

Scott Adams is the creator of Dilbert, a cartoon read by more than 150 million people every day. He has been a bank teller, a computer programmer, and a product manager. As Adams relates, helpful criticism and encouragement are often what it takes to encourage people to do their best work.

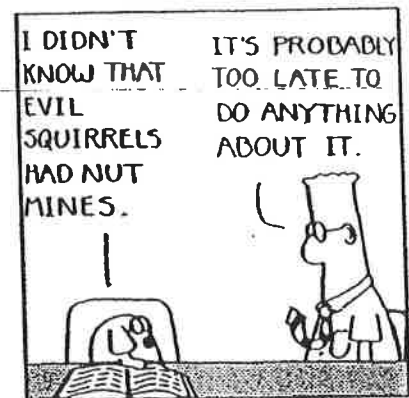
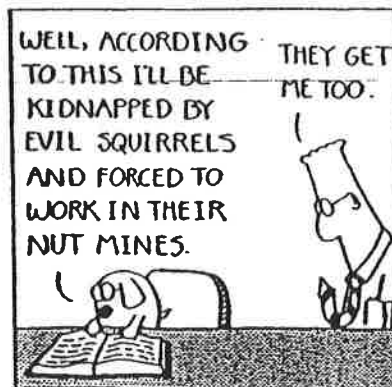
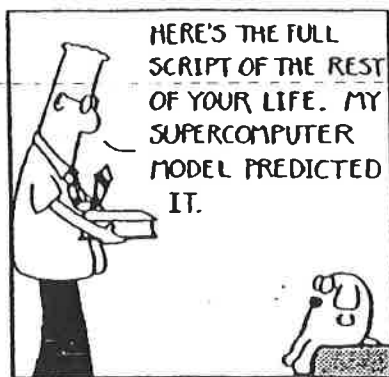
You don't have to be a "person of influence" to be influential. In fact, most people in my life are probably not even aware of the things they've taught me.

When I was trying to become a syndicated cartoonist, I sent my portfolio to one cartoon editor after another, and received one rejection after another. One editor even called to suggest I take art classes. Then Sarah Gillespie, an editor at United Media and one of the real experts in the field, called to offer me a contract. At first, I didn't believe her. I asked if I'd have to change my style, get a partner or learn to draw. But she believed that I was already good enough to be a nationally syndicated cartoonist.

Her confidence in me totally changed my frame of reference: it altered how I thought about my own abilities. This may sound bizarre, but from the minute I got off the phone with her, I could draw better. You can see a marked improvement in the quality of cartoon I drew after that conversation.

And it doesn't take much to make that kind of difference in someone else's life. Once, at a tennis tournament, I was paired with a woman who had just learned how to play. Every time she missed a shot, she immediately turned to me, expecting that I would be disappointed or frustrated. Instead, I talked to her about our strategy for the next point. By doing so, I sent a very clear signal: the past doesn't matter. I didn't encourage her with empty praise - that approach rarely works. But I knew that if she dwelled on a mistake, she was more likely to repeat it, and that if she focused on how we were going to win the next point, she was more likely to help us do just that. Over several days, her abilities improved dramatically - and we ended up winning the tournament.

Realize that in some way you influence everyone you come in contact with. Then pay careful attention to what pushes people's mental buttons. If you can push those buttons for the better, do it.



(Career Studies 10, page 231)

Our Deepest Fear

L2-A4

by Marianne Williamson

- an excerpt from the book, A Return To Love:
Reflections on the Principles of A Course in Miracles

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

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