

# MONTHLY SOCIAL MEDIA



Templates



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.



Blog Post



## Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths

In high school, Scott joined the cross-country team. He participated in that sport year after year until he graduated. The only problem — Scott was painfully slow! I don't mean that he was just an okay-runner. Scott consistently came in minutes after all the other runners.

The first year he joined the team, team members and spectators alike laughed at Scott's snail-like pace. Those closest to him urged him to try a different sport. But Scott kept running. To be fair, his running improved somewhat over the years, but Scott always managed to come in last.

But a funny thing happened in Scott's senior year. Scott became the team captain. It turned out that while running was not his strength, leadership, a positive attitude, teamwork, and perseverance were his strengths. The coach and the team recognized this. From that moment on, when Scott would finally lumber across the finish line behind everyone else, his team and the crowd would stand to their feet and cheer, celebrating Scott's true strengths.

### What Is a Strength?

A strength is a skill or an ability that you're good at. A strength is something that comes naturally to you. Usually, you enjoy engaging in your strengths. Others recognize this ability in you and rely on you for it. But sometimes we can't see our own strengths and it takes someone close to us to point them out.

• Contents •

Why We Must Focus on → pg 01  
Our Strengths

The 3 Phases of  
Great Meetings → pg 07

Down-Time Is Crucial  
for Success → pg 13

Are You Writing for Impact? → pg 18

Above All Else...  
Guard Your Heart → pg 23

Just because we have a particular strength doesn't mean we don't have to work at it and try to improve it. In fact, in many ways a strength is like a trust that has been handed to us. The question is, how well will we manage that trust? Will we invest in it, seek to grow it, and leverage it for the good of others?

## Develop Your Strengths

A strength is like a muscle that must be exercised. Below are several ways we can do that. I've also included some dangers to avoid in this process. Like Scott in the story above, we must persevere. That means enduring hardship and overcoming obstacles.

- 1. Discover your strengths.** Some years ago, Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton wrote the book, *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. These two leadership gurus recognized that many of us "have little sense of our talents and strengths." Instead, we've been told to spend all our time working on our weaknesses. Meanwhile, we neglect and waste our true strengths and abilities.

**Danger:** We burn up precious time and effort trying to master some skill we'll never enjoy or excel at.

- 2. Stretch!** In order to develop our strengths, we need to stretch them and push them beyond their current limits. We won't know what we're capable of until we try.

**Danger:** Relying on past performance, we get lazy. We assume our past achievements will always suffice. In this way we stagnate. Our "muscles" atrophy and we suddenly find ourselves woefully inadequate to the task, because the world has moved on without us.

- 3. Learn from others.** We need to find others with strengths like ours and learn from them. A coach can also be of tremendous help in this regard. In fact, in his book, *The Next Generation Leader*, Andy Stanley claims, "You will never maximize your potential in any area without coaching. It is impossible. You may be good. You may even be better than everyone else. But without outside input you will never be as good as you could be."

**Danger:** Becoming prideful about our strengths and thinking we don't need anyone else to tell us how to improve will be our downfall. If we think we're already good enough, we're in danger of becoming obsolete.

- 4. Focus on strengths.** We need to attend to the skills and abilities that we know are our strengths. We must leverage them, build them and grow to our full potential in using them.

**Danger:** We must avoid "strength-envy" when we watch how good someone else is at something we can't do. Instead, applaud their skills and partner with them.

- 5. Endure/persevere.** We must always combine persistence with natural talent. Natural talent only goes so far. Without practice, growth, and perseverance, we'll never know what we're capable of.

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## What About Weaknesses?

If a weakness is actually a *character flaw* rather than an ability, then we need to set out to change it. Character flaws can really trip us up and hinder our personal and professional growth.

If a weakness is a skill that you really want to pursue, then apply yourself to see if it might be a latent ability. But beware of spending too much energy on something you have no talent for. Finally, if your weakness is a skill that you need in your business, delegate that function to someone who is skilled in that area.



## Facebook Post

### Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths

Focusing all our energies on trying to fix our weaknesses is an effort in futility. We'll be hopeless to excel in those areas and will be miserable in the process. Read the rest of the article...

