

Finding Delight

From my vantage point in an aisle seat near the front of the plane, I noticed how all of us pulled out our iPads, cell phones or other electronic gadgets to tune out the world around us or make good use of those last few moments of "freedom." Then a cute, 3-year-old boy entered the plane and stood in the aisle, followed closely by his mother. He took in the scene and suddenly asked a gentleman on the aisle ahead of me, "Whatcha doin'?" "Just sending a note to my wife before we take off." "Why?" countered the little guy. "Because I miss her." "Oh, well, are you in my seat?" The gentleman smiled and quipped, "Your seat is up ahead, where the toys are." The little guy smiled big and did an excited happy dance, while his mother tried to shoo him along.

The boy did move a few steps ahead and then saw the next man totally engrossed in his cell phone. The little guy bent over and cocked his head to peer up at the very large man, who paid no attention. Determined to be noticed, the little guy leaned closer and loudly said, "Hi!" The entire first several rows burst into delighted laughter; he was not to be ignored! As the boy continued his path down the aisle, we suddenly were all smiling, laughing and commenting about his joyful, contagious exuberance. We went from serious and tuned-out to joyful and tuned-in.

This little boy reminded me and my companions that no matter how serious we are or how focused we are on the tasks at hand, there is still always a world to delight in. I believe a leader often needs to be that spark, just like this little boy was, to snap people out of their intensity. A leader can remind people that every day there are things to be delighted about and grateful for. As Mother Teresa said, "We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do."



Ideas for Action:

How good are you at noticing the little things that bring joy or delight? How good are you at living in the moment? Leadership is such serious business and it is important to get things done or to constantly learn and improve. But we can get so wrapped up in being intentional, setting priorities, making good decisions, finding ways to inspire others and executing well, that we tune out the world around us.

When you can set an example and share the little things happening that bring you joy and delight, you send a message to all that work can be light-hearted, fun and a place for smiles or laughter. All leaders need to regularly lift up their eyes and be mindful of the world around them.

No other suggestions from me today – I only hope you have a chance to meet that little 3-year-old boy tomorrow – or someone else much like him. It will do your spirit good! For more Pearls of Leadership Wisdom, [visit here](#).