

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Welcome to [ASK] - Always Seeking Knowledge!
ASK #21 – The Colour Green: December 8, 2005
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1. Quick [ASK]

Making decisions based on current circumstances is the most limiting thing there is. It sets up an unresolvable reaction-conflict belief system. The only alternative that seems to work is clarity of direction and continuously making 'choices' in that direction. Making choices means excluding many alternative options, which if not rejected cause mental confusion, and possibly destructive anger.

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2. Welcome

Next Wednesday (14 December) there will be a Field Day at Allendale, Boorowa, NSW, the home of David and Mary Marsh. The day will include a field trip. The audience will be addressed by Shannon Horst (Executive Director of the Savory Centre) and the new Marketing Director, Peter Holter. Bring a chair, a hat and your lunch, AND please, could you let us know you are coming, if you have not already done so, by dropping a note to that effect to Jo Richards (jo@holisticresults.com.au).

In the interest of brevity, this issue is somewhat smaller. However, we do want to flag that we are working on an entire new way of doing business next year. There will be full details - and an entire new web site very soon. You will see the reasons why in the section below.

Suzie and Jo join me in firstly thanking you for your support in 2005 (where did that one go, I keep wondering), and in wishing you a wonderful Christmas and a very prosperous New Year. Wool and grain prices will rise, and beef prices will hold, as I am sure you know!!

The recent trip of Australians and New Zealanders to Argentina was rated a great success. Jim and Daniela Howell are planning to conduct a further trip in the last two weeks of March 2006. To express your interest in attending, please call Suzie on 02 9929 5568 or email her sward@holisticresults.com.au. She can give you names of the recent participants if you would like some confidence before you stick your hand up.

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3. Green

Have you ever noticed the colour of 'green'? If not, spend a little time in a quiet spot soon, and just study green. Why would you do this? Because it reminds one of the fact that all of our existence depends on the photosynthetic process. On land and in the sea this is performed by green leaves, and no other way. That is why our eco-system process must be so carefully nurtured, farm-by-farm, and park-by-park, for they govern our physical and financial well being.

I have recently had the privilege of receiving a second chance at life. It was a huge surprise, I can tell you, to discover that the first chance was at all threatened. I thought heart attacks happened to someone else. This time the someone was me. So, here I am, the luckiest bloke alive - I was 5 minutes from a facility that can operate 24 hours a day when such an emergency occurs. I was not on the 19 hour flight to Buenos Aries, or out on the Pampas. I have no permanent damage, and I have had my very own 'tap on the shoulder'!

Here is the point about 'green'. When I got home from hospital, the first thing I did was look out across Lavender Bay, and at the boats below us. All I could observe was the depth of the greens around me. It was as though nothing else mattered, not even the blue of the Harbour. I cannot really explain how powerful this green impact has been upon me, but I suspect it will influence the rest of my life. It has given me the conviction that my life's work remains that of assisting people gain the knowledge required to be permanently profitable, and more importantly, to make bold decisions. It is now crystal clear to me that those bold decisions must be made towards 'how they really want their lives to be, based on their deepest values', and not on the circumstance that currently prevail. Making decisions based on current circumstances is the most limiting thing there is. It sets up an unresolvable reaction-conflict belief system. The only alternative that seems to work is clarity of direction and continuously making 'choices' in that direction. Making choices means excluding many alternative options, which if not rejected cause mental confusion, and possibly destructive anger.

Whilst recuperating I have read a most profound book. It was published in 1972, so it is not new. It is also very likely not to be everyone's cup of tea, but it has had an impact on me. The book "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance", is by Robert Pirsig. Pirsig has used this book to make the analogy between life and the function of a motorcycle. What he was really driving at was the pursuit of quality. What is 'quality'? It's an interesting question, and it goes to the heart of managing holistically, where your actions are driven towards present and future 'Quality of Life'. If every decision is not towards what you want, then by definition it must be towards what someone else wants, and life has been surrendered unnecessarily. There are some additional words about Pirsig's book in the Book Review of this issue of [ASK].

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4. Update your Diary

Bruce will be speaking at the Woodford Folk Festival, Sunshine Coast, on December 28, 2005 at 11:00am. This event has been organised for the past three years by well-known nutritional consultant, Graeme Sait, and over the years has included work by some of the worlds leading human, soil, plant and animal health speakers. Bruce's task is to give the entire process a holistic spin.

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5. Notices

KLR Marketing

As noted in [ASK] #20, at the strong suggestion of several of our clients, we took the opportunity to meet with some of the Directors of KLR Marketing. These blokes, Rod Knight, Jim Lindsey and Grahame Rees have gained the rights to distribute Bud Williams marketing program. I was very excited to hear what these blokes had to say, as you will see in a minute.

