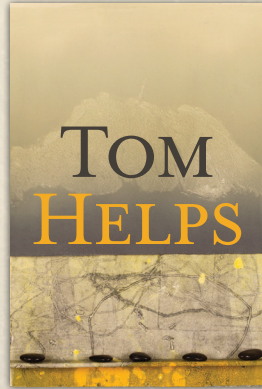


THE SEVEN INTENTIONS of Values-Centered Leadership™



TomHelps.org

99 Main Street
Kennebunk, ME 04043

“VALUES grow people, who in turn, grow VALUES - CENTERED institutions.”

Tom Chappell,
CEO and Co-founder of Tom's of Maine,
Creator of The Seven Intentions of Values-Centered Leadership™
Owner, Tom Helps

The Seven Intentions for Values-Centered Leadership™ is a program for leaders seeking to integrate their values into their personal and professional lives. The traditional model of business management has little space for personal values in the development of policies and priorities. As a result, mission statements can ring hollow and are not fundamentally embraced by the workforce. There is a significant gap between employees' personal values and their work practice. The principles of The Seven Intentions program are designed to integrate these important values into the organizational mission and everyday practices. The result is a workforce that is focused, energized, and creative, becoming more cohesive and actively applying the mission statement in all aspects of company life. Communication becomes more honest and forthright, hidden agendas are abandoned, and the organization becomes significantly more productive. As a result, its value to employees, customers, and shareholders increases.

Enterprises, both for-profit, and not-for-profit, carry a responsibility to create and pursue missions that reflect and further the above-stated values and thus protect the common goodness and best interest of all people. Organizational leaders can achieve, through mindfulness and intention, an integration of these shared values with the aims of their enterprises, including high performance and profit.

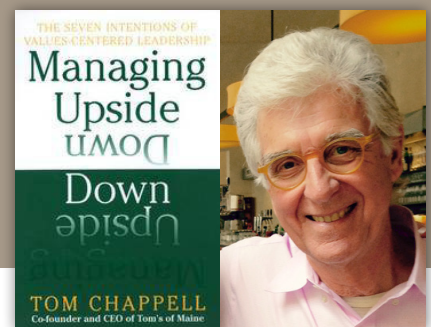
Executives who have dedicated themselves to The Seven Intentions Program have made significant changes in their lives. We refer to these outcomes as the Seven Intentions Promises.

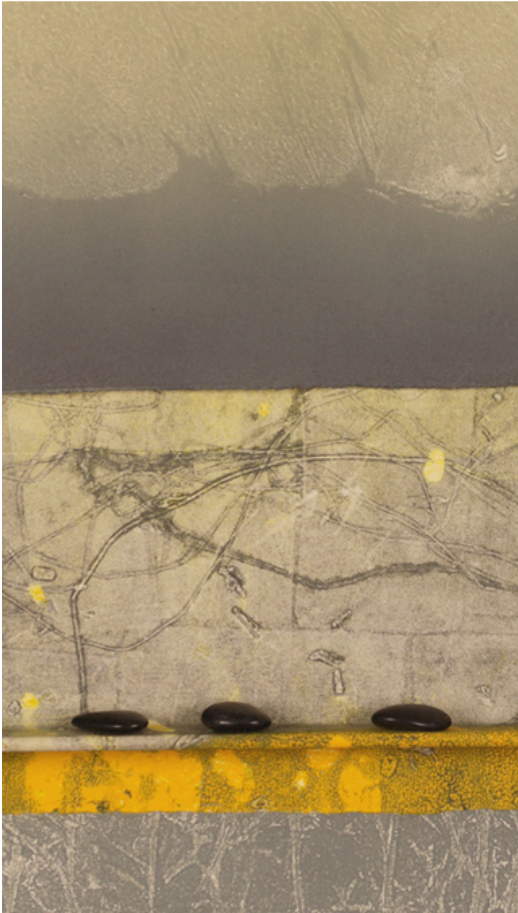
The PROMISES:

- a clearer sense of personal and professional direction
- a deeper connection to personal values
- greater clarity on how one can serve the organization and community
- more intense passion and creativity in work goals
- increased honesty, motivation, innovation, productivity, and community within the organization
- becoming a model of leadership centered in values
- a sense of belonging to a fellowship of others seeking the same goals
- a greater sense of meaning to life

