



Skanes Technology Group

*"A PLACE WHERE YOU ARE FAMILY"
"I LOVE SKANES!!!"*

"Live your Life to the Fullest"

BY STEVE MUELLER

The majority of people are like drones, nowadays. It seems as if they are living their lives in a trance – numb sleepwalkers that do the same things day in and day out – while being stuck in various routines that have accumulated during the years. Routines that give them the sensation of stability in an unstable and ever-changing world. There is no variety other than the regularly changing television program, new computer and console games or the newest scandals of celebrities and politicians. People have no time anymore to call their friends and to spend time with them, but waste hours of their valuable time online, on Facebook – checking status messages, addictively playing games, chatting with random strangers or watching videos on YouTube. You can hear people mumble, "I'm in a rush" or "Haven't got any time" while they rush from their workplaces to their entertainment stations, called home. People have mastered the skill of multi-tasking and can perform various tasks simultaneously, but they lack the ability to focus on only one thing at a time and wonder why they don't get anything done or why they aren't happy with the outcome of their multi-tasked work.

Yet, the state of being a numb sleepwalker can be very promising – after all, all you have to do is lean back and start drifting through life, which can be an exciting journey full of adventurous hours in front of the television or your video console. This is one possible way of life, but there will always be the remaining emptiness within yourself that you will not be able to fill – not with entertainment, not by accumulating riches, gathering tangibles or continuously changing partners. That's the burden of being a sleepwalker – you won't reach true fulfillment and consciousness; to put it simply: you aren't able to fill the emptiness within yourself.

Part 1: The Active Mind

Start living your life NOW!- The sleepwalkers I was talking about in the above certainly do fulfill their specific needs for nutrition, security, love, happiness and entertainment, but are they really living their lives – actively and consciously – or are they still dreaming and behaving on auto-pilot? Let's look at it this way... I'm sure you have heard about the people who had a near-death experience and reported about the phenomenon that they saw their whole lives flashing before their inner eyes, just like a movie. The film that

HOLIDAYS THIS MONTH

September 3rd

Labor Day

September 4th

MD First Day Of School

September 9

Rosh Hashanah Starts

September 11

Patriot Day/National Day of
Service and Remembrance

September 11

Rosh Hashanah Ends

September 22

First Day of Fall

HAPPY 1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Melody Simmons

September 5th

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Kia Dean

September 19th

The courage to live your life to the fullest- All it takes to live your life to the fullest is courage – nothing more and nothing less. This sounds rather minimalist and easy to cope with – but a lack of courage is a key factor that prevents most people from living their lives to the fullest. These people aren't necessarily cowards or scared-chicken – not at all – as they are simply being stuck with their quite comfortable everyday routines. To express it metaphorically: there are some dreams that you do not want to end. Courage is a crucial factor – as you cannot live your life to the fullest if you don't dare to do it or shy the risks that could come with it.

Listening to your heart- The following can be observed ever since in the history of mankind, so it isn't just a recent trend: young people choose – influenced by the advice from their parents (or friends) – to walk the predetermined path that was selected for their lives – a path that might have been chosen by their parents or dictated by the society they live in – often before they were born. Some others pursue the smell of banknotes and follow where the desire to accumulate as much money and tangibles as possible will lead them. There are many other examples where people make important decisions for their lives solely based on external factors – some earn a living with jobs they absolutely dislike and hate, jobs that might even interfere with their beliefs, others become lawyers just because their whole family consisted of lawyers for decades. The mistake we make is that we put way too much emphasis on the importance of external factors – such as money, family tradition, and honor, etc. – rather than listening to our hearts and following where it leads us.

You don't necessarily have to break with your family tradition when you follow your heart, absolutely not! But there is a huge difference in between the choice to become a firefighter "because my dad, my grandfather, and my great grandfather were fireman as well" or to choose to become a firefighter as it is your true desire and you dreamt of it ever since you were a little child that wanted to help others that are in danger.

