

FORT NEWS

MONTHLY BULLETIN

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PROFITS OR PRINCIPLES

By *Francois Damian Aristhomene Martinez*

The month of June I had the pleasure of visiting one of the countries I once called home. During my drive through the different cities, I stopped at a little beach restaurant which I've been visiting for the last 25 years. The familiar scenery brought back memories of my younger days, when I would stop by with my friends after hitchhiking from beach to beach to enjoy a good inexpensive meal. I quickly settled into one of the old chairs. It seemed as if nothing had changed, the wooden and concrete tables, the sand floors; it was as if this humble restaurant was preserved in time, that's until I saw the menu, and although the dishes were the same, the prices were truly not.

This small, simple, and humble place had become a place only tourists could afford, one where the locals and the natives of the area could no longer enjoy, unless they were financially blessed and with money to spare, which led me to reflect on how we operate as business owners.

As I sat and looked at the \$40.00 bill spent on a small fried fish, a house salad and a club soda, I

couldn't help but look at the structures next door, a row of the same depilated houses from decades ago, with zinc-laminate sheets for a roof, beat down walls, and kids running around barefoot; Humble families that in no way on earth could afford to eat at the same place they were growing up next to.

So the question is... Is the owner of this restaurant wrong for capitalizing on his business as much as he can to provide for his family and his needs? Is he wrong for doing the same thing huge corporations with shareholders to answer to, and market caps in the billions of dollars do to us with the consumer products we purchase daily; our phones, our shoes, our sunglasses, and purses?

I guess ultimately that's a question for each individual. What is our happiness worth and what are we willing to compromise for it? Perhaps underpaid labor,

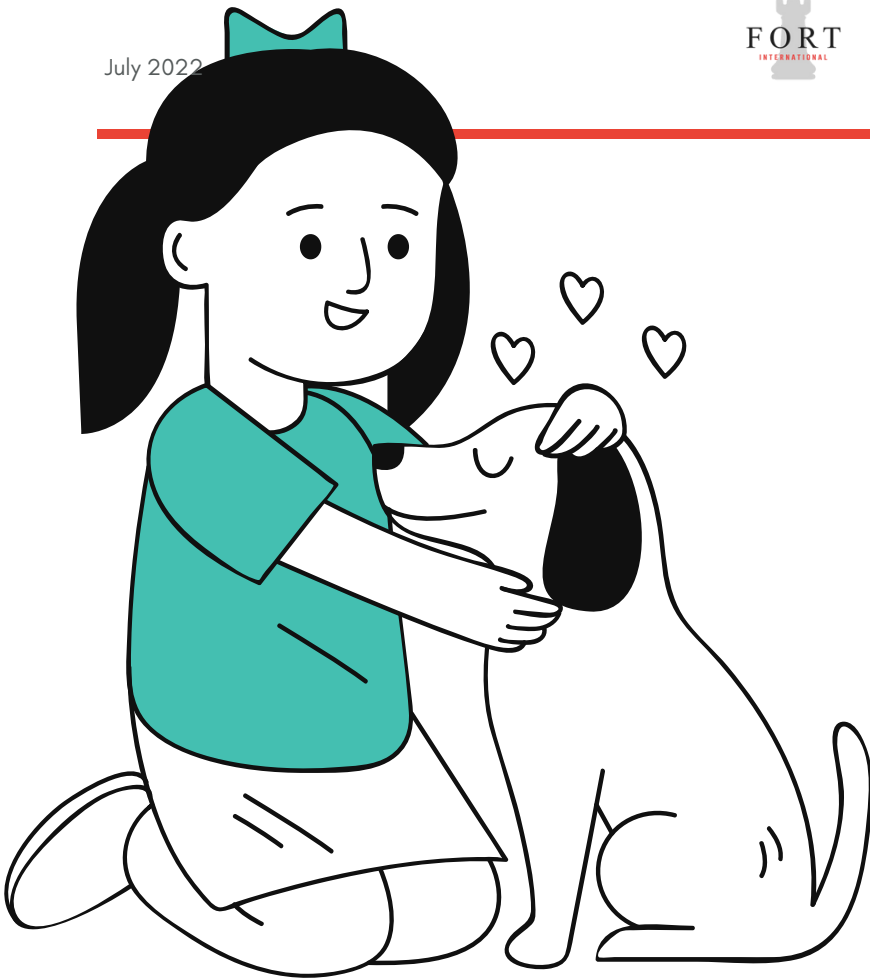
limited employee resources leading to the unhappiness of our teams so we may maximize profits, or the isolation of our very own neighbors?

