

# Compass

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 3

## We've Moved!



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True North has moved three times in the five and a half years since I started it. The first move took it from a small room overlooking a sloping yard with gardens and trees to a bluff overlooking Portland's Dunthorpe neighborhood. The second move gave it a better view of that same Wilamette River gorge. This one takes it to a majestic Victorian house.

The right front window, the one beside the balcony, is True North's new office. I sit in that window as I write this note, looking down a quiet, tree lined street. Amy overlooks the rose garden from her window on the right side top.

### Why Move?

The simple answer is because we wanted to.

But the simple answer complicated itself pretty quickly. Had we stopped for long to consider changing the phones, the post office box, the letterhead and business cards, the ISP, and the licenses, not to mention the lifestyle, we

might have decided against the whole thing. Fortunately, we didn't stop very long to consider the difficulties. This was a leap without lengthy looking.

Should you be concerned that we've moved out of a major metropolitan area? We don't think so. We're as accessible as we've ever been to most of our clients. Most of our work has always been completed "long distance," and our primary concern in moving was accessibility to airports. We now have two airports handy where we used to have only one. Fares seem similar. Some trips have been shorter.

For services, we've retained the best of both worlds. Keeping the printer we're so satisfied with. Shopping for other services we'd out grown.

Most importantly, I want you to understand one thing. We're still close, still in business, and still dedicated to helping our clients.



***"Working Well Together to  
Create Exceptional Results.  
Building on Our Best  
Selves. Dealing With the  
World As It Is."***

We encourage you to check the [www.projectcommunity.com](http://www.projectcommunity.com) website and the <http://pc.wiki.net> Heretics' Forum for the latest news from True North.

We're just as close as we've ever been. In fact, we just moved into that place down the block.

With Warmest Regards,

david

See a new insight on other side...

To Be Continued...

## The Happy Dilemma :o)

Our client slumped into a chair in the back of the empty conference room. The first day of the Mastering Projects Workshop had left behind the usual mess along with two vacuum coffee pots with lukewarm dregs and a cookie and a half on a side table. Amy and I were tucked. The last thing we needed was a troubled client. We had one.

"They've asked me to call a meeting," she reported. "But every time I do, I get bushwhacked and nothing gets resolved. These meetings are like a broken washing machine, they air dirty laundry but don't clean anything," she continued, sliding deeper into her slouch.

"What do you want?" Amy asked.

"Well, I certainly don't want to have this meeting," she replied.

"Okay," I stepped in, "Now that we've established what you don't want, how would you describe what you want?"

"Her face grew more somber as she replied, "I know I can't have what I want."

"I didn't ask you what you thought you could get," I continued. "I asked what you wanted. Let's pretend that you could by some presently unknown means get exactly what you want. What would that look like?" My suggestion that we pretend seemed to sweeten her sour mood a bit.

"I just want to be writing poetry in a cabin in the woods," she giggled nervously as she disclosed this secret. "I don't want to have the meeting at all. I want to escape to a cabin in the woods." She raised her right thumb, pantomiming a hitchhiker, chuckling.

Amy and I sat for a moment, ex-

changing a quiet glance.

"I'm stuck in one of those dilemmas we discussed in the workshop, aren't I?" she noted. "I'm damned if I do and damned if I don't."

"I think so," Amy continued. If you don't want to have the meeting, how is it that you're scheduling the meeting, anyway."

"Well," she slipped back into her discouraged slump, "I don't want to make anyone unhappy."

"Except yourself?" I probed?

"Well, I want everyone to be happy," she continued.

"Except you?" I countered.

She sat frozen in that moment for an extra moment or two. "Yea," she mumbled, "I've been trying to make everyone who works for me happy."

"How's that been working for you?" Amy questioned.

"Lousy," our client snapped back. "I've never been so miserable."

"How do you make others happy?" I asked. "What's your strategy been for achieving this objective?"

"I've been trying to make sure that everyone gets what they want. But because some want things that others despise, I'm being blamed for every little tangle."

"So your attempts to make others happy haven't worked very well for you?" I inquired.

"Not only have they not worked, they've backfired. People are pissed and I'm more miserable than I've ever been in my life," she reflected.

"I think you are on the horns the Happy Dilemma," I continued.

***"Trying to do something for someone that only they can do for themselves makes the helper miserable and undermines the target's ability to do it for themselves."***

"That's it!" she exclaimed, eyes brightening. "I'm absolutely miserable because I've been taking responsibility for their happiness, which is something that only they can really be responsible for."

"I think your sense of responsibility has encouraged them to be irresponsible, bushwhacking and airing rather than cleaning their own dirty laundry," I continued.

A warm light began glowing in her eyes. Smile wrinkles erupted around both eyes. The beginnings of a smile crept across her mouth. "I know what I can do," she said as if to herself. "I can call a meeting, announce that I've looked at how ineffective our meetings have become, and then adjourn the meeting, offering an open door for anyone ready to propose solutions." She giggled. "That will blow their minds!"

She had discovered a not-damned-if-she-did, not-damned-if-she-didn't resolution!

Later in the week, she stopped by to report that she'd held her brief meeting. In it, she apologized for initiating the Happy Dilemma, asking each to assume responsibility for their own happiness in the future.

Before adjourning, though, she offered her help to anyone interested in taking responsibility for their own dirty laundry. Several shuffled out of the room with full hampers, frustrated that nothing was accomplished while our client retired to her office, as if to that cabin in the woods, where she wrote some lighthearted poetry. :o) das

## Notices:

If your projects feel too messy, consider enrolling!

For True North pgs' Mastering Projects Workshop Open Enrollment Schedule, see our web site- [www.projectcommunity.com](http://www.projectcommunity.com) for online registration and the most current schedules!

Also, check our Heretics' Forum:

<http://pc.wiki.net>

Consider, too enrolling in Problem Solving Leadership workshop. See <http://www.geraldmweinberg.com> for details. das

## About Compass



Compass is published periodically by True North pgs, Inc., and is distributed free of charge to a project-oriented community.

Compass is a navigation tool for continuing your process of improving your project experience. Compass shares stories and insights to serve as the basis for you to provide more effective leadership to yourself and to your project's community. We enable each other to improve the quality of our project experiences through sharing our stories and our insights.

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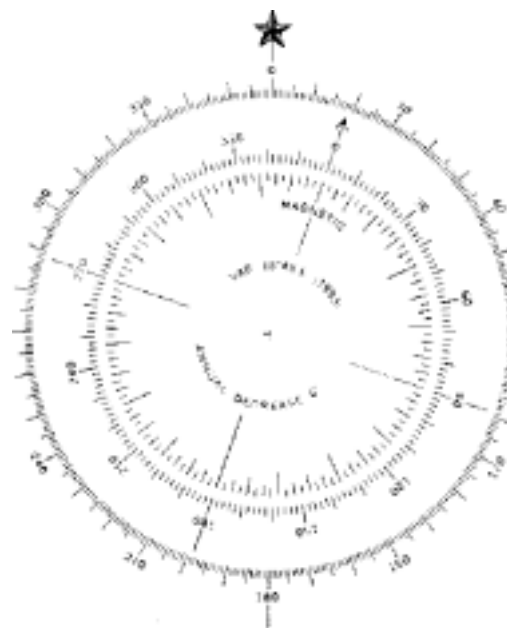
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you will ever use."***



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