiration date of your club membership. You will not receive further Communications after this date unless you renew. Renewals should be sent, with any updates, to Wanda Dow. Make all checks payable to Wanda Dow. US\$12.00 (US/CAN) or US\$13.00 (INTL)

**PLEASE NOTE ABOVE INFORMATION! ALL CHECKS FOR RENEWAL SHOULD NOW BE MADE OUT TO WANDA DOW. CHECKS MADE OUT TO THE PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA WILL BE RETURNED. WE NO LONGER HAVE A CLUB ACCOUNT AT THE BANK AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CASH SUCH CHECKS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

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