**Enhanced Facebook Post:** A strength or ability is like a muscle. We must stretch it, exercise it, and develop it to its fullest potential. Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths

If you lack a strength needed in your business, delegate it! [blog post]

**Enhanced Twitter Post:** Always add excellence and perseverance to natural talent. [blog post]



## LinkedIn Update

### Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths

A strength is a skill or an ability that you're good at. A strength is something that comes naturally to you. Usually, you enjoy engaging in your strengths. Others recognize this ability in you and rely on you for it. But sometimes we can't see our own strengths and it takes someone close to us to point it out. Read the rest of the blog post ...

**Enhanced LinkedIn Post:** Just because we have a strength doesn't mean we don't have to work at it and seek to improve it. In fact, in many ways a strength is like a trust that has been handed to us. The question is, how well will we manage that trust? 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: Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths.

**B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style): Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths**

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## We Need to Develop Our Strengths

A strength is like a muscle that must be exercised. Below are several ways we can do that. I've also included some dangers to avoid in this process. Like Scott in the story above, we must persevere. That means enduring hardship and overcoming obstacles.

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



*Email Blast* (or auto responder)

## Subject: Why We Must Focus on Our Strengths

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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.....)



## The 3 Phases of Great Meetings

Meetings can either be a bane or a boon to a business. On the negative side, meetings can be a huge waste of time if no one knows why they're there, the meeting is poorly led, and nothing worthwhile is accomplished. When a meeting bombs, everybody involved loses. We lose precious time, money, momentum, synergy and perhaps most importantly—relationship capital.

One of the primary reasons to hold a meeting is to build and develop relationships. Without the engaged help of others, we can accomplish very little in life. But a poorly run meeting may diminish relationship capital instead of building it.

A well-run meeting consists of three phases: before, during and after.

### Before the Meeting

Have you ever been invited to a meeting but have no idea why? If so, you know how half-hearted you went into that meeting: low expectations, cynical, preoccupied, etc. For this reason, before we even announce a meeting, we must determine:

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We want to ensure that we really need a meeting, that we invite all key players to the meeting, and that the attendees know exactly why they're coming and what's expected of them. We want people to come to the meeting expecting to walk away with more than they came with.

### During the Meeting

As mentioned above, we often forget that a primary purpose of any meeting is to build relationships. For this reason, we must plan our meetings with relationships in mind. We should seek to accommodate those we invite, create a safe environment, and ensure that everyone leaves with a clear understanding of the outcomes of the meeting.

The purpose of your meeting may drive specific elements of the meeting, but below are some common ones:

### Meeting Elements

- 1. Welcome and thanks.** Even in an informal meeting, welcome your attendees and thank them for being there. You may wish to express how valuable they are to the success of the meeting's outcomes. Also, cover any logistics here such as location of restrooms, instructions regarding refreshments or a meal, the schedule, etc.

**2. Agenda and goals.** Clearly provide an agenda for the meeting and the expected goals. Remind people why they are there and what you're about to discuss. Take Murphy's Third Law of Meetings to heart: "The time spent discussing any given topic is in inverse proportion to the importance of that topic."

**3. Meeting guidelines.** This element is often missed by many. Guidelines refer to a very short discussion of how we agree we will conduct ourselves in this meeting. The group generates these "ground rules," which ensures buy-in. Typically, the ground rules are things like:

- a. Anybody can participate in the discussion
- b. Any idea is worthy of consideration
- c. No one hogs the conversation
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The nature of the meeting you hold will influence the meeting guidelines.

**4. Facilitate don't dictate.** The best meetings are those we facilitate. That means that the leader doesn't do all the talking. In fact, it's often best to limit our verbal contributions to asking questions and summarizing what the group has concluded. A good facilitator draws people out and ensures that everyone has an opportunity to contribute to the conversation. If you already have all the answers, you don't need a meeting—just send a memo.

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A well-run meeting can be a tremendous tool for getting things done. But no one wants to listen to the boss drone on and on. Nor do we want to waste our time in a meeting that should never have taken place. But a well-planned, well-led meeting can build teamwork and enable us to accomplish far more than we could on our own.



## Facebook Post

### The 3 Phases of Great Meetings

Depending on how well you run them, meetings can either propel your organization forward or retard its growth. Follow these three phases to plan your next meeting. Read the rest of the article...