The Seven Intentions of Values-Centered Leadership™

was created by Tom Chappell during his journey of building Tom's of Maine, a socially and environmentally responsible company. Tom obtained a Masters of Theological Studies at Harvard Divinity School alongside his entrepreneurial journey. His book *Managing Upside Down* is the blueprint for the Seven Intentions Program, now part of a new company formed by Tom called **Tom Helps**. Through this leadership program and other **Tom Helps** tools, it is Tom's hope to inspire a new understanding of one's common quest for answers to “who am I,” “what can I do that is meaningful,” and “how do I find my way.”





Values-Centered Is ...

- Integrated Reality,
not an Either-Or Mindset
- Holistic, not Siloed
- Interdependent, not Isolated
- Head and Heart Integration
- Human, not Artificial
- Intentionality
requiring New Tools

The Concept of “Two Worlds” from Martin Buber, I and Thou

GAIN

- Organize
- Calculate
- Select
- Train
- Respond
- Manage

GOODNESS

- Listen
- Affirm
- Play
- Share
- Talk
- Imagine

Our Concept of Values Integration

Integrating
the mind
and heart.

THE SEVEN INTENTIONS

1. CONNECT WITH GOODNESS
2. KNOW THYSELF, BE THYSELF
3. ENVISION YOUR DESTINY
4. SEEK COUNSEL
5. VENTURE OUT
6. ASSESS
7. PASS IT ON

SUMMARY

The Seven Intentions are action-oriented verbs that serve as tools to help a person discover one's unique gifts and destiny for meaningful and useful service. The program does not teach religion but allows for the presence of Spirit and guidance from a Source greater than ourselves, accessible to each of us personally.

The practicum is based upon a sequence of personal reflections which first encourages you to become grounded in humility by acknowledging your relation to others, including a power of goodness greater than self. From that orientation, you are asked to look inward to identify your own special gifts and strengths. Then, looking outward, you reflect on how you can best serve your culture or community with these personal strengths within the framework of a personal destiny vision. You are then asked to seek the counsel of those you trust for feedback on your vision, and proceed to create a strategy of how to reach your destiny. As you venture out, you take time to assess your progress and make any needed changes along the way. Finally, you “pass on” what you are learning about a values-centered journey.

Intention One: CONNECT WITH GOODNESS

The purpose of “connecting” is to create a personal orientation or relation to others, to nature, and to a higher power of goodness. In choosing relation over isolation, we become open to this force of goodness, willing to be led by it, and ready to do our part, our role, in the day.

Many of us in leadership roles assume an attitude of self-sufficiency in making choices that affect others, and the result can be behavior that is closed to suggestions and controlling of others' wills. By choosing to “connect” with a force of goodness greater than ourselves, we leaders are admitting that the solutions for today's needs will come from numerous sources, some from us, some from others.

Others in leadership are so open to process with others that they lose their own center and confidence in a multi-perspective environment. By choosing to Connect With Goodness, these leaders are seeking to be grounded in a source and faith that helps them keep their center and balance.

Just as an attitude of openness and relatedness assists in our professional roles, so does the idea of relationship help us to live fully. “Being in relation” allows us to be present to the dynamics of family, neighbors, society, nature, and other sources of faith. Through relation we live fully. The opposite of relation is isolation. And in the words of philosopher, Jonathan Edwards, “One alone is nothing”.

“Connecting” is a choice for being part of a relation more powerful than self.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR INTENTION #1

To enhance the value of goodness to us and to learn to use it, by connecting with it, as a source of wisdom and strength.

Intention Two: KNOW THYSELF, BE THYSELF

Most of us take a lifetime to understand who we are. Through life's experiences, some unpleasant, we gradually come to know what we value, what we believe, and what we have for gifts and skills to make a difference in the world.

Unless we know ourselves, we become the metal filings of magnets in the world. We become attached to what lures us in, and mere objects of other people's will. We become outer-directed and lost inside.

In our professional journeys, we can easily be attracted to money, power, control, and prestige. The pursuit of these ends leaves us empty and yearning for meaning.

