



SHARE YOUR
MAGIC

Add Value to Yourself and Others by
Daily Performing Your Best Tricks.

DEVIN HENDERSON

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Your Best Tricks.

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Introduction

Did you know that you are a magician? You have a bag of tricks all your own. Have you ever opened your bag? Maybe there are some deep, dark corners of the bag you have never explored. Or maybe there are some hidden pockets you are unaware of (after all, it is a *magic* bag). It's high time you dump out the contents, analyze what you've got, and put it to good use.

I am a professional magician. I will reveal to you the secrets of how to discover and develop the abilities and interests you might find in your magic bag. Your magical traits are not just skills that you use to show off and make people say, "Wow – you are amazing!" They are also meant to make people say, "Wow – you made me *feel* amazing!" In other words, your magic is meant to be *shared* in order that you may add value to others.

This book is for you. Whether you are a business professional or a stay-at-home parent, you have magic that is worth exploring. This book will help you bring your magic to life so that you can bring your magic to every area of your life. You will find there is great reward in doing so, because great blessings come when you learn to utilize your awesomeness. The two basic rewards of sharing your magic are self-fulfillment and better personal and professional relationships.

There is one thing that can keep us from sharing our magic: *The Pickpocket Mentality*. It means that we humans have a natural tendency toward selfishness. It is such a hindrance, in fact, that I have devoted the first half of this book to *Abandoning the Pickpocket Mentality*. Once we address this concept we will focus on your magic. Now let's get to it.

Devin Henderson

1

Abandon the Pickpocket Mentality

The *Pickpocket Mentality* Defined:

Anything a person does that takes value from others.

When the magician called me onto the stage I was terrified. Public speaking is the #1 fear of humans over death. Getting up in front of a huge crowd of people scares me even if I do not have to speak. But the magician put me at ease. He was nice. He shook my hand, looked me in the eye, smiled at me, remembered my name, and assured me I was doing a great job. He was personable and polite and made me feel comfortable. The trick went very well and he even had the audience applaud for me as I returned to my seat. He seemed very sincere – I never imagined he would steal my watch.

This may be what goes through people's minds after they assist me on stage. As a professional comedy magician and pickpocket entertainer, not only do I have the opportunity to provide the gift of laughter and amazement, I get to pick people's pockets in the process. I have never been arrested for this stunt, even after doing it for audiences of police departments!

New to the World of Pickpocket Magic? Here's how it Works:

During my audience-interactive comedy magic show I invite people onto the stage to help me with various tricks. The volunteers on stage typically have no idea that they are about to be “victimized.”

During the trick I take whatever I can get my hands on, including watches, wallets, pens, cell phones, car keys and neckties. I accomplish this by diverting people's attention from their personal belongings onto the trick for which I “need their help.”

The steals are made under the pretense of helping spectators examine props or by physically repositioning them on the stage. For added comedy I often let the audience “in” on the steals that are being made, but the volunteers are typically unaware of what is going on until I hand back their valuables.

Disclaimer:

I use my pickpocketing skills strictly for entertainment purposes and in the end, everyone has a good laugh, including the “victims” themselves.

How my Pickpocket Mentality was Born

The first item I learned to “steal” was the wristwatch. When I successfully stole my first watch without the owner’s detection, I was hooked. After a while, the first thing I began to notice about people was the type of watch they were wearing. *Is it a Timex? Is it a Rolex? Does it fasten with Velcro or is it a belt buckle-type?*

I became a student of watches, especially the clasps. I quickly developed the ability to determine the type of clasp merely by catching a glimpse of the *face* of the watch. Upon spotting any watch I would think things like: *That one would be easy to take, Ooh - that one looks tough, or If I could only shake hands with that person I’d be home free.* Thus was born my *Pickpocket Mentality.*

From Watches to Neckties

Soon I began stealing more than watches. I started taking pens, neckties, cell phones and wallets. I picked pockets everywhere I went. I started by practicing on my family, then took it to church, the mall, restaurants, airports, and when I was ready, to the stage. Often, I would not spot a watch or other valuables on someone right away, but I found with most people that if you look hard enough you will find *something* to take.

The Pickpocket Parallel to Life

I soon realized that this fun art form contains life application. When we keep our eyes open, we begin to see what people have to offer us. It might be their money, their signature, or simply their approval we are after. We will use anything from subtle manipulation to outright bullying in order to get what we want. This kind of activity happens in business, politics, ministry and the family.

Pickpocket Mentality Characteristics

We have defined the pickpocket mentality as *anything a person does that takes value from others, but a pickpocket also...*

- Always try to get more out of people.
- Manipulates and bullies.
- Uses careless and hurtful words.
- Has no regard or respect for others' well-being, ideas, goals and dreams.
- Uses kindness only as a tool for personal gain.
- Refuses to help others get ahead for fear that it will put him or her behind.
- Lacks patience with others.
- Has a **ME**-driven mindset.

All About “ME”

There are two basic types of value a person can take: *material* and *emotional*. Because the pickpocket mentality is a “ME” mindset, this appropriately creates the acronym M.E.

MATERIAL EMOTIONAL

Just like we possess *material* value that can be taken, such as jewelry, credit cards or even a parking spot, we also hold *emotional* things of value that can be taken, such as joy, peace and self-confidence. A nasty comment that steals your joy can be just as bad as someone lifting your watch.

