



# MONTHLY SOCIAL MEDIA



REMEMBER

1. Feel free to change the headline of the blog post so it sounds like you.
2. Also, write one or two sentences in your own voice to introduce the blog post.
3. Create a stock close for your blog posts with a call to action and your contact information.
4. If you promote your blog to Facebook or Twitter more than once, craft each promotion a little different to make each one unique.



## Spread Some Holiday Cheer

On December 17, 1843, Charles Dickens published *A Christmas Carol*. In his preface to this delightful book he wrote, "I have endeavored in this Ghostly little book to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humor with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it."

Dickens was keenly aware of the injustices of his day and initially set out to write a political pamphlet to address those issues. Instead, he realized that sharing his concerns in the form of a story would have "twenty thousand times the force." It is said that his book, which kept selling out in its first 24 printings, left an indelible imprint on the hearts and minds of his fellow citizens in Britain. And indeed, *A Christmas Carol* continues to challenge the greed and avarice of our society here in America 175 years later!

But if a book of fiction can prompt that much change in hearts and lives, how much more the example of a real life in flesh and blood? We can moan and complain about the social ills of our day, but what good does that do unless we change ourselves?

Whether you personally observe Christmas or not, culturally this time of year is one in which our hearts turn to generosity and goodwill toward others. Here are a few suggestions to make the holiday season special, not only for others but for you as well as you exercise your love and generosity toward others:

- 1. Make someone's day!** Often, we go through the routines of our day without even registering the fact that we're dealing with other human beings. That clerk, cashier, or attendant could just as well be a robot for the way we sometimes treat them. Instead, look that person in the eye and greet them with a smile. Ask them how their day has been and thank them for their service.

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Also, as you drive, be courteous and thoughtful. Be patient and let people into the flow of traffic. Be cheerful and congenial with others.

- 2. Cultivate a spirit of generosity.** Look for a charitable organization to give to financially. You could: fill a shoebox with treats for a needy child, contribute toward drilling a well for clean water in a third-world country, or donate to your local homeless shelter. If you can, don't just give, but explore ways to volunteer.

If you encounter a homeless person, buy them a meal. When you drive up to a coffee stand, pay for the coffee of the car behind you. Treat a co-worker to lunch. Keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to express generosity. A spirit of generosity flows from a heart full of gratitude, which leads to the next point...

- 3. Express gratitude freely.** Ingratitude causes us to be grumpy, self-centered and stingy. Despite any hardships or suffering we may be experiencing, we all have much to be thankful for. If there's any doubt about that, simply journal a list of all the things for which you are grateful. When you think you've exhausted those reasons to be thankful, persist in coming up with even more.

Then, think about all the people involved with all those good things in your life and take the opportunity to thank them. And when you encounter people who didn't emerge from your list, think of ways to thank them too. Also, share with others the things that you are grateful for. Your gratitude will be contagious and spur them to gratitude as well.

- 4. Focus on others.** If we're honest, we probably all have to admit that we spend too much time thinking about ourselves. Instead, focus on others. Think about the struggles and joys that others around you are experiencing. Enter into their joys and challenges and celebrate with them or offer help and empathy.

Call someone you haven't talked to for a while—ask how they're doing and wish them well. Think of something to thank them for or compliment them on. If you can think of anyone you've been holding a grudge against, forgive them—if not for their sake, then for yours!

- 5. Spend time with loved ones.** Sometimes it's easy to overlook or neglect those closest to us. Be intentional about spending time with those you love. Celebrate your relationships. Host a special meal or go out for a meal together. Watch your favorite movie together. Play table games and laugh together. Tell them how much they mean to you. Thank them for being a part of your life.

Make these practices a part of your life this holiday season. Practice them well and seek to make them your way of life year-round. By doing so, you'll be a blessing to others, making a positive difference in their lives, and feel more carefree and at peace yourself. And your life will inspire others to live as you do.



