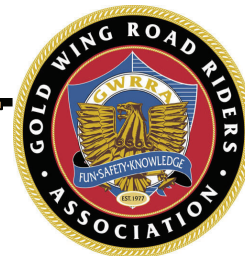


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A Motorcycle is Not Just A Two wheeled Car

The difference between driving a car and climbing onto a motorcycle is the difference between watching TV and actually living your life. We spend all our time sealed in boxes, and cars are just the rolling boxes that shuffle us from home-box to work-box to store-box and back, the whole time, entombed in stale air, temperature regulated, sound insulated, and smelling of carpets.

On a motorcycle, I know I am alive. When I ride, even the familiar seems strange and glorious. The air has weight and substance as I push through it, and its touch is as intimate as water to a swimmer. I feel the cool wells of air that pool under trees and the warm spokes of sun that fall through them. I can see everything in a sweeping 360 degrees, up, down and around, wider than Pan-A-Vision and IMAX and unrestricted by ceiling or dashboard. Sometimes I even hear music. It's like hearing phantom telephones in the shower or false doorbells when vacuuming; the pattern-loving brain, seeking signals in the noise, raises acoustic ghosts out of the wind's roar. But on a motorcycle, I hear whole songs: rock 'n roll, dark orchestras, women's voices, all hidden in the air and released by speed. At 30 miles per hour and up, smells become uncannily vivid. All the individual tree-smells and flower-smells and grass-smells flit by like chemical notes in a great plant symphony.

Sometimes the smells evoke memories so strongly that it's as though the past hangs invisible in the air around me, wanting only the most casual of rumbling time machines to unlock it. A ride on a summer afternoon can border on the rapturous. The sheer volume and variety of stimuli is like a bath for my nervous system, an electrical massage for my brain,

a systems check for my soul. It tears smiles out of me: a minute ago I was dour, depressed, apathetic, numb, but now, on two wheels, big, ragged, windy smiles flap against the side of my face, billowing out of me like air from a decompressing plane. Transportation is only a secondary function. A motorcycle is a joy machine. It's a machine of wonders, a metal bird, a motorized prosthetic. It's light and dark and shiny and dirty and warm and cold lapping over each other; it's a conduit of grace, it's a catalyst for bonding the gritty and the holy. I still think of myself as a motorcycle amateur, but by now I've had a handful of bikes over half a dozen years and slept under my share of bridges. I wouldn't trade one second of either the good times or the misery. Learning to ride is one of the best things I've done. Cars lie to us and tell us we're safe, powerful, and in control. The air-conditioning fans murmur empty assurances and whisper, "Sleep, sleep." Motorcycles tell us a more useful truth: we are small and exposed, and probably moving too fast for our own good, but that's no reason not to enjoy every minute of the ride.

Thanks to Bob Pacheco of Chapter F MA this intriguing article is nice as we sit here in the warm house looking out into the cold weather.

I am going to pick an article each month at random from articles you write to your district or region. This is your newsletter and by going to each region's site I will be looking for different ideas or things that will bring out more knowledge to your educators so we may share it with the membership.

Author unknown...

The following article is from Dottie Bahrenburg, Northeast Region Trainer. It is something our rider educators from the Chapter level to the national level can use and help those who are coming into this new position.



EAT THAT FROG

I have finally learned to eat that frog!

My husband accuses me of procrastinating. I agree that sometimes, I put off a task that I know is important because I need more time to think about it and analyze it in my mind. But once I take that first step toward accomplishing the task, I find that it really isn't that hard and I probably shouldn't have put it off.

Are you like me? Are you a procrastinator? Or do you just have trouble getting started on a project that you do not really wish to do? Do you end up in a mess because you didn't get something done on time? If you are, you might want to check out the book, *Eat That Frog! --- 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time* by Brian Tracy (Berrett-Koehler, 2001). Many times we put off starting on a project or activity because we are not sure where to start or we feel overwhelmed because there is so much that needs to be done for the project to become a success.

The ability to dissect the project into smaller tasks makes it manageable. You need to be able to select the most important part of the project at that particular moment, start on that task and get it done quickly and well. If you accomplish even a small part of a major task with success, it is a motivating force that will keep you going strong. The first step will probably have the most impact on your success with the project.