There is some overlap with these two components. For instance, if someone steals your identity, it will have material ramifications as well as emotional. Or if you have had your Rolex taken, you have also had your joy taken!

Stealing More than just Physical Goods

Emotional pickpocketing is probably more common in your day-to-day life than material pickpocketing. Here are examples of what we can steal from *inside* a person.

- Joy
- Enthusiasm
- Productivity
- Ambition
- Loyalty
- Innocence
- Self-image
- Self-confidence
- Self-worth
- Autonomy
- Trust
- Happiness
- Success
- Motivation
- Dreams
- Security
- Openness
- Satisfaction

“All relationships either add to or subtract from a person’s life.”

John Maxwell

What does all this mean for you?

Think about all of your relationships, both in your personal and in your professional life. Did you ever realize that in each one of those relationships, you are either adding value or taking value?

Most likely you desire success (I have found that most readers of self-help books do). You are probably continually searching for avenues to move yourself forward, as you should be. The question is this: how do your methods for advancement affect others?

Again, like John Maxwell said, there are only two answers – either we add value, or take value. In this highly competitive world, our blinders of self-interest often block us from seeing how our actions can damage the well-being of others. Abandoning the pickpocket mentality is about achieving success in a manner that not only looks to our own interests, but also looks to the interests of others.

Getting Busted

No pickpocket entertainer is perfect with every steal – we all get busted from time to time. Sometimes by chance I call people onto the stage who have seen me work before, and they walk onto the stage emptying their pockets or holding tightly to their watch. These people are the ones that are most likely to bust me on my pickpocketing attempts. In the same way, selfish motives in this life eventually catch up to a person. Everyone who tries to get ahead by taking value from others is eventually going to “get busted.”

Honest and True Success

The truth is, the more we bring others down, the further we bring ourselves down. Likewise, the more value we add to others, the more value we add to ourselves. Thus, abandoning the pickpocket mentality is not only the first step in adding value to others, it is the first step in achieving conscience-friendly, self-fulfilling, long-lasting, through-the-roof success.

Pickpockets are Everywhere!

One of my missions as a speaker is to help people ensure that their presence does not make others feel like victims of a pickpocket mentality.

Following are some real-life “pickpocket” stories. My purpose here is to simply help you become aware of everyday situations where we can choose to either add value or take value. You will find examples of both material and emotional pickpocketing attempts.

I have even included a story of where I exercised the pickpocket mentality myself - and got busted!

Material Pickpocketing

Engagement Ring Shopping

One of the professions that the pickpocket mentality can very easily sneak into is sales. I have nothing against sales; in fact, as an entrepreneur I am a salesman myself. I have much respect for skilled sales professionals who show respect for their customers and believe their product or service is to the customer's benefit.

An unpleasant buying experience for me was when I went engagement ring shopping. I visited about a dozen jewelry stores during this time, and in nearly every store I felt like a victim of the pickpocket mentality.

I understand that a sales professional's job and livelihood is on the line each time a customer walks through the door. Assertiveness is a must. But when assertiveness turned to aggressiveness, my experiences turned sour.

Several of the salespeople did many things right. I appreciated being smiled at as I walked in the door. I appreciated someone approaching me right away, asking how I was doing and how I could be helped. I even enjoyed the small talk and the questions about my plans for popping the big question. These are all great sales techniques for connecting with customers and many people practice them sincerely.

But personally, what I wanted after the small talk was to be left alone so I could simply look at rings and think. I would tell them that but they would not listen. They would follow me around like a lion after its prey. When I would simply pause and fixate on a certain area they would pounce on me – “This is a *really* nice one here. I like this one. It’s beautiful and we have seven others similar to it. Each one comes in yellow gold and white gold. This diamond is a princess-cut and it’s an ‘F.’ You can upgrade to a ‘D’ for only a few thousand dollars more.”

With some sales people, no matter how many times I told them I just wanted to look, they would still turn up the heat. I even tried saying, “I would just like to look and I will let you know if I need your help.” That did not work well either. So I developed a defense strategy when entering stores.

First, I decided not to make eye contact and engage in small talk when I entered the store. Also, if the sales people initiated a conversation, I gave a very short reply or ignored them – still making no eye contact. If they persisted with showing rings or offering unsolicited advice, as a last resort I would say a quick “thanks” and try to throw them off my trail by walking away to another part of the store.

The salespeople’s obligation to listen to me and show sensitivity to my needs was trumped by their burning desire to make a sale. Something is very wrong when a customer has to develop a plan of defense against the sales force!

My response to the pressure of jewelry salespeople shows how people respond to the pickpocket mentality – they throw up defenses and keep their distance. They may even go somewhere else, like I eventually did. Nobody wants to be taken advantage of.

As frustrating as the jewelry store experiences were, I am thankful for them. At the time I was only a few years into my entrepreneurship, and I learned a valuable lesson about the importance of listening to the needs and concerns of my clients.

I ended up buying a ring from a place where the people respected my personal need to shop all by myself – until I asked for their help. I did not feel at all like they were trying to pick my pockets. Instead, they did everything they could to make sure that I had everything I needed in the way I needed it. It was an overall pleasant experience, and they are the first ones I will go to when I am in need of more jewelry.

Hey - That's my Parking Spot!

People become animals when they get behind the wheel. Old people become turtles. Teenagers become monkeys. And many become a combination of cheetah and pit bull – they are the fast and the furious.

