

Peter Reding's 60th Xavier Reunion - Full Speech Script

These were the 10 “Aims” that the Jesuits held for each of us coming into our freshman year . . . and for all 4 years. I will share them briefly:

The 10 Aims

- 1. Wise Decisions**
- 2. Correct Expression**
- 3. Disciplined Emotions**
- 4. Refine Tastes**
- 5. Steel in Wills**
- 6. Build Bodies**
- 7. Habits of Study**
- 8. Stimulate Ambition**
- 9. Social Attitudes**
- 10. Solid Leadership**

My mother received these 10 Aims the summer of 1962. I do not remember seeing any of these until 3 weeks ago when Paul Rossi said he had received them from Kevin Queenin.

Had I seen these at 13 years old, I would not have understood most of them. But the one that speaks to "Habits of Study" would have scared me even more than I already was!

*You see, I really hated school. I was frightened of teachers. And the one thing I did know was that I was a poor student, and a slow learner - - - - because I was told by my remedial reading teacher that I was reading at a 5th-grade level. The idea of a strict Academic High School had my guts in a knot, ... and getting a mandatory "Summer Book Reading List" to select 3 or 5 or 10 of them might as well said . . . **"Peter, why don't you just flunk yourself now and drop out of Xavier before you embarrass yourself"** . . . (That was F – L – U – N – K yourself)*

*Despite my academic trepidations, my **Xavier** education and experience have had a profound impact on my life in 3 particular ways as I look back on it now, and I will share briefly on each*

*The **first way** **Xavier** helped me . . . was learning the lesson that sticking with my studies during my 4 years proved to me that with hard work and focus, I could succeed . . . **and I did for the next 20 years:***

- ***I graduated Marquette University** (another Excellent Jesuit University) with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration,*
- ***I was commissioned and served in the USMC** as a commissioned officer for 6 years,*
- *In my final year and a half in the Marine Corps I studied and **earned my MBA** with a 3.9 Grade Point (out of 4.0) from Pepperdine University,*

*The **second way** **Xavier** impacted my life . . . in retrospect . . .*

- *. . . was the very harsh and brutal reality at 37 that **I was miserable, . . . empty, . . . and living a life that had me absolutely afraid to share with anyone – how miserable I really felt. . . .***

- *I had to confront the most basic and fundamental questions that **every conscious human being faces sometime in their life . . .***
 - ***Who am I?, ...***
 - ***Why am I here?***
 - ***What is my Life's Purpose? and***
 - ***How do I find out who I was Created to Be?***

***Xavier** had instilled curiosity, research, self-care, and self-knowing qualities . . . and the greatest TRUTHS of all that were buried under my: **miserable**, and **empty life**:*

- ***God created me, . . .***
- ***God endowed me with a set of gifts and talents, and . . .***
- ***God endowed me with a Life Purpose***

It took me 4 looong, agooooonizing, soul-searching years of gut-wrenching inner work,

- *I started reading – books by Hazelton*
- *Being a “Certified Over-achiever-aholic” . . . (just having only one 12-step program was just not going to be enough . . . Sooo, while living in Tokyo, Japan . . . I signed up for the 36-step package-program . . . AA, ACOA, and Co-Dependents Anonymous!!! With at least 3 meetings per week. . . . and*
- *Virtually everyday . . . I wrote my deepest and most raw self-reflection, emotions, frustrations, in my personal journal . . .*
- *Slowly . . . I started making healthier decisions, in relationships, . . . work, . . . what I eat . . . what I drank, . . . who I kept in my life . . . and who I released from my life*
- *. . . ultimately it was a complete mind, body, and Spirit catharsis – - - I can also tell you it was the hardest and most agonizing work I have ever done in my life.*
- *And, as I reflect on this 4-year period of my life – I am not sure I could have gotten thru this without (what the Jesuits’ AIM of **Steel** represents) AS WELL AS ---- the seed that got planted in my deep sub-consciousness while at **Xavier** . . . that SEED WAS A DEEP BELIEF THAT **God created me with a Life Purpose!!!!***

Finally, the **third way** that **Xavier** has influenced my life over these past 30 years: - - - - And the irony - - - - (remember at the beginning of this chat ---- how much I hated the whole idea of learning and how excruciating learning, . . . teachers, . . . reading, was for me? ? ? ? ? . . . while at **Xavier** . . .

Well OF COURSE . . . AND . . . you guessed it:

- I have been a FULL-TIME teacher, educator, and facilitator of learning. AND loving it!
- I co-created the **Inspired Learning Model™**, (the positive-reenforcing-learning-model) . . . And have taught over 1,000 educators and corporate trainers how to employ it.
- I have facilitated the LEARNING AND MASTERY of Professional Coaching with more than 3,000 business leaders and executives, parents, trainers, and professional coaches . . . these past 30 years.
- I have held – and still do hold a sacred space for World-changing Visionaries – without giving them advise, - - - I hold a space for these Visionaries (like the Jesuits held the SPACE for me - - - FOR EACH OF US!
- Through these past 30 years of teaching, and coaching, ... one truth has stood out above all the rest:

As a teacher, a parent, or a fellow classmate, we can support the learner's progress—or retard it. The environment we create for other learners is never neutral.

Here is an insight I've shared with other facilitators of Learning

The witnessing of . . . (the INNATE learning process)

When a child takes their first step . . .

What is our natural – visceral reaction as a witness???

Joy!

Cheering!

Celebration!

Getting your camera/phone out to record this most significant event in world history !!!!!

and, and, . . . during this monumental celebration . . . there has **never** been Critique, Correction, or Advice!!!

Our natural and a visceral reaction is to clap – cheer – smile – celebrate another Human Being's Learning Process!!!!

Here is how it is different . . . in organized classrooms parents, trainers and teachers have been told – it is their responsibility to critique the learner – so they can correct what they are doing **wrong**. I have witnessed the opposite and have proven over these past 30 years that by celebrating what the learner got **RIGHT** accelerates the learner's leaning by up to 400% over critiquing.

I invite you to experiment with this with someone you love – maybe a grandchild . . .

Share with them that you want to do an experiment, and ask if they would like to participate. OR JUST Ask them **open-ended question** that starts with "What" - like:

- "What are you most interested in knowing more about?"
- "What topic gets you most excited to know more about it?"

And then... **listen**. Deep and focused listening. No interrupting. Do not share about that topic from your perspective yet. Instead, ask them another open-ended question:

- "What else about that have you found out?"

Celebrate and acknowledge their excitement and what they already know. Do NOT tell them what they need to do next, or how impractical that interest might be for a future career. NO NEGATIVE VIBE. This simple process reinforces what they already know and supports their deeper, organic learning.

AND when they come to you and ask you how they can "fit in" or "be like everyone else," you can repeat this profound quote to them:

"You are you! It is truer than true! There is no one in the world who is Youer than you!"
(Dr Suess) and you might add . . . "You know what, I love you just the way you are!"

This is legacy-building. This is what you will be remembered for . . . when your grandson or granddaughter is 70 years old!

As we look ahead to the legacy we leave behind, the torch passes to us. To hold the space for those around us to learn – to thrive – to find their own God-given Life Purpose . . . So I say:

“Thank you Xavier!

And, thank you Jesuits!”