Make it a habit to set clear priorities and then get those important tasks completed as quickly as you can without sacrificing the quality of the outcome. If you are able to establish priorities and a timely sequence you will run circles around those who talk a lot and make wonderful plans, but get very little done.

According to Tracy, there is an old saying that... *"If the first thing you do each morning is to eat a live frog, you can go through the day with the satisfaction of*

knowing that that is probably the worst thing that is going to happen to you all day long!" Your "FROG" is the one task you are most likely to put off or *procrastinate* on. It is also the one task that can have the greatest positive impact.

Tracy also says that... *"If you have to eat two frogs, eat the ugliest one first!"* This is another way of saying that if you have two important tasks before you, start with the biggest, hardest, and most important task first. Discipline yourself to begin as soon as feasible and then to persist until the task is complete before you go on to something else. Eating that frog or deciding which of the two frogs might be the ugliest can be considered a test or personal challenge.

Can you resist the temptation to start with the easiest task first? Remind yourself that one of the most important decisions you make is your choice of what you will do immediately and what you will do later.

One final point Tracy makes is *"If you have to eat a live frog, it does not pay to sit and look at it for a very long time!"* If you spend too much time thinking about a difficult task, you will think yourself out of taking the necessary steps to get it done.

The main idea behind *Eat That Frog* is to help you develop the ability to tackle major projects or tasks in a timely manner. Not to "over analyze", but to take the first step. Successful, Effective people are those who launch directly into their major tasks and then discipline themselves to work steadily and single mindedly until those tasks are complete.

How can you successfully tackle that project?

1. Think on paper! Decide exactly what you want to accomplish. One of the very worst uses of time is to do something very well that need not be done at all!
 - a. *Write it down!* Clear written goals have a wonderful effect on your thinking
 - b. *Set a deadline on your goal*
 - c. *Make a list of everything that you can think of that you are going to have to do to achieve your goal*
 - d. *Organize the list into a plan*
 - e. *Take action on your plan immediately!*

2. Resist the temptation to clear up small things first. You are always *"free to choose"* the task that you will do next! Your ability to choose between the important and the unimportant is the key determinant of your success.

3. Long-term thinking improves short-term decision making. Begin with the end in mind.

Future intent influences and often determines present actions.

4. Law of Forced Efficiency = There is never enough time to do everything, but there is

always enough time to do the most important thing.

5. There will never be enough time to do everything you have to do.

6. Slice and dice the project into manageable pieces.

After reading *Eat That Frog*, I know that over-thinking a project is not a good thing. Over thinking the project makes me and I think anyone, more apprehensive of their ability to accomplish the task. The more you think about it, the bigger and more daunting the task it appears. Now, I sketch the project out on paper with a clear picture of what I would like to accomplish. Set goals and action steps and assign each a date or time to be accomplished. Tackle the most difficult piece first...and then I'm on a roll.

You might want to check out the Brian Tracy's ideas in *Eat That Frog*. It really is a tongue in cheek approach to *time management*, and *setting goals and action steps*.

Dottie Bahrenburg,

Northeast Region Trainer

CPR/First Aid Division

With the class rosters coming in the past few months the CPR First Aid instructors have been doing an outstanding job in getting our membership a great new training with the new version and updates that came out for all organizations in CPR/First Aid. Through MEDIC FIRST AID® these instructors have done a great job in just two months of 2007, we have held 61 class's with 611 members being trained. Outstanding job !!

This does not include the outstanding instructors we have in American Red Cross or American Heart Association, and other programs out there.

I am in the process of having a GWRRA CPR/First Aid card made up for all instructors in CPR/First Aid that train our membership in GWRRA. This card will be given to all instructors who want and show the desire to be a GWRRA CPR/First Aid instructor. To get this card all you need to be is current in the program you are in and can show me your card and what you are certified in. I will keep a file on all instructors and will update as your certification comes due. I have heard a lot of pro's and con's in doing this GWRRA card but it is time that all CPR/First Aid instructors get recognized in the great job they are doing. If there are any questions or comments on this project please feel free to contact me at larrystiles@msn.com. This program is for everyone and not just MEDIC FIRST AID. MFA is our GWRRA Program because it is the most affordable and one of the best programs we can teach our members.

