

# Encouraging the Heart

## A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others

**James M. Kouzes, Barry Z. Posner**

### Chapter Twelve: 150 Ways to Encourage the Heart

Encouragement comes wrapped in packages of all kinds. We've seen it done in quiet ways with a thank-you, a story, and a smile; and we've been part of grand Academy Awards-style productions. Your imagination is the only limit.

This chapter gives some ideas to get you started. Most are collected examples of what we've observed and what others have contributed to us. Use what we list here as a way of stimulating your creativity. Adapt the ideas to your situation; combine them or use them singularly.

We've categorized the ideas under the seven essentials so you can focus your attention on those areas you most feel in need of working on. But as you see, many of these actions include elements of more than one essential.

Most important, have fun with this. These activities are designed to facilitate your learning, and learning to do a better job of encouraging the heart should be a joyous process.

#### **THE FIRST ESSENTIAL: SET CLEAR STANDARDS**

1. Take time to clarify the values or "operating principles" that are important for you and your team to live by. Write down your answer to this question: "What are the values that I believe should guide my daily decisions and actions, and those of the people with whom I work and interact?" We sometimes refer to this as the "credo memo" exercise. It's like a note you send to your colleagues before you take off for an extended sabbatical, telling them that while you're not around these are the principles you want them to use to govern their actions and decisions.
2. Ask your associates—those with whom you work regularly—to do the same exercise.
3. Keep current. If you've already done the exercise in item one, get out the piece of paper on which you wrote your values and ask yourself, "To what extent do these still represent the values that I believe should guide our daily decisions and actions? Is there anything I want to add? Anything I want to delete? Any priorities I want to change?"
4. Post your values statement conspicuously where you know you'll be reminded of your principles regularly. Put a copy in your wallet. Put one in your planner. Put it on your bulletin board over your desk and on your computer as a yellow sticky. Martin Luther actually nailed his beliefs on the cathedral door centuries back, and it started quite a movement! Why not you?
5. Make the topic of one of your next team meetings "Our Values." Ask everyone to state aloud what they believe in. Listen and observe. What are the values that everyone seems to share in common? What values seem to be unique to some individuals? Are there any major values conflicts? Talk about how you can honor individual values and yet as a team have common values that govern your collective behavior. Post collective values in visible places all around your workplace common areas.

6. If your organization has a corporate creed, or some kind of published statement of values, then set yours, your team's, and the organization's values credos side by side. To what extent are they compatible? To what extent are there some conflicts? How good a fit is there between organizational and personal values? What needs to be changed? What needs recommitment?
7. Every time you start a new project, make sure that SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bounded) are set. It's best if people set their own, but prescribed goals are better than no goals. Make these goals visible and accessible to everyone working on the team.
8. Make sure people get regular, specific feedback. Remember what we learned from the research: the combination of feedback plus goals is encouraging in and of itself. When people know where they're headed and how far they've gotten, they feel better, are physically healthier, and achieve higher levels of performance. So make sure that people get feedback on their progress toward goals regularly. It might come from you: "Hey, we've reached a project milestone. Well done. Let's celebrate!"
9. Better yet, create ways for people to monitor themselves so they know how much progress they've made. The software we're using to write this book enables us at any instant to compute how many pages, words, paragraphs, lines, and characters we've written. We know what our contract asks for in the number of pages, and we know the deadlines. We're completely self-monitoring. That sure feels better than getting bugged by the editor every day, asking, "What progress are you making? How are you doing?"
10. The next time-and every time-you recognize an individual or a group for doing the right thing or doing things right, make sure to announce the standard. Announce it at the beginning, and repeat it at the end. Say something like, "One of the things we stand for around here is knock-your-socks-off service to our customers. Just yesterday, Bev did something to exemplify that value. Let me tell you about it.... And remember, just as Bev did, let's knock their socks off every time!"
11. If your company gives bonuses, start looking for ways to link some portion of the bonus to how people are meeting or exceeding the cherished values of the organization. When it's time to hand out the checks, attach a short note mentioning the actions that exemplified the values. At one company we've worked with, 33 percent of the bonus-eligible managers' incentive is directly linked to the extent to which they've lived out the values. Their ratings come from their direct reports. Now, that's putting your money where your mouth is.
12. Take a class or read a book on how to set goals.
13. Take a class or read a book on how to give performance feedback.
14. Participate in a retreat, the purpose of which is to explore meaning and purpose in life and work.
15. Think of someone you admire who exemplifies living a principle-centered life. Interview that person. Find out how they discovered their own values.
16. Invent or select some symbolic ways of visibly marking people's progress, as the scouts and the military do. Pins, ribbons, badges, patches, medals, certificates, etc., that signify "You made it to the next level" send meaningful messages to the receivers and their friends, families, and colleagues.
17. Watch *Eyes on the Prize*, the film on the civil rights movement, the next time it's on TV, or rent it at the video store. It's a compelling story of the power of purpose and the dedication people make to realizing a dream.
18. Keep your eyes on the prize!

