



## LESSON ELEVEN — To Thine Own Self

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Right from Lesson One in this course I have said it over and over again, “Treat others as you would like to be treated.” It is excellent advice because it is a Principle that will not fail you in good times and in not-so-good times. But like other rules or laws it comes with a caveat, “You must also treat yourself well because that becomes the measuring stick for all of your relationships.” In short, we need to do well unto ourselves also. It is often mistaken as something from the Bible but it is actually a quote from Shakespeare’s Hamlet, “To thine own self be true.” But what does that mean in a society, which is obsessed with self and rife with the problems caused by selfishness? I believe it is the misunderstanding caused when we think of self-care or self-awareness as selfishness. Nothing is further from the truth. In practice, how do I treat others well; treat myself badly, and presume that I should treat others as I want to be treated? In my experience, people who treat themselves poorly can’t appreciate very much. When we ‘beat ourselves up’ we are wasting an opportunity to reflect on what is good and right. We are no longer discerning which train to catch in the station of our mind because we are already on the little train that goes around and around in circles; a train of thought that is both habitual and destructive; a train that visits the sad places in the past and offers tours into the scary make-believe places in the future. It can be the very root of our difficulty in maintaining a positive attitude and productive actions. For example, if I won’t order what I know I need for myself, why would I think others should take care of their health and well-being? I have learned to just take the actions because I can’t think my way out of this; I must act my way out. I can’t fix a sick mind with a sick mind. Eckhart Tolle says using the mind to overcome this kind of a problem is like the town with a fire chief who also happens to like burning things down. If the town goes to the fire chief to catch the arsonist it will never happen because — the problem is trying to solve the problem. Remember that much of this is at the unconscious level. You

have these feelings but you don't consciously know why. You know you are mad at you. And you know you should do something good for yourself. But aren't those the opposing thoughts we know will cancel each other. In other words, it is not easy to change because it is this opposing idea of being unworthy that cancels the notion that you are the best person to present this information; care for this person; serve your way to the top of the pay scale. And it can become a part of who you are. Customers may sense uncertainty in your presentation. How? It goes like this, "You need this." Then I think, "I need this too. But I won't spend the money." I say, "You should order it." But I also know that I won't order it. Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best when he said something like, 'What you are doing is screaming so loud, I can't hear what you are saying.' If I want to have integrity in dealing with my customers I MUST take care of myself. Take a break and take a look at each of the 5 Life Concepts and answer the questions for yourself: Mind – are you feeding your mind? Are you challenging your mind? Congratulations you are doing something good for you because you have taken the time and energy required to do the iCAN2 course. But are you also resting, meditating, and practicing gratitude? What about sleep? Are you making his (or her) majesty the baby go to bed on time? In a bed? If the answer is no, then ask why anyone should believe you when you say they need proper rest? Financially are you able to ask for the retail price now or are you loaning your way to riches? Are you working to work or are you working to have financial security — whatever that looks like for you? I always have to remind myself that there is money-making-busy and there is crazy-making-busy and I can't kid myself about that. I must realize when I am visiting and when I am representing Nikken. Yes, they go well together but I can 'visit' my way into the poor house. Growing in Nikken is about taking responsibility for my behavior. It is very easy to not see the big picture with regard to your friends and family; it is easy to get lost in hours of I should-a', would-a', and could-a. Here is a simple rule of thumb; is this action good for me, good for my customers and good for my family or loved ones? Notice that this question is in three parts and involves all of the levels in your life. It is so simple. But it is not easy. I had to habitually remind myself that there is no time in the future that will make up for taking care of those issues today and each day, one day at a time. Today I must treat me like I want to be treated. Get it? You matter.

The outside work is important because it, over time, changes the way we view ourselves. For example, when you look at your role in the community, or in the Nikken community, do you feel you are aware of what is happening? Because the old train of thought will want to take back to the 'good old days' or to the place where everything is too different and I am too different and alone. When we take action in

the Five Concepts of Life we overcome these old misperceptions. I act according to Principle. I understand rather than look for people to understand me. All of these things are the raw materials of self-esteem.

In my opinion, too many books and well-meaning people mistake self-awareness and self-care as selfishness. Bottom line: treat yourself well in all areas so you can treat others that way too. We are 'victims' or 'victors' in between our ears. Your iCAN attitude is your best defense against self-pity and fear. It is a decision. You have learned how to form the habits to succeed and no one can stop you, except you. But that old inner voice may say, "Wait! That means taking consistent, persistent action. It means building character, which sounds like a great deal of work." The thing it never says is just how much work it is to stay poor; how much work it is to be depressed and alone; how much work it is to do no work! Choose to be your best self. Kind. Patient. Tolerant. Open. Willing. Teachable. That decision is all it takes to begin and to grow. The decision (remember to eliminate the negative) to habitually let go of the excuses in favor of doing the actions, which are based in the Principles of Customer-centrics and Self-care. Wayne Dyer once asked, "What would your life be like if you didn't have your sad little story? If you woke up tomorrow and didn't think of those old problems?" Life is amazing. It is just hard some days because living means actually doing the work, feel like it or not — immediate results or not. Our actions, good or bad, will not become habit until they are repeated. Old ideas will not be overwritten without repetition of better ideas. The thing most of us call faith is totally unattainable without us exercising it, consistently, persistently taking the actions — believing the outcome will materialize. My results follow my actions like night follows day. Once again, there is no permanent change until there is a meaningful shift in our habits. Or stated in psychobabble, "We have a mind that is out to kill us until we actually change our mind!" We are driven by fears rather than moving toward what we really want; what we really love. And all it requires is a change in attitude. It seems like it should be such an easy decision but until we accept a truthful picture of where we are it is difficult to manage the change — to know and repeat the right actions. So for this day: you are perfect as you are. You are focused on the positive today. You are willing to grow in understanding and love. You are an excellent example of what Nikken can be.

