

THE REVIVED LIFE

FAITH · GROWTH · TRANSFORMATION

A FREE GUIDE

The Two Second Pause

The sentence you would have regretted does not leave your mouth. That is the whole win, and you can have it at dinner tonight.

I pray before dinner. Dear God, thank you for this food. Amen. We start eating. And about two seconds later I am saying sit down, in a voice nobody at that table would call compassionate.

I do not swear at my kids. I do not go after their character. What I do is say things with a lot of intensity. I was calmly in the presence of God with my words, and I turned around two seconds later and did not care at all how I was coming across.

The freeze frame

Here is the picture I use now. You are at the table and it is going badly. Time stops, like in Inception. Everything is frozen except you, and a guest you have never met walks up and stands there, watching.

They see the whole scene. The mess, the kid who will not sit down, the dish on the floor. And they see you, frozen, with your next sentence already loaded. Go to your room. Put that over there. No more food for you.

They do not know you believe anything. All they get is whatever comes out of your mouth next.

THE INSTRUCTION

Next time something irritates you, take two seconds before you speak and picture that guest at your table. Then say it, or do not.

I need to lead with compassion and mercy. But I need the bandwidth in my life to do that.

Why two seconds is the whole lever

I went looking for something bigger to fix and there is nothing there. We had just moved. New mortgage, new numbers, boxes everywhere, bills, work. Old problems I had not solved and new ones I had just bought.

Here is how bad it got. My wife asked for a glass of water. I went to the kitchen, poured one, drank it myself, left the cup on the counter and walked back in. She said, did you bring the water? So I went back,

poured another, carried it in, and handed it to my mom. My mom said thank you. My wife said, I thought that one was for me.

I could not think. That is the actual problem. When I have too much going on I turn into quick reactive thinking, and quick reactive thinking, aimed at a kid who got out of bed again, comes out as consequences delivered with an intensity the moment did not earn.

The house still has to get put together. The bills still have to get paid. I cannot delete normal life. So the two seconds before the words leave is not the small lever. It is the only one.

What the two seconds are for

1. Name who you are trying to represent.

Compassionate. Merciful. Slow to anger. Abounding in love. Hold that for one second and it changes the words.

2. Check the delivery, not just the content.

You can be completely right and still land it wrong. Mine is almost never the content. It is the delivery.

3. Let yourself off the mat.

James says nobody tames the tongue. Nobody. So this is not a performance test, and you will miss plenty. Take the next two seconds anyway.

I am not writing this because I have it handled. It is the thing I am working on right now.

Tonight at dinner. One irritation. Two seconds.

If this helped, there is a free companion guide that goes chapter by chapter with reflection questions and action steps. No catch.

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