



February 2010 [\(pdf - available within 24 hours of this email\)](#)

By Donna Zajonc



Why Victims Can't Innovate

In one of [my recent newsletters](#), the story was told of two young twin brothers who walked into a barn with their grandfather. One boy complained about the foul smelling manure and ran out of the barn while yelling about getting manure on his shoes. The other boy raced through the barn with excitement and shouted to his grandfather, "With all this manure, there must be a pony somewhere!"

The first boy saw himself as a victim of the manure and smell. The second boy saw the manure and linked it to greater possibilities. Which boy do you identify with?

Do you constantly complain about life's bumps, or do you see challenging issues as a way to innovate and create new possibilities?

Tough times magnify our view of situations. If we see difficult issues through the eyes of a victim we might say: "The budget has been slashed so there's no way we can accomplish our goals" or "my boss is a tyrant" or "our products are out of date" or "our citizens won't approve that idea."

The victim mentality sucks the life out of innovative energy and has an excuse for every situation. Victims are addicted to the drama and complaining. They spread negative energy and want others to take on the same victim mentality that they are attached to.

The creator/innovator, on the other hand, clarifies what they want and goes after that outcome. (Where's the pony and how do we find it among the manure?) Not brought down by the situation, they ask themselves, "What do I want and what actions are mine to take to create that vision?"

The fundamental difference between the victim mindset and the creator/innovator mindset is where they place their attention. **For victims the focus is on what they don't want.** Problems constantly preoccupy their lives and they fear the loss of control or loss of purpose.

Creators place their focus on **what they do want.** They keep their eyes on what they want rather than focusing on set backs or obstacles. Often it is two steps forward and sometimes one step back. With each step the creator gets closer to and clearer about what they most want.

In This Issue

[Why Victims Can't Innovate](#)

[Testimonials](#)

[Book of the Month](#)

[Article of the Month](#)

[Quote of the Month](#)

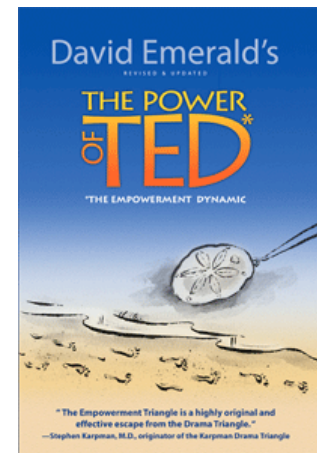
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Book of the Month *The Power of TED**

(*The Empowerment Dynamic)

by

David Emerald



[Buy online at Amazon.com](#)

**Favorite Article
of the Month**
is from the Wall Street Journal

Thinking Happy

David Emerald's book, *The Power of TED* (*The Empowerment Dynamic)* explains the difference between victim and creator mindset better than anyone I know (www.powerofted.com). Okay, many of you know that David is my husband and I AM biased! It is also very fulfilling to hear the stories that David receives after people read his book. The shift in identify and way of thinking is truly life-changing.

It is no secret that now, more than ever, people feel victimized by circumstances. They feel victimized by the economy, not having enough time, circumstances like an illness, toxic politics, their bad childhood or a God who persecutes them. On and on and on.

The creator mindset sees the manure and looks for positive news behind the initial failure. **In fact, failure becomes an opportunity to grow and learn for the creator/innovator.** They view every situation as an opportunity to adjust, re-evaluate, learn, grow and innovate.

Michael Maddock, founding partner of his Chicago-based branding and marketing company says this about a creator; "Creators see the obstacles as springboards for new thinking, not as an excuse to throw up their hands and give up."

People who see themselves as victims are rarely asked to rise to new heights in their organization. Complaining and negative energy get old fast and most successful leaders have looked in the mirror and shifted their mindset to that of a creator and innovator.

Victims cannot innovate! The only thing victims create is more victimhood and more complaining and more misery for those around them.

If you feel twinges of victim feelings, begin making the shift to a creator and innovator by asking: "What's the outcome I want here?" Focusing on what you want will begin the shift from victim to creator. Now the conversation has an opportunity to shift from complaints and problems to a clear destination. When you begin to do this, others will ask you to join their conversation and share your gifts with them.

This is a powerful shift, but no one can make this shift for you. Your boss or spouse can point the way or make suggestions to you. Reading books can give you a few tips. **The fact is, only you can do the heavy lifting and shift the lens in which you view the world.**

It's your choice.

I am excited to share news of an upcoming trip to Cuenca, Ecuador to facilitate two workshops sponsored by the Waaponi Foundation February 23-26. For two days I will be working with local government women leaders. The title of the workshop is "Women as Powerful Political Leaders". David and I will be co-leading the second workshop "Becoming a Collaborative Political Leader." My thanks goes out to Nena Siguenza and her fantastic staff for inviting us and making all the complex arrangements. The seminars will be in Spanish with simultaneous translation. I will share some of our experiences in the March newsletter. Stay tuned!

Thoughts at Work

(read it here)

"Employee satisfaction has hit the lowest level in the 22-year history of the Conference Board's annual survey on the topic. Only 45% of U.S. workers are satisfied with their jobs, down from 52% in 2005 and 61% in 1987, says this 5,000-household study. We could use some cheering up at work."

~Donna

Quote of the Month

"Living from the Creator Orientation is actually more challenging. In the Victim Orientation, I didn't have to exercise conscious choice. I just reacted to my circumstances."

From
*The Power of TED**
*(*The Empowerment Dynamic)*
by David Emerald

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Testimonials

*"Your unique gifts as a coach gave me the courage to embrace my own personal transformation. You listen deeply; offered suggestions and asked me to stretch **beyond what I thought was possible**. You had an objective view which gave me a perspective that I hadn't considered. I was willing to see things differently because of your guidance. You have had the greatest impact on my own personal journey of growth, change and transformation. I'm eternally blessed **for your coaching**."*

Beth S. Jarman, Ph.D.
President, FarSight Group

Considering a Staff Retreat?

Give me a call to facilitate your next staff retreat or planning session. 206-780-9300 ([read more](#))

Individual Coaching

If you would like to experience the power of coaching to transform your leadership and personal life, contact me so we can schedule a complimentary call: 206-780-9300 or Donna@BainbridgeLeadership.com

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