## **THE SECOND ESSENTIAL: EXPECT THE BEST**

19. Remember the principle of the self-fulfilling prophecy: people tend to act consistently with your expectations of them. The Pygmalion effect also applies to you, so be positive and optimistic about your own ability to lead, as well as about the achievements of the people around you. How? Surround yourself with positive people

who can remind you of your strengths and abilities.

20. Practice smiling. This is not a joke. Smiling and laughing release naturally occurring chemicals in our bodies that fight off depression and uplift our moods. Try it.
21. Ask yourself this question: "Do I honestly believe everyone on my team can achieve the goals we've set and live by the values we've agreed upon?" If your answer is yes, make sure that you communicate this to them verbally and nonverbally. If your answer is no, figure out what you can do to change your answer to yes. What changes have to be made, in you and in them, for that to happen? Make them. You can do it.
22. The next time you talk to one of your constituents about a difficulty she's having with a project, make sure that sometime during the conversation you say, "I know you can do it," or words to that effect. And you better mean it.
23. Assign people to important tasks that aren't part of their defined job. Let them know you have assigned them these unusual jobs because you have strong belief in them—that you believe they have the capacity to excel at it. Make a binding commitment to supply them the training, resources, authority, and coaching they need to be successful.
24. Like Don Bennett's daughter (Chapter Five), the next time someone is struggling to succeed, find a way to walk beside him for the most difficult part of the climb, telling him, "Come on, you can do it. I know you can do it. You're the best in the world."
25. Practice envisioning. Right now, picture a sunset at the beach, the waves washing against the shore. Picture a gently flowing stream in the middle of a cool forest on a warm day. Picture a meadow of yellow wildflowers in full bloom in springtime. Picture a hundred-foot waterfall rushing to a valley floor in early spring as the snow melts. Can you imagine these scenes? Do you get a picture in your mind's eye? Of course you do. Sit down with another person and describe these scenes to each other in all their rich color and texture. The ability to create mental images and clearly communicate them to others is a critical leadership skill.
26. Apply this same visualizing ability to imagine scenes in your mind's eye of what you want to accomplish as a leader. Picture yourself and your team reaching the summit of your aspirations, whatever that might be currently. Describe the scene to others in great detail just as you described the sunset at the beach in the previous item. Get others to join you. Create a richly textured image of your future, and see it, smell it, taste it, hear it, touch it. Make it as real as possible. The better you are at doing this, the more likely your group will reach higher levels of performance. It's no fantasy.
27. Buy a few inspirational posters and put them on the walls of your facility. If you don't like the ones in the catalogues, then find posters of images that symbolize the spirit you'd like to promote in your workplace. Through these or other means, find some way to make your positive expectations visible.
28. Walk around your facility and examine the images that are on the walls. Are they images that communicate positive messages or negative ones? Analyze your company's annual report, your own and your executive's speeches, the company newsletter, and other forms of corporate communication. Are the messages positive or negative? Do whatever you can to change the images to positive ones. Remember what historian Fred Polak said (in Chapter Five) about the rise and fall of cultures. When images are positive, cultures and organizations are in ascendance.
29. The next time you are involved in coaching or training people in acquiring new knowledge or a new skill, make sure you say out loud that you know this skill is something that can be acquired. Tell them they can learn it. Even if you think this is obvious, say it out loud anyway. It's important to send the message to your learners. Of course, you've got to believe it yourself, so if in reality you don't think a particular skill can be learned and that it's innate instead, then please do everyone a favor and don't accept an assignment to teach it.
30. It's often said that the real way to tell if someone is a leader is by how many constituents become leaders themselves. Who in your organization has this kind of reputation? Who has a reputation for inspiring, uplifting, and developing esteem in others? Ask around if you don't know. Observe what these individuals do by asking to

shadow them for a couple days. Ask them for pointers on how they do what they do well.

