



A Good Resolution for 2022: “Drop the Rock”

Description

Often as we approach a new year, we think in terms of resolutions. We think about what we can do in the upcoming year to make our lives better. Many people focus on goals like getting healthier, or losing weight, or spending more time with our loved ones. All of these are great. But one resolution that is resonating with me this year is based on a talk I heard years ago from speaker Sandy Beach (who is now deceased).

The talk is called “Drop the Rock.” The message is that we subconsciously bring baggage into situations—meaning negative, self-defeating behaviors that block our progress. These behaviors are the “rocks” that weigh us down. Often, we are not even aware we are carrying them.

Learning to recognize these rocks in ourselves and drop them—and helping others around us to do the same—is a wonderful resolution for 2022.

Recently I met with someone who was upset because he was not able to secure a job in an area in which he received education. He wrote me a detailed letter outlining his work history. I met with him. As we went through his work history, he shared instances in which he felt his employer had let him down. These ranged from a lack of training to being passed over for a promotion. I then asked him if he felt he had brought any baggage into the interviews he had been having.

Not everyone has the same degree of self-awareness and the same experiences. I find that we cannot assume a person is knowledgeable in areas we may think they are or should be. This man’s response, both in body language and verbally, was that he would be very receptive to hearing my feedback.

So, I shared that when I hear an applicant being negative about a current or past supervisor or job, it leads me to think, *If this person ends up working here, we could be next.* I went on to mention that he could instead say the reason he is interested in the job is due to the training opportunities it offers. This is much better than saying, “At my current job, I am not being developed.”

As we reviewed his work history, I asked him to let me know all the good things about it. And he did. As he finished, he realized that while each experience is one to learn from, it is better to bring positives to

the interview. Being negative about a current job makes it seem that you are running from a job, not to a job. We ended up with an entirely different conversation and interview answers from what we had begun with.

We then discussed baggage. My message was that this candidate was subconsciously bringing unhealthy baggage to the interviews. I said, "Do all you can to be great at your current job. The happier you are in your current job, the better an interview for a new job will go."

Years ago, I was desperate to leave a job. I interviewed many times with no success. I finally concluded that I needed to focus on my current job. I still did not like some things. But I did not let my frustrations eat at me all the time. I did get another interview and got the job offer. What was the difference? I left my baggage outside. Also, in the process of working to become a better employee, I had gotten rid of lots of baggage.

Earlier, I mentioned Sandy Beach. His recordings are some of my favorites. They combine humor and life lessons. In his talk "Drop the Rock," he tells about a person arriving at the dock to go on an excursion with some friends. She arrives late, and the boat has just left the dock. The situation is such that the boat cannot stop or turn around. Her friends are at the back of the boat shouting for her to jump into the water and swim to the boat. She hesitates but due to her friends' encouragement, jumps in and starts swimming to the boat.

As she is struggling in the water, her friends yell, "Drop the rock!" What they are telling her is she is being weighed down by what she is carrying. Like anyone trying to swim while fully dressed and clutching heavy burdens, she needed to get rid of what was weighing her down. Some of the items had been with her for so long she forgot she even had them.

So, as they continued to yell, "Drop the rock," she started getting rid of things. With each discarded item, swimming became easier. She felt lighter and freer, and she made it to the boat.

The analogy is that people can be carrying experiences and feelings that have a negative impact. These can become such a part of the person that they may be unaware of the impact. Yet once the baggage is discarded, the difference is felt. My message is this: Keep surrounding yourself with people who care so much about you they will point out those rocks you are carrying.

An attorney I know recently changed jobs. It was hard for her to leave her last employer for she had been there a long time. There had been changes; however, she kept hoping it would get better. Finally, she received a job offer and took it. She shared this past week that the CEO of the new company called her to let her know how happy they are with her and wanted to make sure she was pleased with everything. As she thought about it, she shared that she now wonders why she did not make the move sooner. The reason was most likely the rocks she was carrying made her feel she couldn't.

It is not unusual to carry baggage filled with rocks. We all carry weights of some kind. However, in 2022, we can all start to be very sensitive to what baggage is getting in the way of our success and what rocks are weighing us down. And, as leaders, we can share that message with others. When we do as Sandy Beach said and "drop the rock," we may be surprised by the destinations we end up reaching.

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Author

quint-studer