

**M I K E L I P K I N**

**KEEPER  
OF THE  
FLAME**



**HOW TO INSPIRE OTHERS ON THE CUSP OF CHANGE**



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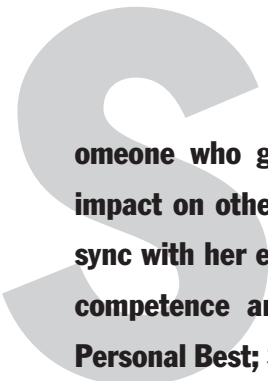
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# KEEPER OF THE FLAME



**Someone who goes first; Someone with a heightened awareness of her impact on others; someone who is her own best coach; someone in total sync with her environment; Someone embedded with the authority of both competence and character; Someone who inspires others to be their Personal Best; Someone who lives each day as though it were both her first and her last; Someone who listens, learns and lets go; Someone who lives in wonder; someone who is forever fresh so the people around her never grow stale.**

**Someone like you. Someone like the person you will become. Or Someone like the person you need to rediscover.**

# **Unifying Idea: There is no such thing as Ordinary.**

**Just beneath the surface, the magic is percolating. Everything, Everyone, Every day is Exceptional. Every thing has distinction. Everyone is gestating a Hero within them. We're all a giant to someone else. Every day is an opportunity to break through. The smallest actions can have the biggest impact. God is in the details, the subtleties, the nuances, and the hints all around us. Fascination is the only lens through which life should be observed. A look, a thought, a gesture, a smile can make history. One act can make all the difference. One Person with courage can change his world. Small is the Real Big. The Miracle is the Here and Now.**

**This book is a celebration of Mr. and Ms Everyman. The stories you'll read about are the stories of the people all around you. Each one is compelling. Each one is valuable. Each one, in part, is your story. We're all angels with one wing. We can only fly while embracing each other.**

# Welcome. You're just in time.

**Look around you. You're being watched.**

**People are following you.**

**Where are you leading them?**

**LET'S GET STRAIGHT TO THE TRUTH: SOMEONE IS WATCHING YOU.**

They're watching the way you talk. They're watching what you do. They're watching you because they're not sure what to do.

You may be a CEO or you may be a PA. You may be a salesperson or you may be a nurse. You may be in government or you may be a one-man band. But someone is being guided by your actions. He may be your colleague or he may be your child. He may be your customer or he may be your fellow citizen. Whether you know it or not, your behavior is affecting the behavior of others.

Imagine there's a cosmic webcam tracking your every move. It's broadcasting your life to a viewing audience of millions. What would they see? Would it be a show that inspired them to be more, give more, love more, laugh more, grow more, try more? Or would it be a cautionary tale of wasted moments, wasted feelings, wasted opportunities, wasted adventures?

Life is theater with consequences. All the world's a stage. Every day is a new drama. Every interaction with every person is a scene you act out with your fellow cast members. What kind of play are you creating?

Here's what I'm asking you to do in this book: Step outside yourself, but be yourself. Be conscious of yourself, but don't be self-conscious. Be in the moment, but watch the moment with the eyes of others.

Each of us has to navigate the duality of the private and the public persona. We need to be true to ourselves while living the perception we want others to have of us. We need to be the best we can be while helping others become the best they can be. We need to be authentic while we are being social.

After studying thousands of people all over the world, I believe there's a powerful synergy between the inner and the outer self. The one develops in sync

Every breath,  
every sound,  
every word,  
every signal,  
every deed  
counts.

with the other. In trying to make others better, we become better. To quote Nelson Mandela, “As you let your own light shine, you unconsciously give others permission to do the same. As you liberate yourself from your own fear, your presence automatically liberates others.”

I like to watch – it’s how I make a living. I’m always just outside the box, studying what’s going on inside it. My company, Environics/Lipkin, is the motivation company within the Environics Research Group, one of Canada’s most sophisticated research houses. Every year we poll thousands of people across the United States and Canada. I personally conduct over thirty focus groups a year with people all over the world. That means every two weeks I sit down with groups of people all over the world to talk about one thing: their perception of how their lives are changing, how they feel about it and what they’re doing to manage change on both a personal and professional level.

I have my finger on the pulse of social change. I can tell you that it’s beating faster and it’s beating more erratically. We’re all hovering between anxiety and excitement, and very little time is being spent in the neutral zone. Think about your life. Think about your social or professional circle. How many times over the past year have you kicked back and thought, “Well, not much happening here. Things are pretty much as they’ve always been. Not much likelihood of anything changing any time soon . . .”? Yeah, right.

It’s like living in a permanent crisis. In fact, a major client of mine has the philosophy “if it’s not a crisis, why bother?” But here’s what happens in a crisis, and this is the theme that underpins every line in this book: People become hypersensitive. Every pore is opened, nerves are exposed, actions are amplified. That’s why Webster’s Dictionary defines a crisis as a turning point, a defining moment. Elephants have got nothing on humans – it’s humans who never forget.

That’s why I wrote these words, and that’s why you’re reading them. From now until forever, you matter a whole lot to so many people. In the tiniest way you can be the difference between somebody making it or losing it. A throw-away line to you may be a lifeline to another. Remember, inspire comes from the Latin word *inspiro*. It means, literally, “to give breath.” Every breath, every sound, every word, every signal, every deed counts.

My personal call to action: I \_\_\_\_\_