



Please Come Back!

This episode today is another of the type that makes me wonder if perhaps I should be keeping it to myself. It's not exactly flattering, to say the least!

For about a year now, beginning sometime last fall, I have been mulling over major changes in the way that I run my affairs. For just about two decades, I have enjoyed a wonderfully successful 'career' as an independent craftsman, and although that is continuing to move along very well, over the past year I have begun to edge in a different direction by bringing in other people to work with me.

Doing so has meant that I have had to think about different ways of organizing the work, because the presence of these new people has meant that many more options are now on the table - things that I simply could not do alone are now becoming possible. So my mind is frequently buzzing with possible projects, most of which will of course never see the light of day.

One day, I guess it was early last summer, I was on one of my frequent trips to the post office, carrying a backpack full of packages to send off. I followed my usual route, taking me past the local printing company and the bakery, then across a main road and down a long hill. I had been mulling over some of the business ideas as I pedalled along, and somewhere just near the top of that hill, I had a flash of inspiration. I saw instantly - and completely clearly - just how we could organize our business in a new way. It was one of those, "How could I have been so stupid not to see this earlier!" moments. The new type of print project that I visualized would completely eliminate many of the problematic aspects of what we were trying to do, and would pretty much guarantee steady sales of the prints for years to come.

I remember whooping out loud; this was so obvious, and yet would also be completely straightforward to implement. This was it! I felt as though I had just won a massive lottery - I would never again have to struggle with my business affairs!

I pedalled along, completely happy, even singing to myself as I went; what a fabulous time I was going to have working with this new system! A couple of minutes later, I arrived at the post office, swung my backpack off, and went inside to do the transactions. It was crowded. I took a number from the machine, dumped the packages at the postal window, and then waited at the finance window to withdraw the money to pay for the postage. Questions were asked and answered, forms filled out, and when everything was finally set in order I made my way outside to my bike.

As is my common habit, I then stood there for a moment, trying to figure out what came next - should I be going to the supermarket, the 7-11, or simply home? But something was bothering me ... it seemed as though I should be doing something else instead. And I then remembered ... yes, I had had that wonderful idea, and now had to head home instantly to get to work on it!

But.

Although I clearly remembered *having* a wonderful, indeed life-transforming idea just a few minutes previous while riding the bike, I couldn't remember what it had been!

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I stood there, straining to 'play back the tape' of my thoughts. Nothing came. I closed my eyes to cut out the traffic and distractions ... still nothing. In desperation, I jumped back on the bike, pedalled madly back along the way I had come, then stopped at the top of the hill, at the very place where the inspiration had struck just a short time ago.

Nothing.

Nothing at all would come back to me. I got back on the bike, and pedalled slowly home, hoping against hope that I would be able to somehow recover the idea from the mists into which it seemed to have drifted.

But I couldn't. Not that day, and never since.

I tell you, I did *not* imagine this! I *know* that during the few minutes of that bike ride, I had clearly 'seen' the future for my business, with everything falling into place in a way that would put me in a wonderful financial situation. And what makes this almost unbearable to think about is the fact that - as is usual whenever I leave the house - I had my portable voice recorder in my shirt pocket. But the idea was so obvious and so simple that it just didn't seem necessary to notate it.

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