

MY VIEW



Founder Wayne Fortin



MASTER WEAVERS

Dear TIP Weavers,

In a recent MY VIEW, I talked about Weavers...those who prioritize building caring relationships with others. I talked about YOU...members of the TIP community...as weavers because of the relationships you build with fellow TIP volunteers, survivors of tragedy and emergency responders. Indeed, you are all part of the solution to the fractures which exist in our society.

Yes, we are all TIP weavers, but I'd like to encourage all of us to become even more effective weavers and relationship builders...to become **Master Weavers**. In all of the roles we play in life we can always improve. We can always do what we do better. And so, it is with weaving. We can all learn to become even stronger relationship builders than we are now.

There are 1,000's of books, articles and seminars about how to establish strong relationships. But for me it comes down to one rule: *"Be interested before being interesting."* In other words, the path to establishing strong relationships involves showing interest in others rather than showing how interesting we are.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? Unfortunately, it's not. We all have a SELF gene which whispers to each of us: *"You are so very interesting"; "the world revolves around you"; "others really want to hear about your interesting life."*

If you don't believe in the SELF gene, just consider Facebook and Instagram. They are filled with people showing off their interesting lives. Or just look around you as you travel through life. You'll see people looking not at you or others but at their smart phones. Or pay attention to the interactions you have at your next social, work or church event. I suspect you'll find people talking to you about themselves while showing little interest in you.

So, becoming **Master Weavers** who are adept at focusing outward at others is not as easy as it may seem. It requires taming that SELF gene, no easy task. And it requires going against the societal norms which encourage us to promote ourselves on social media and to pay more attention to our phones than to each other.

Although becoming **Master Weavers** will not be easy (for the reasons mentioned above) it's really quite simple. Here are some lessons I've learned about master weaving from observing the **Master Weavers** in my life...

- Understand what others really want... someone to listen to their experiences in life and VALIDATE (not change or expand upon) those experiences.
- When others do share about themselves, PAY ATTENTION with your whole being.
- When others speak up...SHUT UP!
- Get your face out of your phone. At your next TIP training or meeting use the breaks to SHOW INTEREST in those around you.
- ASK others about themselves using open ended HOW questions vs Yes/No questions... *"How was your job interview?"* vs *"Did you have the job interview?"*
- Establish relationships in person, one on one.
- Focus on establishing strong relationships with a few rather than "networking" with many.
- Follow-up on what you heard about the other's experience the last time you met: *"You told me you were going on vacation. How was it?"*
- Keep in touch. *"I'm just checking in. How are you?"*
- Give frequent "10 second appreciations": *"I really liked that talk you did at our last meeting."*
- Send hand written notes.

Becoming a Master Weaver takes time and practice. There are only a very few **Master Weavers** among us. I'm not one of them, but I'm striving to become one.

Let's all aspire to become **Master Weavers**. TIP, each one of us and the people in our lives will be better off for it!