31. Read the children's story *The Little Engine That Could* to your child or someone else's child. Ask the child about something she thought she couldn't do but did. What was that like? What helped the turnaround? Apply your insights to your organization.

32. Read George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. This is the classic novel on the power of positive expectations. Or rent and watch the video of *My Fair Lady*. The film version of Shaw's novel, it portrays the power of belief in self. Watch how Eliza Doolittle evolves through a growing sense that she can learn.

33. Learn how to meditate. Practice it daily. Get in touch.

34. Listen to a tape on mental imagery and mental rehearsal. Practice it daily. (Caution: this is one kind of tape you don't want to listen to in your car.)

35. Visit your local library and rent a video or CD of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech delivered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., in 1963. Listen to it for the word pictures he paints. You'll be able to see what he says. Now try to add word pictures to your own speeches.

### **THE THIRD ESSENTIAL: PAY ATTENTION**

36. Leave your desk for fifteen minutes every day, solely for the purpose of learning more about each of your key constituents. Who are they? What are their needs and aspirations? What do they need to find greater joy in their work? How do they like to be rewarded?

37. When you're out there caring by wandering around (CBWA), take along a pocket notebook to record the things people are doing right and the right things people are doing. Make sure to record not only the names but also the details about setting, people involved, how the act is special, and how it fits with the standards you're trying to reinforce. Use this later when telling your recognition stories.

38. Make note, also, of the kinds of "gifts" or recognition people appreciate (or don't appreciate). Remember, for some people, all that glitters is not gold!

39. Start a file of recognition ideas on your computer or in a journal that you can carry in your briefcase, purse, or pocket. Record in it ideas that come to you for recognizing and rewarding individual contributions and for celebrating team accomplishments. Keep your eyes and ears open for those moments we all encounter when we experience or witness particularly effective events of this sort. You might also pick up some ideas from television dramas, movies, or books. A journal where you can jot down these ideas becomes a tool for remembering good ideas and also for focusing your search for new ways to encourage the heart.

40. Don't wait for a ceremony as a reason to recognize someone. If you notice something that deserves immediate recognition, go up and say something like, "I was just noticing how you handled that customer complaint. The way you listened actively and responded was a real model of what we're looking for. What you've done is an example to everyone. Thank you." If you happen to be carrying around a few extra coupons for a free drink at the local coffee or juice shop, here's an opportunity to give one out.

41. Get a small annual calendar with space to write the birthdays of your key constituents. Also write in it the anniversary dates of their joining the organization. Send a note or drop by for a visit on those dates.

42. Walk in another's shoes for a while. Volunteer to do someone's job. Roll up your shirtsleeves and jump in. People appreciate your efforts, and you gain a better understanding of what your colleagues do.

43. Wander around your workplace for the express purpose of finding someone in the act of doing something that exemplifies your organization's standards. Give that person recognition on the spot.

44. Make a short list of those people who are performing their work above stated expectations. Pay particular attention to those who best embody the team's values and priorities. Then jot down at least three ways to single out these people and praise or

reward them over the next couple of weeks. Don't wait too long to put your plans into action.

45. Imagine that someone has followed you around with a video camera and filmed your daily wanderings. Now imagine that you are watching the video. What behavioral signals are you sending? Are they ones that communicate that you're looking for people doing things right and doing the right things? Or do they announce that the sheriff's in town? What specific behaviors can you adopt that communicate I'm here to find all the positive examples I can?

46. Make a list from memory of the objects that each of your key constituents has in her workspace. Once you've done this, go pay a visit to see how accurate your memory is. Now go spend time with the people whose workspaces you couldn't recall-in their space.

47. If you're a virtual company and don't have the opportunity to visit everyone you work with, ask people to describe to you in detail their workspace. Ask them probing questions about what's on their desk, what's on the walls, etc. Tell them you're trying to get a feel for their space in the same way that you do with the people down the hall whose space you actually do see.

48. Right now, pay attention to your breathing. What do you notice? Write it down. Your ability to attend to the most common and immediate elements of your daily life helps you be more attuned to what is going on around you.