**Enhanced Facebook Post:** What's the worst meeting you've ever attended? What will prevent the next meeting you lead from being on somebody else's "Worst Meeting List"? Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### The 3 Phases of Great Meetings

One of the primary reasons to hold a meeting is to build and develop relationships. [blog post]

**Enhanced Twitter Post:** If you already have all the answers, you don't need a meeting—just send a memo. [blog post]



## LinkedIn Update

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## The Second Phase Is What Happens During the Meeting

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Blog Post

## Down-Time Is Crucial for Success

As entrepreneurs, we're very driven! Whether we've just launched our business and we're desperate to eke out a living, or we're seasoned vets, we tend to work long hours with little time or attention to anything else. So the thought of taking down-time may freak us out.

### What Is Down-Time?

Down-time is the discipline of getting the rest and sleep we need to be able to function optimally. Taking down-time also involves stepping away from our work to engage in a hobby, exercise, or relaxation. Because it's a discipline, each person needs to figure out how often and how much down-time to take. This may include: mini-breaks during the day, two or more lengthier weekly outings, and at least one day a week on which we set our work aside completely.

### Dangers of *Not* Taking Down-Time

Taking down-time may seem like a catch-22 situation. You may be slammed with work and you feel like taking time away will only get you further behind. And, admittedly, we're sometimes caught against looming deadlines. Also, some of us reading this are intensely competitive. Whether we're competing against ourselves or someone else, we may associate taking down-time with capitulation or failure.

Following are some dangers of *not* taking down-time:

- 1. Physical burnout.** No one can run a marathon day-in and day-out. We need rest and relaxation. When we're solely focused on work, we tend to neglect getting enough sleep, eating right, and exercising. All that's a recipe for sluggish work and the likelihood of getting sick.
- 2. Emotional stress.** The old adage goes, "All work and no play make Jack a dull boy." When all we do is work, we find ourselves becoming stressed. And in a stressed condition, we become short with people and our relationships suffer. Stress also damages our physical health and kills creativity.
- 3. Decreased productivity.** Under pressure, we may feel like there's no way we can work down-time into our hectic schedule. But failure to do so is likely to diminish our ability to produce. It's like trying to drive a car that's in dire need of a tune-up. It can't function properly, and neither can we.

Those are some of the dangers of *not* taking down-time, so let's look at the gains:

## Benefits of Taking Down-Time:

- 1. Recharges, re-energizes and motivates!** After being cooped up at a desk all day, there's nothing like a brisk hike or walk in nature to clear one's mind and recharge one's batteries. We come back to our work feeling ready to tackle its challenges.
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Different surroundings, varied experiences, interaction with others, and incubation time are often crucial elements for generating creativity. Taking down-time can be just what we need to give us that boost.
- 3. Increases productivity.** Taking time away from work increases our productivity. Refusal to leave the workstation until the project is finished may seem like a good idea but it may cause us to disengage from our work and get bored with it. We may even get sloppy, just to be able to say we've finished. It's much better to step away from work for a while and come back energized.
- 4. Improves decision-making.** A well-documented phenomenon called "decision-fatigue" sets in when we're required to make decisions continually without taking breaks. We make better decisions when we're well-rested and not under so much pressure.

Taking down-time is a necessary discipline for staying alert, productive, healthy, and creative. These mini-vacations from work can be fun and energizing.

So, what is your strategy for getting down-time into your workday?



## Facebook Post

### Down-Time Is Crucial for Success

If you're an entrepreneur, you're probably very driven. But being too driven can backfire on us reducing productivity, motivation, and creativity. Read the rest of the article...

**Enhanced Facebook Post:** A well-documented phenomenon called "decision-fatigue" sets in when we're required to make decisions continually without taking breaks. We make better decisions when we're well-rested and not under so much pressure. Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### Down-Time Is Crucial for Success

Want to increase your creativity on the job? Then step away from it for a while. [blog post]

**Enhanced Twitter Post:** Feeling too busy to take a break? Then you're too busy *not* to take a break! [blog post]

## in LinkedIn Update

### Down-Time Is Crucial for Success

If you're looking for more energy, more productivity, and more creativity on the job, then take some down-time. Read the rest of the blog post ...

**Enhanced LinkedIn Post:** No one can run a marathon day-in and day-out. We need rest and relaxation. When we're solely focused on work, we tend to neglect getting enough sleep, eating right, and exercising. All that's a recipe for sluggish work and the likelihood of getting sick. 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: Down-Time Is Crucial for Success.

**B. Content (revise to fit your speaking style):** **Down-Time Is Crucial for Success**

As entrepreneurs, we're very driven! Whether we've just launched our business and we're desperate to eke out a living, or we're seasoned vets, we tend to work long hours with little time or attention to anything else. So the thought of taking down-time may freak us out.

