

Conviction In Opposition To Commitments

by Phil Phillips, PhD
Contributing Editor
phillips@chemarkconsulting.net

Is there a gap between what you hold dear and supportive action (commitment) to reinforce that set of convictions? When we say that family, professional achievement, financial security, are the most important things in our lives and in that order, do we really understand what it takes to fulfill that obligation order or, are we just kidding ourselves?

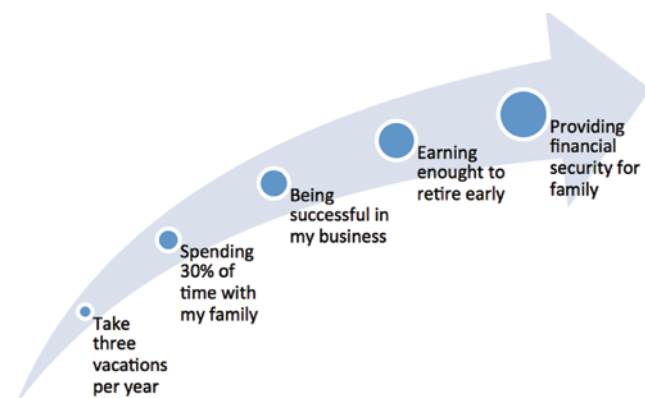
Do we find a space between the things we value most and the way we actually spend our time, resources and concentration? This space may be a “grand canyon” or a gorge in size, but in either case this space/gap should concern us about how we manage the differences sandwiched between ostensible values and our authentic behavior.

Crisis, many times, define us in real terms: For example, death in the family, illness of a dear one, divorce, or bankruptcy . . . have turned peoples focus onto something or things, not sought after prior to these life-altering events, but nonetheless, the things that really matters to us.

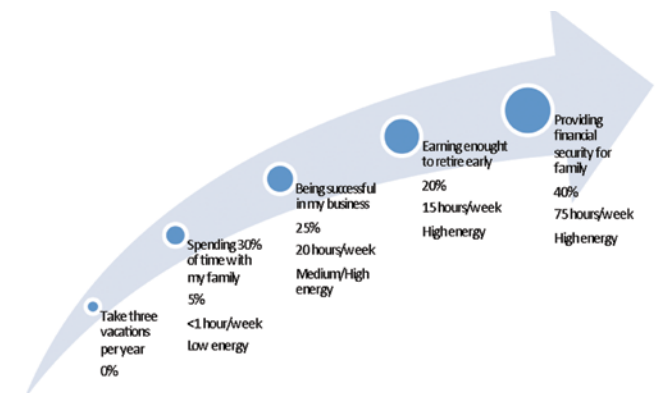
The large question is what do we have to encounter any of these major crises before we change?

There are systematic processes that can alter the way we deal with the gap between CONVICTION and COMMITMENT. Here are a few tips Messrs. Donald N. Sull & Dominic Houlder developed through HBR (Harvard Business Review) that have been successful in their practice.

Inventory your values: Here's some arbitrary values that one could consider



Assess how you're investing your resources: Place time & energy spent onto these values



Identify gaps between your values and commitments:

Do some of your values receive little to none of your time, money and energy; is there a single value that drains a disproportionate share of your resources?

Understand what has caused the gaps:

Taken on more obligations without considering the long-term effects on other obligations. Or, you have let others define what success looks like for you.

Change course:

To change course without an outside crisis dictating it, invent an artificial but meaningful “time out” to be thrown into the your value mix. Time outs can be in the form of a sabbatical, educational course, retreat or some other device that gives you an excuse to change old commitments and forge new ones. To avoid “commitment creep”, abandon or renegotiate one old commitment for every new one you make. **CW**