When road rage takes to the parking lot, I call it “pick-parketing,” or if you’re from Boston, “pick-pahketing,” in which case it sounds like “pickpocketing.” Here is my confession about a time I attempted a pick-parketing stunt, only to be busted by my wife.

The first weekend of every June our city holds its annual festival, Old Shawnee Days, at which I have performed many times in the past. On Saturday morning of the festival, many organizations and clubs participate in a parade. It was something I enjoyed as a child and now enjoy with my own children.

We always park at the First Baptist Church of Shawnee, because it is a primo spot along the parade route and is also adjacent to Old Shawnee Town, the location of the festival. Every year during the parade, without fail, the church parking lot is completely packed.

What do you do when a parking lot is full? Again, some people become animals, in this case buzzards circling continuously in search of a spot. Others make their own spots. And some of us become stalkers – watching for people who are walking to their cars in the hope they are leaving so we can take their spots. I am a stalker.

We waited for a few minutes and bingo – we spotted three teenage girls walking to their car. As I turned to pursue the trio, I noticed out of the corner of my eye that a car was already following them. But this car was following the girls backwards. Immediately I called “foul.” That’s just dangerous. So without making eye contact, I cut off the other car, and began following the girls.

While watching the other car in my rearview mirror, it became apparent to me that the person saw what I was doing. This person slammed on the brakes and sped forward to race around the block of cars, hoping to luck out and beat me to the spot. But chance would have it that the girls did not go far and I was waiting at their spot with my blinker on as my opponent came peeling around the corner.

I had manipulated the situation perfectly. I had some kids in the back seat who were eager to see a parade, and I needed a parking spot -- now.

Then out of the blue my wife said, “Should we let them have it?” And I was thinking, *no*. But I didn’t say that. Instead, I said the two words that have saved me many times. “Yes, dear.” She was not going to let me do it – I was busted! Even though I could have argued that I earned the spot and now it was rightfully mine, it was only right that I considered the other person.

As I drove forward, I paused, rolled my window down and called out to the other driver, “Would you like this spot?” The driver was a little old lady, and as she looked up at me and shielded her eyes from the sun, I could see there was a cast on her arm. She replied, “That would be wonderful.” I said, “It’s all yours.”

It felt good -- no, it felt *really* good to put my own wants aside and focus on someone else who needed the parking spot more than me. I thank the good Lord that I have an amazing woman who helps remind me at times to think outside of myself and live out the things that I encourage other people to live out.

In that situation I was faced with a choice: I could either add value to that woman, or take value from her. Those were the only two options. After we drove off and found a parking spot further down the street, I was able to walk with my family to the parade with joy in my spirit and peace in my heart.

Emotional Pickpocketing

Restaurant Management

Before I was giving magic-themed keynote presentations at conferences, I was doing tableside magic in restaurants. I do not do it anymore, but it taught me valuable lessons.

Having never been a waiter, I enjoyed experiencing the behind-the-scenes aspects of restaurants. It was interesting hearing staff complain about patrons rather than the other way around, feeling the anxiety of the managers needing to turn tables faster on a busy night, and seeing the wait staff getting totally ticked-off when the hostess seated too many tables in their section again.

I found that when managers have a positive attitude, handle conflict well, respect staff, and can keep their cool, the restaurant functions well and there is minimal staff turnover. And vice versa. I saw the best of both worlds.

One restaurant I worked in was on top of their game, and it started with the owners. They worked as a team and knew how to treat their staff well. I was shocked at how long some of the staff had stayed on there.

Then there was the restaurant that was just the opposite. I did not see a collaborative effort among the staff. One night when business was slow I was talking with a waiter and the manager came by, tossed a wet rag to the waiter, and said with a demeaning look, “Those tables aren’t going to clean themselves.” The waiter caught the rag, and as the manager walked away, the waiter gave him one of the dirtiest, most hateful looks I had ever seen.

He did not feel respected. The manager took his will to work hard and his motivation to *show* respect. Weeks later, that staff member was fired for giving away a free bottle of wine at the bar, which is strictly against restaurant policy. It was an act of defiance against all of his negative experiences.

These two types of restaurants taught me the value of abandoning the pickpocket mentality in leadership and management. Take value from people and they will break the rules, show disrespect, and get the heck out of Dodge (unless they get fired first). But add value to your people, and your organization will thrive.

“You’ve Aged!”

‘Sticks and Stones,’ baby. Yeah, words hurt. Sometimes it happens with ill intent, and sometimes it happens unintentionally. Either way, hurtful and careless words steal value.

One time before a speaker showcase I was talking with a fellow speaker. She had just visited my website and was complimenting me on how it looked. Boom – value added. “Thanks a lot,” I told her. She said she especially liked the pictures, and asked me when I had them taken. This is where things went south.

I thought for a second and told her the pictures were taken about three years earlier. “Wow!” she said, “You’ve aged!” Uh, gee, thanks, lady. Self-esteem killer. Need I say more?

That’s my Dad You’re Talking About!

My dad had a similar experience. One time he bought a new suit. He felt good in the suit and he was proud to wear it to work.

Someone at work said, “That’s a nice suit Bill – too bad it doesn’t fit you right.” That man picked the self-confidence right out of the pockets of my dad’s new suit!

Sometimes when we say hurtful things, we think the follow-up words “I was joking” fixes everything. But they don’t, because the comment still sticks. And besides, like my good friend Joe always says, “There is a little bit of truth in every joke.” What we say is irreversible. The same tongue that has the power to uplift has an equal and opposite ability to completely tear down.

