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Are You Sleepwalking Through Life?

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"If you start the day reading the obituaries, you live your day a little differently." – David Levithan

At least once a year for the past 10 years, I have had either coffee or lunch with my friend Chris Hoffman. Chris was the CMO of a private equity firm, and his entire business career encompassed success. More importantly, he was a great person always giving back to the community. His enthusiasm for my ideas and counsel helped provide energy for me to continue to blast through any barriers I faced.

As I sat waiting one day for Chris to show up for our lunch, I thought it unusual for my friend to be late. He was always prompt, impeccably dressed, and one of the most professional people I have ever known. When I called his office, I only learned that "he was out." When I mentioned I would try his mobile, the response was: "He won't answer," which threw me for a loop. I later found out that my friend was fighting for his life in a battle he eventually lost. Over the weekend, he wasn't feeling well and went to the hospital. He was diagnosed with leukemia, never left the hospital, and passed a short time after.

The only good thing about death is that it is a sober reminder that life has an expiration date.

The loss of Chris and the recent experiences of another friend who lost his teenage son in a car accident have brought a tremendous sense of urgency in me to live life.

We've all heard older folks tell how important it is to experience life every day, that if they had a chance to do it over again, they would have taken more risks. However, if you are like me, it seems that all I am doing is chasing my tail in a merry-go-round of never-ending daily tasks. The years have gone by in one big blur.

My 11-year old-daughter Tess has brought an important ritual to our family dinner in which she asks three questions: What was your high for the day? What was your low? And what was your buffalo (funny thing that happened)? We all go around the table to answer those three questions.

Tess, my chatty Cathy, has no problem filling the air with her high, low, and buffalo. In fact, there are times we need to cut her off so we can get to other family members.

Unfortunately, there have been too many times when I can't answer those three simple questions. How about you? Are your days so filled with tasks that the weeks just blend together? Are they made up of just lows but no buffalo's?

Today, there is one responsibility in my life that I tend to prioritize at the cost of flying out late or taking an early flight to get home. I love to cuddle with my kids either waking them up in the morning or putting them to bed at night. This is my high every day.

I miss my friend Chris Hoffman. But his death will be a reminder to make sure I make time for the buffalos in my life.

Question:

What is your high for today?

What is your low?

What is your buffalo?

Scott Anderson is a founding principal at Diamond Performance Solutions LLC and RevenueForce LLC. He is co-author of the book Reignite: How to Rekindle Your Passion for Selling. Scott spent his entire career-more than twenty-five years selling, managing salespeople, and providing sales consulting, training, and coaching to some of the biggest and best sales organizations in the world. He has worked with leading organizations including 3M, IBM, Cargill, UnitedHealth Group, Carlson Companies, Andersen Windows, Wells Fargo and The Hartford. He has authored numerous articles on sales effectiveness. He resides in Dallas, Texas. Office Number 612-961-1778 email: sanderson@diamonddpg.com