A Little Guiding Light

The star shone brightly in the night sky, winking at me, as if the two of us were in on a little secret. I was going to make this Network Marketing business work, even if no one else believed it could be done! You see, I'd learned early on to never, never quit. No matter what happens.

I started out skeptical, perhaps even a bit cynical, when I agreed to attend an opportunity meeting that a friend of mine invited me to. Even though I'd never been to anything like it, I was pretty sure that it was nothing more than a scam and that I wouldn't be interested. I was wrong on both counts.

At 33, I'll have to admit that I was a bit immature. Life, for me, was about my men's softball league, my wife Michele, my black lab Boomer, and my job as sports editor at my hometown weekly newspaper. The pay wasn't great, but life was good and I wasn't really looking for any major changes.

But on that spring night in 1998, my life changed forever. Not only was I impressed with the presentation at the meeting, but by the end of the night I was filling out the distributor application and writing out a check. My upline was nearly as raw as me, and my training brief. But the advice I got that first night turned out to be priceless and the message was clear; never, never, never quit. No matter what happens.

My enthusiasm for this new venture was put to the test right from the start. One of my new distributors called and asked me to drive to Cape Cod with him to introduce the business to his sister. She had invited twelve friends to her house and we couldn't pass up the opportunity to present the business to them. Unfortunately, Cape Cod was a five-hour drive and in order to get there on time, I had to leave work early, which I did.

A pair of MLM rookies, my buddy and I arrived at Kim's house in plenty of time to set up our flip-chart in the living room. 7:00 came and went. We waited. 7:30. The same. Still, at 8:00 we remained, waiting. Twelve had been invited. Twelve had indicated they would be there. Twelve didn't show up. At least we had Kim's attention, so the evening wasn't a total loss. Or so we thought. After being "blown off" by all of her friends, Kim wasn't interested either.

We found comfort in a Cape Cod lobster dinner, knowing that if we left by three a.m. we'd be back in time for work. We sat in a parking lot, looking up at the sky and started to laugh. Maybe it was our apparent ineptitude at Network Marketing, but we laughed hysterically. That's when I first saw the star, seeming to laugh along with us. Not being a particularly spiritual person, I took note of the star, but didn't give it another thought.

"We're going to be huge in this business, buddy," I said to my friend. "Because anyone else would quit right now."

Just a few weeks later, my friend did.

The next day at work was arduous. Between the brutal drive home and the lack of sleep, even the five cups of coffee couldn't rouse me. But a call from my cousin did. Another of my very first distributors, his voice was filled with excitement.

"My dad's rented out the back room of a bar for tonight. There are 50 people planning to come hear about the business," he explained. "They'll be there at 7:00."

This was an amazing opportunity, so I shook off my fatigue and left work early again. The bar was in upstate New York, a three-and-a-half hour drive away. With zero sleep, I headed out. After all, how could I blow an opportunity to share this opportunity with 50 people! Usual odds were that 3-out-of-10 new people would sign up at each presentation. That would be 15 new people, which would ensure an immediate promotion! *Gosh, this stuff is easy!* I thought to myself.

My cousin met me at the front door. Going inside we found the perfect angle for the flip-chart and set it up. I piled the 50 copies I made beside the sign-in sheet and again I waited.

"Are you sure you told everybody 7:00?"

"Yep."

"Are you sure you said *tonight?*"

"Yeah."

"Where's your dad?" I asked, wondering why my uncle hadn't shown up yet.

"He was tired."

"*HE* was tired?" I let out an exasperated sigh.

Somehow, as 7:00 turned into 7:30 and then into 8:00, humor eluded me. I continued waiting, but by 8:30 I gave up, realizing that I could make it home by midnight if I left right away.

I packed up my chart, my copies, and my untouched sign-up sheet and headed outside. Leaning against the outside of the bar, I noticed a sign on a stone archway in the street. “Home of the Square Deal.” I started to laugh. That’s when I saw her again, that same bright star that I’d seen the night before. This time, however, it was not only the brightest star in the sky, but it was the *only* star in the sky. My laughter grew louder.

“What’s so funny?” my cousin asked.

Ignoring his question, I pointed up at that lone star and laughed some more. Waving my finger at her, I scolded, “Is that all you’ve got? If that’s all you’ve got, I can take *that.* That’s nothing!”

During my 200-mile drive home, I phoned my sponsor.

“We’re going to be rich, partner!” I shouted into the phone.

“How many signed up?” he asked.

“How many *showed* up is the better question!” I replied. “And the answer is *none! Zero baby!”*

I laughed some more.

“Why do you sound so happy about it?” he asked me.

“Because anybody else would quit right now.”

My cousin did.

During the 3,285 nights that followed, that star in the sky became my Network Marketing upline and trainer. She became my companion during the many nights I drove around the northeast to-and-from potential opportunity meetings, some good and some bad.

On the night that I walked out on my full-time job forever, we celebrated together. She was there nodding her approval on the nights that both my daughters were born. When things went really well for me – big promotions, awards, obscenely large paychecks – I gloated with my star.

I've spoken with her in Paris, London, Amsterdam, Vienna, Dublin and Hamburg. I've seen her smiling down on the skylines of New York City, Chicago, Dallas, Orlando, and San Francisco. I've even winked at her from the exotic beaches of Mexico and all over the Caribbean.

I mostly talk to her now from the back porch of my estate in the woods of Connecticut where my eight-year-old daughter, Sydney, named her "Rose Butterfly". We sometimes talk to her together.

Throughout my Network Marketing career she's always been there for me, as my friend, my counselor, my leader, even a parental figure. I sometimes wonder if that star was put in the sky just for me.

Is that so crazy?

Don't we all need a little guiding light once in awhile?

Tommy Wyatt

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