

news & events

EXTRAORDINARY CONVERSATIONS INC. specializes in leadership development, organizational renewal and communications. Our clients include Fortune 500 leaders, medium-sized national companies and small entrepreneurial enterprises. Our work has taken us to global corporations in North America and Europe, to the townships of South Africa, and to the peace process in the Middle East.

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LEARNING MATERIALS

EXTRAORDINARY CONVERSATIONS FOR BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS

3-tape set, \$55 Cdn / \$38 U.S. + shipping & applicable taxes

Patrick O'Neill, in conversation with Angeles Arrien, outlines the philosophy and concepts that comprise his transformative three-day seminar. Learn the eight skills for personal and collective leadership, including: suspending your assumptions; building trust; moving from reactivity to proactivity; and recognizing your own gifts and talents as well as those of others. This is an engaging introduction for newcomers or a vital support for those who have already enjoyed the seminar.

THE COURAGE TO LEAD

1 CD, approximately 1 hour
\$20 Cdn / \$18 U.S. + shipping & applicable taxes

A guide to strengthening our resolve to meet challenge from a place of courage and confidence. In this live recording, Patrick O'Neill discusses how leaders at all levels of organizations, communities and family systems can be strong-hearted by examining: the four kinds of courage; personal power and authority; hope and possibility; and the impact of fear on the imagination.

NEW THE RESPONSIBLE MENTOR

1 CD, approximately 45 minutes
\$20 Cdn / \$18 U.S. + shipping & applicable taxes

One of the most important legacies of leadership is developing people. In this live recording, Patrick O'Neill explores the art and craft of being a good mentor, as well as the responsibilities incumbent on those being mentored. Patrick addresses the distinction between coaching and mentoring, and provides tools for giving effective feedback.

To order any of these learning materials, contact us at 416-361-3331 or info@extraordinary.on.ca.

UPCOMING COURSES

THRESHOLDS OF COLLECTIVE WISDOM

Seven Principles of Group Dynamics
March 9-13, 2004, Seattle, WA

In this intensive five-day program, Angeles Arrien & Patrick O'Neill address the universal principles and skills that build and support collective wisdom in families, teams, organizations, and institutions. Collective wisdom is created and fostered by the contribution of individual gifts, talents and diverse experiences to support a common purpose. Revitalize your ability to inspire responsibility, participation, and creativity in yourself and in others.

EXTRAORDINARY CONVERSATIONS FOR BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS! FOUNDATION PROGRAM

April 20-22, 2004, Toronto, Ontario

This powerful three-day program provides individual managers and teams with the practical skills required to create a competitive advantage by building relationships where collaboration, innovation and mutual respect thrive. You will learn how to: become more proactive, listen authentically, and inspire and motivate employees. Most importantly, you will be asked what breakthrough you want to make happen in your workplace, and leave with the tools and a plan to make that dream a reality. Early bird registration deadline January 27, 2005.

TRIUMPH OF THE IMAGINATION™

A Journey to the Heart of Creativity
& Personal Leadership
May 13-15, July 8-10, September 16-18,
November 11-13, 2005, Tiburon, CA

In a four-weekend format, Angeles Arrien and Patrick O'Neill address the universal principles that support the alignment of the mind, heart, creative fire and character behind your life dream. Once you've identified your dream (Imagination), the program establishes a framework for you to access practical tools for manifestation (Wisdom), leave with an action plan (Manifestation), and clearly identify the resources, gifts and talents that support success (Recreation).

For more information on these courses, please contact Lynne O'Neill at 416-361-3331, lynne@extraordinary.on.ca

breakthrough

WINTER 2004

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

a message from
patrick o'neill

Recently, I talked with Judith Timson of the the Globe & Mail, Canada's national newspaper, about an unusual topic – hope in the workplace. Hope isn't often addressed in relation to business. But hope is vitally important to success because it begins the cycle of possibility thinking that leads to a breakthrough. >

“Hell is the place where one has ceased to hope”

A.J. CRONIN

Leadership & hope



PATRICK O'NEILL

Story continued from cover

You can read Judith Timson's article in its entirety on our website, www.extraordinaryconv.com

HOPE FUELS PROGRESS. It is the belief that possibilities are more powerful than circumstances and that imagination and strong-heartedness are sufficient to solve any problem or generate new opportunities. Every invention, innovation, and positive change that benefits our families, businesses, and communities comes from the hope and belief that we can and must do better.

