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10 Principles for a Happy Life and Career

Principle 1: Find Your Peace

By Michael A. Crawford, CPA

Editor's Note: Mike Crawford has, by even his own accounts, had a successful and happy career as a CPA in Oklahoma. He says there are 10 basic principles that have guided him through a joyful life and a fulfilling career. In this and future issues of CPAFOCUS, Crawford shares that idea and those principles.

We can never obtain peace in the world until we make peace with ourselves.”
- Dali Lama XIV

All of us have something that brings us inner peace, especially in turbulent or trying times. The key is finding this something and experiencing it to the fullest degree possible. It is important to remember that each one of us as individuals do not own all the problems in the world. It is too easy to get caught up in our own real or perceived problems and conveniently forget the blessings we do have. Often times, regret of things we have done or not done get in the way of our enjoyment of everyday life. We must make peace with our past so it won't keep us from enjoying the present.

For some unknown reason, I've always felt the most inner peace around water. Rather strange for someone who grew up on and to this day still lives in the dusty plains of Oklahoma. However, I continue to find myself attracted to places where water abounds. Although it took me 40 years and four previous houses to get here, my current home backyard in Oklahoma City opens to a beautiful neighborhood lake. Sitting in the backyard swing enjoying the sights and sounds of nature is the essence of peacefulness

for me. I even find myself focusing my leisure travels on locations where water abounds. Every year my wife and I look anxiously to our trip to the mountains of Estes Park, Colorado, where I awake every morning to a breathtaking walk around Lake Estes and strolls along the mountain rivers that run through town. I feel that same peace whether I'm floating in the ocean water near an island or looking out at and listening to the sea on a cruise. I don't understand the reasons for my love of water, but I do recognize the peace it brings me.

Where do you feel most at peace? Where are you when you feel most connected with your inner spirit? For some, it's meditation or yoga. Others find that connection on a run through the neighborhood. Whatever it is that whispers to your soul and gives you serenity, indulge in it as frequently as you can.

For each of us, whatever our "water" is, it's important in life to find it and experience the peacefulness it brings us to the fullest extent our schedule and budget will allow.

Find what brings you peace and do it as often as possible. ☺