### What Is Down-Time?

Down-time is the discipline of getting the rest and sleep we need to be able to function optimally. Taking down-time also involves stepping away from our work to engage in a hobby, exercise, or relaxation. Because it's a discipline, each person needs to figure out how often and how much down-time to take. This may include: mini-breaks during the day, two or more lengthier weekly outings, and at least one day a week on which we set our work aside completely.

### Dangers of *Not* Taking Down-Time

Taking down-time may seem like a catch-22 situation. You may be slammed with work and you feel like taking time away will only get you further behind. And, admittedly, we're sometimes caught against looming deadlines. Also, some of us reading this are intensely competitive. Whether we're competing against ourselves or someone else, we may associate taking down-time with capitulation or failure.

But following are some dangers of *not* taking down-time:

- 1. Physical burnout.** No one can run a marathon day-in and day-out. We need rest and relaxation. When we're solely focused on work, we tend to neglect getting enough sleep, eating right, and exercising. All that's a recipe for sluggish work and the likelihood of getting sick.
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## So, let's consider some of the benefits of taking down-time:

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Taking down-time is a necessary discipline for staying alert, productive, healthy, and creative. These mini-vacations from work can be fun and energizing.

So, what is your strategy for getting down-time into your workday?

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**Email Blast** (or auto responder)

## Subject: Down-Time Is Crucial for Success

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### C. Your close

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## Are You Writing for Impact?

One thing all entrepreneurs have in common is that we seek to influence others through our writing. We're constantly asking ourselves questions like:

- ❖ How can I speak to the needs, drives and longings of my potential clients?
- ❖ How can I convince people that my products and services will benefit them greatly?
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- ❖ What strategies will win people to a new point of view?
- ❖ What can I do so that people thirst for something better?
- ❖ How can I communicate my message in the most persuasive way?

Writing for impact is both a skill and an art. If we want to influence others, we can't just "wing it." Our writing can't be something we just throw together with a lame hope that something good will come of it. Consider these 5 elements for writing with impact:

- 1. Contemplate.** To *contemplate* means to consider, to mull over, to reflect on, and think about. We often rush this step when writing. We get an idea and "pluck it off the tree like unripe fruit." Instead of letting it mature in our minds, we blurt out an idea that's only part way thought-out. It's only "half-baked."

Take time to let your idea incubate. Mindmap or brainstorm your idea. Look at it from every angle. Devote enough time to let a good idea develop into a great one. You'll know when your idea is ripe enough to pluck.

- 2. Concise.** Keep your writing tight. Use words sparingly. Technology has groomed us to expect speed and brevity. When someone drones on, we get bored and antsy. We lose interest.

"Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts." (William Strunk, Jr., co-author of *The Elements of Style*.)

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When you write, put yourself in your customer's shoes. Read and reread what you've written. Read the piece aloud. How clear is it? A bit foggy? Or crystal clear? Ask your spouse or someone else to read what you've written. Give them permission to give you honest feedback.

- 4. Creative.** Be creative, but let conciseness and clarity tame your creativity. We want to be clever, but not so clever as to be confusing. Our writing should never be dry, dull, or boring! When we write, we don't want to lead our readers up a colorless stairwell, but to the glorious heights of a mountain meadow.

With creativity we make our reading fun and give the reader a glimpse into who we are. Creativity in our writing reveals our passions and our humanness. This attracts others to us. Creativity endears us to others because through it we become vulnerable. And vulnerability gives others reason to trust us.

**5. Compelling.** Our writing may display all the other qualities and still lack the element that evokes action. What we write must be compelling. Nearly any writing seeks to persuade. What is it that you want your reader to do? After reading your piece, how clear is their next step? Why would they even choose to take that step? What is compelling about your writing?

Think about this: we can write something we're really proud of. We've put a lot of thought into it and it's clear, concise, and creative. But unless it's compelling, it's just fluff. It may be "tasty," but lacking in any "nourishment."

How can this piece of writing challenge or change your reader's life? In what way will their situation improve by what you've told them? Our writing must compel our readers to action.

Writing is a primary tool of the entrepreneur. We write to inform, convince, entertain, persuade, and prompt others to action. We all want our writing to impact others in a positive way. And when these 5 elements permeate everything we write, we know we're writing for impact!

