

Four Quotes

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30 September 2013



I came to the realization several years ago that all of my personal heroes are good storytellers. I don't know why; they just are. Perhaps it's because they have a way of motivating me through their stories, but whatever it is their collective impact is powerful for me.

Five quotes come to mind when I think of the impact that a simple story can have. The first is a quote from Abraham Lincoln, who responded to a question about people who were attacking him and his presidency. His response: "There are no strangers – only new friends to be made." I like that; it puts a different spin on the idea of relationships, both personal and professional. It also takes me to the second quote, which comes from Mark Twain: "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness, and most of our people need it sorely on all three counts." As someone who visits as many countries as I do every year, I'm here to tell you: Nothing is more humbling than the opportunity to see the world through somebody else's eyes. The experience provides a perspective, a viewpoint, which just can't be had through any other means. It also teaches you to not just look, but to actually see, which takes us to the third quote.

Charles Kuralt was a CBS journalist and the host of "Sunday Morning with Charles Kuralt" for many years. But before hosting that show he hosted "On the Road with Charles Kuralt," a program about the people and places of America. His job for twenty-five years was to drive all over the United States in a big lumbering motor home with a film crew, looking for great stories. He once said that his job was "to find extraordinary things in ordinary people," my third favorite quote. He did. For a quarter-century he sought out the best in people and places, and displayed them on TV for the world to see.

The fourth quote on the list comes from Mary Kay, the cosmetics mogul who built an empire from the sale of cosmetics sold at Mary Kay parties in peoples' homes. Once, when asked what the secret of her success was, she smiled and said, "whenever I'm talking with another person, I always pretend they have a sign around their neck that says 'make me feel important.'" What insight, and what a valuable tool for anyone in a customer-facing position.

The fifth and final quote that I will add to this collection comes from "[Work that Matters](#)," a marvelous book by photographer Justin Zoradi. Justin's book, which I strongly recommend to all, is about the fine art of living well and making a difference while doing so – oh yeah, and having fun along the way. Here's his quote: "Don't follow your passion: instead, pay attention to where you spend your time." How many people do you know who spend their time beating their heads against the wall, trying to achieve something that they desperately want, when in fact they should perhaps be focusing on something else that is far more important to them? I do;

in fact, I've been that person. But I learned a while ago that the key to being satisfied and happy is to do the things that make you happy - period. So I do.

You can find Justin's book at the link shown above. Please - download and read it. It's free. And think about the quotes I shared in this post. Do they apply to you?

Thanks for reading.