

Understanding the Power of Our Intention

By Paul Houston | Categories: Uncategorized

We all have ideas and plans that we would like to see become reality. But far too often, they just stay at the idea stage. "Someday I'm going to...lose ten pounds...write a book...improve the test results of my class, etc." Before you can do anything, you must first have an intention. But then the real work begins-which is to turn that intention into reality.

Leaders of all kinds, including educators, confront endless challenges and opportunities as they chart the future of their organizations or classrooms. One of the most powerful tools we have is the power of intention because almost everything starts with intention. It is the framework for the creation of reality. Even before you have a plan, you must have an intention.

It is not always understood that when you send your intention out to the world, it creates energy towards making the idea into a reality. This is because you are enlisting the help of others and their powers to make something happen. It's like the ripples a stone makes, skipping across the water. Each time the stone touches the pond, it creates a new set of concentric ripples. But in the case of an intention, the ripples do not dissipate and disappear. They grow and expand because the energy of thought and action are powerful.

But there is a catch. You must have the proper motivation. If you are trying to make something happen that will benefit others, your intention grows and expands because it gathers the power from others. If it is self-centered, it will eventually lose strength and wither.

You might have a goal to lose weight. The intention underlying this goal is to become healthy. If the intention of being healthy is so that you can do a better job as a mother or a teacher in helping others, it becomes even more powerful than simply wanting to be healthy to serve your own ends. As leaders, the intentions we have that will benefit others carry the most force.

Intention starts with thought. Thought is powerful, and once something is thought, it finds its way out into the broader universe. We might think we are just having our own little private thoughts, but they have their own energy and that energy goes out to the world. Most Americans believe, in some way, in the power of prayer. A non-religious way of looking at prayer is that it is a way of sending thoughts out to the universe and creating an energy around those thoughts. It is not just the idea of God answering our prayers, but of the world responding to our intentions.

Having an idea has power. Sharing it creates more power. Writing it down and sharing it has even more power. Think of it as life having different frequencies. Our thoughts are at a higher frequency than our words. So speaking an intention has a lower and more powerful frequency. Writing down the intention lowers the frequency even more and takes it closer to manifesting itself. Speaking and writing the intention acts as an accelerant. It's like pouring kerosene on the fire. Some may remember the movie The Ten Commandments when the Pharaoh would say, "So let it be written, so let it be done." He was really using the power of intention and its various frequencies.

It is imperative that leaders "walk their talk." They have to align their actions with their intentions. If your intention is to get healthy but you are constantly eating things that are bad for you or failing to exercise, your intention and your actions are misaligned. Your staff or your children have to see that what you say is important to you is manifested constantly in how you act each day. When you

can gain an alignment between your intentions and your actions, you become more powerful and effective.

It is important for a leader to constantly look both inward and outward. You have to see what you really want to do and determine whether your inner thoughts are helping that along; you must also look at the broader world to see what obstacles might exist to making your intention into reality. You have to use a mirror look at yourself and a window to see the outer world.

Real leaders put some energy behind their intentions. You might intend to be rich, but if your action is to simply buy a lottery ticket each week, the odds say you won't meet your goal. However, if your intention is to be rich and you have energy behind that intention, you will understand the path you must take and the skills and talents you will need. You will work towards gaining those skills and talents, and find ways to put yourself in situations where you can apply them towards your intention.

I have heard so many kids explain that their intention is to become an NBA player or a rock star without looking at what skills, talents, and actions would be required to meet that goal. They also have limited their vision to a narrow and unrealistic band of possibilities. I doubt if Bill Gates or Warren Buffet spent much time dreaming of getting drafted by the NBA or winning a Grammy. They used their skills and applied the effort required to change the world.

Each of us must use the power of our intentions to make our own lives better and to make the world a better place. And we must find ways of passing on this understanding to our students. It is one thing to dream the impossible dream, but it is quite another thing to make it happen. Education is the path towards helping our children make their dreams a reality.

To learn more about intention and a number of other values to improve your own leadership ability, check out my new book, with Stephen Sokolow, called *The Empowering Leader: 12 Core Values to Supercharge Your Leadership* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2017).