



The Advisory Alliance 60-Second Email™

How Big is Your Blind Spot? ***June 26, 2009***

In this month's 60-Second Email™, we ask: How will you know what you need to know?

So now another high-profile male political figure has come clean about his lack of integrity. The past couple of years have been busy ones: from Spitzer and Edwards, to Kilpatrick, Ensign, and now Sanford. ABC News even has a web site devoted to "Politicians Who Cheat":

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/popup?id=7893148>

There's 17 featured in all, all male (but that's a subject for a different 60-Second Email™).

One question that has come to my mind every time I see the disgraced politico at the podium is: "What's changed?"

By "What's changed?" I mean, why is the politico apologizing now? Is it solely because he got caught? Or that the issue has gone public?

Why is it that only after these men have been exposed, do they apparently have regret or view their actions as inappropriate? (In conversations I've had with several women, they would argue that, in fact, they don't in both cases, and the regrets and apologies are just as insincere as the original misconduct). Moreover, why, in most cases, do these leaders cease the relationship once it's gone public?

Now I'm not arguing for infidelity, but, in general, if you truly believe something is worth doing, why do you stop doing it once others learn of it?

Bottom-line, whose opinion of yourself and your conduct matters more: yours or others?

If I'm about to do something immoral or illegal, shouldn't my own awareness of that fact be sufficient to stop me? In general, why do we need others to let us know we messed up, when we knew that before we started?

In 1955, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham created a simple, useful tool called the Johari Window to help us better understand how we communicate and how we handle our relationships with others.

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In essence, Luft and Ingham said the following:

There are things about ourselves that we know and that we don't know, and
There are things about ourselves that others know and don't know.

Those things about ourselves that others know, but we don't know: those are our blind spots.

I would argue that some of our male politicians have some fairly large blind spots. And they, their family, their colleagues, and those they have led have suffered accordingly.

The question I'd like answered then is this: If their own opinion of their conduct was insufficient to stop them, did they at any time receive unsolicited advice from anyone alerting them to their conduct? And did that have any impact?

We all have blind spots to a certain degree. For many, they're not as serious as those featured as the leading news story. Nonetheless, we can be blind to what we should know about ourselves. Ask your spouse, significant other, or very good friend, and if they have the courage (some, though, don't even need that), they'll tell you what you don't see.

And that is invaluable. To have someone who's willing to tell us what we should know, when we can't or don't want to know it. That will save many of us from having to make the trip to the podium.

You can access all of our 60-Second Emails (TM), including last month's issue, "I'm No Susan Boyle or Captain Kirk" via this link: <http://www.advisoryalliance.com/newsletter.php>

Have a comment on the blind spots you've seen in others or even in yourself? Share your thoughts with our readers on our blog: <http://www.advisoryalliance.com/blog>

Best regards,

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