Listen to your heart when you make important decisions and try to neglect the promising external factors (money, etc.) just for a moment. Have the courage to follow where your heart leads you! Become aware of the things that your heart desires and ask yourself the question if you really think that your heart might desire something as superficial and material as money, fancy cars and jewelry. When looking behind the scenes you might discover that it isn't tangibles that your heart truly desires, but – more valuable things such as – true friendship, happiness, love, but also fulfillment, consciousness, awareness and inner peace with yourself.

Part 2: The Importance of Responsibility

Reconciling and accepting the past- Nearly all of our thoughts, questions, and worries revolve around events and situations in the past or the upcoming future. The closer you look at it, the more will you realize that only a slight percentage of our thoughts revolve around the present. If you so want, "thinking in the present" is an oxymoron in itself, as the line between past, present and future are continuously shifting, which makes it nearly impossible to continuously think about this very moment. Therefore, nearly all human beings are either very focused on the future and the changes that will come along with it or clearly living in the past full of regret about the drastic changes in the nowadays world, (overlapping does exist as well, of course).

Nevertheless, worrying about the future or struggling with the past – no matter what happened – can be a huge obstacle when it comes to the ambition to live your life in this very moment to the fullest, which might even prevent you from doing so. Accept the past as that what it is, bygone and not changeable. Spending a single second with regret about your past will take you the chance to enjoy this moment, in this second and so on. If you so want, worrying about the past could be seen as a vicious circle; it does not only take you the chance in this very moment to change whatever you dislike, but it also supplies you with another pretty good reason to struggle in the prospective future, aka "Why didn't I do anything about it when I could?", etc.

As you can see – worrying about the past and the future can be a vicious circle that occupies your mind with thoughts and situations that aren't related to this present situation, which finally prevents you from living life to the fullest. The key to success lies in the acceptance of what happened and the reconciliation with the past, the opportunities you've missed and with whatever you regret. The realization that the only way to change anything in life is to take action now, in this very moment, will further help you to reconcile with your past. Living your life to the fullest, in this very moment, cannot be accomplished when mentally living in the past and continuously visualizing all the golden opportunities you've missed throughout your life.

Don't pass the buck- The second part of this article was named "the importance of responsibility", as I believe that it takes a lot of courage but also the willingness to take responsibility to accept what happened in the past and to reconcile with it. After all, it is by far easier to blame other people for your own mistakes and to make specific external influences accountable for the development of your life, rather than acknowledging that it might have been your own fault and seeking the reasons within yourself.

Doing so will take a lot of pressure from your shoulders, it might even be a very good feeling to know that you're not guilty for negative developments in your life as you can always blame others for it, but it will also let you become a helpless victim. Being a victim does not only make you vulnerable, but it also takes you the last chance to change anything about your current situation – as you clearly do not see yourself as the sole reason for a negative trend, but the victim of it. Accusations will redirect your focus (from doing something about it or making the best of it) towards the problem that might lie many years in the past and can neither be changed nor undone.

Taking responsibility for your past and reconciling with it will allow you to gain back the power over your life, which helps you to accept the past, forgive others and to wipe the slate clean, but most important of all: you will start focusing on the present and live in this moment. Make yourself clear that the one who lives in the past and the one who regrets misses the chance – in this moment – to make the best of it, to change it or to start all over again. Accept the past, let the bygone be bygone and make the best out of your situation. In the end, it depends on you, if you decide to continue to whine about the past, or to make the best of it now so that you can look back one day with a smile on your face and recognize that everything has come to a good end.

Part 3: The Reflective Mind

Dare to be conscious!- Living your life to the fullest consists out of three elements that complete each other – the active part (= taking action), the responsibility part (= taking responsibility for the past) and finally, the reflective part – the Ying and the Yang of living your life to the fullest, if you so want and the sphere that surrounds it. Living your life to the fullest does not only consist of taking action or accepting the past but also to live your life in a conscious state of mind, where you invest some time for yourself, to reflect and to think about your life in general. It doesn't necessarily have to be a for yourself, to reflect and to think about your life in general. It doesn't necessarily have to be a restriction, you do not need to stop watching TV or to reduce your internet usage drastically, but it includes your willingness to spend some time with yourself (without distractions), every day.