## Facebook Post

### Spread Some Holiday Cheer

Charles Dickens' book, A Christmas Carol, made a profound impact on the culture of his day. How much more could our lives serve as an example to others of how to live? Read the rest of the article...

**Enhanced Facebook Post:** Whether you personally observe Christmas or not, culturally this time of year is one in which our hearts turn to generosity and goodwill toward others. Here are a few suggestions to make the holiday season special, not only for others but for you as well as you exercise your love and generosity toward others. Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### Spread Some Holiday Cheer

A spirit of generosity flows from a heart full of gratitude. [blog post]

**Enhanced Twitter Post:** Live your life this holiday season the way you want to live year-round. [blog post]



## LinkedIn Update

### Spread Some Holiday Cheer

You and I can have a positive influence in the lives of others by the way we live and conduct ourselves. Here are some practical ways to make that happen. Read the rest of the blog post ...

**Enhanced LinkedIn Post:** What are you thankful for? Make a list and express your gratitude to others. A heart full of gratitude promotes a spirit of generosity. Read more in this week's blog post...



## Video Script

**A. Your standard Opening:** Hey everyone it's YOUR NAME and on this episode, I want to share with you an important topic: Spread Some Holiday Cheer.

**B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style): Spread Some Holiday Cheer**

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Also, as you drive, be courteous and thoughtful. Be patient and let people into the flow of traffic. Be cheerful and congenial with others.

**2. Cultivate a spirit of generosity.** Look for a charitable organization to give to financially. You could: fill a shoebox with treats for a needy child, contribute toward drilling a well for clean water in a third-world country, or donate to your local homeless shelter. If you can, don't just give, but explore ways to volunteer.

If you encounter a homeless person, buy them a meal. When you drive up to a coffee stand, pay for the coffee of the car behind you. Treat a co-worker to lunch. Keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to express generosity. A spirit of generosity flows from a heart full of gratitude, which leads to the next point...

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Then, think about all the people involved with all those good things in your life and take the opportunity to thank them. And when you encounter people who didn't emerge from your list, think of ways to thank them too. Also, share with others the things that you are grateful for. Your gratitude will be contagious and spur them to gratitude as well.

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**5. Spend time with loved ones.** Sometimes it's easy to overlook or neglect those closest to us. Be intentional about spending time with those you love. Celebrate your relationships. Host a special meal or go out for a meal together. Watch your favorite movie together. Play table games and laugh together. Tell them how much they mean to you. Thank them for being a part of your life.

Make these practices a part of your life this holiday season. Practice them well and seek to make them your way of life year-round. By doing so, you'll be a blessing to others, making a positive difference in their lives, and feel more carefree and at peace yourself. And your life will inspire others to live as you do.

**C. Your Standard Close:** Until next time this is....



*Email Blast* (or auto responder)

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Greetings! YOUR NAME here and I've got something for you that I thought that you'd find extremely helpful!

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## C. Your close

If you'd like to read more relevant and informative articles, check out my blog at [www.....](http://www.....)



## Take Time for Reflection

That we can't change the past is a certainty that we must accept. The past is *past*, so don't live in the past. There's no point in wishing that things from the past either would continue or would never have happened. What's done is done. Take care neither to gloat over past successes, nor to grieve too long over past failures and losses. Accept your past as part of your story describing and shaping who you are.

It is also said that our past can haunt us. That can be true if there's something lurking in the dark recesses of our past that we're ashamed of. If that's the case for you, make every effort to put the ghosts of your past to rest by making things right. Forgive, ask for forgiveness, and make restitution if necessary.

However, we can learn much from our past as well, but sadly, many never do. Following are some steps for taking time for reflection to glean what we can from this past year. We recommend that you arrange a little retreat for yourself as you go through these steps. Get away from your usual digs and go somewhere you can be alone and uninterrupted to reflect.