## Facebook Post

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**Enhanced Facebook Post:** We often get an idea and begin writing about it without fully letting it incubate in our thoughts. The result is a half-baked idea, one that has not yet fully matured. Read the rest of the article...

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## C. Your close

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## Above All Else... Guard Your Heart

I love ancient truths that are still as relevant today as they were when they were originally spoken. One such truth was given from a father to his son and has been preserved over thousands of years. In what is called *The Proverbs of Solomon*, King Solomon imparted the following maxim to his son:

.....

**Above all else, guard your heart, for everything  
you do flows from it. – Proverbs 4:23**

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Today, we often speak of the “heart” merely as the source of our emotions. But what Solomon was referring to encompasses much more than that. A brief study into the meaning of the “heart” in this context reveals four primary areas to which it refers:

- ❖ Our faculty of reason, the mind, and thinking
- ❖ Our conscience and moral character
- ❖ Our desires, passions and emotions
- ❖ Our courage

With those four areas in mind, it’s easy to see why Solomon urged his son to guard his heart so carefully. We also recognize that if those four areas describe the function of the heart, then it’s true that pretty much everything we do flows from our heart.

If we accept the above, the big question is: How do we guard our heart, and what are we guarding it from?

### How We Guard Our Heart

Let’s consider some of the threats to our hearts and various ways we can guard our hearts in these four areas:

- 1. Reason, the mind and thinking.** This is a very broad area. For instance, there’s the corollary, “You are what you think.” This has to do with the power of positive thinking and self-talk. If we think poorly about ourselves and our abilities, it will be very unlikely that we’ll be able to function beyond the bounds of that thinking. This is a very powerful force in our lives. We need to constantly monitor our thoughts and self-talk.

On another level that has more to do with reasoning, we’ve been inundated in recent years with what many call “fake news.” This isn’t only a journalistic issue but overlaps into areas like fad diets and pseudo-science. For example, for a while we were told that butter was bad for us, so eat margarine. Now that’s reversed. There was a time when eggs were taboo, now that’s been turned on its head. And there are hundreds of other such examples. We often let peer pressure trump sound reasoning.

Another area of reason and thinking has to do with the danger of accepting false premises. If we start with a false premise, any thinking resulting from that premise will be distorted. This problem is more widespread than we might think. We need to test information and consider it well. Consider the source. Ponder *why* something is said and seek truth.

**2. Conscience or moral character.** Our conscience is not infallible. Our conscience is formed and solidified by the input and environments we subject it to. Someone's conscience can be perverted, soiled, or simply ignored. In recent years, the whole idea of conscience has been influenced by the notion of moral relativity that pervades our culture.

Consider the fact that "tolerance" has become one of the chief values of our day. And yet, in practice, tolerance seems to only work one way, because anyone who disagrees with the tolerant is pegged "intolerant." Logic should tell us that this line of thinking is self-contradictory. But we often allow emotive language to dictate our morality rather than basing it on what is truly good and beneficial to others and right before God. We need to anchor our conscience to sound moral principles instead of being tossed here and there by the tide of an ever-changing culture.

**3. Desires, passions and emotions.** We all recognize how fickle our emotions are. We can be happy one moment and sad the next. Again, we hear people encouraging us to "give our emotions free reign." Really? Since when is yelling and screaming at each other or at total strangers in traffic okay? Desires and passions can be good or bad, healthy or unhealthy, productive or unproductive. Emotions offer a very poor basis for making most decisions.

Instead, we need to learn to curb our emotions. We must master them instead of submitting to them. There are times when it is proper to emote freely, but there are other times when it's more beneficial to keep our emotions in check.

**4. Courage.** This area of the heart may seem to be different from the other three. Think of King Richard "the Lion-Hearted," and "Brave-Heart" in this context. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the strength to act (or not act) in the face of fear. Fear and anxiety are emotions that can cripple and incapacitate us. We need courage to combat them.

How do we gain and guard our courage? By exercising it. Courage is a strength, and strength is gained and preserved through exercise. We must exercise courage in small things, so we won't fail in big things.

This article may feel a little "heady" to some reading it. But these heart issues are matters we all wrestle with. To guard our hearts is a conscious decision and requires active involvement on our part. We dare not leave these monumental issues to chance or the whim of our ever-changing society. Therefore, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."



Facebook Post

## Above All Else... Guard Your Heart

An ancient Proverb urges us, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." What is meant by "heart," and how do we guard it? Read the rest of the article...