49. Right now, pay attention to your heartbeat. What do you notice? Write it down.

50. Right now, pay attention to the sounds in your immediate space. What do you notice? Write it down.

51. Next time you go to the movies, stay for the credits. Pay attention to how the makers of the film manage to recognize virtually everyone who took part. Can you do that with everyone who works on the "movie" you're making right now? If not, invent a way to make sure that you can capture the names and contributions of everyone. Think about the end of your movie, and watch the credits roll.

52. The next time you watch an awards ceremony like the Oscars, pay particular attention to which acceptance speeches you like and which you don't like, and why. Incorporate the best of these ideas into acts of recognition that you carry out.

53. The next time you listen to someone talk about himself, his work, and what's important, listen with your "eyes and heart," not just your ears and brain. What do you notice in listening with eyes and heart that you don't in listening with ears and brain?

54. For the next lunch hour, hang out at the table with your team. At our company's Palo Alto office, Friday is pizza-for-lunch day. The company buys, and we all sit around and chat about "stuff." There's no agenda. We just get to know each other and talk about whatever's on our minds.

55. At your next team meeting, disclose something about yourself that others don't know. We're not talking deep dark secrets here, just something that enables others to get to know you a little better: the number of brothers and sisters you have, what it was like growing up in your house, your first memory of working in the organization, your favorite screw-up of all time, anything that makes you more open to others. Encourage the same in them. Remember, openness leads to trust, and trust is essential to your personal credibility. Try practicing more openness.

56. Ask your colleagues for feedback about your performance, particularly about how you are doing in encouraging the heart. The ground rules are that you can only ask questions for clarification and that you can only respond by saying thank you.

## **THE FOURTH ESSENTIAL: PERSONALIZE RECOGNITION**

57. Think back on a time when someone encouraged your heart meaningfully and memorably. What did she do to make it special for you? How did she personalize it for you? Make note of the lessons you learned, and apply them.

58. Tell people in your organization your own "most meaningful recognition story." Ask them to tell theirs. What are the common lessons?

59. Talk with friends outside of work. Ask them to tell you stories about receiving recognition that particularly moved or affected them. Sometimes, great ideas can come out of such talks because you can share the inner experience of how people are affected by having their efforts acknowledged.
60. The next time you give a speech on behalf of your organization and you have to wear a name tag, wear the name of someone in your organization other than yours. (Maj. Gen. John Stanford did that once when he gave a speech at Santa Clara University. He wanted to communicate how important his aide-de-camp was to him, so he wore that person's name tag.) Notice how it feels to do this. How might it feel to be the other person, knowing that you're wearing his name tag?
61. At the end of one of your speeches, say something like, "My colleagues at Challenge, Inc., couldn't be with me today. I sure hope I represented them well."
62. As they now do at many airlines, give your customers, vendors, and other employees coupons to award to people who do something exceptional. Make it possible for these coupons to be redeemed for some kind of prize.
63. Make every effort to personalize every recognition event so that the man or woman receiving it feels uniquely appreciated. For the avid bicyclist in your office, for instance, recognize them with a small plastic model of a bike for the desktop; attach a note that says, "For a quick spin around the block when you're working late."
64. Try doing what Carl English did (in Chapter Seven): write a thank-you note to a loved one of the person in your organization who has done something special.
65. Send champagne or sparkling cider and flowers to the family of your next Super Person of the Month.
66. Invite the recipient's family to attend a special-recognition ceremony.
67. Every time you plan an act of recognition, ask yourself, "What can I do to make sure this is special, dramatic, and unique for this person? How can I do the equivalent of putting a motorized flag on the machine, or a part in the freezer, or a letter addressed to the associate's son?"
68. Every time you plan a recognition ceremony and expect to present some kind of gift, ask yourself, "Is this something the individual would appreciate?"
69. Create symbols for certain kinds of recognition in your organization. We use the zebra. It's just amazing how many zebra T-shirts, zebra cups, zebra mugs, zebra pencils, zebra pins, zebra cards, and zebra what-have-you there are! Be creative devising your rewards; have some fun with them.
70. Enlist the help of someone who knows well the person you intend to recognize. Ask him what the person likes, what would make it special. Through this sort of grassroots involvement, you are more likely to personalize while linking rewards to actual performance.
71. Publish captioned photos or the names of people you want to recognize in a company newsletter, annual report, or department handout. If there's room, include a brief story describing the person's special contribution.
72. Create your organization's Hall of Fame: an area for small plaques, or even handwritten notes, recognizing all the people who've done extraordinary things.
73. Your imagination and creativity are the only limits to personalizing recognition. Use them both.
74. Make a contribution to an employee's favorite charity and announce it at a company party or department get-together.
75. Display banners in the company cafeteria, with the name of the person or persons being thanked.
76. Take a class or workshop on creativity.
77. Take a course in drawing, painting, or photography.
78. Learn to use a software program for creating exciting graphics.
79. Take a course about advertising and promotion to study words and images that inspire people; translate those methods into encouraging the heart.
80. Say thank you personally every time you appreciate something someone does,

