

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

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Total Commitment...Sometimes

What is it about energy and why do some people have the conviction to follow through and others who are stimulated, motivated and inspired switch that off.

Why do some allow themselves to return to their safe life without facing the challenges that present or embracing the opportunities?

A friend of mine Matt Church has a saying that I love which is "The teacher will appear when you are ready for the lesson". But why is it that so many people find the teacher that inspires them - then find a reason to skip class and avoid the lesson?
I move from state to state and country to country talking to

groups of people from all different walks of life and I love learning of the various journeys that people have taken in their life.

I am intrigued by what stops people, who are presented with opportunities, yet let them pass them by. Is it fear of change, is it the lack of courage to embrace something different or is it the case that they need constant external motivation to get them out of bed each day?

What separates those who provide inspiration, and those who despite claiming to be inspired fail to act on that and quickly return to their status quo?

Khun Rotjana the Director of our orphanages in Thailand was recently interviewed for a program on the BBC that featured Hands Across the Water and during that interview she was asked about promises made to her.

She responded that many organisations and individuals promised after meeting her to return to their respective countries and provide assistance for the fantastic work that she is doing with the children. She said that the vast majority had left Thailand and she never heard from them again.

Was it that in making those promises and commitments they were never made with

good intent? I don't think so for one moment. I don't really believe that anybody would promise to help such a beautiful selfless lady and not mean it.

So why did so many then return home and put aside their commitment? It's a bit like when you leave a funeral and promise to catch up with those relatives you haven't seen for years and you mean it at the time, but then never do, or at least not until the next funeral!

I think we have the front part of the process down pat. We are all able to make the commitment at the time and well and truly mean it. But the problems start to come when we are no longer staring at what inspired us and we need to find that inspiration within.

I love being surrounded by those who have the courage and conviction to wake up on their own the next day, without the external stimulus and stand true to their commitments they made.

So here is my challenge to you. When you're next

inspired to act and you're about to make that commitment public, don't - stop and draw breath. Then ask yourself "am I just caught up in the moment here, or do I really mean this?" Rather than promise and not deliver have the courage to follow

what has inspired you, take the leap, because you know what, you might just find the rewards are really there, or if you can't - just not promise in the first place. Following through takes conviction and purpose on your behalf. There isn't really anything that special about those who make

"It's one thing to feel that you are on the right path, but it's another to think that yours is the only path."

Paulo Coelho

it happen, they just make the choice to follow through, rather than look for excuses as to why they shouldn't.

Look around at those people who inspire you and you will notice there isn't anything that different about them, they just followed something they believed in.

So rather than making a commitment to someone else, how about making a commitment to yourself to follow through on that which most inspires, challenges or lives inside of you.

HANDS UPDATE

In line with our commitment to support the Thai's continue to move towards self sustainability we are about to launch our latest agricultural venture - a palm oil plantation. Thailand is now one of the leading global producers of palm oil and it is seen as a viable alternative to the production of rubber.

To diversify and spread our risk we are now working to establish our first palm oil plantation on land which adjoins the rubber plantation.

The area of the plantations has become a weekend retreat for Khun Rotjana and the children who spend at least one day a weekend up there swimming in the rivers and ponds that surround the plantation and working to constantly improve the facilities there.

The establishment of the agricultural ventures is for some less exciting than the opening of a new home for the kids, but we see it as equal importance on every level and are just as proud of these ventures as the beautiful homes in which the children spend each night.