By contrast, when we know what we value and act on those values, we derive meaning and personal fulfillment. Values-centered living or leadership is acting on our beliefs and our values. We become inner-directed and outwardly motivated.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR INTENTION #2

To become centered in a greater understanding of our own values, beliefs and giftedness.

Intention Three: ENVISION YOUR DESTINY

Destiny is the evidence in history that the employment of one's gifts is making a necessary difference in today's world. We suddenly, or gradually, discover that the world needs what we were given as gifts and values. And we begin to envision how these gifts and values can serve the needs of our community, family, or organized vocation. *Destiny* is, thus, a vision, even a plan in which we play a vital role. Through "envisioning" how our gifts can serve others, we begin to craft a plan that has meaning to us and to others. We set goals that make sense for who we are!

Destiny is not predestination by a Higher Power; there is no freedom in such an idea. For our part, we identify our gifts and our values, envision how they can be used in our world, and COMMIT to serve. Orchestration of our gifts and the gifts of others is the role of our "authorship" in the co-creation of a better world.

Our role is to serve with all that we are, while the presence of a Greater Power is to conduct. Footwork, faith, and commitment are all we have control over; the rest is a mystery beyond our control. Knowing the rightness of our choices is in the affirmations and the opening of doors. We gain confidence in our *Destiny* as our service to others continues to fulfill our sense of purpose.

In time, our *Destiny* finds us. The best we can do is to imagine how we can serve our culture effectively—and to respond fully.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR INTENTION #3

To envision how one's own gifts, beliefs and values correlate to a purpose in life that has meaning.

Intention Four: SEEK COUNSEL

By taking the first three steps toward Values-Centered Leadership, you know that the kind of success you are searching for does not happen by assuming that you are omniscient and giving orders. You have already taken some crucial steps away from the role of the traditional autocratic business leader.

Having left self-interest aside by Connecting With Goodness, you have recognized that two heads (and more) are better than one. You are now ready to seek out advice from the most diverse sources available. And in doing so, you will tap into more ideas and more creativity, thus increasing your opportunities. Values-Centered Leadership is a partnership, between you, goodness, and those with whom you share the journey to your Destiny.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR INTENTION #4

To discover the value in asking others for advice.

Intention Five: VENTURE OUT

Venturing Out is a way to describe how creativity is needed to imagine a way to our Destiny. Because we are holding to our values, we need to find new ways to overcome the competing tensions in our whole list of personal values.

Venture means risk; creativity is the solution. In a counsel-seeking fashion, leaders can be grounded in their values, reaching for their goals, and frustrated on how to get there.

This exercise will demonstrate how powerfully our imaginations serve to solve problems. We are creative people. *Venture Out* with new ways to reach your goals. The creative solution may not resemble current approaches, but it will make total sense to you and your partners because it is harmonious with your values.

Venture Out is about imagining, engaging in dialogue and taking a risk to bring forth a new creative solution.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR INTENTION #5

Discover how one's imagination is the source for creative and effective solutions.

Understand that the courage to risk is essential to Values-Centered Leadership.

Intention Six: ASSESS

We have been creating new solutions to reach our Destiny. Our values required new ways, greater risks. Now it is time to *Assess* how well these new ways are working out. We are accountable for our ideas and actions.

The assessment process seeks to reveal what is working, and not working. What needs to be changed, or affirmed? The values journey is a trial and error process, forever being refined by more and more experience and by ever increasing perspectives. Wisdom is the outcome of a learning process enriched by values, openness, multiple perspectives, and dialogue. Trust among each other is a bonus.

The assessment process is continuous, because learning is continuous. Edit where appropriate and affirm the good. Work together.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR INTENTION #6

We are accountable for our choices; assessment is an ongoing disciplined process.

Work together to reveal what is working and build a system of successful practices.

Intention Seven: PASS IT ON

The values journey is more trial and error from taking risks than an objective process of gaining knowledge. Wisdom needs to be shared. By *Passing On* our experience, faith, and hope with our learnings, we help empower others to become more productive.