Now the Important Question is... Are *You* a Pickpocket?

Think for a minute about your interactions over the past week, over the past few days...even just today. Has there been an instance where you have picked a pocket?

You may be familiar with the hilarious Jeff Foxworthy's "**You might be a redneck if...**" routines. Inspired by that premise, I present: "**You might be a pickpocket if...**" to provide you with the opportunity to reflect on your general motives and methods in dealing with others.

As you read the following pages, be honest with yourself as you seek the answer to the question, "Do I have pickpocket tendencies?"

You will find a little humor in some of these statements, but you will find truth in all of them.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You begrudge doing favors for others.
- You get upset when someone doesn't repay you for your kindness.
- You keep track of your good deeds.
- You are more concerned with your own accomplishments being recognized and less concerned about recognizing the accomplishments of others.
- You cut people off on the highway then don't let other cars in.
- You are always asking, "What's in it for me?"
- While eating out, you despise when others order the chicken and then ask to try a bite of your steak.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You do not serve others or volunteer your time in any way.
- Every time you call your friends, the first words out of their mouth are, “What do you want now?”
- Your friends stop answering their phones.
- You consciously make under-handed comments that cut people down.
- You *subconsciously* make under-handed comments that cut people down.
- You bust out the tip calculator function on your cell phone when paying in a restaurant to ensure you only pay the minimum amount required – even if the service was excellent.
- You are quick to receive credit but slow to accept blame.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You e-blast people and send newsletters like crazy but spend even more time unsubscribing to others' newsletters and e-blasts because they annoy you.
- Gossip is fun, pleasurable, and feels good.
- You demand the undivided attention of others but exhibit poor listening skills and do nothing to improve them.
- You think every parking spot in the world has an invisible sign with your name on it.
- You've ever written off a nice dinner with your spouse as a business expense.
- You are never happy with what you have. The more you get, the more you want.
- You have a hiding place for the remote control.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- Your flattery is as sweet and as thick as Mrs. Butterworth's maple syrup: "*Flattery is from the teeth out. Sincere appreciation is from the heart out.*" –Dale Carnegie
- You are the breadwinner and in order to maintain power and control in your household, you refuse to combine banking accounts with your spouse.
- You re-gift junk.
- Your politeness, smile and kindness are contingent upon the politeness, smiles and kindness of others.
- You enjoy "telling off" in-laws, co-workers and telemarketers and then proudly share stories about it with others.
- You practice dishonest techniques to get what you want and you are okay with that.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- Rather than lighting up a room, your demeanor, personality and attitude suck the life out of a room.
- Your kids' friends aren't welcome in your home because they might put a hole in the wall, ruffle the carpet and otherwise tear up the place.
- You've ever taken the biggest, juiciest chicken breast from the fried chicken bowl at the Sunday church potluck.
- You've ever taken the last deviled egg at the Sunday church potluck.
- Your parents/caregivers were pickpockets. It is often hereditary.
- You can think of someone right now you are holding a grudge against and whom you refuse to forgive.

You Might be a Pickpocket if...

- You never make sacrifices of any kind.
- You lay early claim to movie theater and airplane armrests.
- You've ever taken a nice, long, warm shower and the five people after you took cold showers.
- Your criticisms run rampant: "*Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain and most fools do.*" –Dale Carnegie
- You've ever strategically placed your brownies at the head of the dessert table.
- You've ever told someone they've aged or gained weight.
- You associate Santa Salvation Army bell-ringers with guilt.
- You are human.

A New Habit

So what do you think? Do you have pickpocket tendencies?

In pointing out the pickpocket mentality, I am not saying we are all horrible people out for blood. I think there is good in all of us. It is not my intent to shame or guilt you. My goal here is to simply help you become *aware* of the pickpocket mentality. Since we humans are by nature selfish, often times we do not even realize we are taking value.

It would not be fair for me to encourage you to abandon the pickpocket mentality without offering you a solution. We overcome pickpocket practices the same way we overcome any bad habit – by replacing the bad habits with good habits. Pickpocket practices can be replaced with the good habit of *sharing your magic*, and that is the focus of the remainder of this book.

2

Discover Your M.A.G.I.C.

Magic Defined:

*Anything about a person that can
add value to others.*

Magic: it's not Just for Magicians

As a magician, I create the illusion that I can execute the extraordinary. I make money appear inside of fruit. I bend forks with my mind. I read people's thoughts. I pull playing cards from thin air (and from my mouth). It's entertaining. It's fun. It adds value. It's my magic.

What is *your* magic? Your magic may not look like mine, but what about you adds value to the people you live, work and interact with?

Sharing your magic is about using your positive traits to make a positive difference in people's lives. When you share your magic freely with people, without putting conditions on your sharing, you can live life to the full. It brings fulfillment not only because you are bringing joy to others, but because you are finding a useful outlet for your under-used, highly-valuable, God-given talents.

“Girls only want boyfriends who
have great skills.”

Napoleon Dynamite

Napoleon and Pedro

You may be like me. Your magic is easy to identify. If I were to ask you what your magic is, the answer would be on the tip of your tongue. Or maybe you feel more like Napoleon Dynamite when he had this conversation with his best friend, Pedro.

Napoleon: I don't even have any good skills.

Pedro: What do you mean?

Napoleon: You know, like nunchuk skills, bow hunting skills, computer hacking skills...girls only want boyfriends who have great skills.

