

## Chapter Four – Excerpt

### Chapter 4 – The Fungus Factor

#### Getting the Most From the Least

"... the most complex ecosystem on earth ... the tropical rain forest is one thousand times more biologically complex than the tropical reef system, the second most complex system on earth, with one million times greater biodiversity than our own ecosystem here."

Mike Robinson, Director of National Zoo

When you step inside the rainforest, you take a step back in time... so far back it seems, that time itself is no longer a factor. There are no clocks hanging on trees. No sundials in the clearings. No sense of time or urgency. Yet everything is progressing, producing, busily moving along at the speed of peace. Peace. That is the overwhelming and immediate experience you encounter once you step inside the rainforest. It quiets every distraction in your mind and you are absorbed into a sea of green and peace. The tranquility is compelling and instructive.

I remember visiting the old growth rainforest on Vancouver Island in British Columbia called Cathedral Forest. Douglas Fir towering 300 feet, big enough it

seemed you could build a subdivision with each one! The fascinating thing was that everyone walking through that forest was whispering in soft respectful tones. Nobody told them to do that. It just seemed like the thing to do. Nobody wanted to disturb the profound peace we were corporately experiencing in that remarkable rainforest.

Here's the instructive part: rainforests thrive in an environment of peace and so will we. When we are in peace, it is far easier to discern the still, small voice that belongs to the One who created the rainforest. Trees aren't stressed out about whether there will be enough rain or whether their fruit will ever mature. They simply do what they were designed to do and the result is predictable and abundant. It's a bit like the Amazon River looking for all the world peaceful on the surface, gently winding its way through the rainforest, while all the while quietly and efficiently moving 4.2 million cubic feet of silt and 32 million gallons of water **per second** out into the Atlantic Ocean.

When we are in a place of peace it strengthens our ability to concentrate so we make better decisions and can focus on the activity that produces results instead of fretting over something we can't change anyway. Researchers at the American Institute of Stress estimate that issues stemming from workplace stress take up at least 20 percent of a company's payroll, and over \$150 billion in U.S. productivity each year. Peace is an inner condition you can choose in the

midst of turmoil, chaos and confusion. In fact, that's when you need it most. If you find yourself lacking that peace, consider taking a walk in the woods, quiet your soul and reacquaint yourself with the presence of peace.

### **The Myth of Perpetual Growth**

One reason we don't have peace is because we try to be something we're not. We want to be like Microsoft or Starbucks when perhaps we're best suited to be like that one-of-a-kind fish market in Seattle, (Pike's Place Fish Market) where they throw fish to each other and the customers. They are not on every corner like Starbucks but people from every corner of the world come there to partake of their bounty and enjoy the experience.