The core of the program is a simple and effective (and paradigm shifting) approach to marketing of livestock. It uses many of the underlying principles of futures markets BUT does NOT use futures markets in any way. In fact, the refreshing thing about the program is how you use your own data to make your own decisions both better and differently. There are some excellent exercises in their two-day program, and you come home with a manual, a bunch of simple to use spreadsheets, and a whole lot of knowledge you probably didn't know you needed.

The principles underlying the program are EQUALLY applicable to both breeders and traders of CATTLE and SHEEP, and GOATS. In fact, you will discover they are applicable to any commodity that can be sold.

So, we are definitely going ahead with three planned courses, which have been developed and badged for our Holistic Management clients and friends they may wish to bring along. We urge your support of them. We will shortly be emailing you a brochure (there will be no 'snail mail' brochures), and when you get that there will be a special booking form on our web site.

NSW - 22 and 23 February, 2006 at ORANGE
WA - 1 and 2 March, 2006 in PERTH
NZ - 19 and 20 April, 2006 in CHRISTCHURCH
(Note changed dates - was originally flagged as March)

Managing the Carbon Cycle Forums

Christine Jones has advised that there will be a Forum in Horsham, VIC on 26/27 July, and at Kojonup, WA on August 2/3. These will be similar to the Armidale, NSW Forum held recently.

Diversification opportunity

Katie and Phillip Brown run Australia's largest organic herb farm, east of Walcha, NSW. They currently have available for sale 3,000 Ginko trees. They tell me that the trees are planted at 400 per ha., and that they are hardy, drought resistant, easy to care for and simple to harvest, and most importantly, profitable. Phillip and Katie are happy to talk about processing your product. For more details, phone 02 6777 7505 or 6777 7551 Email: austorgherbs@bigpond.com

Opportunity for someone enterprising - Northern Territory

Maira O'Brien from Mataranka, NT has advised us of a creative opportunity that may be very suitable for someone keen. Maira says her family are wanting to make part of their NT station available to a person or family who wish to run their own stock. In return for having the land available, the lessees would be required to work part of their time on the balance of the station - assisting Maira and her family. A two-bedroom house is included. I gather it is in reasonable proximity to town.

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Ideally, Moira is seeking some one with Holistic Management® and low stress stock handling skills. For further details, please call Moira on (08) 8975 4955 or by Email: holisticNT@bigpond.com

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6. Books and Materials you can use

"Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance"
Robert Pirsig
ISBN 0099 322 617

This book is quite deep, and not really easy to read. I have observed it angers some people, and excites others. It excited me. The focus is really all about the meaning of 'quality'. In searching for the meaning Pirsig looks at both Greek and Roman scholars, but eventually comes back to the wise words of two much more contemporary writers, Henry David Thoreau and H.D.F Kitto. But don't worry about that aspect - it is also extraordinarily practical, as anyone who has ever disassembled any piece of equipment will vouch.

For me, the essence of the book is in this statement, uttered by the central character, Phaedrus:

"And now he began to see for the first time the unbelievable magnitude of what man, when he gained power to understand and rule the world in terms of dialectic truths, had lost. He (man) had built an empire of scientific capability to manipulate the phenomena of nature into enormous manifestations of his own dreams of power and wealth but for this he had exchanged an empire of understanding of equal magnitude: an understanding of what it is to be a part of the world, and not an enemy of it."

NB The word dialectic means "the art of investigating truth by logical discussion". For example, a logical sequential discussion might show (a) that plants need nutrition, (b) that fertilisers provide nutrition for plants, therefore, logically, (c) that plants need fertilisers. You see the point.

This book should be in your local library, as it is something of a classic. It is still well and truly in print, and about \$A24.95.

By the way:

Most books we recommend are available at The Book Connection in Dubbo, NSW
Ph: 02 6882 3311 Fax: 02 6882 3311 or email orders@bookconnection.com.au
(Also ask David Pankhurst about their Mail Order Catalogue - it is terrific)

or

Scorpio Books in Christchurch, NZ
Ph: 03 379 2882 Fax: 03 379 2886 or email scorpbk@ihug.co.nz

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7. Quotes that mean something

"As if you could kill time without injuring eternity."

-- Henry Thoreau

"Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!"

-- Henry Thoreau

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"The only time you know for sure whether creating a result is possible or not is when you have done it. All other thoughts on the subject are simply speculation".

-- Robert Fritz

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8. Joke

Ever wondered:

Why Noah didn't swat those two mosquitoes?

Why sheep don't shrink when it rains?

Why they are called apartments when they are all stuck together?

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Regards, and keep well
Bruce Ward