Pedro: Aren't you pretty good at drawing like animals and warriors and stuff?

Napoleon: Yes – probably the best that I know of.

Pedro: Just draw a picture of the girl you want to take out, and give it to her for like a gift or something.

Napoleon: That's a pretty good idea.

Pedro was a great friend. Not only did he help Napoleon *discover* his magic, he encouraged him to *share* that magic.

I want to be your Pedro. I want to help you discover how awesome you really are, and encourage you to find creative ways to use your awesomeness to add value to others (and make your life better in the process).

Having magic does not mean you must possess a technical skill like Napoleon or me. There are many forms of magic. We will now delve into your bag of tricks to see what magical powers *you* possess!

And by the way, if you have not yet seen the movie *Napoleon Dynamite* – do yourself a favor and go buy it. It is awesome.

Your **M.A.G.I.C.**

To help you uncover your area, or areas, of magic, we are going to observe five basic magical categories. These categories are found in the word *magic*: M.A.G.I.C.

MEMORABLE

ACTS

GIFTS

INTERESTS

CHARACTER

There are some overlapping qualities in some of these categories; however, each holds distinguishing virtues and is worth exploring individually. Following, you will find descriptions of each magical component followed by an example or two. It's finally time to open up your bag of tricks. (Zip!)

MEMORABLE

“I remember you. You’re the one who _____.” If you can fill in this blank because of what other people say to you, then your magic may fall under this category.

Is there a special reason people remember you? How do you stand out from others? Are you funny? Are you a great storyteller? Are you both? Do you have a great personality? Do you like to serve people? Do you have a killer smile or an uncanny ability for remembering names? Maybe you have a quirk, an oddity or a disability. Perhaps you have a scar, whether inside or out, with an inspiring story behind it.

This is the staple magic category of the other four qualities, because the other four qualities have the ability to make you memorable. *Any* positive trait people remember you for might be your magic.

MEMORABLE EXAMPLES

Funny Business at Fazoli's

Previously I mentioned that I used to work my magic in restaurants. I worked in several restaurants over the years, and one of the first I worked was Fazoli's (Fast. Fresh. Italian.). I was there every Tuesday for kids' night. Although it was my job to entertain the customers, there was one special customer who also entertained me.

To this day I do not know his real name, but I always called him "Jeff," because he was the spitting image of Jeff Foxworthy. The first time I saw him, I thought to myself, *Cool, Jeff Foxworthy has come to Fazoli's in Shawnee, Kansas to watch my magic. Word is getting around!*

The ironic thing is that “Jeff” liked to tell jokes! I cannot remember how it started, but somehow it became protocol that he owed me a joke every time he and his family came in. He had a plethora of one-liners. Sometimes the jokes were hokey, but that did not make me enjoy them any less.

Although I am thankful for every job that helped get me where I am today, I must say some nights at Fazoli’s dragged on a little. Doing magic for kids while they are eating their breadsticks and lasagna is not exactly a magician’s dream gig. It was nice to have someone like Jeff who could liven up my night. It is pretty good when you can entertain an entertainer! Jeff became one of the most memorable people I ever performed magic for because he shared his magic of humor with me in return.

Is there something that people remember you for? If so, that is your magic.

A Memorable Smile, to Say the Least

At Kansas State I was in the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity. When one of my fraternity brothers got engaged to a member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, they asked me to play piano for a singer in their wedding. They told me the singer would be Lynn, who was also a “Kappa.” I had only met Lynn a few times during college, so I looked her up in the K-State yearbook. When I found her picture, I immediately remembered one of my favorite features about her. It was her smile.

Lynn and I got together before the wedding to practice the songs. We practiced for a while, and then we talked. I loved watching her talk because when she talks, she smiles. We got to know each other pretty well around the time of the wedding, and then we lost touch for a while. Months later, another one of my fraternity brothers got engaged to another Kappa, and Lynn and I were asked to make music together once again.

When we met up to practice, she was still smiling. You are probably wondering what is so great about Lynn's smile. She would tell you her smile is asymmetrical, but I say it is stronger on one side than it is on the other. I can't really describe why it is so amazing, but there is something about the "asymmetry" of her smile that adds to her beauty and character.

It turns out that our friends had ulterior motives in asking Lynn and I to play for their weddings. They were trying to get us together. And it worked. A few years later, there was yet another Lambda Chi/Kappa wedding - ours. I knew I could not live without that smile.

One time when we were dating, I was looking at a photograph of her. She said, "I hate that picture." When I asked her why, she said it's because her face is "jacked up on this side," and she pointed to one side of her face. I knew she was referring primarily to her smile.

I then realized that I had never told her how much I liked her smile. So I tried to make up for it, but she didn't buy it. She just thought I was trying to make her feel better. It made me wish I had told her long before then.

I now tell her on a regular basis how much I love her smile, and I think she is finally starting to believe me. What she calls imperfect, I call perfect, and I think it is one of the most memorable things about her. To me, her smile is magic.

Is there something about *you* that makes you feel unhappy or insecure? Maybe it is your ears, your nose, your hair, your nose-hair, your voice, or your figure or physique. Do not be ashamed of the things that make you memorable. Your magic is the cumulative you, including the flaws. Besides, as was the case with my wife and her smile, you may find someday that your imperfections just happen to be someone else's treasure.

