

Searching your past to understand your future

I have found that looking into our past can provide us with valuable insights into how we can shape our future. It was once said that “we can make perfect sense of our lives looking back, unfortunately we must live forward”.

I truly believe that by examining the events that shaped our lives as kids, we can learn new lessons today. Have you ever wanted to be a kid again? What's stopping you? We all have a child inside waiting to burst out and have fun. As we grow older we all seem to leave the child within to become the adult without.

Let me relate an example of how I've learned a lesson for my professional life from a steppingstone from my childhood.

Every summer we went to our cottage. My older brothers both water-skied, and I wanted to as well, except for one small detail, I couldn't swim a stroke, and I was afraid to put my head under water. I wasn't a dumb seven year old, I new about the monsters in the lake.

Well the family rule was that unless you jumped off the end of the dock, you couldn't ski. I was scared stiff of jumping off the dock. I didn't think I ever would.

One beautiful hot sunny afternoon, I gathered up all my courage and walked to the end of the dock! Splash, I was in. As I hit the water my first thought was who pushed me in? My life jacket, the old two-sided square devices that looked like something off the titanic, was not done up



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tightly (why would it be, I knew I wouldn't really jump in). I fell right through the jacket. Water swished over my fresh brush cut. I saw the surface of the water from an angle I had never seen before, and my brother at the edge of the dock laughing hysterically. I kicked and struggled to the surface, dog paddled over to the side of the dock and grabbed the big old tire

on the side. I pulled myself up onto the dock and pronounced, triumphantly, I can go skiing now!

If not for the little nudge from my brother, I may still be standing on the dock staring at the water. Even though we all make bold steps in our business lives, a little nudge in the right direction often begins our success. Do you or some of your employees need a little nudge? Training may be the key. Take the initiative!

I bet you can't help but smile as you think of your own defining childhood moments. Do they have the same relevance today?

I'd like to read them, and learn from them as well. E-mail them to me at jeff@bowmantraining.ca.

P.S. another important lesson I learned, a fishing rod makes a huge welt on a brother's bare back!

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