Pure honesty towards yourself and your life- Whenever you have taken yourself some time to reflect on your life, it is essential that you are completely honest towards yourself. Ask yourself the question, if you are living – in this moment – the life you have always dreamt of, the life you envisioned as a little child, the dream that has evolved throughout your whole life and became more and more detailed with every day you were alive. Ask yourself if you are happy with your personality, your job and the way you live in general. Are you the creator of your life, do you take control over your life, are responsible for your actions or have you switched to your role as a victim and the one who only reacts towards other people's actions? Are you living your life with excitement and amazement, curious to discover the deepest depths of life, or do you rely on television to stimulate and entertain you for a given period? Is your life a routine or a daily changing adventure?

New STG Family Members

Shawn Shaw –
Customer Service & IT
Specialist
Started August 15th

Roy Dismuke-
Instructional Designer
Started August 20th

Jessica Frasier-
Project Integrator
Starting September 10th

Lauren O'Neal-
Systems Engineer
Starting September 17th

September Incentive Challenge

First Place- \$200 Second Place- \$175 Third Place- \$125

Please send your answers in to Krista by September 10th. Winners will be revealed on September 12th

1. How much time, on an average, does a person spend on kissing, in his lifetime?
2. What is the relation between Trivia and Roman mythology?
3. How much time, on an average, does a person spend on the toilet in his lifetime?
4. When a burning cigarette is inhaled, what is the temperature at its tip?
5. Back in the 1600's, what was used in thermometers, instead of mercury?
6. Which song was the most played number on American radio, during the 20th century, and for how many times was it played?
7. Which is the only mammal species of bats, where the male has the capability to lactate, and probably feed its young?
8. Which Hollywood movie showed the first toilet flush?
9. Which Greek God seduced and violated Leda, the Queen of Sparta, in the guise of a swan?
10. How serious is the production and distribution of adult movies in North Korea?
11. How big does the pupil become, when it looks at something pleasing?
12. What is strange about the casinos in Las Vegas?
13. What was the carburetor of the first Harley-Davidson, built in the 1903, made of?
14. Google may be your preferred search engine, but do you know how it got its name?
15. Do you know when was Gmail (email service provided by Google) launched?
16. How many steps would you have to take before you reach the first level of the Eiffel Tower?
17. What is "milk" called in Indonesia?
18. What is "entrance" and "driveway" in Swedish?
19. What is paper money made from?
20. What is so strange about the seven continents of the world?
21. How many pairs of underwear do men buy in a year?

It's that time of year again where Krista and Stacy starts planning our annual holiday party. You guys are in for a treat we have an awesome theme this year. The ladies have chosen **"The Great Gatsby"** to be the theme this year. We would love for you all to dress the part. Ladies you can find a nice flapper dress or any 1920's styled dress or outfit. Gentlemen you can find a nice suit with a bowtie and hat. We are so excited for this year it will be our 3rd annual holiday party. It will be December 1st at 6pm at the Hilton Garden in Fairfax, VA. Formal invitations will go out in the mail late September early October.

Skanes Tech Referral Program:

Skanes Tech is always looking for more individuals with a TS/SCI w/ Full-scope play for these positions in Northern VA. and some in MD:

Applications Developers, Cyber Security SME, IT Program Managers, Program Managers, Project Integrators, Software Engineers, Systems Administrators, Helpdesk Specialist, Software Quality Assurance Specialist/Applications Testers, Systems Engineers, Systems Integrators, and Web Developers.

Urgent Positions we are looking for now:

Graphic Designers(Reston), Open Source Governance Team(Reston/Herndon), Instructional Designers(Reston/Dulles), Capability Management(Tysons), Requirements/IT/User Experience(Tysons), FINTEL Production Graphic Designer(HQS), Corporate Communication Designer & FINTEL Production(HQS), and Program Property Management Data Analyst(Springfield).