ACTS

This category is about acts of kindness, acts of generosity, and acts that come from the heart. Your giving is altruistic (giving or serving without expecting anything in return). Are you the gift basket person? Are you the person who can make people feel special with the small things? Have you developed a certain act of kindness that you have become known for over time?

You really enjoy doing these acts and they are not a burden to you. It comes completely natural and you enjoy giving more than you do receiving. Maybe you give money to people in need. You like to do these things in secret without receiving any credit. If this describes you, then your magic falls under the category of “Acts.”

ACTS EXAMPLES

Daisy

One person that shared her magic through acts of kindness was the organist of the church where I grew up. Her name was Daisy. Daisy's magic was giving mints. But not just any mints – Velamints, a brand I haven't seen in grocery store checkout lanes for some time now. They were yummy.

Every Sunday morning when we walked into church and I heard the organ music playing, I automatically thought of Velamints. Then I would see Daisy and I swear I remember salivating. It was sort of like Pavlov's dog experiment. Just for the record – Daisy is the only little old lady who ever made me drool.

Daisy not only gave her mints to people that she knew, she also approached total strangers with her mints.

If you can think back to your first time in a church, you may remember that it was a little scary. There is the fear of being embarrassed or judged privately or before the congregation. There is weird music, there are weird pictures on the walls in the bathroom, and there are weird people (at least there were in my church, including me).

Before the service has begun, when there is still time to escape out the front door, a little old lady approaches you with a smile and a Velamint. And all of a sudden, everthing is okay. This place is normal – for they too, eat mints.

I saw Daisy bring many smiles to people over the years. Her small act of kindness completely transformed people's first time experience in our church. It made them feel welcome, comfortable, and special. Now *that's* magic.

The Flower Fairy

When I was in the Toastmasters Club, I met “The Flower Fairy.” This woman designs beautiful flower arrangements in flowerpots and secretly leaves them on people’s doorsteps as a gift. She also tapes a note to their door telling them how to care for the flowers. What The Flower Fairy does not write on the note is her name. She does not want people to know that the flowers came from her, because she agrees with John Wooden, who said, *“You can’t live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.”*

This woman’s joy does not come from recognition – it comes from secretly blessing people with her magic. She said that one time a picture of her flower arrangements appeared on Facebook. The caption said, *look what The Flower Fairy brought me!* You know you made someone feel special when that person tells others what you did. This act of magic lights up people’s day.

“You can’t live a perfect day
without doing something for
someone who will never be able to
repay you.”

John Wooden

GIFTS

This is probably the easiest type of magic to identify. Magical gifts are not about the gifts you *give*, but the gifts you *possess*.

What are your natural abilities, strengths, skills or God-given talents? Does your strength fall in the area of the arts, such as music, painting, or drama? Is it an athletic ability? Is it the gift of hospitality? Were you a born leader? Do you have a high IQ? Are you creative? Maybe you are the person on your team who always brings the best ideas to a project.

The “gifts” area of magic means you were born with the gift of potential to flourish in a special way.

GIFTS EXAMPLE

Saskatche-watch

Magic is my living, but I do not just do it on stage. I share my magic everywhere I go. I do it for wait staff in restaurants, at the mall, on airplanes and in department stores. I figure that my magic is a gift that is meant to be shared, and I find fulfillment in using my gift to bring smiles to people's faces.

This past summer I traveled to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada to perform for the International Linemen's Rodeo Association. The plane was not crowded. A very friendly stewardess was making her way down the aisle, asking people what they do for a living. When she got to me, I figured it would be better if I *showed* her what I do rather than *tell* her what I do. I always carry a couple of half dollars with me when I travel in case I am presented with the opportunity to share my magic.

I got the coins out and did some sleight of hand for the stewardess. First I made the coins jump invisibly from hand to hand. Then I made them jump visibly from hand to hand. Then I did it in her hands. She liked it. But in the process, I stole her watch. It was a Rolex.

I was about to hand back her watch when she said, “I have to go make an announcement,” and she ran to the back of the plane. At this point I held up her watch and showed it to the people around me. They began laughing. I kept it in the air as she made her announcement from the back of the plane, wondering when she would notice. Her announcement went something like this:

“Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and welcome to Delta flight 5724, distance to Saskatoon. If you could please locate the...Hey! He has my watch!”

Then the laughter erupted – it was by far the best announcement I have ever heard on an airplane. She came and got her watch, and then I handed her back her note pad as well. And just when I thought the fun was over, she smiled at me and said, “We have an empty seat in first class if you want to go up there.” I thought, *this is great – she must have loved me!* Then I got to thinking – *or maybe she just wants to keep an eye on me.*

I gave the stewardess something she has never experienced, and something she will never forget. Not only because she will always be more careful with her belongings, but because it was a personal experience and it was a gift that was shared from the heart.

Are you gifted in some way? Maybe your gift has not become your profession, but that does not mean you cannot find a way to give it away. The gifts you possess are priceless, yet it costs you virtually nothing to share them with others. You never know what rewards will come by sharing your gifts.

INTERESTS

Here's another easy one. Where do your interests lie? What do you spend most of your spare time doing? Do you have a hobby? Are you a collector? Do you enjoy playing poker? Do you work on cars? Do you knit? Your interest could be water skiing, hiking, juggling, or reading. Are you a sports fan? Do you play golf? Do you play chess? The possibilities are endless!

Even a simple hobby can be used to add value to someone and make a difference in that person's life. Do not sell your hobby short – it can definitely be your magic. And when you meet someone who shares your interests, it creates an instant, magical connection.