- 1. List all the good things that have come your way this past year.** Take time to brainstorm and write down all the good things you've experienced this past year. Include things you were fully or partially responsible for as well as things that just happened to you serendipitously or through the thoughtfulness of others. Celebrate these blessings!
- 2. Think of all those who helped you and invested in you this past year.** No one ever accomplishes anything of significance without the help and input of others. Who are those people in your life? Make a list. Call them or write them a thankyou note. Be specific in your gratitude and tell them how much they mean to you. If appropriate give a gift to express your gratitude and appreciation.
- 3. What goals have you achieved this past year?** This is an important part of reflection. We often live such hectic lives! No sooner do we complete one project and we're on to the next without any thought for celebration or reflection. What specific accomplishments can you celebrate from this past year? List them all and humbly give thanks for them.
- 4. What regrets or disappointments did you experience this past year?** List these and learn from them. Where appropriate, take time to grieve over them, but give them a proper burial so you can move on. Consider what you can learn from this past year. Determine the source of your disappointment. Is it possible that you need to adjust your expectations? What else can you glean from any regrets or disappointments you have from this past year? What safeguards can you put in place to avoid or minimize the chances of any of these negative experiences happening again?
- 5. Share your reflections with a trusted friend.** Once you have completed the four steps above, ask someone you trust and respect if you can share your reflections with them confidentially. After you've shared, ask them for their honest feedback. Thank them for their time and take their suggestions and responses to heart and consider what to do with them.

With our fast-paced lives, we seldom take time for reflection. However, reflection can be a great exercise for promoting our intellectual and emotional well-being. Reflecting on the past year can also help us avoid the same mistakes and establish new habits and processes to increase our success in business. And of course, all those things play into our physical and spiritual health as well. Don't wait! Put a date on your calendar today for taking time to reflect.



## Facebook Post

### Take Time for Reflection

With our fast-paced lives, we seldom take time for reflection. However, reflection can be a great exercise for promoting our intellectual and emotional well-being. Reflecting on the past year can also help us avoid the same mistakes and establish new habits and processes to increase our success in business. Here's a five-step process for taking time to reflect. Read the rest of the article...

**Enhanced Facebook Post:** Taking time to reflect is not only therapeutic but can provide us with incredible insights for planning the coming year. Follow our five-step process for taking time to reflect. Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### Take Time for Reflection

Take care neither to gloat over past successes, nor to grieve too long over past failures and losses. [blog post]

**Enhanced Twitter Post:** Take time for reflection. Reflection can be a great exercise for promoting our intellectual and emotional well-being. [blog post]



## LinkedIn Update

### Take Time for Reflection

Don't live in the past. You can't change the past. But we can learn from it. Take time to reflect on this past year using these five steps. Read the rest of the blog post ...

**Enhanced LinkedIn Post:** Reflection can be a great exercise for promoting our intellectual and emotional well-being. Reflecting on the past year can also help us avoid the same mistakes and establish new habits and processes to increase our success in business. And of course, all those things play into our physical and spiritual health as well. Read more in this week's blog post...



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## 7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout

"Burnout" is a term that describes the cumulative effects of chronic stress in one's job. Anyone in any profession can experience burnout. Think of burnout using the analogy of a car. Failure to conduct routine maintenance over time can result in massive engine failure. While routine maintenance is simple and inexpensive to perform, repairing massive engine failure is not. So it is with burnout.

### Symptoms of Burnout

The symptoms of burnout are many and varied. Much depends on the individual and other factors. But here is a list of possible symptoms:

- ❖ Angry, irritable, anxious, or aggressive behavior
- ❖ Feeling out of control
- ❖ Caustic behavior that drives others away
- ❖ Inability to function normally
- ❖ You feel like you've hit a wall physically, emotionally, or spiritually
- ❖ Lack of creativity
- ❖ Making foolish mistakes repeatedly
- ❖ Severe discontent
- ❖ A desire to "chuck it all" and run
- ❖ Cynicism
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ A critical mindset
- ❖ Low motivation
- ❖ Lack of self-confidence
- ❖ Exhaustion
- ❖ Excessive alcohol use or reliance on drugs to function
- ❖ Chronic physical ailments: headaches, backaches, colds, flus, intestinal distress

Anyone may experience some of those symptoms for a short time without being burned out. But when multiple symptoms are present over a longer period of time, burnout is likely the cause.

