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Just a few more weeks to the conference...

I understand from Liz that there are more than 60 people (so far) registered for the conference in Napa Valley. Plus, she said there is a great line up of restaurants for Friday "Dine Around Town" – including American Seafood and Italian. It will be good to see everyone.

In the meantime, in this newsletter please enjoy reading Roger's "Note from the President," a reminder about the conference, an interview with George Schofield about his most interesting book concerning changing roles as we evolve, and information about a new website that might be of interest to our members.

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Note from the President

The economic wreckage that emerged in 2008 cut down the number of sponsors and the total amount they gave in 2010. The years when SPIM could count on a substantial financial cushion from this source are over. The number of attendees dropped in 2010 and we absorbed additional costs providing housing and basic travel expenses for some presenters. For the 2010 Conference, we had to dip into our financial reserves to the tune of almost \$22,000. Not nice!

As Co-Presidents Billie Blair and John Langhorne began planning for 2011, they adopted as a central principle that persons making presentations would be drawn from SPIM's own extensive pool of talented and experienced Psychologist/Managers. Looking at the lineup of the Program for 2011, it appears that this principle has been implemented very well. They were able to secure a first-class site with reasonable room rates. The Program promises to be a rich experience for all attendees. Along with familiar faces, there will be many new ones.

SPIM may be facing and having to adjust to new realities. The halcyon days of the 1990's and early 2000's may have passed for good. We will probably not see the kind of income we previously received. We will be doubly grateful for the sponsors who continue to make their contributions. Growth in membership might remain on the slow side for the foreseeable future.

- Please consider holding a Regional SPIM meeting in your area. In the past Marlene Thorn and others have been successful in planning such meetings.

SPIM has two directories of members. One is a printed directory distributed by Connie Schroyer

The second is the website listing of members. Names and emails on the website are only posted when the member approves the posting by checking the boxes or emails

Please check your web address on the website to make sure we have the correct address. If you want to make a change, contact Connie Schroyer.

At the same time, I'm sure that Billie and John will be addressing these critical problems, as well as those of retaining old members and reaching out to new ones. Marlene Thorn, our incoming President-Elect, is brimming with energy and enthusiasm as she contemplates what the focus of our 2012 Conference in Charleston, SC might be. She will be soliciting first-class presenters who will turn her planning into reality.

Ichak Adizes, in his book, *Corporate Lifecycles: How and Why Corporations Grow and Die and What to Do About It*, describes the major stages in organizational lifecycles. He outlines the constructive changes essential to moving from one stage to another. He provides vital insights into how to respond when an organization becomes derailed, stuck or stalled. I hope as we go through transitions in leadership and face inevitable challenges we can learn from what Adizes and others have to say about our stage in organizational development.

I am convinced that SPIM has a viable future, but there are no guarantees. I hope we can recover the spirit of creativity, innovation and encouragement that was evident in our formative years. We don't know what structural changes and other innovations will be required to ensure a desirable and durable future. The warmth and openness toward each other that is evident in the Thursday night "Kickoff Meeting", where we sit in a circle and take the time necessary to update each other on what we experienced during the past year, is an essential element in SPIM's unique corporate culture.

The boundary-breaking Thursday night experience is balanced by a rigorous reflection on the presentations made in our plenary sessions. Tough questions and incisive insights provide intellectually responsible impulses for professional growth. This pattern of emotional and intellectual engagement are gifts I received at The SPIM Conferences I have attended for the past 16 years. I covet them for you, too!

Roger

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P.S. Welcome to SPIM 2011 in Napa! *In vino veritas* is only one pathway to truth. SPIM is another!

SPIM 2011 Conference!

Practice makes Perfect: Retreat and Renew in Napa
SPIM 2011 Registration is open and the program is available online at <http://www.spim.org/conference.htm>

SPIM has created a fine annual meeting at an enviable location. This year the programs are being presented exclusively by SPIM members. The Mid-winter conference is the soul of SPIM. It is an

If you would like to share any news about yourself: publications, new job, etc., please send me the information and I will include in the next newsletter

You might check out "Linked In" to connect with SPIM members – go to the Group section.

opportunity to see old friends, develop new relationships and find ideas you can use on-the-job.