INTERESTS EXAMPLES

Interests vs. Gifts

Some people have an interest in an area where they are not gifted. (Ever watch American Idol?) Then there are those who have a gift in an area where they have no interest. Do you know someone who is wasting musical, intellectual or athletic potential? It drives us crazy!

My brother Jason is a good example of someone who has found a balance for his gifts and interests. He is a gifted caricature artist, but deep down, Jason's heart's desire is to be an actor. He is very good at both, but I believe he is more gifted in art than he is acting. I saw art come more natural to him, but the acting took much more work. He uses his gift as a caricature artist to make money, while he has found an outlet for his interest in acting in community theater. In both of these he is sharing his magic.

The Chaplain's Native Flute

About a year ago I spoke to a hospice care group. A chaplain named Lowell approached me after the presentation and told me he has found his magic. He said he plays music on his Native American flute for the patients in the hospice house.

That is what I'm talking about! Lowell has found a part of himself that he can share with the people in his life. I think the Native American flute is one of the prettiest instruments that exists. I can only imagine how this music uplifts the patients, and their families, at such a difficult time.

This example shows how we can incorporate interests into our work lives. Lowell did not have to join a Native American music group just to find an outlet for his unique interest. By being creative, he was able to take the thing that he loves, bring it to his work, and use it to add value to others.

Do you have an interest that you have always thought was somewhat useless? Start brainstorming ways that you might be able to take what you love and incorporate it into the activities or work that you currently do.

Maybe you like to fish and discover that a potential client shares your interest. Why not plan a fishing trip? Perhaps some of your staff members are die-hard football fans like yourself. What better way to connect with them and show you care than by throwing a Super Bowl party for the office?

Interests can bring a personal element to our professional relationships. Do not hide your hobbies and do not be ashamed of the things you love.

CHARACTER

Positive character qualities have a magical effect. They include honesty, integrity, sincerity, love for people, a forgiving spirit, a non-judgmental demeanor, and acceptance of others. Are you known for your ethical behavior? Do people know you as someone who is always seeking justice? Do you always want to do the right thing whether or not it is to your own benefit?

These positive character traits may or may not come through in a first time meeting with someone, but through daily interactions people begin to accurately identify a person's true character. This area of magic is one all people can possess and one that can continually be improved upon.

CHARACTER EXAMPLES

Just a “sec”

A few years ago, Ameriquest Mortgage Company had a series of commercials with the tag line “Don’t Judge too Quickly.” The ads showed people ending up in the most unusual and humorous predicaments, and someone else walking into the room at just the right time to catch the person in what seemed an unthinkable act. I experienced a “Don’t Judge Too Quickly” moment myself once.

During high school and college, I worked for our parks and recreation district as an after school daycare staff member. Timmy, who is now in high school, was an active kindergartner, to say the least. Timmy loved sports of any kind. Most days, when his mother came to pick him up, he was in the middle of an active game.

One day when Timmy's mother came we were out on the playground and Timmy was playing kickball. She said, "Timmy, let's go."

"Just a sec!" Timmy replied, and went back to his game. She just rolled her eyes. A few moments later he chased a ball that rolled right by his mother. Again, she called to him,

"Come on, Timmy!"

"Just a sec!" This happened three or four more times and then she finally got fed up. He came running by one more time and she yelled,

"Timmy – let's go – now!"

"Just a sec!"

"NO MORE SECS!"

In case you hadn't noticed, there is something interesting about the last line of that dialog. Read it again, this time out loud. Phonetically, it has a different meaning altogether, doesn't it?

Imagine you were another parent at this daycare and you had just walked out the door onto the playground to pick up your kids, only to hear a mother blurt out to her child what sounded like “No more sex!” It would have been pretty easy to make a quick judgment against this woman.

This humorous example offers a valuable lesson: Don’t judge too quickly. Judgment is as prevalent as it is unpleasant. It breeds gossip. Those who possess a non-judgmental character have found their magic.

A Variety of Characters

There is nothing like a wonderful network of individuals with a variety of great character traits to support, challenge and encourage a person. My wife has such a circle of friends:

- Kelly is an **emotional** and **sympathetic** listener.

- Sarah shows **compassion** and prays for my wife out loud over the phone.
- Susan is a missionary who shares her **spirituality** by sharing scripture.
- Courtney, in her **wisdom**, offers sound advice and brutal truth without the harshness.
- Amy has a beautiful way of adding **humor** to serious situations.
- Crystal is **intentional** in friendship, which is proved by her frequent text messaging.
- Michele and Tera, because of their **selfless** and **generous** natures, have brought us food at times when my wife was sick.

These are just a few of the women I am thankful for, who invest in my wife and offer her moral, emotional and spiritual support. Each shares the magic of her character and adds great value.

Having Trouble?

Perhaps you have considered what your M.A.G.I.C. is but you are still having trouble identifying your awesomeness. Here are some suggestions to help you along:

- Ask yourself, “What are my greatest strengths?”
- Ask yourself, “What do I enjoy doing?”
- What do others say “stands out” about you?
- Ask your friends and family to tell you the things they value most about you.
- Hone a special skill, get a hobby, and grow yourself (that might mean less TV, internet surfing and video game time and more time with books and mentors).
- Like Abraham Lincoln said, “*Whatever you are, be a good one.*”

Now the Important Question is... Are *You* a Magician?

If you aren't right now, you definitely have the potential to be.