### What Brings Burnout On?

Burnout can creep up on a person unawares. That's why it's so important to attend to the strategies that prevent it.

Typically, burnout is due to prolonged, intense focus on one's job and the pursuit of success or perfection. Such intense focus often leads to lack of sleep, lack of exercise, improper eating habits, failure to spend time recharging, and lack of social support. All those healthy practices equate to the "routine maintenance" required to live a healthy, productive life.

But when a person experiences "massive engine failure" in the form of burnout, there is no quick fix. Coming out of burnout can take months, during which time your business will suffer as you try to regain your health. Also, one of the ironies of burnout is that when a person experiences it, *they are both the victim and the perpetrator*. But burnout is avoidable!

## 7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout

Following, are 7 of those "routine maintenance" measures you can take to prevent burnout and enjoy your life and work:

- 1. Institute rhythms of rest.** No one can function at "full throttle" indefinitely. Establish routine, even daily, times of rest. Consider rising early in the morning while the house is still quiet. Prepare your favorite beverage and sit in the quiet to simply center yourself and relax.

Also, during the day, when you feel yourself getting tired, agitated, or stiff, get up and walk around. Take a 15-minute break. Go outside and breathe in deeply.

- 2. Set boundaries for yourself.** Boundaries can take a variety of forms. For instance, you may simply need to say, "No," to a prospective client. Another boundary might be setting your work schedule, so you're not working too early or too late. A boundary might consist of restricting the frequency of travel. Another one might be confining your work to just certain days, maintaining regular days off.

- 3. Invest in your relationships.** We tend to underestimate the importance of relationships and they often take a back seat to our business and success goals. Ironically, at the end of life we finally realize that it's our relationships and not our success in business that hold any real value.

Invest in your relationships by spending dedicated time with your spouse and children, or close friends and family. Unplug from work while you're with them. No one wants to feel like they're competing with your job for your affections and attention. Be "all there" for them when you're with them and fully enjoy their companionship.

- 4. Establish good sleeping habits.** Some people boast that they can get by on four or five hours of sleep at night. Much research has established that that is nonsense. You may be able to function on so little sleep for a time, but it will catch up with you.

Aim for a minimum of seven hours per night. As much as possible, keep a static routine of going to bed and getting up at a certain time. You'll feel better and be more productive.

- 5. Take mini-retreats.** Plan fun, non-working play and recreation times each week. Plan ahead so that you have something to look forward to. Involve others in your plans to help keep you accountable and increase your pleasure.

While such retreats may seem like a time-waster, they not only serve to rejuvenate you, but they often spawn creativity and unexpected break-throughs in your work.

- 6. Exercise regularly.** Regular exercise is crucial for maintaining physical and emotional health. Consider combining your mini-retreats and social time with exercise. One of the keys for maintaining a consistent exercise routine is to engage in sports or activities that you enjoy. A side-benefit of the self-discipline of regular exercise is that it assists you in other areas of your life that require self-discipline, including your work!

- 7. Eat in a healthy way.** "Garbage in, garbage out," right? Poor eating habits are often one of the telltale signs that someone is on the road to burnout. No one can subsist on coffee and chips and expect to crank out great work for very long.

Eat good, natural foods. Eat a well-balanced diet. Eat at regular times and portions appropriate for good health. Combine your mealtimes with social interaction. And don't forget to drink plenty of water during the day.

While burnout can happen to anybody in any profession, it's not inevitable! Learn to recognize the symptoms of burnout and employ the above 7 strategies for preventing burnout. You'll discover that you're not only avoiding the distress and dysfunction of burnout, but you'll enjoy much more productivity in your life and work.



