

SELF-CONFIDENCE

A) Personal Meditations

After meditating and debating this word in my innermost thoughts, for some time now, I decided to write about it. To bring out how I feel about this trait and the affect it had on my life and my intention to make a difference for the rest of my life.

This may not be the best definition but Google states:

"Self-confidence is an attitude about your skills and abilities".

Healthy Place states:

"Self-confidence is experiencing genuinely positive feelings about yourself while accepting your faults and foibles".

I like this one better.

Then there is this definition when it comes to self-esteem:

"There are three (3) types of self-esteem, they are **inflated self-esteem, low self-esteem and high self-esteem.**

There is a strong message in this last statement that seems to identify my situation most times.

B) Phases in my Life

This is a photo taken on Thanksgiving weekend, 1958, when I returned to Pelly from a month at University of Saskatchewan. I had a disturbing discussion with my father, that weekend, when he had asked me to stay behind and assist him to liquidate the farm as he was unable to continue farming, to permit my mother and him to move into "town", (Pelly).

I had to reluctantly refuse as, I had just found my own financial way to enter first year of Engineering and I felt it impossible to accept this request as it would mean that I would essentially have to cease my university attendance. I was also suffering from serious "shock" that is normal for a first-year student exposed to "higher education" from a small high school in a rural setting.



The facial expression, perhaps, reflects the lack of confidence in my future.

I had the full complement of Mentors' influence from my brother-in-law, John Khadekin (a High School Principal and a major in Psychology), Mr. Parks (my grade 12 High School Principal), Peter Negraeff, my High School Educator. I was convinced that this was my destiny. I worked hard during the Summer of 1958 to earn the funding that I thought might be necessary (I had no idea just what budget was required at that time) and I was also successful in my application for a Student Loan from the Province of Saskatchewan. I had a total of \$950 in the Bank of Montreal in Saskatoon for Tuition (\$400), Books (\$75), Room and Board for 8 months (8x \$55 = \$450) and the balance for bus fare and expense money. As one can appreciate, there was no contingent funds, and I knew there could not be any money from my parents.

This photo may be taken at a time when I was in my prime and perhaps in the best mental health. After three (3) years in Chemical Engineering and two (2) years in Civil Engineering, I had been offered a Scholarship to complete a Masters in Sanitary Engineering from the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon which perhaps, was a highlight in my scholastic journey.



I had achieved my plan to be a university Engineering Graduate. I had completed my employment as a practicing Engineer at an operating Sulfite Pulp Mill, I was accepted as a Professional Engineer in the Province of British Columbia after meeting my requirement of articling for two (2) years with Professional Engineers at the Pulp Mill (1963).

The formation of a construction company with my two (2) brothers had become a fact (1967). We had completed our first development project, Elkford Square (1974). We had incorporated a partnership (1984) with Rempel Bros to create Marbella Construction Ltd to construct twenty-nine (29) International Pavilions and ten (10) Restaurants at Expo '86, in Vancouver.



Probably **this is the most descriptive photo** sitting (2018), with all my drawings and records (180 binders) from Kootenay Columbia Seniors Housing Cooperative (KCSHC) Grandview Housing Project that I had retained records for seven (7) years after resigning in 2011, and I was now destroying. The memory would not burn too well!

I had returned to the Kootenays (1993) after eight (8) years at the B.C. Coast to my planned semi-retirement. All the "slings and arrows" of the business world was an experience that I had decided to leave behind me and accept the limited financial resources that I had accumulated, to operate as a Construction Consultant and stay away from any more business ventures that could threaten my retirement "nest egg".

Although the Grandview project was a success from a design and implementation viewpoint, it failed to be recognized by all levels of government as an alternative to the then current housing solution for seniors. Because of my experience in seniors housing projects, I reluctantly accepted to lead my friends into the Grandview retirement project. As one of the B.C. Housing Executives stated later, "your project does not fit our funding policy at this time". Although private interim financing was found, a guarantee was required from a governmental agency in order to fulfill the requirements for interim construction financing from a Financial Institution for the Supportive / Assisted Living / Residential Care portion Chateau Grandview of the project which failed to materialize.

The entry level seniors housing of 47 units was self funded by seniors and completed, establishing a pattern for this type of seniors housing solutions. The City Approving / Development Officer required inclusion of some \$1,800,000 of Infrastructure in this 60-acre project, that was not initially recognized, nor outlined at the outset by this Officer. Development of the three-part senior's project would have absorbed that requirement but, that phase of the project just never happened and subsequently, about \$1,200,000 of seniors investment went forced the Kootenay Columbia Seniors Housing Cooperative into voluntary bankruptcy.

I considered this to be my personal failure along with over \$200,000 of personal funds which I had reserved to my retirement, now was lost.

This "shock" to my personal self was what I suffered from deeply and I went into Depression.

I slowly lost my self-confidence, and my self-esteem was at the lowest level in my entire life.

C) Progression of my Condition

I soon became self conscious of too many negative events taking place around me. My natural optimistic self drifted into the opposite condition. I also slowly retreated from family and friends.

My family noticed this first and would attempt to rescue me, but my hearing handicap made it easier to go into seclusion.

I had changed!

I felt that I was in the situation that can be best described "when you are up to your asshole in alligators, it is too late to say that you had planned to drain the swamp."

I began my life of existing.

D) "Climbing" out of the hole that I had "fallen into"

The first part of any recovery is to recognize my personal situation and condition. During my career, I had many instances when I would drift into a similar condition, when under extreme stress. Perhaps at a younger age, the ability to rebound is easier and I was able to self diagnose to deal with whatever was causing my problems but this time, I kept "slipping" into a quagmire of self doubt and blaming myself for allowing this to take place, when I had accepted this "last project".

I immersed myself totally into my "pet" benevolent project, Whatshan Lake Retreat, that was being developed by the Doukhobour Heritage Retreat Society #1999 (in 1995). I applied all my experience, Engineering knowledge and accumulated contacts to raise funding and volunteers and the Project did well right through the additional stress of Grandview.

Perhaps in 2011, I had reached a "breaking point" and my body weakened and succumbed to Depression, when the Directors became convinced, they could not follow my leadership. Despite my warnings, their actions resulted in voluntary bankruptcy.

E) A Possible Solution

My eldest daughter, Nona, and I were chatting yesterday about my attempt to deal with my mental condition. She has achieved a Master Executive Coach Certification and suggested a method to "crawl out" of my condition when I feel myself being "drawn in" and overwhelmed.

"...Imagine that you are driving a bus. The bus has as its "passengers", all the good and successful events that have taken place in your life. Standing on the road are "potential passengers" requesting an opportunity to get on your bus. They are from a negative part of your life and are sure to compromise the positive atmosphere that now exists on your vehicle.

It is your decision whether you slow the bus down and allow those “passengers” to board and disrupt the positive enjoyment taking place on your bus right now.

Should you accept these “passengers” or continue with your life’s travels and take on more constructive and congenial candidates to augment that already on your bus.....”

I resolve to load my bus with positive “passengers” and be more careful about accepting the others so that the rest of my life is more enjoyable.

I will drive into the sunrise and turn away from the sunsets.

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