“You might be a pickpocket if...” was designed to help you examine your general motives and methods with people.

Now it is time to look at the other side of the coin. In the pages to follow, **“You might be a magician if...”** will offer you insight, ideas, and inspiration for adding value to the people in your life.

You Might be a Magician if...

- People are not afraid to ask favors of you.
- You take your mother or father to breakfast once a week.
- You buy your wife flowers, or better yet, pick some: *“Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put in that action.” –Mother Teresa*
- You take time to listen to people’s problems, dreams and ideas.
- You are forgiving.
- You note the date of death of friends’ loved ones and send them a sympathy card exactly one year later.
- You bring a small gift along when you are invited to someone else’s house.

You Might be a Magician if...

- When you see someone you know in a grocery store aisle, you go down that aisle rather than avoiding it.
- You keep cold drinks on hand for the mailman and trash pick-up people.
- You let your basketball goal be “open game” to the neighbors.
- When someone tells you they are moving, or a new family is moving into the neighborhood, you do not hesitate to offer your help.
- You have become passionate about a charity and volunteer your time regularly.
- You never withhold a due compliment:
“I can live for two weeks on a good compliment.” –Mark Twain
- You commit at least one altruistic act daily.

You Might be a Magician if...

- As you take your seat on a plane, you ask the person next to you how they are doing.
- You send birthday cards.
- You work to remember people's names:
“Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language.”
–Dale Carnegie
- You've ever payed the toll for the car behind you.
- You always have a pack of gum or mints on you to offer to others.
- You tip generously, even when the service is poor.
- You've ever told a restaurant manager you received exceptionally good service from your waiter or waitress.

You Might be a Magician if...

- You stop and get your car washed at fundraising car washes.
- You admit when you are wrong.
- You are honest with the IRS.
- You ask people if they want anything before you make a Starbucks run.
- You genuinely care about others and it shows: *“People don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.”* –Teddy Roosevelt
- You’ve ever filled up the tank and gone through the wash after borrowing someone’s car.
- You’ve ever started the engine and cleared the snow off of someone else’s car.
- People ask and respect your opinion.

You Might be a Magician if...

- You've ever taken a meal to someone who was sick or just had a baby.
- You often hear the words, "That was awesome!" or "Do that again!" or "How did you do that?" or "Can you teach me that?"
- You continually look for ways to appreciate and encourage others: *"The way to develop the best that is in a man is by appreciation and encouragement."*
–Charles Schwab
- People are not afraid to approach you with a personal problem or a problem they have with you.
- People are happy to see you.
- You are able to "let it go" when someone keeps forgetting they owe you money or a favor.

You Might be a Magician if...

- You maintain an “open-door policy” at home and at work.
- Smiling has become second nature for you: *“Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.”* –Mother Teresa
- Many people tell you when they meet you, “I’ve heard a lot of good things about you.”
- You are willing to befriend someone who seemingly has nothing to offer you.
- “How can I help you?” is your phrase of choice over “Can you help me?”
- You are the life of the party.
- Because you have followed your dreams, you have inspired others to follow theirs.

Deliver the Goods

In my keynote I use magic to emphasize the lessons in this book. For one of my metaphors I use one of those long balloons that are used for balloon animals. I inflate and tie off the balloon. As I hold up it I tell the audience,

“This balloon represents your magic. Your magic is your potential to add value to people. But sometimes, people waste their potential. They decide not to share their magic, but instead, keep it to themselves.”

I then tilt my head back, open my mouth, and proceed to ingest the balloon. The whole thing. I continue to push it in and inch-by-inch it disappears into my mouth (without deflating). This trick has been a reputation maker for me for years and I hope to have the opportunity to show it to you someday.

Audience reaction to this stunt is awesome. The look of amazement (and disgust) on people's faces is priceless. They simply cannot believe I swallowed that balloon!

I then make the point that just as it was ridiculous that I swallowed the balloon, it is equally ridiculous when people waste their magic by keeping it to themselves. I then inflate another balloon. To the audience's relief I do not swallow the second one. Instead, I begin twisting it while I say,

“If we tap into our potential, we can shape it and develop it and make something good out of it. Then, we can deliver the goods.” I then hand the balloon dog I had been twisting to someone sitting near the stage. It is a perfect illustration of how we all have the choice to either waste our value-adding potential, or creatively give it away.

Great Rewards and Final Words

Is there reward in sharing your magic? Oh, yeah. The reward is self-fulfillment and better relationships. Success comes naturally to people who add value. Sometimes the reward has monetary value, sometimes intrinsic value, and sometimes both. People naturally give back to someone who has shared with them.

But the focus in sharing our magic should not be on what we get – that would be reverting back to the pickpocket mentality. Gain should not be our *motive*, but simply a result of our lifestyle of caring and sharing. And just as I learned on the plane to Saskatoon, when you make sharing your magic a lifestyle, you will ride through life first-class.

May you find something you love as much as I love *my* magic, and may you share it generously and experience great rewards. Good luck and God bless!

About Devin Henderson

Devin's passion for "Bringing Magic to Life" in individuals and organizations has made him both popular as a speaker and as a magician. Clients across the United States find his presentations "hilarious," "engaging" and "motivational."

Devin's keynote message, also titled "Share Your Magic," has inspired and been enjoyed by corporations such as Enterprise, Sysco and Hallmark Cards. His use of illusion, humor and audience participation in his message of personal transformation creates a captivating experience and leaves a lasting impression.

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