## Facebook Post

### 7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout

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**Enhanced Facebook Post:** Anyone in any profession can experience burnout. But burnout is not inevitable. Establish these 7 strategies in your life to avoid burnout and lead a productive lifestyle. Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### 7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout

One of the ironies of burnout is that the person experiencing it is both the victim and the perpetrator. [blog post]

**Enhanced Twitter Post:** Burnout is like failing to conduct routine maintenance on your car. Over time, you can expect massive engine failure. [blog post]



## LinkedIn Update

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Think of burnout using the analogy of a car. Failure to conduct routine maintenance over time can result in massive engine failure. While routine maintenance is simple and inexpensive to perform, repairing massive engine failure is not. So it is with burnout. Read the rest of the blog post...

**Enhanced LinkedIn Post:** Typically, burnout is due to prolonged, intense focus on one's job and the pursuit of success or perfection. Such intense focus often leads to lack of sleep, lack of exercise, improper eating habits, failure to spend time recharging, and lack of social support. All those healthy practices equate to the "routine maintenance" required to live a healthy, productive life. Read more in this week's blog post...



## Video Script

**A. Your standard Opening:** Hey everyone it's YOUR NAME and on this episode, I want to share with you an important topic: 7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout.

**B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style):** **7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout**

"Burnout" is the term we use to describe the cumulative effects of chronic stress in one's job. Anyone in any profession can experience burnout. Think of burnout using the analogy of a car. Failure to conduct routine maintenance over time can result in massive engine failure. While routine maintenance is simple and inexpensive to perform, repairing massive engine failure is not. So it is with burnout.

## Symptoms of Burnout

The symptoms of burnout are many and varied. Much depends on the individual and other factors. But here is a list of possible symptoms:

- ❖ Angry, irritable, anxious, or aggressive behavior
- ❖ Feeling out of control
- ❖ Caustic behavior that drives others away
- ❖ Inability to function normally
- ❖ You feel like you've hit a wall physically, emotionally, or spiritually
- ❖ Lack of creativity
- ❖ Making foolish mistakes repeatedly
- ❖ Severe discontent
- ❖ A desire to "chuck it all" and run
- ❖ Cynicism
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ A critical mindset
- ❖ Low motivation
- ❖ Lack of self-confidence
- ❖ Exhaustion
- ❖ Excessive alcohol use or reliance on drugs to function
- ❖ Chronic physical ailments: headaches, backaches, colds, flus, intestinal distress

Anyone may experience some of those symptoms for a short time without being burned out. But when multiple symptoms are present over a longer period of time, burnout is likely the cause.

## What Brings Burnout On?

Burnout can creep up on a person unawares. That's why it's so important to attend to the strategies that prevent it.

Typically, burnout is due to prolonged, intense focus on one's job and the pursuit of success or perfection. Such intense focus often leads to lack of sleep, lack of exercise, improper eating habits, failure to spend time recharging, and lack of social support. All those healthy practices equate to the "routine maintenance" required to live a healthy, productive life.

But when a person experiences "massive engine failure" in the form of burnout, there is no quick fix. Coming out of burnout can take months, during which time your business will suffer as you try to regain your health. Also, one of the ironies of burnout is that when a person experiences it, *they are both the victim and the perpetrator*. But burnout is avoidable!

## 7 Strategies for Preventing Burnout

Following, are 7 of those "routine maintenance" measures you can take to prevent burnout and enjoy your life and work:

- 1. Institute rhythms of rest.** No one can function at "full throttle" indefinitely. Establish routine, even daily, times of rest. Consider rising early in the morning while the house is still quiet. Prepare your favorite beverage and sit in the quiet to simply center yourself and relax.

Also, during the day, when you feel yourself getting tired, agitated, or stiff, get up and walk around. Take a 15-minute break. Go outside and breathe in deeply.

**2. Set boundaries for yourself.** Boundaries can take a variety of forms. For instance, you may simply need to say, “No,” to a prospective client. Another boundary might be setting your work schedule, so you’re not working too early or too late. A boundary might consist of restricting the frequency of travel. Another one might be confining your work to just certain days, maintaining regular days off.