anywhere and anytime. It's good practice, and good manners.

## **THE FIFTH ESSENTIAL: TELL THE STORY**

82. More than likely, you are planning to recognize some individual or group in the next few days. Whatever else you do, be sure to tell the story of what was done in as much detail as you can. If possible, figure out a way to reenact the incident. There must be someone in your organization who is a great storyteller; spend some time talking with her about how she came to be so good at it. Pick up whatever tips you can.

83. At the next opportunity, tell someone the story of your most meaningful recognition.

84. Make the only agenda item for one of your team meetings that each person tells the story of his or her most meaningful recognition.

85. Make the only agenda item of another team meeting the telling of stories on the theme of "I heard something good about you," related to someone they work with.

86. Never pass up any opportunity to publicly relate true stories about how people in your organization have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Hallways, elevators, cafeterias, as well as meeting rooms are all acceptable venues for telling a good story.

87. If at all possible, whenever you give out recognition try to do it in the place where the accomplishment actually occurred. If that's not feasible, at least make sure to describe the scene to people so that they can picture it in their own minds. All good stories create a sense of place.

88. Don't forget voice mail and e-mail; these are good media for telling stories as well. Although people tend to want shorter stories in these formats, they're still helpful ways to disseminate good news.

89. Keep a journal. Record in as much detail as you can the critical incidents of the day. Capture as many examples of outstanding and commendable performance as you can. The practice of observing and recording is important in building your skills in storytelling.

90. Take a page out of 3M's book, and incorporate storytelling into your next strategic planning process. Pledge that you will no longer accept bulleted points on overheads as an acceptable plan for the future.

91. What's the best movie you ever saw that really tells a compelling story? Rent it on video and watch it again. What lessons can you learn from your favorite movie? How can you incorporate these lessons into your leadership practice?

92. Ask a professional storyteller—yes, they exist—to participate in one of your leadership seminars, and get everyone to learn some tips on good storytelling.

93. Buy a CD or tape of one of your favorite children's stories. Listen to how a professional tells a story. Try reading the story yourself in the same way the professional does.

94. At the next holiday when you're together with your family or friends, volunteer to read a story fit for the occasion.

95. Take a class in storytelling. Attend the next storytellers' convention in your town.

96. At dinner every night, don't just talk about the day; tell a story about it. Describe the rich details of place, people, and feelings. Use your home as a practice stage.

97. Attend a reading at a local bookstore featuring a fiction writer you like. Listen to how he reads his stories. Learn from his example how to express yourself in stories.

98. Take an improvisational-theater class.

99. Interview an actor who does improvisational theater. Ask her to share some ways of taking a simple idea from the audience and turning it into a story.

## **THE SIXTH ESSENTIAL: CELEBRATE TOGETHER**

101. Visit a party store in your neighborhood. You can pick up countless ideas on how

to make something more festive.

102. Visit an organization that you know has a reputation for being a really fun place to work (The MathWorks and Southwest Airlines are just two examples). Find out what makes them so inventive when it comes to celebration.

103. Attend local athletic events. Watch cheerleaders, coaches, and players as they celebrate small and large victories. Focus on their enthusiasm and energy. Watch how people express this enthusiasm as well as how those who receive it are affected. Notice how you are affected by the celebrations.

104. At a wedding or other celebratory event, make mental notes on what you like, or what really inspires you about the event. See if you can incorporate some of these ideas into your plans for encouraging the heart.

105. If your organization doesn't do much celebrating, start an informal celebration task force. It probably has to be a skunk-works operation, since, with a few notable exceptions, CEOs don't tend to sponsor these kinds of projects. Make it your job to liven up the place, borrowing where you can from the inventiveness of others and creating your own fun and games at work.