**Enhanced Facebook Post:** The "heart" not only represents the seat of our emotions but also our faculty of reason and thinking. Consider some of the ways our thinking may be in jeopardy and how we can protect it. Read the rest of the article...



## Twitter Tweet

### Above All Else... Guard Your Heart

If we think poorly about ourselves and our abilities, it will be very unlikely that we'll be able to function beyond the bounds of that thinking. [blog post]

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- ❖ **Our faculty of reason, the mind, and thinking**
- ❖ **Our conscience and moral character**
- ❖ **Our desires, passions and emotions**
- ❖ **Our courage**

With those four areas in mind, it’s easy to see why Solomon urged his son to guard his heart so carefully. We also recognize that if those four areas describe the function of the heart, then it’s true that pretty much everything we do flows from our heart.

If we accept the above, the big question is: How do we guard our heart, and what are we guarding it from?

## How We Guard Our Heart

Let’s consider some of the threats to our hearts and various ways we can guard our hearts in these four areas:

- 1. Reason, the mind and thinking.** This is a very broad area. For instance, there’s the corollary, “You are what you think.” This has to do with the power of positive thinking and self-talk. If we think poorly about ourselves and our abilities, it will be very unlikely that we’ll be able to function beyond the bounds of that thinking. This is a very powerful force in our lives. We need to constantly monitor our thoughts and self-talk.

On another level that has more to do with reasoning, we’ve been inundated in recent years with what many call “fake news.” This isn’t only a journalistic issue but overlaps into areas like fad diets and pseudo-science. For example, for a while we were told that butter was bad for us, so eat margarine. Now that’s reversed. There was a time when eggs were taboo, now that’s been turned on its head. And there are hundreds of other such examples. We often let peer pressure trump sound reasoning.

Another area of reason and thinking has to do with the danger of accepting false premises. If we start with a false premise, any thinking resulting from that premise will be distorted. This problem is more widespread than we might think. We need to test information and consider it well. Consider the source. Ponder why something is said and seek truth.

- 2. Conscience or moral character.** Our conscience is not infallible. Our conscience is formed and solidified by the input and environments we subject it to. Someone’s conscience can be perverted, soiled, or simply ignored. In recent years, the whole idea of conscience has been influenced by the notion of moral relativity that pervades our culture.

Consider the fact that “tolerance” has become one of the chief values of our day. And yet, in practice, tolerance seems to only work one way, because anyone who disagrees with the tolerant is pegged “intolerant.” Logic should tell us that this line of thinking is self-contradictory. But we often allow emotive language to dictate our morality rather than basing it on what is truly good and beneficial to others and right before God. We need to anchor our conscience to sound moral principles instead of being tossed here and there by the tide of an ever-changing culture.

- 3. Desires, passions and emotions.** We all recognize how fickle our emotions are. We can be happy one moment and sad the next. Again, we hear people encouraging us to “give our emotions free reign.” Really? Since when is yelling and screaming at each other or at total strangers in traffic okay? Desires and passions can be good or bad, healthy or unhealthy, productive or unproductive. Emotions offer a very poor basis for making most decisions.

Instead, we need to learn to curb our emotions. We must master them instead of submitting to them. There are times when it is proper to emote freely, but there are other times when it's more beneficial to keep our emotions in check.

- 4. Courage.** This area of the heart may seem to be different from the other three. Think of King Richard "the Lion-Hearted," and "Brave-Heart" in this context. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the strength to act (or not act) in the face of fear. Fear and anxiety are emotions that can cripple and incapacitate us. We need courage to combat them.

How do we gain and guard our courage? By exercising it. Courage is a strength, and strength is gained and preserved through exercise. We must exercise courage in small things, so we won't fail in big things.

This article may feel a little "heady" to some reading it. But these heart issues are matters we all wrestle with. To guard our hearts is a conscious decision and requires active involvement on our part. We dare not leave these monumental issues to chance or the whim of our ever-changing society. Therefore, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

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



**Email Blast** (or auto responder)

## Subject: Above All Else... Guard Your Heart

- A. Your standard Opening (revise to fit your writing voice):**

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):** **Above All Else... Guard Your Heart**

I love ancient truths that are still as relevant today as they were when they were originally spoken. One such truth was given from a father to his son and has been preserved over thousands of years. In what is called *The Proverbs of Solomon*, King Solomon imparted the following maxim to his son:

.....

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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.....)