

Six Lessons

10 October 2010

I learned six lessons today.

The lessons came from over the bridge.



Lesson One: What goes up, often comes down.



We've had a long, good run around this part of the world, but now we're in a downward portion of the cycle. If we don't pull up, we (and that's not the royal we, that's the collective we, as in you and me and just about everyone else you know) will, in aviation terms, "auger in." That means we'll "buy the farm." That means that if we don't get it together and turn things around, it's going to get a whole lot worse before it gets any better.

Lesson Two: Collective fate.

It doesn't matter too much if one of us is able to level off.



Copyright © 2010, Stephanie Hackney, all rights reserved.

Or if one of us is able to pull up and climb.



Copyright © 2010, Stephanie Hackney, all rights reserved.

Because if the rest of us auger in, there's not going to be enough people left to clean up the mess. And besides, who wants to clean up a mess this big all alone, anyway?



Copyright © 2010, Stephanie Hackney, all rights reserved.

Lesson Three: The cost of anarchy.



Everybody being able to do their own thing in their own way with no consideration of what the impact is on anyone else sounds great in the abstract. That type of thinking makes a lot of sense when you don't have anything to lose or you just don't give a damn.

Six Lessons

But, if you've got something to lose, and the anarchic actions of someone else around you can not only cause you to lose everything you've got, but also cause them to lose everything they've got, then it doesn't make any sense at all.



Copyright © 2010, Stephanie Hackney, all rights reserved.

Lesson Four: The cost of partisanship.



The chances of getting anything done when half of the people are aligned exactly opposite of the other half is exactly zero. If all you want to do is be exactly opposite, exactly opposed, to whatever the other half is attempting to achieve, then collective progress is exactly zero.

Six Lessons

When the collective formation is heading into the ground, being intent on being opposed does not help the overall goal of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. All it does is guarantee that everyone will auger in at more or less the same time.



Lesson Five: Success requires cooperation.



If you want to keep things in the air, then you need to keep an eye on what the overall priorities are—keeping things in the air—and cooperate with who is up in the air with you.



That's the only way you keep things moving forward.

Six Lessons

And return them to an upward trajectory.



Lesson Six: Things are much closer than they appear.



Those who promote diametrically-opposed partisanship or knee-jerk, tangential flight to any other-tribe objective often claim that all obstacles or imminent threats are a long ways away.



Copyright © 2010, Stephanie Hackney, all rights reserved.

They say there is plenty of time to correct the collective downward trajectory once they seize total control before anybody, much less everybody, augers in.

Six Lessons



But in reality, everything, especially [the existential threats](#), are much closer than you've been led to believe.

Six Lessons



That means all of us, regardless of race, creed, passion or politics, better wake up and smell the jet fuel.

If we don't, we're all going to collectively meet the angels a lot sooner than we'd prefer.

* * * * *

Six Lessons

* * * * *

Just like the people of the United States, the Blue Angels team consists of men and women of many different races, origins, beliefs and interests. The Blue Angels demonstrate what is possible when people of many different races, origins, beliefs and interests work together to achieve a common goal.



* * * * *

The Navy Blue Angel flight demonstration squadron flies Boeing F/A-18 Hornet aircraft.

The Blue Angels performed their first flight demonstration in June 1946.

The name was created by the original team when planning a show in New York City in 1946. The name was discovered when one of the original team members noticed mention of the city's famous Blue Angel nightclub in the New Yorker Magazine.

In 2009 the Blue Angels performed for more than 8 million spectators. Since 1946, the Blue Angels have performed for more than 463 million spectators.

More information on the Blue Angels is available here: <http://www.blueangels.navy.mil/index.htm>

* * * * *

All photographs by Stephanie Hackney

Six Lessons

* * * * *

Copyright usage terms:

This document may be copied and distributed in its original, complete and unaltered form.

* * * * *