

Empty Your Cup

How Are You Pouring Your Energy

— by Josephine Gross, Ph.D.

The issue you hold in your hands is filled with sound advice and proven strategies from top earners in network marketing who over the years have helped hundreds—even thousands—of networkers start successful home businesses.

Yet there is one more element to getting started right—and continuing to grow—in any undertaking. I learned this from my Zen master under whom I studied almost twenty years ago: it is called "beginner's mind," *shoshin* in Japanese, as illustrated in the following story:

A Japanese master Nan-in gave audience to a scholar who came to inquire about Zen. Serving tea, Nan-in filled his visitor's cup, and kept pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he could no longer contain himself: "Stop! The cup is overfull, no more will go in." Nan-in said, "Like this cup, you are full of opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"

The mind of the beginner is empty, ready to learn and open to all possibilities. The opposite mindset, the expert mind, lures us into thinking we know it all, and we no longer welcome new ideas and change. We become closed-minded, stop learning and stagnate.

Innocent of preconceptions and judgments, beginner's mind is present to explore and observe. It is the kind of mind which can see things as they are, and not as we expect them to be.

What if you could approach each new prospect with that kind of alert presence? "Not knowing" means "I'm just going to see what happens and trust what occurs, moment by moment."

Looking at our business in such a way is easier said than done.

As children, we began to lose that innocent quality of just being open to see what is there to see. Instead, we prefer to be "the one who knows." But we lose something vital when we've got it all figured out and are no longer awake to what's happening.

How do we maintain a beginner's mind as we progress throughout our networking career?

Give each presentation with the wholeheartedness of someone who is delivering it for the first time. Never use jargon—use simple, everyday language. Be a silent, impartial observer as you listen to each prospect. See what is and don't try to change people.

When we relate to others with this kind of openness and readiness, they in turn feel safe to open and expose themselves to what we have to offer. This reminds me of Laws 4 and 5 in *Go-Givers Sell More: Be Real and Stay Open*.

"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few," says Shunryu Suzuki. If you give yourself the freedom to look at what you do without the constraints of your knowledge and experience, you may discover new insights that set you on a path of boundless possibilities.