As we *Pass On* our experience either in storytelling or more systematic processes, we help refine in ourselves the essential learnings. As teachers we find we are still learning the essence of our experience. The values-centered approach to teaching is designed to be a continuously shared, experiential process. When you tell your story of how a new way solved a complex problem, I hear both your experience and the experiences in my own life. Storytelling teaches by bringing common moments of life's learnings together between the storyteller and the listener.

Experiential learning is the essence of a values-centered teaching process. Rather than relying upon mental concepts to be communicated head to head, experiential learning places the coach and the student into the shoes of those who have passed before us. *Passing It On* recreates situations of learning so that the student experiences the wisdom to be passed on.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR INTENTION #7

To become aware of how we can pass on our learnings about values integration to others in our professional and personal lives.

Creativity In Art and Business

By Kate Cheney Chappell

Creativity is both a frame of mind and an act of expression. To be creative, I need to be open to the original in me; then I will be able to use my unique way of knowing the world to put a form to what I see, feel, and intuit. As an artist and a poet, my creativity takes shape in color and line, words and images. I make watercolors, monotypes installations, poems, and stories. In business, my creativity comes out in the form of new products, new systems, new ways of seeing the opportunities to serve customers.

In 25 years of developing new products for Tom's of Maine, I have never once known for sure how a new product would take shape. I found things turned out best when I suspended my belief in what could logically be predicted, and became willing to discover a new way. For example, when I was working on the first children's toothpaste, we were struggling to find a happy medium between good taste and low abrasivity. Our old all-calcium base was too chalky for the fruit flavors we knew children liked, and more abrasive than they needed. But when we tried silica (all other children's toothpaste used this base), it was too puckery. The solution came from discarding an either/or approach. I experimented with a hybrid "gel/paste." It was unique-never before used-both effective and palatable. A creative approach required me to discard what was common knowledge, and try a new way.



Kate Cheney Chappell
Moonbird VII: Sustenance, 2015
collagraph/monoprint

I hear so many people say, "I'm not a creative person." This is a habit of thinking about ourselves that can be challenged. I believe each of us contains vast stores of creative imagination. A sense of personal discovery can happen when we play. It's a matter of access. A safe, non-judgmental atmosphere is essential. We all know how to play-it's not a mystery-because we were all children once.

I started playing again as an adult, playing formally (which sounds like a paradox) around 1990 when I went to the Charles River Studio Workshop to explore new dimensions in my art making. It really freed me up-I began writing poetry again and I started working in mixed media and three dimensions. The process helped me in my new product development work in business. I now play regularly with a group of writers and artists.

ABOUT THE POETRY WE USE IN THE SEVEN INTENTIONS

By Kate Cheney Chappell

Although I am a visual artist, I began writing poetry at age 14, and rediscovered it ten years ago. When I did, I began reading the many contemporary poets we have, as well as some of the ancient mystics. What richness I found! I also discovered poetry in new places. David Whyte and James Autry were bringing poetry into the business setting, and people were hungry for it.

Seven years ago, I brought poetry into the workplace at Tom's of Maine. It soon became a valuable communication tool. We begin every Board Meeting with a poem and a related connecting exercise. At Mission council meetings, as well as meetings of the entire company, poems have become a catalyst for human exchange on a (sometimes surprisingly) deeply felt level. In poems, things can be said (and not said, yet touched on) that just do not make it into our surface conversation. We connect on a deeper level when we share our human joys or disappointments, and we bring that sense of connection into our work together. The William Stafford poem which follows, "A Ritual to Read to Each Other," speaks to the dangers of not knowing each other in this way.

Poetry is ... "the human soul entire," says Langston Hughes, "squeezed like a lemon or a lime, drop by drop into atomic words."

This concentrative aspect of poetry comes with its tight economy of words, and gives it the power to move us, to change the way we look at things. The poems chosen for each of the Seven Intentions are meant to evoke an aspect of the intention, and to lead us into deeper reflection on the issues at hand. As you listen to each poem, first savor the words, their sounds and rhythms, without trying to figure out the meaning. Then, notice what phrases capture your attention, what feelings come up for you. Think about what this means in *your life*.

The poets we use range from Rainer Maria Rilke, a German lyric poet of the early 20th century, to Mary Oliver, a Pulitzer Prize-winning American poet who lives and writes in Provincetown, Massachusetts.

