

Mind Over Matter

Take time to think about what messages you are feeding your mind.

by Kindra Gordon

Feed your mind good stuff,” says Tim Sanders, a business expert, motivational speaker and author.

Sanders purports that we should be as careful about what we put into our mind as what we put in our mouth.

“Your mind is a machine,” he explains. “When you ingest a piece of information, your mind goes to work, chewing on it, digesting it, and then converting it into a thought.”

Sanders, who is a former chief solutions officer and leadership coach for Yahoo, continues, “When good stuff goes into your mind, good thoughts emerge.”

In his latest book, titled *Today We Are Rich*, Sanders promotes this principle of feeding the mind positive information and says, “The reason it is so important to feed your mind good stuff is that the resulting thoughts determine your success or failure, your happiness or misery and, most important, the circumstances of your life.”

He goes on to suggest that feeding your mind positive talk is a momentous step in building confidence, which will ultimately help you — and your business — attain a higher level of performance.

Grow the positive

Sanders offers several strategies to increase the positive content in your life. For starters, he recommends starting the day with 30-45 minutes of mindful reading from an inspirational, instructional or historical book.

He does not advocate starting your day with email, the Internet, the local news or newspaper.

“We know breakfast is considered the most important meal of the day,” Sanders says. “It’s also important for your mind, because what you feed your mind first thing in the morning influences your mood for the entire day.”

Thus, he suggests, “For a few minutes each morning, read from a book that helps you be better at what you do. All the great leaders from the past read. It fills your mind with confidence. The future is in books — not blog posts.”

Sanders says another source for positive thoughts can come from our memory vault. He suggests pulling up positive experiences and “regurgitating” them, which he likens to a cow chewing her cud.

In his book, Sanders says, “The healthiest mind food is success experiences ... times when you displayed courage ... were masterful ... performed above your own expectations ... your confidence soared.”

Sanders says those thoughts can build our self-confidence for a present task at hand.

Unfortunately, he notes, most of us tend to keep criticisms at the top of our memory bank and bury the successes at the bottom.

“We need to flip it and remind ourselves of the successful moments, so they can help us

deal with new challenges,” Sanders says. Regarding criticism, Sanders has this

advice: Learn to digest it properly. He uses the analogy of a walnut, saying, “Criticism is a gift. There is a nut inside that shell — it tells you something about yourself or someone else. Eat the good stuff and throw away the shells.”

Weed out the negative

Sanders advocates filtering negative influences, which he likens to junk food, from your life. His list of things to weed out includes negative TV shows and news programs, gossip, and people with nasty attitudes. On the Internet, he suggests going on an

“unfriending-spree” for Facebook users who are linked to individuals who repeatedly post negative or inappropriate content.

With regard to the Internet, he also promotes “purposeful” use instead of grazing the web.

Sanders says the upshot of feeding your mind positive information is that you will push out the negative. By continuing the routine, Sanders says, eventually you will find yourself optimistic, hopeful and constructive.

Today We Are Rich is available at major book retailers and through Amazon.com.

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— Tim Sanders

Email etiquette

As a former leader at Yahoo, it might be a surprise to hear Tim Sanders suggest that email is an Achilles heel. For many of us, Sanders suggests, email can be friend or foe.

While email can be beneficial, he says if used inappropriately it can negatively affect relationships. He advises the following tactics for utilizing the tool in a more professional manner.

► Do not deliver bad news or criticism through email. Sanders says to be effective and to solve problems, you should speak directly to the person with whom you want to communicate. He says, “Do not use email as a one-way communication tool to get your way.”

- When responding to someone via email, particularly if you are upset, Sanders suggests deleting their address in the “To” line. He says this is akin to “leaving the safety lock on,” which gives you time to think about what you are sending and reconsider any comments you might regret.
- Sanders does not mince words with his last piece of advice: Stop sending email at unprofessional hours — evenings and weekends. “We all need to respect people’s time,” he says, suggesting 24/7 emailing creates a sick work culture.