The oracle of you

By Chaplain Norbert Karava

If it were your purpose to hide or disguise your character, it would be necessary for you to cover your tracks, and certain tracks would certainly be more critical than others. Among the most critical would be your credit card statements and your financial records.

This is about what we do with money, which, of all the many things we do, is more telling than most about who and what we are. For most of us, money is gained by labor, and labor, if it is honestly undertaken, requires not just mere intentionality; because labor often involves leaving our pleasure/comfort zones and undertaking what for us is unpleasant and perhaps even arduous, it requires focus of will, especially if we labor conscientiously. Hence, what we spend our money on is what we labor for and what we labor for is what we desire.

In other words, the earning and spending of money reveals the naked factuality of a man's true desires, and once you know a man's true desires, you know the man's character. In the words of an obscure carpenter from Nazareth: "Where a man's treasure is, there his heart will be." But why should we need to look in the patterns of what we do with our money, i.e., our treasures, for indications of our true desires, and therefore our character or our hearts? Are not a man's desires and therefore his character obvious and even self-evident to him? Our experience, I opine, should have taught us by now, that our temptations and proclivity to self-delusion are well nigh irresistible and that honestly knowing and assessing our own moral character as opposed to our mere psychological profiles is an incomparably more difficult thing than knowing the character of others.

Self-deluded… moi? Yes, you! Without an external intervention, it is impossible for us to escape the sense of ourselves as "special" not merely in the sense of ontologically unique and separate beings, but especially as "someone better than" (better than at least, someone else – please show me how much better I am on the bell curve than the greater part of inferior humanity), or someone worthy of special considerations, or someone to whom the rules, if they must apply, apply differently, or someone whose excuse for doing what was not supposed to be done or not doing what was, is somehow more plausible.

What do self-delusional beings generally do when they consider their motives and desires? Are we not tempted to hide our own desires and motives from ourselves? No it wasn't me drunk, it was me a little buzzed. No, it wasn't me up to my eyeballs in pornography, it was me glancing here and there, noticing this or that, maybe even appreciating some art. No it wasn't me stuck to my sheets in the glue of my laziness; it was me "coming down with something."

When the self-delusional spender gets his credit card statements, especially the annual reports, he is painfully surprised. Apparently he does not know what he spent his money on. This can only happen because he does not want to know what he spent it on, and the reason for not wanting to know what he spent his money on is because he fears to see his desires exposed even before himself. But there it is, the painfully blatant annual pie chart of what we spent our money on: where, when, how often and how much. These are the naked facts of our desires. What we spend our money on reveals something yet more subtle and, I think, more significant, namely, what we do not desire. Not as obvious or perhaps even as relatively innocent as the glaring and scarlet revelries in the Honch, what is missing in our management of mammon often is a reflection of what is missing in our hearts: love, not just the warm-fuzzy-ish sentimental imitation thereof, but the love that is tested in the crucible of factual generosity.

The numbers can reveal a very disciplined, savings-oriented, budget-balanced manager of income who has taken a quantum-leap forward in selfishness; unlike the undisciplined spendthrift who cannot resist the immediate gratification of his desires, and hence, who never saves anything, this sort of disciplined investor is able to amass a fortune to support an expanded empire of self, but becomes the fool, who, for all his hard work, ambition, intelligence and good fortune, is that much the worse off, that is, if love be the measuring rod of man.

And so, as we scrutinize the shadows our souls cast on the numbers constituting our fortunes, do we see the telltale contours of a life defined by generosity? Or is it really all about, one way or another, foolish or clever, the empire of me?

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The impact of the ERB process can already be felt in many affected rates.

"The benefit of ERB is that advancement is up dramatically, E-6 up five percent, E-5 up ten percent and successful perform-to-serve (PTS) quotas are up exponentially from 30 percent to now 70 percent," said Garcia.

In July, the Navy addressed gaps for sea billets by expanding initiatives for Sailors with the right experience levels and skill sets into high-priority Fleet billets. Garcia addressed the relevance of ERB in light of short falls for these billets.

"It's easy to understand why there is confusion about the introduction of initiatives to encourage sea duty extensions at the same time we are following through with ERB," said Garcia. "But it's an apples and oranges question. The sea billet gap existed before ERB. We now have the size Navy we need; we just need to fix the gaps, and these incentives are designed to encourage folks to do so."

The assistant secretary's visit to CFAY is a part of the Navy's focus on the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative, Japan Road Show to promote the use of tools designed to focus on the whole life of the individual and their family's lives.

September DoDDS school calendar

First semester:

- **Sept. 3 – Labor Day *Federal holiday**
- **Sept. 4 –** Byrd Elementary School kindergarten first day
- **Sept. 11 –** Ikego Elementary School Open House (3–4 p.m.)
- **Sept. 12 –** The Sullivans School Open House (2:30–3:30 p.m.)
- **September 13 –** Yokosuka Middle School Open House (4–5:30 p.m.)
  Nile C. Kinnick High School Open House (4:30–6:30 p.m.)
- **September 14 –** Union training
- **Sept. 18 –** Byrd Elementary School Open House (5-6 p.m.)
- **September 28 –** Half-day CSI Training

You know where you want to go.

Sailor Career Toolbox

The tools you need to get there.

http://www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/CareerToolbox/

HELP FIGHT CANCER
RELAY FOR LIFE

OCTOBER 6, 2012
IKEGO HOUSING DETACHMENT

RELAY FOR LIFE
American Cancer Society

At our 2012 Yokosuka Relay, teams of around 10 people will camp out on Ikego and take turns walking around the track for the 24 hour event. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times, because cancer never sleeps. We are *CELEBRATING* those who have battled cancer, *REMEMBERING* loved ones lost, and *FIGHTING BACK* against the disease.

over $67,000 raised in 2011

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED
1. START A TEAM WITH YOUR FRIENDS
2. SIGN UP AS A CANCER SURVIVOR
3. DONATE TO A TEAM
4. CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE BELOW. IT'S EASY!!!

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Celebrate.
Remember.
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