*"Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."
-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Integrating personal values into work, home and community —

TOM O'BRIEN

Tom joined Tom's of Maine, in 1997 as COO after thirteen years at Procter & Gamble. He grew up in an entrepreneurial environment. He graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and received his MBA from Harvard Business School. His responsibilities included overseeing daily operations of the business including sales, marketing, finance, and manufacturing as well as working in partnership with the President on Strategic Planning.

"The first time I met Tom Chappell, back in 1996, we got together to talk about my coming to work for Tom's of Maine but we spent most of the time focusing on his dream of The Seven Intentions Program. I was fascinated with the concept, and it was around this idea where Tom and I first really connected.

The idea of The Seven Intentions is so wonderful and so needed in today's world where people are struggling to integrate their emotional lives with their practical lives. I saw The Seven Intentions Program and the idea of values-centered leadership as a way out for people. It's a way to help folks connect with their own values and encourages them to connect by drawing upon their inner strength.

As a person who worked in a multi-national company for many years, I found myself very much drawn to the idea of building a road map for folks to live more value-centered lives at home, in their professional environment, and in their community. I have done a lot of historical inner work, and I believe that you can draw strength from knowing yourself and what you value. I saw this as an opportunity to go through this work in a group where before I had done this type of work alone.

I think that The Seven Intentions allows people to discover something about themselves, how they relate their beliefs to others, and what shapes their destiny. I get really motivated by the Destiny Intention, and I believe that destiny is partly owned by you and partly owned by someone or something else. My understanding of destiny is what would your life look like if you truly acted on your values. When I first went through the exercise, I was single and living in an apartment. One year after going through The Seven Intentions, I was engaged to someone I had known for ten years, and two years later, I was married and had a six-month old son.

The folks who select The Seven Intentions are clearly people who are not afraid to seek, grow, and understand themselves, and this work is a wonderful way to create an awakening in an individual; to create fertile ground for living a more connected, rich, and fulfilled life. This work can help people find integration in their lives but it doesn't define values for folks. You have to get in touch with your own values which are based on personal history and cultural influences."

Clarifying a personal destiny —

ROGER MILLIKEN, JR.

Roger is President of Baskahegan Company, a forestry company started by his grandfather in 1920 that owns and manages 100,000 acres in eastern Maine. Roger first heard about The Seven Intentions during a talk Tom Chappell gave to an organization called Maine Businesses for Social Responsibility.

“I was at a place where I was ready to turn the compost in my life. There were many places where I felt I was working out of habit rather than passion. The Seven Intentions Program offered a structure to examine how I was choosing to live my life. I signed up.

I’m someone who had largely split my spiritual life from my business life. I work in a fairly conservative industry so I’ve chosen to keep a lot of what motivates me to myself. During this program, I began to examine how I was handicapping myself by being less than fully present. The workshops challenged me to look at how I might be able to take my values more fully into the organization and to the people I work with.

The part of the program that was most significant for me was the work that we did around personal heroes. Among others, I focused on Martin Luther King, Jr. I realized that I was drawn by his ability to bring people together around an ideal of the way life could be. Through the work I did with The Seven Intentions, I asked myself how I might incorporate and embody a similar quality of inspiration.

One of the advantages of The Seven Intentions, as opposed to other models for personal growth, is that it doesn’t try simply to create a euphoric experience. Instead, it invites you to integrate what you care about into your life and work. The tools learned at the workshop are ones that people can continue to use long after the group experience is over.

The premise is that if people are doing work that they think is important, that they care about, then everyone will be happier. This will ultimately create better work. Businesses with a commitment at the top to be values-driven and to be respectful of the values of each person who works in the company would benefit from The Seven Intentions work.

The Seven Intentions Program is about making a bridge between one’s core values and the expression of those values in the world - that’s the key and the heart of it for me.”

Connecting to the mission —

NICK FORSTER

Nick is founder and president of E-town, a nationally syndicated live radio show that features music and commentary. The radio show features the E-chievement Awards, at one time sponsored by Tom's of Maine, that recognizes remarkable volunteers.

