

# EDITORIAL

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## Thoughts For Success

By HERBERT HARRIS  
SELF IMAGE (NNPA)

How you see yourself in your own eyes determines what you get out of life. Self image is your own conception of yourself. It is the mental and emotional picture you hold in your own consciousness of who you are, what you are, and what you represent. Your self image is important because it is the starting point of your life experiences. The image you hold of yourself is like a great vase into which all your life experiences are poured and blended. If your self image is a small, limited concept, based on ignorance, fear, doubt and insecurity, then all of your experiences will be filtered through these negative emotions. On the other hand, if it is based on knowledge, love, courage, respect, faith and confidence, your life experiences will be filtered through them. Self image determines your capacity to give, receive and interact with the life experiences and possibilities which confront you. It is like a magnet, attracting or repelling, like or unlike qualities into your life experience.

### Five Signals Of A Poor Self Image

In doing your own personal analysis of your self image, there are certain keys or signals to look for:

1. Putting the blame on someone else. By putting the blame for your own circumstances and situation on someone else, you avoid taking responsibility for what you have really done to yourself. If you do not take responsibility for your condition, you cannot change it. Nor, can you grow through it. That which you cannot grow through, you will go through again and again.

2. Running away from your problems. When you are confronted with a

problem or challenge, how do you respond? Generally, you can do one of four things: Flee it, fight it, forget it, or face it. It is only when you face your problems/challenges and consider them projects to be completed, that you grow stronger in faith and self confidence. As your faith and confidence grow, your ability to handle greater challenges improves.

3. Criticizing other people constantly. Why do you criticize other people constantly? Is your criticism constructive and motivated by true care, concern and desire to help? Or, is it based on envy, jealousy and thoughts of inferiority? If your criticism is not positive, based on love, respect, and a sincere desire to help and improve another person, then it is not constructive criticism. It does harm not only to the other person, but also to your own self image.

4. Waiting for someone else to solve your problems. When you wait for someone else to solve your problems, you neutralize your own possibilities for learning and growing through the experience. What keeps you from taking action when a problem presents itself? Is it fear of failure or of success that contradicts how you really feel about yourself? Which ever it is the result is the same...procrastination, inaction and ultimately failure.

5. Pretending that everything is OK. When you pretend that everything is alright, actively ignoring your challenges, you subconsciously accept the consequences that will surely result from your inaction. You deceive yourself into thinking that there is no need for change or improvement and develop a false sense of complacency. You eliminate virtually all possibility for personal growth and development. The nature of challenges is that if they continue unresolved, they only get worse.

## Letter To the Editor

By HERSH CRAWFORD

Headlines coming out of the 1999 Oregon Legislature pointed to one conclusion: Lawmakers had tough decisions to make about which service to support with limited tax dollars. One memorable headline said some lawmakers were looking for Oregon Health Plan cuts of up to \$100 million. This meant that the landmark health plan, now in its sixth year, faced careful scrutiny, tough questions and a demand to be more efficient than ever. We're used to the scrutiny: When policymakers were creating the health plan, they held 260 public hearings and meetings, focused on prevention and the world's first medical priority list, and were seeking the wisest ways to use Medical dollars. As a result of the recent legislative debate, some Oregonians may be confused about the status of the health plan. Does it still exist? Were members cut from the health plan? Were services eliminated? The short answers are yes, no, and not yet. These are major points resulting from just-completed legislative action: The Oregon Health Plan continues much as it has operated since 1994. Legislators cut one from health plan eligibility. Although legislative action would eliminate several services, actual cuts will require federal approval which, if it comes, will take months or longer. The limit on the amount of liquid assets that a household can have and still qualify for the health plan was reduced from \$5,000 to \$2,000. Liquid assets mean ready cash such as checking and saving accounts, but not a house, car or retirement accounts. The thinking was that someone who has more than \$2,000 can afford to pay for health care. We will be

up our monitoring to ensure that people who apply for Oregon Health Plan coverage are genuinely eligible. This means checking reported income information even more carefully, requiring a document (such as a voter card or tax return) proving Oregon residency and monitoring other eligibility criteria. Another element of the Oregon Health Plan that continues is the Children's Health Insurance Program for uninsured children in families that earn somewhat more than the federal poverty level. People who believe they may be eligible may call toll-free (800) 359-9517 (or TTY 800 621-5260) for an application. However, it is important to understand this: For working people whose earnings put them under the federal poverty level, health coverage is available—but it is not free. These people pay premiums on a sliding scale, averaging \$11 a month per household. This money reduces, dollar for dollar, what Oregon taxpayers contribute. One Oregon woman, who had worked for years and lost her health insurance in a divorce, became a health plan member after being hit by a drunk driver. "Without it," I would not be alive and my children would not have a parent to care for them." The health of the overall plan is a result of Oregonians' support for increasing access to health care, illustrated in part by the voter decision to use state tobacco taxes to help pay for it. Now lawmakers have made their decisions, the headline should be that Oregon is continuing its bold experiment in delivering basic health care to people who need it most. Hersh Crawford is state Medicaid director in the Oregon Department of Human Resources, that state's health and human services agency.

