



REFLECTIONS

May 29, 2011 Refreshed from February 6, 2005

**Therefore encourage one another and
build each other up,**

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Accent-u-ate the positive ...

The song is an old one, but the truth in its lyrics is as fresh as ever. “*Accent-u-ate the positive, eliminate the negative, and don’t mess with Mr. In Between.*” The message teaches a lesson of life.

It is so easy to focus on the wrongs because we seem to be surrounded by them. Yet too much attention to all that is wrong or imperfect detracts attention from all that is right and good. The positives are easily lost in the negative. And the negative can destroy.

Ken Blanchard, the noted author on leadership, has warned of the harm caused when the negative is given a place of prominence. He observes how negative comments and criticism can damage relationships even with people that we love. No one is perfect—everyone fall short of a perfect score of 100. But so often we become so caught up in correcting the deficiencies that cause the ones we love to fall short of 100 that we lose sight of the qualities that we originally fell in love with.

Blanchard also observes that the Sea World trainers don’t correct Shamu for doing the wrong thing. They reward the whale for doing the *right thing*—accent-u-ate the positive. But if the trainers tried the opposite approach by correcting the negative there would never be positive achievement.

And the principle applies to more than loved ones or training whales. Once when an enterprise was seeking to replace a retiring leader, the owners identified the strengths they wanted in the person they were looking for by identifying the weaknesses of the retiring leader. The result was that the person they hired to replace him was deficient in the qualities that made the retiring leader successful.

There are certainly times when shortcomings need to be addressed, but remember the lyrics—“*Accent-u-ate the positive, eliminate the negative and don’t mess with Mr. In Between.* It will make a difference to those you love—

The payback will be worth the effort.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org.