“I had been a full-time professional musician for 15 years, touring, recording, and traveling all over the world. I grew up in the shadow of Peter Seeger and I watched the connection between music and social action. Music has the power to bring people together, but you can't just watch it happen, you have to get involved.

I interviewed Tom Chappell for my radio show, E-town, when his book, *The Soul of a Business*, first came out and we established a friendship based on mutual interests. Later, I was part of a group of people here in Boulder who became Tom's sounding board for The Seven Intentions which culminated into the work it is today. I was the only one who came from a mission-driven, non-profit viewpoint. The other folks were running successful companies who wanted to infuse more values and more intention into their businesses so it could make their corporate culture evolve, to ultimately make their businesses more meaningful and therefore more successful. My perspective was the inverse. ‘How can I take this business that is totally motivated by intention and heart and make it have more money?’ I learned that the Intentions were more universal than I thought.

This work helped me realize that I have customers. They may not buy widgets from us but they listen to the radio and they have to be taken care of like any customer base. The wisdom and the techniques involved with The Seven Intentions work are equally helpful for a non-profit organization as they are for for-profit corporations.

The variety of the perspectives represented by the other people with whom I was doing this work was one of the most engaging parts of the work itself. We have a tendency to group with like-minded people, finding our own clan. But the danger is of becoming isolated and of hearing your own story come back to you all the time. It helped me expand my understanding of both my work and my goals.

I brought The Seven Intentions work back to my workplace. We did it in our staff meetings -I would routinely share parts of what I learned at Saltwater with my staff during our regular meetings. We had a half-day workshop, a sort of breakout session, at our office and I borrowed some of the exercises. We refined our mission statement and collectively formed a sense of where we are going. It was very powerful.”

Values and leadership in a corporate setting —

DON VANLANDINGHAM

Don has been CEO of Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. of Boulder, Colorado for over three decades. Ball Aerospace is a full-service aerospace company that supports the US Government with satellite and instrument systems such as the Hubble Space Telescope. Don learned about The Seven Intentions Program through an executive group he was part of in Boulder.

“It was an informal forum where we met to talk about workplace issues, find out how others solved their problems, and bring new ideas into my company. Tom Chappell came to our group and proposed that our group become a test site for The Seven Intentions work. Our executive group became the first attendees of The Seven Intentions Program.

The reason I decided to participate was that I saw things within The Seven Intentions that mirrored my own philosophy of management and allowed me to think of these ideas in a more structured way. For me, it's the philosophy of the servant/leader. It's more of the coach or mentor approach rather than the dictatorial approach. It's a management style.

I am viewed as someone who is a builder of bridges and even as a peacemaker. I think that is the way that people like to be managed. I want people to feel that they are a part of what it is that we are trying to do here. I have always said that people come to work to do well and accomplish something that they think is meaningful. A lot of companies have problems that come from a bureaucracy that grows up in the non-functional side of the company. A good manager identifies the negatives and allows people to do their work.

The Intention of connecting to goodness was something I had always felt about my work. It's not to just make money but to do something for the world and for other people. And I think we do that at Ball Aerospace. We've made some significant contributions to the world through the knowledge that's been gained through the Hubble telescope.

I experienced the Intentions as an affirmation of what I already believed and yet the part that dealt with my destiny was something that I hadn't previously thought about. The more you stay on your path that you have set for yourself and your company, the more likely you are to succeed.

A word that I would use to sum up this work is balance. You can go way overboard in this corporate culture in pushing toward an end goal that is totally profit related. Of course, that's not bad because profit is what keeps a company alive but there are many ways to get there. You can do it through really motivating your employees so that they want to support you and share in the vision, or you can run them to death where you lose the balance and cause people to have family problems and things of that nature.

The Seven Intentions are easily understood and easily applied and you have to remember them as you are setting up the vision and philosophy of the kind of company you are trying to run.”

Walking your own path is the best example for your children —

LAURA GAULD

Laura worked for many years at the Hyde School of Bath, Maine, and eventually directed a national outreach program of workshops for parents and families for Hyde called, “The Biggest Job We’ll Ever Have.” The mission of the program is to encourage awareness of effective and meaningful parenting skills. She attended The Seven Intentions Program in 1998.