One of the important responsibilities of a leader is to create an environment of hope. Hope means “the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best.” We all need that feeling to be successful. Hope is a call to action, to dream, to explore possibilities. As Peter Levi points out, “No hope, no action.”

HOPE LEADS TO OPTIMISM. Optimism is the presumption of good prevailing. The optimistic leader faces each moment confident that his or her gifts, talents, knowledge, experience and resourcefulness will carry the day. A team or company of optimists is a force to be reckoned with and conditions its own success through positive thinking and a “can-do” attitude.

Optimism does not ignore reality. A great way to sabotage optimism is “magical thinking”. Magical thinking ignores or dismisses reality rather facing it head on. The optimistic leader is careful to take everything into consideration – all the positives and the negatives

Even in the face of adversity, the optimistic leader knows that something good will emerge. John F. Kennedy said: “Every area of trouble gives out a ray of hope, and the one unchangeable certainty is that nothing is certain or unchangeable.” The optimist boldly seizes opportunities that others greet with skepticism or pessimism.

OPTIMISM LEADS TO PASSION. “Nothing great in the world has been accomplished,” said George Hegel, “without passion.” Leaders who are passionate about what they do bring fire and enthusiasm to their work and that’s infectious. Who doesn’t want to be around the kind of passion that invented the iPod, fuels the breakthrough performance of Southwest Airlines or the tradition of excellence and fanatic customer loyalty of Harley Davidson motorcycles?

Arnold Toynbee provides some pragmatic advice for leaders on how to light the fire of enthusiasm in the workplace: “Enthusiasm can only be aroused by two things: first, an ideal which takes the imagination by storm, and second, a definite, intelligible plan for carrying that ideal into practice.

“The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it.”

CHINESE PROVERB

PASSION LEADS TO POSSIBILITIES. Leaders with hope, optimism and passion generate possibilities. Possibility thinking is the creative response of the imagination to an opportunity. Possibility means “something that can or may exist, happen or be done; the condition of being possible.” What an interesting and powerful distinction, “the condition of being possible.” It is undoubtedly a leader’s responsibility to create the right conditions for something new, better and different to emerge.

For the optimist, filled with hope and possibility, there is very little that cannot be accomplished. “I have learned to use the word impossible with the greatest caution,” writes Werner von Braun. And he was a rocket scientist!

Even the most difficult circumstances can benefit from a hopeful, optimistic, passionate and creative attitude.

PATRICK O'NEILL

Founder and President,
ExtraOrdinary Conversations Inc

“When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall – think of it, always.”

MAHATMA GHANDI

seven things you can do to support hope

1

FACE YOUR FEARS

Don't let fear diminish your hopes, optimism about life or your ability to explore new possibilities.

2

MAKE TIME FOR YOUR DREAMS

Many of us put our dreams on the back-burner. Just 15 minutes a day reflecting on what matters most can help us reconnect with what has heart and meaning in relationship, work, health and personal development.

3

LOOK FOR THE POSITIVES

Spend at least as much time focussed on the positive aspects of a person, situation or decision as you do on the negative. Be disciplined. Don't just leap to why something won't work. Explore how it could work.

4

MANAGE YOUR SELF TALK

We all have an optimist inside us. But does your optimist get as much attention as the voice of pessimism? Be fair. Don't let the self-critic dominate.

5

ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT'S WORKING

Too often we look for what's not working or why something will fail. But as cultural anthropologist Angeles Arrien points out, there is always more that is working than not working. It's the glass half full versus half empty.

6

RECOGNIZE AND ENCOURAGE EXCELLENCE

Leaders that recognize the excellence that they see around them inspire people to grow and excel. That is tremendously motivating. If you are looking to light the fires of creativity at work, catch people doing things right.

7

LISTEN AND LEARN

Nothing kills creativity like a culture where no one listens, especially at the top. People at every level of the organization have breakthrough ideas that are never heard or recognized by the people they work for or with. Leaders who listen learn faster and their organizations go further.