**3. Invest in your relationships.** We tend to underestimate the importance of relationships and they often take a back seat to our business and success goals. Ironically, at the end of life we finally realize that it’s our relationships and not our success in business that hold any real value.

Invest in your relationships by spending dedicated time with your spouse and children, or close friends and family. Unplug from work while you’re with them. No one wants to feel like they’re competing with your job for your affections and attention. Be “all there” for them when you’re with them and fully enjoy their companionship.

**4. Establish good sleeping habits.** Some people boast that they can get by on four or five hours of sleep at night. Much research has established that that is nonsense. You may be able to function on so little sleep for a time, but it will catch up with you.

Aim for a minimum of seven hours per night. As much as possible, keep a static routine of going to bed and getting up at a certain time. You’ll feel better and be more productive.

**5. Take mini-retreats.** Plan fun, non-working play and recreation times each week. Plan ahead so that you have something to look forward to. Involve others in your plans to help keep you accountable and increase your pleasure.

While such retreats may seem like a time-waster, they not only serve to rejuvenate you, but they often spawn creativity and unexpected break-throughs in your work.

**6. Exercise regularly.** Regular exercise is crucial for maintaining physical and emotional health. Consider combining your mini-retreats and social time with exercise. One of the keys for maintaining a consistent exercise routine is to engage in sports or activities that you enjoy. A side-benefit of the self-discipline of regular exercise is that it assists you in other areas of your life that require self-discipline, including your work!

**7. Eat in a healthy way.** “Garbage in, garbage out,” right? Poor eating habits are often one of the telltale signs that someone is on the road to burnout. No one can subsist on coffee and chips and expect to crank out great work for very long.

Eat good, natural foods. Eat a well-balanced diet. Eat at regular times and portions appropriate for good health. Combine your mealtimes with social interaction. And don’t forget to drink plenty of water during the day.

While burnout can happen to anybody in any profession, it’s not inevitable! Learn to recognize the symptoms of burnout and employ the above 7 strategies for preventing burnout. You’ll discover that you’re not only avoiding the distress and dysfunction of burnout, but you’ll enjoy much more productivity in your life and work.

**C. Your Standard Close:** Until next time this is....



*Email Blast* (or auto responder)

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## C. Your close

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## Are You Serving Time?

There's a story about a man who went to live among a primitive people. These people had never seen a clock or a watch before, but they noticed the strange looking band on this man's wrist. The band looked like it had a small face on it. Frequently, the man would consult the little face and then make decisions based on what it told him. The tribespeople concluded that the face must represent this man's god whom he served.

Although that story is probably apocryphal, it brings up a good point: Do you serve time, or does it serve you? I find it interesting that when someone goes to jail, we say "they are serving time." Indeed, many of us are "imprisoned" by the clock, allowing it to dictate our every move.

But we seem to walk a fine line, balancing between letting time control us and disciplining ourselves to master it. We speak of:

- ❖ Killing time
- ❖ Wasting time
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At one extreme, we don't want to waste time and at the other extreme we don't want to run out of it. How do we maintain a proper balance? Here are some time-tested suggestions that may help:

- 1. Establish helpful routines.** Routines like rising and going to bed at the same time each day help establish rhythms in our lives. These rhythms aid us in leveraging time more efficiently and effectively. Other routines might include things like: only checking email at certain times of the day; working first, playing later; taking the same days off each week; etc. Resist the urge to veer from your established routines unless absolutely necessary.
- 2. Take unexpected interruptions in stride.** This point seeks to balance out an over-strict adherence to those established routines. An unexpected interruption doesn't have to derail you. Try to approach such a situation with a playful spirit. Who knows? Perhaps that interruption may actually move you forward in your work in an unexpected way. Serendipity often births a fresh perspective or a new idea.
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5. **Beware of time killers.** Some time killers like spending precious time on games and social media are obvious. But other things that suck time away may not be so apparent, like: attempting to do things outside our expertise, hanging around certain individuals, and lack of routines or self-discipline. Also, meetings, unless carefully planned and artfully facilitated, can be massive time wasters. Murphy's Third Law of Meetings states: "The time spent discussing any given topic is in inverse proportion to the importance of that topic."
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In all these ways, you can make time work for you instead of being its slave.