There are many ways to make money and achieve power in life, but only one that will yield the satisfaction and true happiness we all long for, and I can assure you it doesn't involve greed.

Let's not lose sight of the true reasons why we do what we do, and let's remember that if those in our communities with less opportunities are not included in our growth, we will become one sighted takers, leading miserable but financially rich lives.



CVO & Founder
FORT
International



Don't let the urgent distract you from what's truly important.

*By Sebastian Vasquez -
Graphic Development*

Thinking about the future prevents us from enjoying the present, therefore we do not live the present nor the future.

Modern life forces us to live our days with so much intensity, it requires us to invest so much of our time fulfilling our obligations, leading to forgetting what is truly important in life.

Wanting to have the life we dream of for ourselves and our families, has become a day-to-day struggle that wears us down physically and mentally. Our way of life revolves, in large part, around our work, often without regard to the days and hours we invest in them. Although this is not wrong at all, and since the world in which we live has evolved to develop and prosper in this way, we can't fail to remember that our time in this life has an expiration date.

It is very easy to lose sight of who we really are and how fragile our existence can be.



There is no greater motivator than father time to teach us to enjoy the now, to be aware that at some point sooner or later, we will all cease to exist.

We all have real priorities which at times we don't even recognize as priorities at all. Learning to live in the present, taking care of what is really important without neglecting the urgent, is the ideal balance.

Time is the most valuable thing we have, learning to share it with the people we appreciate, or in what we are really passionate about is how we should be motivated to live.

No person is forever, many things can happen in a matter of a year. Keeping this in mind will help us to never leave aside what is most important, even if sometimes we forget.



The Importance of Emotional Health

By Goretty Gonzalez - AP/AR

"We must take the time to recognize how we feel in the face of sadness, anger, helplessness, uncertainty, etc."

During our June staff meeting, we discussed the importance of emotional management. We began with this phrase from Charles Darwin: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor is it the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."

Being able to adapt to our circumstances is what allows us to enjoy life and to live it fully. But how do we become adaptable? By getting to know ourselves, paying attention to how and what we feel every day, acknowledging every emotion that emerges and stays by our side, unyielding. These emotions appear as fellow travelers who may not bother us so much at first, but after a while, they exhaust us, they wear us out, and they break us emotionally until they become a time bomb against us, and our ability to respond to life.

We must take the time to recognize how we feel in the face of sadness, anger,

helplessness, uncertainty, etc. We must welcome these emotions and know that regardless of what has provoked them, we have the power to change them only by accepting and acknowledging that they exist, and give them space and a moment in our life. This is called "Developing Emotional Intelligence" which allows us to become aware of our own emotions and the emotions of others, and grants us the ability to regulate them.

We must give ourselves permission to feel each and every one of our emotions in order to manage them and control them, before they take control of our behaviors.

OUR MONTH IN A FEW WORDS

JULY HAS BEEN A MONTH OF MANY CHANGES

1 Independence Day.

As a nation we had the pleasure to enjoy a hot summer day with our families in a country free of war and political prosecution. An important time to celebrate our rights, our freedom, and the sacrifices made with their lives by those who set the foundation of this great nation. As the country continues to evolve and develop, hurdles and obstacles always remain and must be addressed, however we cannot forget where we are, and that is a place where opportunities are plentiful and your vote still matters.



2 Roe vs Wade: A political Shift.

As the U.S. Supreme Court rolled back the dials of time 50 years, we saw the right to abortion be stripped away from women in varying levels according to states. The inability to choose what to do with their bodies and when to do it has created a divide in civil liberties which affect both sides of the isle. In all, the questions to ponder are... Why the change and Who benefits from this ruling at this moment in time?

3 Summer is in the air: A Planet Celebration

With both the “Don’t stop a bee day” and the “World population Day” being celebrated this month, along with the “Clean Beaches week”, it’s a good time to address both the positives and difficulties our world faces with its natural resources, the growing number of mouths to feed, and the effect on our environments and habitats. The fact remains that our planet is meant to be enjoyed and not destroyed. Let’s give life back to it, by taking care of the gifts of nature and do our part for a better tomorrow.





Half the month away!

Leo + Virgo

As summer rolls on with plenty of sun, it's important to enjoy the outdoors and take advantage of the nature around us. A good time to travel, admire, and reflect on not only what's in front of us, but also what needs to remain, and be let go off. A great time to spend with family and enjoy the little things our planet has to offer; Our Beaches, trails, and rivers are waiting. This month as well as the beginning of August, allows us a much needed break from the hustle and tussle of morning school routines and traffic; It gives way for meditation and focus. Let the wisdom and power of the Lion surface within you, and take pride on tasks and projects ahead.

The Social Fort

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