

# Reflection

By Karel Murray

Personally, I feel that reflecting about what has occurred in my life over the past year is a dangerous thing. It allows me to evaluate situations that have occurred with the knowledge of the lessons learned. Case in point...would I live my last year in the same way knowing what I know now? Or would I become a classic case of history repeating itself? I think I like the sense of adventure wondering what each new day will bring.

This year, I thought I would reflect about what I learned in 2006 that I didn't know before. I thought the page would be blank; I'm 52 years old, feel fairly worldly... know a lot about life.

Apparently not...

## **What I Learned This Year**

- ***Its possible to gain 5 pounds in weight overnight.***

No matter how high you lift your arms over your head, lean back on your heels or hold your stomach in...the scale will reveal transgressions of the night before. This is why all over America households reverberate on January 1<sup>st</sup> with shrieks of horror... it isn't from the hangover, it is the news delivered by the true sadist in the home... the accurate scale reflecting the overindulgence from the night before.

- ***Men can be astonished...***

My husband disengaged from our loving hug and reared away from me when I uttered, "Hot! I'm getting hot!" He finally experienced the intensity of menopausal changes as I suffered through a hot flash which generated enough heat to melt my makeup and sear his outer garments. His look of absolute astonishment at this incredible bodily temperature change was priceless.

- ***Shopping for the right bed should be a sitcom***

First there was the decision that our mattress is too hard and it was the cause of our back pain. So, the search for a softer bed was launched.

First, we needed to determine exactly what we wanted in a bed. When two adults (each with different requirements) are involved in the buying decision; it can be a complicated process. Doesn't a person need a full eight hours of sleep on the mattress in order to make an accurate choice? I personally feel that all mattress retailers should have private sleep areas

where customers can crawl up onto a mattress and take a short nap - without being on view to the public. I feel it is impolite to linger long on the mattress while a sales person looks on. It's too intimate a moment to be revealed to a complete stranger.

In addition, who would have dreamed there were so many choices? We tried a "sleep number" bed...it made sense; with the quick change of the dial, your side of the bed can be adjusted to fit your personal preferences. What they don't tell you is that when you are a bed hog, half of the bed doesn't feel right because it probably isn't adjusted to your selected sleep number. We discovered that if you don't purchase a high end mattress unit, the creaking of the box springs can be unbelievably annoying. The unit was returned after a week.

Our second choice resulted in the purchase of a pillow top style mattress which, in the store, seemed extremely comfortable to both of us. Why wasn't a disclaimer posted next to the "Legal Notice: Do Not Tear off" tag that indicated any bed occupants would wind up wedged together in the center of the mattress because the center coils were not as firm as the perimeter coils. Trying to struggle out of that bed each morning resembled emerging from a fox hole!

Our third try for a mattress feels great, but it is two inches higher off the ground than our original bed. I feel like a child when I spring up onto my side of the bed. Nice...as long as the bounce remains in my step!

- ***Loyalty is directly tied to food***

When we brought home Stryder, our Siamese kitten, I carried him around so much my husband considered him my personal appendage. Of course there was a reason for this. With my heavy travel schedule, I wanted to "bond" the kitten to me and make him my cat. I only want one pet who favored me. It isn't asking much, is it? Our other animals adore my husband, Rick. He feeds them. He ignores them. And they can't get enough of him. However, with is experiment, I was confident that nurture over nutrition would ultimately win out.

Didn't work. Stryder has made Rick his personal savior. I'm the convenient guest who holds him when Rick is out of the house. I think I need to start feeding him liver snacks.

- ***Children will continue to ignore their parent's sage advice***

When did my son get a mind of his own? I mean...why bother to give advice, even if solicited? He doesn't ever seem to take the wise insight provided by his loving parents and apply it to his situation. He simply does what he always planned on doing regardless of how we try to help.

Wait a minute... is that my mother talking? Pinch me.

- ***Children are looking younger every day. Politicians are looking older.***  
I met a nineteen year old girl last week and swore she looked no older than twelve. I wonder if she thinks I look like a fossil. I saw a photo of some politicians and wondered "who are these old men?" That's when my husband gently reminded me that the individuals in the photo were approximately our age.
- ***Technology – I can't live without it, but I can't work it either...***  
The world of digital information and microchips is hurtling forward at a startling rate. I bought two new computers and subsequently learned that Microsoft is introducing the Vista operating system shortly. I discovered that my new computers have dual drives. Would someone tell me what the other internal drive does and why is it there in the first place?