## Facebook Post

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## Twitter Tweet

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## C. Your close

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## Navigating Conflicts

There's no way around it, relationships are messy! Yet, we can't live without them. A life without relationships with others is unimaginable. Our basic need for relationships with other people is undeniable. But the irony of this is that wherever there are relationships, *there will be conflict*.

Conflict is inevitable in any relationship worth cultivating. We mistakenly think there's something wrong with our relationships if we experience conflict. We often try to avoid conflict at all costs, not realizing that conflict is part of relating with others. Conflicts can either deepen or destroy a relationship, depending on how we navigate them.

Also, there are two types of conflict: *caustic* and *congenial*. Congenial conflicts usually occur due to a simple misunderstanding. With clarification and a bit of humility and grace these can be easily remedied. In that humble, gracious process we can grow closer together and deepen our relationship.

Caustic conflict, on the other hand, is deliberate, vindictive, and destructive. Caustic conflict sets out to hurt the other person. If we're honest with ourselves, at times we probably all find ourselves engaging in both kinds of conflict. Again, with humility and grace, we can recover from both kinds of conflict.

Let's investigate some ways to prevent and resolve conflicts:

- 1. The relationship is almost always more important than the issue.** If we are in a relationship with someone and we want to protect and nourish that relationship, we must recognize its importance in our life. In such a relationship, there are very few issues that are more important than the relationship itself. There are exceptions to this, but I'm mostly talking about arguments over trivial matters.

Sometimes our egos get the best of us. We become so intent on being "right" that we inadvertently sacrifice our relationship on the altar of ego. We need to recognize when the conflict becomes more about our egos and desire to be right than protecting the relationship. Some of the points below will help in this regard.

- 2. Believe the best of others.** This is hard. Often, our go-to response is to think the worst of someone. We're not suggesting a blind naivety here, but a predisposition to trust someone with whom we have a relationship. If you think you heard them say something mean or they do something that appears hurtful, assume that you've misunderstood their intentions.

Ask a simple question to clarify their intent. Say something like, "I'm sorry, I think I misunderstood you. What did you say?" Or say playfully, "Ouch! That hurt!"

Often, when people do something hurtful, they're reacting to something else going on in their lives and have no intention of hurting us. We just happen to be in the way. So, believe the best of others.

- 3. Listen to others intently.** As we mentioned earlier, conflicts often result from misunderstandings. And misunderstandings frequently occur because of our failure to really listen to the other person. So, put down your phone or other electronic device and give the other person your full, undivided attention.

Also, Dale Carnegie explains, "You make more friends by becoming interested in other people than by trying to interest other people in yourself." In a similar vein, Stephen Covey urges us to "Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

- 4. Make a positive move toward them.** Especially when you feel friction in a relationship, take the initiative to move toward the other person rather than pull back from them. We can do this through a kind gesture. You could say something like, "I can tell you're having a rough day. Can I buy you a coffee?"

Another way to move toward someone is to offer to spend time with them. Doing so shows that you value them and your relationship. Finally, a great way to move toward someone is to engage in laughter together. But be careful that the joke is not at their expense!

- 5. Apologize.** If you are the one who initiated the conflict, try to own up to that as quickly as possible and apologize. A genuine apology should be simple, humble, and sincere. "I'm sorry for the hurtful things I said, would you please forgive me?"

Conflicts in any relationship are bound to occur. But by taking initiative to resolve those conflicts they can even serve to deepen your relationships.



## Facebook Post

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### Navigating Conflicts

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**Enhanced LinkedIn Post:** Often, when people do something hurtful, they're reacting to something else going on in their lives and have no intention of hurting us. We just happen to be in the way. So, believe the best of others. Read more in this week's blog post...