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## Count On The Experts People, Not Statistics, Can Deliver A Fair And Accurate Census

By J. KENNETH BLACKWELL, NNPA

Next year, the federal government promises to fix the census. "Don't worry," say politicians and statisticians singing the praises of statistical sampling. "Modern scientific methods" will find the people left out of previous counts - a disproportionate number of whom were minority children and families. Worry. "Modern science" has, in the past, made false claims about everything from the safety of smoking to the inferiority of people of color. Excuse my skepticism, but I grew up in a neighborhood where what the government promised, and what it practiced, was as different as black and white. So, when I was appointed to a panel to oversee the Census Bureau, I looked hard at the results from the last time the government promised to fix the census with "modern scientific methods." That was in 1990. Like today, there was a political firestorm over whether to use "statistical sampling" to find the people the census missed. "Statistical sampling" is like polling - statisticians take a small (less than one percent) sample of the U.S. population. They use the results to estimate how many people are in each state, city, neighborhood, and block. People who wanted to use sampling insisted it was the only way to fix the census in places where it has always been broken: Places like Laurel Homes, public housing in Cincinnati, and Chicago's Robert Taylor Homes, the nation's largest public housing community. Counting people is also hard in the vast farmland of the Mississippi Delta, in Latino colonias along the Mexican border, in American Indian lands throughout the West, and in Asian neighborhoods throughout the country. Not surprisingly, the people who live in these areas often face barriers to economic opportunity. The census misses a larger percent of people in these neighborhoods than in most. For example, when we looked hard at the 1990 sample, we found 783 neighborhoods where the census missed more than 10 percent of the people. In many, the census missed 20, 30, 40 percent or more of the population.

Most of the people in those neighborhoods - about 60 percent - were Black, Latino, Asian or American Indian. These are the places needing the most attention - the neighborhoods sampling is supposed to make whole. However, when we examined what would have happened if sampling had been used, we found that these neighborhoods would have remained heavily undercounted. Sampling generally added a few people, but never enough to fix the problem. The average undercount in these neighborhoods before sampling was 37 percent. After sampling, it was 34 percent. It turns out "modern scientific methods" mostly adds people to neighborhoods with good census counts - or to those where the census mistakenly counts too many people. In the 1990 sample, 75 percent of the people added through sampling would have been added to neighborhoods where more than 90 percent of the people were already counted. Alarmingly, almost 20 percent of the people added were to neighborhoods that were overcounted. All these numbers add up to this: sampling alone has no hope of correcting large undercounts common to African-American, Latino, American Indian and Asian neighborhoods. Anyone who relies on statistical adjustment to make their neighborhood whole will be disappointed. When Washington experts fail (that is to say, most often), turn to local experts. If you want to find out how many people live in a neighborhood, ask someone who lives or works there. For the last year, my colleagues on the Census Monitoring Board and I have done just that. We visited the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin, Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago, Latino colonias in Texas, farms throughout the Mississippi Delta, and other neighborhoods across the country. Every place we went, we found local experts who knew the area better than anyone from Washington ever could. In Wisconsin, it was Chief Apesanhkwat. In Chicago, it was Tyrone Galtney and Levi Nawls, Robert Taylor residents who work with neighborhood

kids, and Reverend Herbert Martin of the nearby Progressive Community Church. In Brownsville, Texas, Alma Rendon, director of the Cameron Park Centro Cultural, is known and trusted in the Latino community. In Gulfport, Miss., it was Pastor Adams of the Little Rock Missionary Baptist Church. In Laurel Homes, the human information network consisted of my "aunties" - more aunties than my mother and father had sisters. At any given time, they might be on the stoop or at the window, from one end of the neighborhood to the other. If you got into trouble on one end, the news was at the other faster than you could run. Kids today have the Internet. But, in my neighborhood, we had the Auntie-Net. Unfortunately, Washington experts often mistake low income for low IQ. In other circumstances, women like my aunties in Cincinnati and men like Tyrone and Levi in Chicago would be doctors, lawyers, and professionals, commanding the same respect as the experts at the Census Bureau. Some people want you to believe the census is only about politics, a fight between Democrats and Republicans. But, there is a more important fight: the battle to make Washington experts show a little respect for our neighborhood experts. My aunties at the window, Tyrone and Levi in Chicago, Reverend Adams in Mississippi, Chief Apesanhkwat in Menominee - these are the true experts on undercounted communities. Respect them. Listen to them. Hire them. Give them the funding and support to count people, to build a platform for people to speak up and speak out and break down the barriers to opportunity. Politicians and statisticians can use "modern science" to make their best guess from Washington. But, don't use it as an excuse not to hire my neighbors to count my neighborhood.

J. Kenneth Blackwell is Ohio's only African-American statewide elected officeholder. He was the first African-American elected to statewide executive office in Ohio as state treasurer in 1994. Blackwell currently serves as Ohio secretary of state.

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