Cell phones are getting more complicated every month! I remember when you picked up a phone and all it did was allow you to talk to another person. Now you can create your own video, snap a quick series of photos, send text messages to others, and even maintain all of your data files on a Blackberry. When I first heard the term Blackberry, I thought someone was talking about the plaid trench coat. And just to think...I was finally getting the hang of using my Personal Digital Assistant (PDA).

Websites are becoming more engaging and overwhelming. I recently accessed the Google search engine and typed in a search for a product. Within seconds, I am provided with 1,400,000 options. Excuse me...I only needed one!

Personalizing a highly digitalized world is now becoming the rage. Notegram.com has created the ability to send handwritten notes over the internet without scanning a document. Simply use their electronic pen and specially coated notepads and viola! Instant personal note to a friend or client. Snail mail...watch out. I'm going to miss opening up an envelope.

Blue streaming is the technology that enables a person to have their image superimposed into their web site page. By the way it is designed it

appears as if the person is talking directly to you... a small television program right within the web page.

Connecting to someone from another country over the Internet is just too unreal. My niece lives in Spain and she participated in our Christmas Eve celebration by logging on to her computer, sitting in front of a video camera and then talking to us over an internet phone line. The cost? Zero. As she viewed us through our camera, I hope I didn't look 10 pounds heavier.

Nurses now use thermometers that record body temperature. By inserting a wand like device into the ear canal, an accurate reading is provided in seconds. Where was this device when we had to use the rectal thermometer on our infant son?

Video tape is disappearing as a common media for taping programs. The current rage is to record on re-writeable CD ROMS, which are easier to store. No tape to bundle up and bind the recording equipment. Cool.

High definition television images look clearer than the real thing. How is that even possible? My husband installed surround sound to compliment the beautifully detailed image on the television. Now when I watch a scary movie, the graphic scenes are more disgustingly realistic and the "terror" noises make me twitch and yelp. I love every moment.

An IPOD has no buttons. Took me two days to figure out how to turn on my Nano IPOD because I couldn't find the "on" button. You are probably wondering why I didn't read the instructions... simple. I felt that any good technology piece should be easily operated through human logic. No buttons just about did me in until I held my thumb down by accident over the word "menu". My son loaded it with my music and now I have no clue how to get rid of some of the stuff that is on there. Oh, you think I should read the instructions? My son, Ben's phone number is easier to dial.

- ***The wrapper on an exercise CD ROM can remain on the box for over a year***

I learned in order to receive the benefit of an exercise video; you need to remove plastic wrap on the box and insert the CD ROM into the computer for viewing. Where are the instructions when you really need them? The excuse lasted for six months until our cat chewed through one end and I had to remove the wrapper. No more excuses...will the horror ever end?
- ***Saving scraps for chickens is a good thing***

My friend and her husband joined Rick and I for a New Year's Eve celebration at a local restaurant. Upon completion of the meal, she asked for a doggie bag. As she cleared her plate and sealed the bag, she commented on how she used to take scraps out to a friend's chickens.

Silence and expectant looks greeted her statement.

She thought her actions made perfect sense, "You never know when you are going to need a chicken!" My first thought was "a chicken to the rescue?" But she meant that if she did a good deed for someone else (like taking scraps to the chickens), the friend might return the favor by providing a chicken for her household if she should ever be in need of one.

I loved her for sharing this. The logic...so simple and rational.

Do good for others - Don't expect anything - But, you never know...  
You might get a chicken for your efforts.

You just gotta love the gal. No wonder she has been close to my heart for 30 years.

I can't wait to see what the new year brings! Just as long as it isn't another 5 pounds.

*Karel Murray, a national motivational humorist and business trainer is the author of Straight Talk: Getting Off the Curb (a book co-authored with KC Lundberg), Think Forward!® (a monthly e-newsletter with over 4,200+ subscribers), The Profitability Blueprint Series: Career Building Concepts for the Real Estate Licensee and numerous articles in local, regional, and national publications. You can contact her at [karel@karel.com](mailto:karel@karel.com) or call 866-817-2986 or access her web site at <http://www.karel.com>.*