For job descriptions please email Krista or Stacy for the job descriptions. If you have family members or friends that are looking for new opportunities? Please email us their information and resume to office@skanestech.com or either Krista or Stacy, and we will take it from there. **Skanes Tech offers a \$3000 referral bonus for your help!** The candidate must go through the whole selection process. So, keep those referrals coming!!! ALL individuals must have the required clearance.

Monthly Reminder:

Timesheets are very important. Krista sends out a reminder at the end of each pay period (15th & the last day of the month). We know you want to get paid for your hours worked. Please have your hours entered in Paychex at least 3-4 days before the pay day on the 9th & 24th . If you don't want to receive a phone call or email from Krista & Stacy please do so by the given times.

Hearty Fall Slow-Cooker Recipes

"The preparation of good food is merely another expression of art, one of the joys of civilized living." – Dione Lucas

Slow-Cooker Garlic-Parmesan Chicken



INGREDIENTS

3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
2 lb. bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 lb. baby red potatoes, quartered
2 tbsp. butter, softened
5 cloves garlic, chopped
2 tbsp. fresh thyme
Freshly chopped parsley
2 tbsp. freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for serving

DIRECTIONS

- In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat 1 tablespoon oil. Add chicken, season with salt and pepper, and sear until golden, 3 minutes per side.
- Meanwhile, in a large slow cooker, toss potatoes with remaining 2 tablespoons oil, butter, garlic, thyme, parsley, and Parmesan and season generously with salt and pepper.
- Add chicken and cook on high for 4 hours or low for 8 hours, until potatoes are tender and chicken is fully cooked.
- Garnish with Parmesan before serving.

SLOW COOKER HONEY TERIYAKI CHICKEN



INGREDIENTS

4 boneless chicken breasts, about 2 pounds
½ cup soy sauce
½ cup honey
¼ cup rice wine vinegar
¼ cup onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
¼ teaspoon pepper
¾ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ cup water
3 Tablespoons Cornstarch
Optional garnish: green onions, sesame seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

- Spray your slow cooker with cooking spray and place the chicken breasts in the bottom. In a small bowl whisk the soy sauce, honey, rice wine vinegar, onion, garlic, pepper and ginger. Pour over the chicken breasts.
- Cook on high for 3-4 hours or low for 4-5 or until chicken is cooked throughout and shreds easily. Once the chicken is cooked, remove with a slotted spoon and shred on a plate.
- Pour the sauce into a medium sauce pan. In a small bowl, whisk together the water and cornstarch. Slowly whisk into the sauce on medium high heat. Continue to whisk and let it boil until the honey teriyaki sauce starts to thicken. About 2 minutes.
- Add the chicken back to the slow cooker and pour the sauce on top stirring to coat. Serve over rice and garnish if desired.

Slow Cooker Caramel Peanut Butter Hot Fudge Cake



INGREDIENTS

1 cup all purpose flour
1 cup granulated sugar divided
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup milk
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
3/4 cup peanut butter
15-20 Rolos or similar caramel candy unwrapped
3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1 cup boiling water

INSTRUCTIONS

- Stir the flour, 1/2 cup sugar, and baking powder in a large bowl. Add milk, oil, and vanilla and stir until smooth. Stir in the peanut butter.
- Spray a 6 or 7-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. Spread the batter in the bottom of the crockpot. Press Rolos evenly across the top of the batter.
- Whisk 1/2 cup remaining sugar and cocoa powder in a medium bowl. Slowly whisk in the boiling water. Carefully and slowly pour the chocolate water over the top of the cake. Do not stir.
- Cover and cook on High for about 2 hours, or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool slightly before serving. Serve with ice cream or whipped cream.
- Note: all slow cookers cook differently. My crockpot has a "High 6 hour" setting, which is what I used. Be sure to check on your cake after 1 1/2 hours and it may take up to 3 hours, depending on how your machine cooks.