As usual, SPIM members will host first time attendees. Beginning in 2011, sessions for emerging leaders will be included in upcoming conferences - this feature will further enhance the informal coaching, counseling and mentoring that routinely happens at SPIM.

There will be an afternoon session at Beringer Winery including a manager discussing "Managing the Grape" followed by sessions and a winery tour and tasting.

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Interview with George Schofield, Ph.D., Author of "After 50, It's up to us" (available through Amazon or Barnes and Noble)

At age 66, George has had many 'roles' in his life. He spent much of his life in corporate America (Vice President for Bank of America, working for a major national consulting company, etc.). He started his Ph.D. at age 45 and finished at age 52. In 1979 he found himself a single parent raising two young boys. Today, in his second marriage of ten years he is married to a wonderful wife. As George said "We came into this marriage as full grown adults." His two adult sons are successful, with one living in Asia and the other in California. This interview highlights some of George's thinking that went into his book.

Question: Why did you write the book?

G: "I wrote the book to find answers I could not find anywhere else. Answers to my "becoming." Let me tell you a story – I was in my later 50s and began to realize that who I had been and how I had been successful in my life was probably not going to work in my 80s. For example, I had always been someone who had sought out the next mountain and next impossible task, and I had raised my children by myself. One of my major pieces of identity was as single parent. I was way too afraid to take risks when I still had little boys at home and raising them. I could see that my preferences and interests were migrating away from where they had been, but I did not know where they were going."

I was very sad without knowing it and did not realize how much I was grieving. My wife rented a condo for me in Palm Desert and sent me away for a week so I could figure it out. I am a meditator and so I stared at blank sheet in the condo until I realized how many losses I was experiencing. I loved my work but did not have the same ambitions. I did not want to climb the corporate ladder anymore. I had been a VP for Bank of America. I had my PH.D. My relationship with my work changed. I did not want to be a CEO anymore – I was tired of being a CEO. And I had no desire to retire.

I discovered in my late 50s I was not just a driven guy – I am a guy who can't do just one thing. It is traditional to get a job and progress up the ladder. Nothing wrong with that, but not a match for me."

Question: How did writing this book help you figure out where you were going?

G: "It was not writing the book that was transformational. It was the research underlying the book. I never set out to write a book. But, I realized our language does not work. When we talk about 'elderly' we think about 'chronological age.' What I discovered was that I know 'young' 90 year olds and 'old' 50 year olds, and chronological age is not the big determiner anymore.

In the book I talk a lot about the 'wall' – I smacked into the wall so hard I fell on my ass. Linda was smart enough to say to go to the desert and you will figure it out. I moved from not knowing I was grieving to realizing I was grieving to realizing I did not know what I did not know. And I could not find anything in the literature. I did some experimental interviews. And then my phone started ringing with people saying 'Hey you interviewed my friend Fred and just asking him questions was transformational so will you interview me too?" Out of that came a ton of interviews and out of them came the book. I had never written a book before. I had a chance to self-publish or go with major agent. I chose neither but I created a virtual publishing company of my own so I could retain all the rights and still work with a national distributor.

Elderly for me is not a chronological age. It is the moment I have to say to my wife or children that I can no longer self manage and I need their help. The word 'retirement' for me does not mean one day I am working and the next day I am not. It means the creation of one or two or more revenue streams which add up to ¾ time work.

As soon as we see the word 'aging' people start talking about

'elderly'. As soon as we say the word 'retirement' people start talking about not working at all. As soon as we say the word 'grandparent', we start talking about people babysitting the grandkids. As soon as we talk about 'health and aging' we talk about deterioration. My specialty is human and organizational development. How do we anticipate who we are going to be and what we are going to have to be good at in the future? So I did a literature search and discovered there is lots on retirement planning, health care problems like twitchy leg, and retirement travel. And the word 'lifelong learning' is bandied about. But when I looked at the curriculum almost all the content was about memorization not transformation. By memorization – I mean I could take a class on history of Broadway theater or evolution of alligators, but not about personal transformation. So my research question became: Who am I going to have to be and what am I going to have to be good at much later in my life that I can start working on now?

