

Too Lazy To Upgrade!

By Karel Murray

What a weekend! To celebrate my husband Rick's 55th birthday, I arranged for three of his best friends and their spouses to join us in Chicago for a 30 year reunion. All of these individuals had either participated in our wedding or were my husband's college roommates. We hadn't seen most of these friends for at least 20 years.

The conversation fell easily into the cadence of long term friendships – hurried biographies, photos of cherished moments and startled laughter reminiscing about past exploits. These exchanges only confirmed why everyone had become friends in the first place...

One particular comment said in complete jest remains with me four weeks later... We were discussing how unusual it was that all of us were still married to our first spouse and still happy. That's when someone exclaimed "We were too lazy to upgrade!"

I've been pondering that statement since that trip, wondering what types of things do I ignore or simply accept due to my unwillingness to either take action or spend money. So, with that in mind...here is my list!

FOOD

I've developed a habit of only ordering certain meals at specific restaurants:

Carlos O'Kelly – Chimichanga

Oliver Garden – Chicken Alfredo

Culvers – Pork Tenderloin Sandwich

Applebees – Orange Oriental Salad

And the list goes on....

"Order something different!" my husband has frequently suggested. I simply shrug and announce "what if I don't like it? Then I've ruined my appetite and spent money on something distasteful when I could have enjoyed my meal!" This particular conversation has been occurring repeatedly over 30 years. He still keeps trying.

What about products I buy at the grocery store? I must have Count Chocula...not Coco Puffs! Heaven forbid Rick selects the wrong one. Folgers coffee over Starbucks? Not on your life! Have some other soup besides Italian Wedding Soup? Please!

Rick makes a valiant attempt each week to introduce different foods to me and fails. Soon I expect his eyes to glaze over and he'll stop. I'm always amazed at the different stuff he eats when I've been on the road for a week. I see the discarded packaging and he smiles at me in triumph! Perhaps having me out of the house for days at a time has its perks!

TRAVEL

There is a specific process in the way I pack for a trip. It just kinda developed:

1. Count the number of days I will be presenting a program.
2. Count the number of days I will be traveling and can wear casual clothing.
3. Try on everything to make sure it will fit this week. If you haven't discovered the disaster of body bloat while on the road...oh...I just can't go there!
4. Make sure I have one color theme so I only have to pack 2 pairs of shoes and glasses.
5. Load undergarments and jewelry first...can't forget these vital items!
6. Pile in a book, make-up, hair products and whatever else I need for getting ready each day.
7. Try to cram in a coat – even if it is 75 degrees out and sunny. You never know when it will rain.
8. Zip it shut. Let me rephrase that...try to zipper it shut and fail.
9. Move up to a larger suitcase.
10. Transfer everything into the larger case and realize it is way too large for what I have to take on this trip.
11. Shift everything back to the first case, pushing and shoving harder and stuffing more creatively.
12. Close the suitcase while holding my breath and zipper it.
13. Drop it with a thud to the floor off of the bed. The pets have learned the hard way to stay out of my way when packing.
14. Wheel the bag out to the car and try to lift it into the trunk. Third attempt is always successful.
15. Go inside the house and realize I forgot to pack sleepwear and robe.
16. Retrieve the missed items, go back out to the car and shove the items into the exterior zippered pocket. The suitcase now looks pregnant.

Rick watches me repeat this process week after week and marvels at how much I need to take with me for a four day trip. He casually asks "Can't you dry-clean things while you are away?" I always respond..."I'm spending one day at the

location and moving onto the next, so they would have to dry-clean it while I'm wearing it. Also...what if they shrink it and I can't fit in it and have nothing else to wear?" This actually did happen to me last year... my sleeves shrunk 2 inches and my long pants ended up higher than my ankles. I looked like Alphafa from that old television show "Spanky and the Gang". I certainly didn't look hip! High top pants with support hose and orthopedic shoes.

Nice.

HOTEL ROOM

Once I arrive at my destination, I immediately retire to my room and a time honored routine asserts itself:

1. Open computer case, plug in the computer and start it up.
2. Open suitcase while standing to the side incase items have shifted during transport. Don't want to lose an eye!
3. Take make-up bag and hair products to the bathroom and put out everything I will use on the counter and shower products on the tub ledge.
4. Confirm computer has booted up and request new mail.
5. Pull out clothing and determine what will be worn while I'm at the location.
6. Iron everything I will need for that stay while watching a Lifetime movie.
7. Put stuff in drawers... always the right side closest to the bed.
8. Set the alarm for the next morning and dial the operator and request a wake up call... even if it is 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.
9. Do work or go to dinner.

A very efficient routine... except sometimes Rick travels with me. The first time he went on the road with me, we entered the hotel room and I promptly began "the process". He simply removed his clothing and travel kit, then shoved his suitcase into a corner and said "Let's go walk around the area!"

I froze. My hands were deep into the suitcase and I was ready to move the makeup to the bathroom. Do I just drop it back into the bag or put it where it belongs? Rick grins, knowing what is coming next. I say "Just a minute" and haul my makeup bag to the bathroom. I stop in my tracks.

Rick's kit is where MY bag is supposed to go. It was unnerving. He used up at least half of the counter space! I burst out laughing when I realized how used to traveling alone I was. I dropped my items into the sink, shut the suitcase and we went for a brisk walk up and down the beautiful parkade.

Too lazy to upgrade... not interested in trying new things. I don't want to be in a rut!

I've determined that I really must get some sort of variety in my life...new foods, routines, different types of clothing. I actually purchased a scarf to wear while presenting...and promptly shut the long end in a door as I hustled out. Almost pulled myself right off my feet. The red mark on my neck took about an hour to fade. Try to explain that one to an audience!

Making room for change is good for us. I just need to make sure I conduct research and approach any change rationally. So, yesterday, I ordered Nachos at the movies instead of a small popcorn, buttered and salted in the middle. The refreshment stand clerk shot me a startled glance, recognizing this was definitely NOT what I normally order. In fact, they had already opened the sack and had the scooper poised and ready dump in the fresh popcorn. I sagely nodded and let her know it was okay to proceed. But, at movie house prices, I'm still not ordering a full bag of M&M peanuts for each of us! My husband and I can share just fine, thank you!

Little steps toward change with a determination that won't falter.

At least for today.

Too lazy to upgrade... we will see about that!!!

Karel Murray, a national motivational humorist and business trainer is the author of Straight Talk: Getting Off the Curb (a book co-authored with KC Lundberg), Think Forward!® (a monthly e-newsletter with over 4,200+ subscribers), The Profitability Blueprint Series: Career Building Concepts for the Real Estate Licensee and numerous articles in local, regional, and national publications. You can contact her at karel@karel.com or call 866-817-2986 or access her web site at <http://www.karel.com>.