Keep up the great work. This program saves lives and it is all because of the outstanding instructors we have in GWRRA and their dedication to make our members knowledgeable in the important areas they should know in case of an incident.

As we move forward there will be an update on the MCSR. (Motorcycle Crash Scene Response.) It will be more in depth but easier to understand and the instructors will have a better understanding of the content. In Rider Education we are here to help you and all the members. If you have questions or ideas please do not hesitate to contact one of your National or Regional Educators. We are here to help you in any way we can. Be Safe, Ride Safe.

Larry & Rhonda Stiles

Educator Article of the Year from the state of Texas.

Educator's Kickstart

In this month's article, I thought we would address some common technique errors that are really BAD IDEAS.

Riding in Blind Spots: One of the most dangerous mistakes motorcyclists make is to linger in other driver's blind spots. Motorcycles easily disappear in the invisible area between typical car and truck mirror coverage. Few drivers seem to practice head checks to determine if a lane change is safe. A motorcyclist is riding along, and all of a sudden a vehicle is coming into their lane. A rule of thumb is to ride through blind spots. Also, avoid changing lanes into a driver's blind spot and position your motorcycle within your lane to ensure optimum visibility in traffic.

Trying to Keep Up: Group rides can be a lot of fun. But too many times, group rides turn sour as inexperienced or less skilled riders crash trying to keep up with the group. This often happens if a rider is afraid of losing touch with the group, or appears less capable than the others. It's important for group leaders to have a plan that keeps the group together and to assure slower riders that they won't be left behind. It's also important for individuals to recognize when they are being influenced by the need to stay with the group. Y2 will always respect your willingness to ride within your limits. But, you must inform your group leader of your concerns.

Accelerating Through An Intersection:

It is tempting to twist the throttle through an intersection to try and beat a red light. It's a reflex many of us have, and even the smartest riders have been known to do it. The problem is that intersections are the number one location where crashes occur.

It's important to remember that motorcycles have small visual impact and can be lost in surrounding traffic. The small frontal profile not only makes us harder to see, it can also make it more difficult for others to judge our distance and approach speed. Keeping this in mind, you can see why drivers often pull out in front of motorcycles, thinking it is safe to proceed.

The lesson here is that increasing your speed through intersections is a "bad idea".

Stopping Too Close To the Vehicle In Front Of You:

Too many riders position themselves poorly for escape when stopping behind vehicles at a stoplight or stop sign.

Give yourself plenty of room to maneuver. A driver approaching from the rear can't stop in time. This means positioning your motorcycle well away from the vehicle in front and to one side (usually the left portion of your lane). This position allows room to move forward, past the car in front and has the added benefit of keeping your tires off the often slippery center part of the lane. Be sure to keep your eyes on your mirrors to monitor vehicles approaching from the rear. Keep your motorcycle in first gear so you can respond quickly if necessary.

Signaling Too Late: Miscommunication is a major cause of traffic-related mishaps. One of the most common examples of this is slowing down or maneuvering before signaling your intent, which forces surrounding traffic to guess what you are up to. Well-timed communication ensures that traffic around you is not surprised by your actions. Remember, simply rolling off the throttle may slow your motorcycle enough to require the typical car driver behind you to brake, but he doesn't know what you are going to do. Signal three to five seconds prior to turning and activate your brake light early to alert drivers of a change in direction or speed.

Leaving Riding Gear At Home: It's easy to leave your riding jacket, gloves, boots, or helmet on the shelf for a short trip to the local store or restaurant. But many crashes happen close to home, and at relatively low speeds. It doesn't take much of an accident to render yourself brain-dead without some head protection. And road rash is no laughing matter either; a simple low speed fall can do a lot of damage to your epidermis without the benefit of sturdy protection. Wide skin abrasion can easily turn into infection, and the risk of lethal septic shock. Do yourself a favor and make riding gear a habit, no matter how short the trip. Can you see how easy it is to pick up any of these **BAD IDEAS**? And how little effort it takes to turn them all into **GOOD IDEAS**!

Tom Durham Texas Y2 Educator

