



7 HABITS for Citizen Leaders

The Montgomery Institute, Meridian, Mississippi

November 2002

Golden Moon Shines on Fourth 7 Habits Retreat

The new, splendid Golden Moon Hotel hosted our fourth *7 Habits* retreat. 31 active citizen leaders, as did their previous fellows, found Jerry Aull to be a marvelous and entertaining facilitator.

Highlights of this retreat included Fred Hamilton's discussion of his "golden rule" management system; Jay Brewster's "100%" profile results, and Kathy Brookshire's skit directing. Thanks again to The Riley Foundation for making these retreats possible.

Our next *7 Habits* session with Jerry is scheduled for January 28-30, 2003, at Meridian Community College. If you know someone who should attend, please tell Beverly at 483-2661.

More and more from Jerry!

Jerry Aull will bring his *7 Habits* message to more and more people during the coming months. Lee McCarty with Franklin-Covey is making Jerry available for events the Monday before *7 Habits* retreats.

This past month, Jerry was the guest at a special Power-Hour at First Baptist Church. In January, Jerry will be the guest speaker at the Meridian Rotary Club.

Of course, Jerry will continue to meet with his former *7 Habits* participants on the Monday evening before the quarterly retreats.

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Harry Mayer and Gerald Hudson guffaw at fellow participants' presentation.

7 Habits Reflections

Shape Up or Ship Out

(From *Living the 7 Habits: Stories of Hope and Inspiration* by Stephen R. Covey)

When most people hear others complaining about someone they tend to join them in their judgments and then take arbitrary action. Notice how this supervisor exercised self-knowledge and self-control, and followed the principle of involving others in the problem so that all could become part of a synergistic solution.

I supervise a staff of about 26 housekeepers for the local hospital. We hire a lot of local college kids because we can offer a flexible schedule that fits their school schedule.

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(More and More continued)

The next Monday evening event will begin at 5:00 p.m. on January 27th at Union Station.

Challenge offered

The most recent retreat class has issued a challenge to the first three classes. They say they will have more of their class attend the Monday evening session than any of the other classes. Will they win the challenge?

Leadership Lauderdale Youth Teaches Teen Habits

Twenty-three 11th graders are learning *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* as participants in the 2002-2003 Leadership Lauderdale Youth Program. The “teens” habits are the same *7 Habits* as adults learn, but the teaching methods and style come from Stephen Covey’s son Sean Covey.

Participants in this year’s program come from Meridian High, West Lauderdale, Northeast Lauderdale, Lamar School, and home school. 4-H hosts the program to make it available to public, private and home school students.

(Reflections continued)

A couple of full-time employees came to me complaining about a college student on their team. They said he was always late, that the quality of his work had dropped off, and that he’d take hour-long lunch breaks instead of the allotted thirty minutes. By the time they finished the report, they were pretty worked up.

I knew this student quite well. He was a good worker but he had transferred to a college sixty miles out of town. His commuting took a heavy toll on him. As I thought about his situation, I remembered the principles of being loyal to the absent (Emotional Bank Account), to avoid blaming (Habit:1: Be Proactive), and instead, to focus on the solution. I decided to do that.

In the past, I would have been pretty direct and autocratic. However, I wanted the two complaining employees to feel part of the problem-solving process. So we started talking about their relationship with him while still remaining loyal. I asked them when the problems started (Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood). Then I told them about his transfer to the state university. With this information, they could sense why things were changing. I could tell that just identifying the root cause of the problem empowered them. Now, they felt part of the solution.

I told them what they could expect. I would meet with the employee, work out a solution, and if things didn’t improve, we would get back together. Before understanding these habits of effectiveness, I would have called this young college student into my office and come out blasting, ‘These are the facts, if you

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(Reflections continued)

don't straighten up and start getting to work on time and doing a good job, I am going to cut your hours." Instead, when I called him into my office, I knew it was important to guard his self-esteem.

"Ivan," I said, "we need to talk about what is going on with you." Then he explained his situation. In response, I asked him, "How can we help you be successful? School is very important to you, and we also have a set standard of performance at the hospital. How can we work this out (Habit 4: Think Win-Win)?"

He suggested, "How about I cut my hours back to two days a week? On those two days I can do my very best work. I can also devote all my energy on the other three days to school (Habit 6: Synergize)."

The solution was quite simple. His co-workers are happy to work with Ivan. He felt part of the solution and was able to maintain his self-esteem. My job became easier all the way around because I followed sound principles of management.

Isn't it interesting how the space between stimulus and response can become larger by simply pausing and thinking about the principles that are involved? This is a remarkable illustration of the power of self-awareness and determination to act on principle. You can see how unilateral arbitrariness is really the spirit of independence, not interdependence.



Cheri Barry discusses Habits with Jimmy Covington ... Kathy Brookshire readies her group.

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G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery

7 Habits for Citizen Leaders is an information newsletter published by The Montgomery Institute, a charitable, tax-exempt, organization. Initiated by a grant from The Riley Foundation, the Institute was named to honor and sustain the leadership legacy of former Congressman G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery. The Institute serves as a think tank to provide important information to citizen leaders. The Institute also seeks to spur regional cooperation and enhance leadership in an eight county region of East Mississippi and West Alabama.

Your Stories: Have you had real-life experiences or accomplishments using the 7 HABITS? If so, please send us your story. We want to use true local stories in future editions of 7 HABITS for Citizen Leaders.

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