

What Can I Be?

By Tim Tice

Each quarter we individually write an article to appear in H2Oregon, the magazine for Oregon Association of Water Utilities. Occasionally writer's block shrouds me so a change is necessary for break-through. Well, for this issue I decided to put together something that varies from an article and for now; we'll just label it as a project.

It was during a discussion regarding deadlines to be met, I was telling our executive director of how close the project was to being completed as well as the specific details in the project. Jason (i.e. E.D.) wanted the project to be part of our annual conference, so let it be.

A few days following and the realization hit me like a bus, "do I have to write another article since my first project is being used in a different way?" Jason's answer to the question was not really a definitive one, so here is yet another article.

I have embarked on a book that my mom sent me and the title will remain anonymous for I do not wish to persuade or lead someone to read into something that is not there. The book discusses an anthology of topics, yet the consensus is based on three key words and one running theme.

"Individualism" is the first word, and in the book explains how the practice of such draws the human side of this world farther away from each other. It seems in this worldly environment that the individual's decision making processes stem. These actions show a strong trend towards growth.

"Hedonism" is word number two. In the philosophy of the word, it places pleasure as the goal and aim of life, quoted as "if it feels good, do it". How much of a concern on the affects of the action towards someone or something is considered when we live by the above quoted phrase?

The last word of the three is "minimalism" which simply describes an attitude of "what is the least I can do?" What is the smallest effort put forth for the greatest reward? Is it understood how this train of thought has infected all aspects of society?

In looking into understanding the three words better, I have in my personal realization come to acknowledge that I for one at times get caught in a whirlwind of materialism and selfishness.

It is amazing from what direction the bus that hits me comes. Scouting with my boys, the core values that are taught are contrary to the three words. I never participated in scouting as a young lad; I was too busy on a baseball diamond, attempting to accumulate future arthritis of the elbow, shoulder and knee. Getting old is not for sissies.

The motto for scouting is "do a good turn daily", a phrase I have attempted to practice. When someone thinks of scouting, the picture of helping the little old lady across the street, being part of the honor guard in a parade or the uniform comes to mind. How many good deeds are out there for us to grasp? Everything from serving a cup of coffee, letting someone else enjoy the closest parking space to dropping a kind word or words of encouragement are simple ways of a good turn.

The resounding theme in the book is, are you the "best version of yourself". In the aspects of our lives; faith, family, friends, work and play, we have an amphitheater to act in such a manner. We have all heard the truism, "Actions speak louder than words."

Attempting to create "best version" is difficult when the world is coming at us faster than ever before, distractions everywhere we turn. Imagine if "individually" the attempt of being "best version of ourselves" was made and successful. Living with this concept may go unobserved. Deep inside the practitioners; the feeling will be subtle, yet overwhelmingly peaceful. One last thought for the reader to ponder, is this lifestyle infectious? The best that life has to offer! Mr. OpTIMist