106. Put up a "bragging board" in your workspace. Post notes of appreciation from customers, vendors, and colleagues. Invite everyone to contribute notes and pictures of themselves and others.

107. End each of your team meetings with a round of public praising.

108. In times of change and transition, people need to get together to talk about how they're feeling and doing. Social support is most critical at times like this so schedule regular opportunities for people to lean on each other. It might even be helpful for you to get an outside facilitator to work with your group if the situation is particularly intense.

109. Be sure to mark particularly significant transitions with special celebrations-things like company anniversaries, a merger or acquisition, the launch of a new product, etc. You might not be able to build a temporary nine-hole miniature golf course in your building (as The MathWorks, in Chapter Nine, did), but what else can you do to make the event unique and memorable?

110. Give every celebration a theme, and always include a surprise at some time during the evening.

111. Formal events are important, but informal ones are likely to be more frequent and accessible. Organize informal ways to bring people together: special lunches, picnics, noontime athletic events (volleyball, shooting baskets, softball game, etc.), anything that promotes camaraderie and interpersonal support.

112. When organizing a celebration, make sure everyone knows what it's about: dates, reason for celebration, where it is to be held, how people become eligible to take part. We all know how it feels to be left out, so pay particular attention to communicating these occasions.

113. Get people involved in planning celebrations. But don't try to do it all yourself. Joint planning offers social support, gets people to laugh together, and generates more creativity than if one person handles everything.

114. Show up in a costume at your next group celebration. Hey, if Sam Walton, at one time the richest man in America, was willing to put on a hula skirt and dance on Wall Street, then we all have permission to dress in a clown suit for a special event. Besides, people love it when they can laugh with the boss like that. Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines and Harry Quadracci of Quad Graphics (to name a couple of CEOs) have made big successes out of their public displays of playfulness.

115. Put a microwave in the vicinity of your office door. At about 3:00 P.M. each day, cook up some popcorn. Invite folks to take a break and join you for a brief discussion about how the day's going. If popcorn isn't your thing, how about an ice cream vending machine or a basket of fruit?

116. Always keep a few party favors handy. You never know when you might want to throw a spontaneous celebration should an employee announce a wedding, a birth, or other personal achievement.



117. Always keep a few spare tickets to the local cinema in your drawer. Surprise someone with a night out for two (or more) at the movies.
118. Just for the heck of it, around noon someday soon, say to everyone, "Let's go to the movies," and go take in a matinee.
119. Print up note cards that say at the top, "I heard something good about you...." Leave enough blank space for people to write a personalized note to a coworker, describing the particular situation that is deemed to deserve recognition. Use them yourself to recognize your employees, but also give every employee a stack of these cards to hand out and encourage their use for recognizing one another. Provide a bulletin board in a highly visible place, where people who've received cards can display them.
120. One Southern California hospital has instituted the use of "Catch Me" buttons. Every time a manager or fellow employee notices someone doing something right, she tells him about it and presents him with her own button. The buttons are redeemed at the end of the month for prizes and awards.
121. There's a nursing home in Tennessee, adjacent to the main hospital, which recognizes its staff with a simple pin that says, "Caught caring!" In an environment where patients often can't say thank you, these pins mean a great deal to staff members. They represent tangible evidence that someone recognizes how much they give.
122. Plan festive celebrations for even the smaller milestones that your team reaches. Don't wait until the whole project is completed before you celebrate. Immediate acknowledgment keeps energy and enthusiasm high.
123. Set aside one day each year as a special organizationwide celebration day, much like Independence Day or Mardi Gras.
124. Go to clown school so that you can learn to laugh and joke around more. Humor is something people look for in leaders. And that's no joke. (Ouch!)
125. Once a quarter, go out for an evening at the local comedy club. Some of them offer classes. Take some lessons if you can.
126. At one of your next meetings, make the only agenda item discussion of how people are feeling at that moment about working in the organization.
127. Take care of your own needs for support. Develop a relationship with at least one person with whom you can talk about your grandest hopes and worst fears, your greatest achievements and your biggest flops.