## Video Script

**A. Your standard Opening:** Hey everyone it's YOUR NAME and on this episode, I want to share with you an important topic: Navigating Conflicts.

**B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style):** **Navigating Conflicts**

There's no way around it, relationships are messy! Yet, we can't live without them. A life without relationships with others is unimaginable. Our basic need for relationships with other people is undeniable. But the irony of this is that wherever there are relationships, *there will be conflict*.

Conflict is inevitable in any relationship worth cultivating. We mistakenly think there's something wrong with our relationships if we experience conflict. We often try to avoid conflict at all costs, not realizing that conflict is part of relating with others. Conflicts can either deepen or destroy a relationship, depending on how we navigate them.

Also, there are two types of conflict: *caustic* and *congenial*. Congenial conflicts usually occur due to a simple misunderstanding. With clarification and a bit of humility and grace these can be easily remedied. In that humble, gracious process we can grow closer together and deepen our relationship.

Caustic conflict, on the other hand, is deliberate, vindictive, and destructive. Caustic conflict sets out to hurt the other person. If we're honest with ourselves, at times we probably all find ourselves engaging in both kinds of conflict. Again, with humility and grace, we can recover from both kinds of conflict.

Let's investigate some ways to prevent and resolve conflicts:

- 1. The relationship is almost always more important than the issue.** If we are in a relationship with someone and we want to protect and nourish that relationship, we must recognize its importance in our life. In such a relationship, there are very few issues that are more important than the relationship itself. There are exceptions to this, but I'm mostly talking about arguments over trivial matters.

Sometimes our egos get the best of us. We become so intent on being "right" that we inadvertently sacrifice our relationship on the altar of ego. We need to recognize when the conflict becomes more about our egos and desire to be right than protecting the relationship. Some of the points below will help in this regard.

- 2. Believe the best of others.** This is hard. Often, our go-to response is to think the worst of someone. We're not suggesting a blind naivety here, but a predisposition to trust someone with whom we have a relationship. If you think you heard them say something mean or they do something that appears hurtful, assume that you've misunderstood their intentions.

Ask a simple question to clarify their intent. Say something like, "I'm sorry, I think I misunderstood you. What did you say?" Or say playfully, "Ouch! That hurt!"

Often, when people do something hurtful, they're reacting to something else going on in their lives and have no intention of hurting us. We just happen to be in the way. So, believe the best of others.

- 3. Listen to others intently.** As we mentioned earlier, conflicts often result from misunderstandings. And misunderstandings frequently occur because of our failure to really listen to the other person. So, put down your phone or other electronic device and give the other person your full, undivided attention.

Also, Dale Carnegie explains, "You make more friends by becoming interested in other people than by trying to interest other people in yourself." In a similar vein, Stephen Covey urges us to "Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

- 4. Make a positive move toward them.** Especially when you feel friction in a relationship, take the initiative to move toward the other person rather than pull back from them. We can do this through a kind gesture. You could say something like, "I can tell you're having a rough day. Can I buy you a coffee?"

Another way to move toward someone is to offer to spend time with them. Doing so shows that you value them and your relationship. Finally, a great way to move toward someone is to engage in laughter together. But be careful that the joke is not at their expense!

- 5. Apologize.** If you are the one who initiated the conflict, try to own up to that as quickly as possible and apologize. A genuine apology should be simple, humble, and sincere. "I'm sorry for the hurtful things I said, would you please forgive me?"

Conflicts in any relationship are bound to occur. But by taking initiative to resolve those conflicts they can even serve to deepen your relationships.

**C. Your Standard Close:** Until next time this is...



**Email Blast** (or auto responder)

## Subject: Navigating Conflicts

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Greetings! YOUR NAME here and I've got something for you that I thought that you'd find extremely helpful!

### B. Content (revise to fit your writing style): **Navigating Conflicts**

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## C. Your close

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