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Feelings are the Fuel

by Keith F. Luscher
Author, *Prospect & Flourish*

In the last article ("Face it, Dude...She's Not Gonna' Call") we talked about the importance of persistence and of not giving up—of how good things happen when you truly believe in what you offer, and have faith in yourself.

This is all well and good, until you hit the wall. After all, whether it is declining sales or being forced into the job market, these challenging times have taken their toll on many of us.

I was reminded of a book I read almost two years ago: Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search For Meaning*. To read Frankl's book is phenomenal; to read it realizing that he secretly wrote it in 1945 while a prisoner at Auschwitz (and not from the comfort of hindsight 15 years later) can be life transforming.

There was one paragraph that stood out in my memory that I would like to share with those of you who are feeling pushed to the edge—and that perhaps it is time to give up. The paragraph's context: the author is reflecting a particular (and then-recent) day while being marched by the Nazis one cold evening at dusk. For a mental respite, he begins to ponder the image of his wife, whom he has lost and misses terribly:

...for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth — that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world still may know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved. In a position of utter desolation, when man cannot express himself in positive action, when his only achievement may consist in enduring his sufferings in the right way — an honorable way — in such a position man can, through loving contemplation of the image he carries of his beloved, achieve fulfillment. For the first time in my life I was able to understand the meaning of the words, "The angels are lost in perpetual contemplation of an infinite glory."

How powerful is this? That one can choose to focus on LOVE amidst circumstances so dreadful that they are beyond our imagination? Frankl points to the freedom that each of us has within us—a freedom that is connected with a deep "inner" life, fueled by a spiritual awareness that connects each of us with something that is outside and greater than ourselves.

Frankl's "beloved" was his wife; your beloved may include your spouse, your children, and even your closest friends and family. They are the people who lift and feed you...who give you purpose. The number one obstacle to effective prospecting, be it for clients or a job, is not understanding the value you provide for others. Quite simply—it is numbness to your purpose—to your meaning.

It is not enough just to identify your purpose...you must feel it. This delves into two facets: the WHAT—what you offer and the value it brings to others; and the WHY—why you do what you do.

What can first be gleaned by exploring your track record. Talk to previous/current clients and/or employers. Hear their stories—and feel the emotion behind their stories. Make notes of what they say, and write it up as a testimonial for their review and approval (article on that one on its way.)

Understanding the why is simple. Who do you love? Who loves you? Your spouse? Your children? Your parents? Your pet? Your God? Whoever it may include, keep a reminder of these "why's" close to you at all times—and I mean CLOSE. On your phone, your computer, your keychain, everywhere. Savor the time you spend with them—every day, every moment, every hour. These feelings are not your defense; they are your offense. They keep you in a faithful and positive state of mind that holds that "wall" at bay.

And on days when you do and will "hit the wall," your connection to your purpose—your meaning—will give you the strength to break through. That's a promise.