## **THE SEVENTH ESSENTIAL: SET THE EXAMPLE**

128. Do a DWYSYWD audit (recall Chapter Ten). Take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle. On the left-hand side record your values: the principles by which you say you want to lead your organization. On the right-hand side, record your actions: what you do regularly to live out each of your values. The only way to get any value out of this exercise, of course, is to be completely self-honest. If you don't see yourself doing anything to live out a value, then leave the space blank. If you think your behaviors are contrary to your espoused values, then write down that admission. Grade yourself on how you're doing. Do your values and actions line up? Where are you strong? Where do you have opportunities for improvement? Make a plan to better align values and actions.
129. Now do a DWWSWWD audit (recall Chapter Ten). Using the same process that you used in #128 above, assess how you are doing in living up to the values you share as a group.
130. Become more visible. You're supposed to be setting the example, and people have to see you doing what you say.
131. Get personally involved in as many recognition events and celebrations as possible. If you don't attend staff celebrations, you're sending the message that you're not interested. That lack of interest is sure to be mirrored back to you.
132. Identify those experiences in your life that truly inspire you, and then bring this kind of inspiration into your conversations with employees.
133. Write and deliver at least three thank-you notes every day. We've never heard

anyone complain about being thanked too much, but we've all heard lots of complaints about being thanked too little!

134. Look around for a person you know or have heard about who is much better at encouraging the heart than you are. Ask for his advice and some coaching.
135. Ask a colleague to give you feedback on how you are encouraging the heart. Ask her for suggestions on how to improve.
136. Fit some form of caring by walking around (CBWA; Chapters Two and Six) into your daily routine. Take time to find out what at least two people are doing to exemplify the standards that have been set. Let them know you're curious.
137. Every time you start a meeting, make sure to affirm your personal commitment to the values that you all share. There's something about frequent repetition of a commitment that starts you moving in that direction. The more people you tell and the more often you say it, the harder it is to back out.
138. Post your values where you and others can see them.
139. Ensure that you identify a positive role model for each of the seven essentials of encouraging the heart. Make sure you can envision in your mind someone who does each of these practices well.
140. Practice the seven essentials regularly and extensively. If possible, sessions should be done with a coach or trusted colleague present so that you can get feedback on how you're doing.
141. Give yourself some credit for practicing and applying the seven essentials. Find a way to reward yourself for doing what you say.
142. Like John Schallau (in Chapter Ten), create your own recognition reminder notice, screen saver, or other device for making visible the ways in which you can encourage the heart.
143. Put a sign on your door or cubicle that reads "Fun!"
144. Think of a person in your department or organization who exemplifies one of your organization's standards. Think of another person who exemplifies another standard. Find a way to make these individuals peer coaches for others.
145. Make sure that others know about your own efforts to model encouragement. Tell people stories about how you tried and succeeded, or tried and failed. Share the lessons you've learned.
146. Keep a journal of your experiments with encouraging the heart. What works for you? What doesn't? What lessons have you learned? How has this effort changed you as a leader?
147. The next time someone recognizes you, make note of your own thoughts and feelings. (Experience becomes the best teacher, but only if we reflect on it.) Then send that person a thank-you note expressing appreciation for what you learned.
148. Offer to teach a course on encouraging the heart. The best way to learn something is to teach it to someone else. You certainly remember how much more you prepared for something when you actually had to be the one in front of the classroom.
149. Practice "living with encouraging the heart." That is, create a plan to make it part of your life, say, for a week, in which you must include some element of encouraging the heart at work, at home, in the neighborhood, while shopping, while eating out, and while participating in an athletic activity. For one week, see what it's like to live with this practice.
150. Read *1,001 Ways to Reward Employees*, *1,001 Ways to Energize Employees*, and *301 Ways to Have Fun at Work* for 2,303 more ways to encourage the heart. (See the endnotes for Chapter Ten for reference information.)

**Oh, and here's one more for you!**

151. Now, give yourself a standing ovation for having read this book! Your desire to encourage the heart is worth celebrating. Thank you.

Get together with friends and colleagues and try to generate your own list of 150 ways to

encourage the heart. Send us any of your ideas, and we'll find a way to share them with others. You can fax them to Jim Kouzes at (650) 326-7065 or Barry Posner at (408) 554-4553. Or send e-mail to [jkouzes@tpgls.com](mailto:jkouzes@tpgls.com) or [bposner@scu.edu](mailto:bposner@scu.edu).