

# LifeMap<sup>SM</sup>



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more satisfying life."

December 2014

## This Month's Message:

### The Gift of Laughter

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- Tired of boring meetings??

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## The Gift of Laughter

I'm a news and current events junkie. I read a newspaper or two a day (yes, the inky/folding kind), try to always catch the evening news and spend a good chunk of Sunday watching the weekly television interview programs. One of them (*Sunday Morning* on CBS) has a segment that they run at this time of year noting and briefly commenting on those in the public eye who passed away during the previous 12 months. I make it a point to never miss that segment because I find it an interesting exercise in self-examination because when it dawns on me that I will miss someone I ask myself why. The answers are, of course, more about me than the person who has passed away.

The names and faces stay with me. I remember when- a few years ago- the names of Dr. Joseph Murray and Levon Helm jumped out at me. Dr. Joe was one of only two Nobel Prize

winners I've had the opportunity to meet (his was for medicine) and was proof positive that greatness could spring from even my little hometown of Milford, Massachusetts. The world remembers him for the first successful kidney transplant. I remember him for his graciousness, courtesy and humility. Some will remember Levon Helm as a multi-instrumentalist, vocalist and founding member of the musical group The Band. I remember him for his soulful voice with echoes of America's earliest music, his ever-present smile, the legendary Midnight Rambles he held with musicians of all stripes in his later years, his gripping (and too few) film acting roles and his Arkansas grit which enabled him to beat back for so long the cancer that finally took him.

I remember the following year when the names that jumped out at me were Van Cliburn and Nelson Mandela. For a kid taking piano lessons in the 60's Van Cliburn with his world-wide success in his 20's and acclaim even in the USSR he was like the Elvis of classical music. And among the great men I'll never get to meet is Nelson Mandela who proved to a jaded world the truth of Marvin Gaye's lyric that "only love can conquer hate".

This year I already know who I'll miss the most and (the real topic of this LifeMap) the gift they left behind. Here's to Robin Williams and Tom Magliozzi and their gift to us of laughter.

Robin needs no introduction. His comic genius was unparalleled but it was his movie depiction of the Southie psychologist who helps Will Hunting master his inner demons that sticks with me. Oh, the sad, sad irony that no one could do the same for Robin. But the laughter he left us helps with the pain.

And speaking of laughter - was there ever a more engaging, more joyful, more infectious laugh than what emerged from your radio when you were listening to Tom and Ray (aka Click and Clack, the tappet brothers) on NPR's *CarTalk*? I wish I could remember who said that Tom's laugh was the kind that got you laughing along with him even if you didn't completely know why. Of course, *CarTalk* (thankfully now in reruns) is less about cars and more about boyfriends, girlfriends, husbands, wives, parents, in-laws, children, friends, dogs, cats, and understanding that forgiving, forgetting, loving and laughing were a million times more important than any stupid machine that will eventually end up in a junkyard. I don't even know if cars *have* tappets any more but I try to never to miss it and you shouldn't either; you could use the laugh and here's why.

## Paths Forward

### \* **Laughter and Humor is Good for You Physically:**

Multiple studies have shown that laughter lessens tension, improves blood sugar levels, lowers the risk of heart attack and can even relieve pain. There are a multitude of volumes detailing the health value of humor dating back even to the Bible which says "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." More recent volumes include the classic: [Anatomy of an](#)

[Illness: As Perceived by the Patient \(Twentieth Anniversary Edition\)](#) Jul 17, 2005 by Norman Cousins

**\* Laughter and Humor is Good for You Emotionally:**

Laughter helps you engage with others. It helps keep things in perspective. You might also enjoy a book on the healthful effects of optimism, hope and laughter: [Head First: The Biology of Hope and the Healing Power of the Human Spirit](#) Dec 1, 1990 by Norman Cousins

**\* Laughter and Reading:** Even if you don't find a lot to laugh about in our own life you can benefit from the benefits of laughter from a multitude of humorous writers. Some of my favorites include: Carl Hiaasen, Mark Twain, P.J. O'Rourke, Art Buchwald, Dave Barry, Nora Ephron, Andy Rooney, Fran Lebowitz, Ogden Nash, Roy Blount Jr., George Carlin, David Sedaris, and Steve Martin.

**\* Laughter and Movies:** There are too many funny movies for me to even start listing my favorites but the nice thing about them is that you can enjoy them alone or with others (which somehow seems to increase the enjoyment).

**\* Laughter as a Gift:** This holiday season think about bringing some laughter into the lives of those you love. Books and movies are always popular. Stocking suffers of a clown nose, funny glasses or a rubber chicken from the joke store will lighten things up. Collections from a favorite cartoonist are a good choice. Tickets to a comedy club or funny play at your local playhouse are pleasurable in two ways - for the momentary laughter and the pleasure of having an enjoyable event to remember.

**LifeMap** (sm) is about helping you keep things in perspective. Humor and laughter can do that and improves your physical and mental health as well.

### · Need Career Coaching?

The best investment you can make is in your career, your future and yourself.

email [drpaul@drpaulpowers.com](mailto:drpaul@drpaulpowers.com)

### · Tired of boring meetings??

Have Dr. Paul speak at your next off-site meeting or conference. Fast-moving, practical, motivating presentations from an acknowledged leader in the field of career and personal success.

<http://www.drpaulpowers.com/speakingschedule.html>

### Resources

· Are you or someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?

The best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. Revised Edition [Winning Job Interviews](#) by Dr. Paul Powers.

In this easy-to-follow, step-by-step book, Dr. Paul Powers demystifies job interviewing, explains why the process actually favors the job hunter, and shows how you can dramatically improve your interview skills.

Packed with solid, practical information and laced with both humor and "kick in the pants" motivation, *Winning Job Interviews* is the book you wished you had before your last interview... and is mandatory preparation for your next one!

· Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?

Or know someone who is? Order your copy of [Love Your Job! Loving the Job You Have, Finding A Job You Love](#) by Dr. Paul.

**<http://www.drpaulpowers.com/booksandarticles.html>**

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**Sincerely,**

Dr. Paul

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