

Foxworthy concert is the same 80 nights in a row. A Steelers-Ravens game is a new, epic event every time. If building model cars makes you different, so what? If you are a guy and love cats, adopt six of them. If you want to watch *Pretty Woman* 40 times and cry every time, watch it. If you enjoy watching birds, then watch them. It is completely normal to be different as long as your behavior is not self-destructive, since that kind of behavior can drive other people away.

THE DISCOVERY ICEBERG

Because the density of pure ice is about 920 kilograms and sea water's density is about 1025 kilograms, typically only one-ninth of the volume of an iceberg is above water. You can't tell much about the shape of the whole iceberg by what you see on the surface. This, of course, is the genesis of the phrase the *tip of the iceberg*, which describes a problem or challenge that's likely much bigger than is immediately apparent. Just like an iceberg, as an individual, you too have a great deal below the surface that only you can see. The portion people can see is the visible you, or the cliché level. It is the news, sports, and weather of your life; while it is sometimes trivial, most people communicate on this level. The part of you below the iceberg is the real you. This part is comprised of your unexamined life, secret mental life, purposes, priorities, goals, ambitions, motives, relationships, use of time, use of money, moral behavior, pride, fear, anger, problems, suffering, and discouragement. The challenge you face daily is the amount of insulation you have between the two levels. People tend to insulate themselves against themselves. They struggle to be honest with themselves and with other people who want to see what lies beneath the surface. The insulation is a double-edged sword. It can tear apart a relationship. All too often, people get beyond the



insulation of a person, which can sometimes cause the former to look at the latter differently.

We tend to insulate ourselves against ourselves.

My experience has been that if you want to get below a person's surface, take a trip with him or her. In the span of twenty-four hours, you can tear down a great deal of insulation. If you do not want to spend the money on travel, invite the person over and have one too many cocktails. Chances are you will hear about that person's hurts, hopes, and fears, and you'll discover who that person really is. Before you go diving into the water, looking for the depth of another person's iceberg, acknowledge and discover what is below your surface. Like most folks, you probably tend to live your life wanting other people to believe you are the small portion they can see, which inevitably can be negative when the real you is revealed. Be honest with yourself, be honest with God, and be honest with your friends.

WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING

The test of your character is what you would do if you knew no one would ever know. Who are you when no one is looking? Character is the stuff of which God knows you to be made. Your reputation is the stuff of which people think you consist.

Character isn't something that simply appears overnight; it develops over time. Many people believe that a person's character is set in childhood; whether or not that's entirely true, we can agree that it isn't subject to easy or fast changes. Each one of us has to be aware