“We are so caught up in this achievement culture that it gets tied into how we raise our kids. What we’re trying to do is help parents see that you need to get to a deeper place, to go on a personal journey, if you’re going to raise your kids. We started these workshops with priorities such as valuing truth over harmony, principles over rules, setting high expectations and letting go of the outcome. If we get in the way of our kids’ failure, we get in the way of having things seared into them.

You work on your character to find your destiny. You’ve got to get the adults in the community doing it and that’s what I liked about The Seven intentions. It’s very similar to what we are trying to do in our program where we ask three questions; who am I, where am I going in my life, and what do I have to do to get there?

At the time I did The Seven Intentions work it was a risk to leave the comfort of this little school community and venture out. During one session I became emotional and I remember thinking ‘I don’t even want to go here. These are people I don’t even know.’ But I did and that was a risk. You knew you were in a place of honesty and humility and that there was a lot of laughter, a lot of fun. I was surprised at how much I did open up.

I’ve spent my life helping other people climb their mountains and this was my chance to climb a mountain too. I had my children and all of my dreams went to my kids, but you have to make sure that you reconnect with your own vision. Part of what I have to give to my children is what I do with my life. That’s another thing I respect about what Tom is doing, trying to build a healthy culture in the workplace which has a huge effect on home and family. They go hand in hand.

I always left every session feeling rejuvenated and with a certain sense of clarity and serenity. I think the biggest thing was that this work gave me the confidence that what I was doing was right. The idea of connecting with people was, for me, about making contact with people outside of Hyde and that’s been great for me. If you’re into risk or change or interested in trying to set the bar high as an organization, the more you need something like this. The program connects people with the most important piece - who they are. If you focus on that, your bottom line, and by that I mean your output or your service, all will be OK.

The Seven Intentions helps an organization create a culture of growth, both professional and personal. If you focus on character and education and the culture of growth, you will succeed. The caretaker of the vision, the keeper of the keys, the executive of the company has to be involved in order for this to work. And great things will happen.”

Learning to balance both professional and personal lives —

GABRIELLE MELCHIONDA

Gabrielle is President of Mad Gabs, a woman-owned business based in Portland, Maine. They manufacture lip balm and body ointments, which they sell worldwide. One half of their product sales are to Japan.

“I had heard of The Seven Intentions Program workshops from Tom Chappell, my former father-in-law. I was told that The Seven Intentions Program was a workshop that would help me define where I was in my life and where I might be going. And I was really amazed at what I found there. I’ve done writing workshops, business workshops, and conferences but I’ve never done anything like The Seven Intentions workshops. I didn’t realize the depth that it was going to take me to personally as well as professionally. The whole thing was an amazing gift for me.

Everyone talks about how vital it is to find the right balance between your personal life and your professional life and I couldn’t get a grasp on either. So here I was going to The Seven Intentions Program, doing the first few Intentions, and identifying my gifts and what I had to give the world. I’d never had the time, made the time, or been in a place with other people that was safe enough to do that exercise. Being able to say what my goals were, to look at them on paper and talk about them with other people, was so powerful for me.

For me, an important aspect of the work was seeking counsel. I’ve always been able to ask for help on a day-to-day basis but going to people who could really change my life was always something I put off. During the course of The Seven Intentions work I incorporated, hired an employee, got a lawyer and a real accountant. Six months later, I was able to realize that I had done all of this because the work I did at the program was giving me permission to improve my life in all of these ways. Every piece came together in my life and now my life is unfolding.

Going through the Intentions was about getting the tools to look at one’s life, to see where it could go, and then to do it. And, as for “passing on” my experience, tomorrow I’m going to the State House to tell my story and give my history to a group of people, and later I’ll be speaking to women who are thinking of going into business. And we’ve been donating heaps of product to people. It feels great to support everything from the local schools to Maine Handicapped Skiing. There are lots of ways that this work is “passed on”, and one of the biggest is by encouraging the people in our company to also have balance in their lives.

What I think is so interesting about The Seven Intentions Program is that there are so many courses and workshops, counselors and advice for businesses. It’s a place where I can go to figure out how the pieces fit together. Looking back, I am able to say I sought counsel, identified my gifts, and created a new product. It all happened. It was magical.”