

Significance 02.23.25

In 2011, we featured a story in our first Life Lessons book "Simple Words That Matter" about Removing the Underbrush. At the time, it served as a metaphor for clearing away unnecessary distractions, negativity, and clutter—both physically and mentally—to reveal a path toward clarity and purpose. The significance of this story today is particularly strong, as many people feel overwhelmed by digital noise, societal pressures, and an excess of commitments.

As the legendary story goes, a general found his troops disenchanted, disparaged and whipped. He believed that it was because his army division felt isolated and endangered by the enemy. The general knew that his division was physically close to other regiments, separated only by a dense growth of small trees and shrubbery. To lift his troops' spirits and let them see the might of the vast army, he ordered "burn the underbrush."

When the explicit orders had been carried out, his division of soldiers found that they were not isolated, as they had supposed. To their surprise, they saw that they were a part of one mighty army approaching near victory. With their courage revived, they marched forward in victory.

Zoom forward 14 years, and we are in an era where mental health, mindfulness, and simplification are growing priorities. The lesson of Removing the Underbrush is about focusing on what truly matters. Whether it's in business, relationships, or personal growth, clearing away the unnecessary allows for greater insight, creativity, and fulfillment. The story remains relevant as individuals and organizations strive for clarity in an increasingly complex world.

As we move into the Spring season, consider where you have been, what you have accomplished in your body of work and burn the underbrush of self doubt, over eagerness, mistrust, and separation.

Your success AND significance may be much closer than you ever considered.

Favorite Podcast of the Week: Speaking of military leaders, enjoy this podcast on the late, great General Earl Rudder, hero at Normandy and at Aggie land. <https://www.spreaker.com/episode/success-to-significance-honors-general-earl-rudder-military-hero-texas-a-m-president--64395408>

Book that Carla and I are reading: LifeCare by Solome Staff. This is a profoundly practical book that is guiding us as counselors to the next generation. As spiritual doubt is mounting in the U.S., we have found Sol's approach compelling. Rule #1 is don't preach, teach or try to fix.

Quote I'm Pondering: "Most of the shadows of this life are caused by our standing in our own sunshine." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Enjoy a week of significance. Rick