I have always been an entrepreneur – but at that point the entrepreneur side really emerged. Since I am one of experts mentioned in "What Color is Your Parachute", I needed to figure out what could I do that I can still do in my 80s. So I did a career design for myself and I am executing it now. I have my existing practice, I am an author speaker. In early January I am launching a new e-commerce business – Newbrightlife.com. This is a video based online self-administered education program for people ages 45 to 75. It is all about 'becoming' and people finding their own answers.

The most popular question out there for people over fifty is what am I going to do next? I think that is the bozo question for our generation. We need to find new 'identity anchors.'"

Question: Why?

G: "Because how we have known who we are has always been based on our *role* – I knew who I was as a parent, student, homeowner, volunteer, employee, etc. The big developmental task at this period in our lives is to do three things:

1. Get the most important roles that will be most satisfying to us BUT not let them totally define us.
2. Figure out in an adaptive way who we want to be outside of role as we age that will give us contentment. We have to remember that our roles will change – our spouses will die, our children will leave us, we will lose our mobility, etc.
3. The work of this period is to answer 3 questions: **Who will I need to be in the future?** For example, if something happens to your husband means you will have to be different

in the future somehow because 'wife' will not be the number one thing you will hook yourself to. **Who will I want and need in my life? How will I want to use my time and energy?** You can see the difference between 'what will I do next?' vs. the answers to these 3 questions. The question 'what will I do next?' is all about staying busy – not reflecting.

As Americans, we are problem solvers. We love problems and solutions and closure. Can you think of one person in your life who has been able to solve their aging and move beyond it? If our strength is our problem solving ability, then our weakness is also our problem solving ability. We are natural prey to facelifts and moving to sunny places and investment advice and after 50 travel because they all look like solutions to the problems we imagine regarding aging. Aging cannot be defined as a problem or moved beyond using our usual mindset.

Everything in this book is natural. It is important for people to understand there is nothing wrong with them – nothing to be fixed – just have to go through it. It is all supposed to happen – we are right on schedule. I am not who I used to be – and I should not be who I used to be.”

Question: What is a key takeaway from your book for SPIM members?

G: “New, clear practical concepts that they can apply in their own lives and with their clients.

All of this has huge business implications: business leaders are also aging and pretty uninformed about it and they set the direction for their companies. If you have an aging CEO who is hanging on or aging CEO who no longer likes her job or an aging CEO who wants things to stay the same as in 1983 or an aging CEO who has not done the personal adaptable work – then there is a good chance you will have a CEO whose capacity for leadership is at best impaired.

Question: Where are you at now in your life?

G: “We are living what I wrote about. In California, we were actively involved. Be we wanted to move somewhere where no one knew us and where we could challenge ourselves developmentally. So twenty months ago we moved across the country to Florida. We have been successful and now neither one of us fears about adapting, creating new relationships or taking care of ourselves.

Truthfully I have as many questions as answers. I am focused and open at the same time. I want to associate myself increasingly with

other professionals who are willing to pioneer After 50 their futures more than coast on their histories. Some of the best work of my life is ahead of me. Collaboration will be important. I have a sense of creativity and freedom I'm trying to capture in my magazine columns (see www.redroom.com) and with my business clients. I want 1 on 1 time with my grandchildren. My friendships are increasingly about people who are interesting and interested. My wife is an amazing woman. My sons are men I want to know better. I have my intentions and plans. Life will be a combination of these and my adapting to what really happens.

My legacy: To move our generation a quarter of an inch down the road towards 50 to Elderly being one of our most developmental, creative, and satisfying life periods in some substantive and informed way. That will be plenty of legacy for me, helping to create opportunity and competence."

George is conducting an institute on Sunday morning for SPIM. I was asked to build an institute based on the book. It is about the combination of creating dialogue and conversation with people and introducing key material for them. This is not about retirement or what I am going to do next. It is about the 3 questions that we have to work on in our lives.

New Website that might be of interest to SPIM members

Patricia Duggan has developed a new website, <http://www.psychologydegree.com> that may interest our members.

Her goal was to compile an unbiased and updated list of every school that offers a psychology degree program in the US. She felt the existing lists were not comprehensive, easy to find, and many web sites had outdated information and links. She spent a lot of time building a useful resource for psychology students. All the schools are listed on the front page and lead directly to each program, additionally they are sorted by state.

If anyone has any questions or comments about this website, please contact Patricia at Patricia@psychologydegree.com