Your hard work over the last number of months has been both powerful and painful because it isn't until we challenge the old unworkable ideas that we come to truly understand what was holding us hostage — until we really believe that we can right-size that bogymen. Our false idea of who and what we are may be so distorted that we are strangers to ourselves. But here is the really good news, and the one thing I know from over forty years of challenging these old ideas, you don't have to understand 'why' you thought the way you did; you don't need to know 'where' you got these paralyzing ideas; you DO need to habitually do the things that bring success for you and for others because those old chains and restraints will fall away over time with steadfast repetition. You will form new pathways in your brain. This is not delusional thinking — this is neuro plasticity; this is not personal — it happens for anyone who will consistently do the work; it begins when we say 'no' to the old familiar way, the negative idea — when we practice an iCAN Attitude for as long a stretch as we can each day to place ourselves in development. We need to understand that it is the willingness to change, the honesty to admit that sometimes we don't know how or why ... we just do the right action to form a better character.

And what is our group experience? What have you said in your email? We know that no one stays in development 100% of the time. We've learned that the feelings such as guilt can act like fire alarms or the warning lights in our car — those 'feelings' serve to wake us up; to slingshot us back into development, and the sooner the better. My mentor used to say, "If you're feeling guilty, it's probably because your guilty." It still sounds harsh but for me, and I am the only one qualified to talk about me, it was and remains true! But let me make this perfectly clear — there is a huge difference between Guilt and Shame. Guilt says, "I did something bad." Shame says, "I am something bad." Never be confused. I read your messages. I see you opt in and opt out of development; and you've convinced me that 'bad' people would never stick around to learn this. They would scoff at the Principles we hold so dear. No you are not a bad person if you are struggling with doing this work, but you may feel some guilt, which is coming from a good place because it is really saying, "You are better than this. You can do it. Now get off of your procrastinator and repeat those simple actions." What is that but growth? It is good stuff, providing we don't let our ego turn it into shame to justify not doing the work. I like to think of it this way, the Nikken family is a good place to g-r-o-u-p — gro-up. To become your higher self.

So many of you have increased your customer-centric consciousness to a place where sales and upgrades are increasing and coming naturally. You have done what you were asked because iCAN2 arrived just as you were ready to do the work. Some others started farther back and are in the process of getting up to that starting line. Either way remember this: you are an amazing individual expression of the power behind everything. A power that is based 100% in Principle; which makes succeeding possible for everyone who will continue to take the right actions. So you must keep up the work and even more important — you must teach others to do the work. Not good at talking? Don't have teaching genes? Humbug. You can do it. You can do it because you have done it. At whatever level, you are only sharing your experience and you have people around you to help. I know that it can be tough in the beginning. And that is the beauty of Nikken — if you really want to 'get' this — you will learn to teach it. Do the actions, get the results, teach others. And it is not about you doing everything alone and everything 'perfect'. We all 'fail'. We only learn from the failure. There are so many examples of people who have proven that the proper application of our will is to get back into development the instant we know we are off. Marshall McLuhan was right when he said it takes a village to raise a child. Most of what defeats us are our childish demands for our own way and only staying in action, staying with the group; keeping an iCAN attitude with the help of those in the same endeavor will give us the momentum to break through in the low spots. Someone once quipped that we are the uneducated, led by the unknowing, doing the impossible. Of course many of you are highly educated but this is a philosophical statement. Funny, but there is an element of truth. We have to unlearn, relearn and apply. We can focus and be a beacon for the countless people around us who are really struggling with health, financial, and real-life issues. The people trying to use a map of Chicago to navigate their way around in San Francisco. People just like us who want to feel the joy of financial security and remuneration beyond money. Your personal development is meaningful and powerful so don't let your left brain tell you anything different.

We will finish this course next week. You have all of the materials required to carry this work on because iCAN2 was designed to bring out the mentor in you. Next week we will divide the call in two parts. In part one I will give you an overview of Lessons One to Eleven. You can use this as a kind of summary or reference to aid you in remembering what we've been through together. But no summary can replace the actual work involved, which is why it remains a good idea to redo each week's lessons. Repetition is the mother of learning. So, keep reviewing and applying each step of the way.

In part TWO of next week's call I am asking you to share your experience with iCAN2. I am asking you to prepare an elevator talk explaining your experiences. Tell us how you improved. Tell us how you overcame your bad habits and fears. Give us your tip for getting and keeping new customers. Please keep your comments brief so that we can get as many of these talks on the call in the time permitted.

By the time of next week's call many of you will be returning from the Nikken Convention. It is my hope that you will get together to support one another at the event. Surprise us with an iCAN2 badge or some other creation that will let your fellow enrollees know who you are. (If they have no way to identify you, you may miss a great opportunity to make a wonderful like-minded friend.)

I am a main speaker in an unrelated event in Portland, Oregon so I won't be attending but Michael DiMuccio will be there. Saturday morning, following the session, Mike will host an iCAN alumni get-together in the main lobby. But it is also a good idea to check the events board for impromptu iCAN meetings and here I go again: let everyone see your iCAN attitude. How? If there are problems, see what you can do to help. If there are great announcements show your enthusiasm and support.

There is no other homework for this session. No homework, just an opportunity to prepare an elevator talk about your iCAN journey for next week. I believe that these talks may be the highlight of the entire iCAN2 session so it is important that your contribution really tells your story and encourages others to adopt an iCAN attitude. For those going, enjoy the conference and travel safely. Talk to you next week.