

A JOURNALING LIFE LESSON

Here's another thought which has a substantial life lesson it – it has to do with the film 'On the Waterfront' 1954, directed by Elia Kazan, scripted and adapted from a book by Budd Schulberg, acted by Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Karl Malden, Eva Marie Saint, and Rod Steiger. Marlon is a dockworker and treated as a son by Lee J. Cobb, the dockworkers union boss. Karl Malden is a priest in the New Jersey waterfront harbor neighborhood. Eva Marie Saint is daughter to her old father and young brother, both dockworkers. Rod Steiger is the lawyer for the union and Marlon's brother.

The dockworkers are controlled by the union that collects from them a daily fee and charges the shipping companies for dock-work of unloading cargo. The corruption on the waterfront is the union's control over the workers paying low salaries, without further benefits, rewarding those who cooperate while the union earns much money. Those who reveal these dealings to the investigating crime commission get killed by the gangsters protecting the union.

The priest Karl finds his true calling by helping these workers stand up against the union that is controlling their lives while getting wealthy wearing Armani suits and driving big cars. Eva's brother is one such young dockworker who gets killed for talking to the crime commission investigators. In grief she vows to find the killers.

Karl suspects that dockworker Marlon is being used by the union in various ways and rewarded by extra money and lighter work by Lee the union boss. Marlon is implicated in the killing of Eva's brother by calling him to the roof from where the gangsters push him off to his death into the alley. Both Karl and Eva lean on Marlon to reveal this to the investigators. Marlon is subpoenaed to testify at the investigation trial but tears it up.

His brother Rod, lawyer for the union, tries to keep him from testifying which Marlon is unsure of doing. When Marlon connects with Eva at the dock and following a church meeting for dockworkers, he begins feeling like

a bum for cooperating with the union boss Lee and his surrogate father. The gangsters see them together and suspect trouble with his sympathy for Eva. Rod is killed by the mob for not keeping his brother in line. This is the last straw for Marlon and he appears testifying at the criminal trial against the mob for the murder of Eva's brother.

Marlon is denied work. He challenges Lee the union boss to a fist fight. He is almost killed. He lies in the water after several of the gangsters have beaten him nearly to death. Priest Karl and now girlfriend Eva arrive at the water's edge scene and try to revive Marlon. Karl tells him: "You may have lost the battle but you stand a chance of winning the war!" If you can get to your feet now and walk to the dock to work the union members will follow you.

The point I'm saying is that he is able through the encouragement of the priest and the loving trust of Eva to see that he can become a hero in his own life instead of the disillusioned bum he feels he is. We can all become heroes in this sense. We don't have to be on the front page of the newspaper or the front cover of Time magazine, there are all levels of becoming an advocate for yourself. Though he is nearly beaten to death, he gains immense benefits – he wins the love of a woman who has seen and is seeing this hidden power for empathy in his life. He finally gets the respect of the dock workers who have known that he was a stooge for the union. They have called him a bum. Eva and Karl saw the potential for honesty in him. Marlon was blind to that power because his self-image is that of being a 'bum' which is how the other dockworkers see him because of his enabling the union boss Lee J Cob to silence dissent. And earlier in his boxing career he threw a fight in order to make Lee and his brother money betting on the other man.

This is where there is that famous interaction with his brother where he accuses his brother of not stopping the union boss from using to make on the boxing fight. And he says: "I could have been a contender. I could

have somebody instead of a bum. And that is what I am.”

So it is that transformation from being a bum, standing up against the union boss, almost costing him his life, losing the battle but winning the war, and becoming the hero instead. The hero that Eva and Karl felt he had the capability to be.

People around you may react one way or another to what you're doing and who you are, however you will find that there are well-meaning people in the world around you who see what you don't see, and will root for you in each their own way to open you own eyes to your potentials.

And so in my life, similarly, I mostly view myself as being lonely and unlovable and unsuccessful. Through my Journaling work I have begun if not already achieved the feeling that I am worthy of my own appreciation of my intellect and my history. I hear myself say: “I like who I am. I like what I say and what I do!”

So that's part of the journey you are going to go on when you start journaling. And I wish you Good luck. It is not an easy road but it is ...well, you will see what it is for you. I don't want to promise too much. It's dependent on your capacities, capacity to learn a little discipline, write a little and then write a little more, and then write a little deeper, and then and then and then. I don't want to over-blow it, but it's definitely a trip that more often than will be worthwhile working for.

Not all the time because we are all competing for worthiness but you will see truth in what some of the people around you are saying by their behavior toward you. In other words, you will turn the world and its competition into a world in which ...I don't know how to put it, you turn the world into a brighter more peaceful place rather than a harsh and competitive place, a LEARNING world, a SELF-ACCEPTING world, that is not always in the trenches of trying to get ahead of other people, or to solve

problems that chase unreal dreams. BE REAL.

And I'm not saying I can do it myself. I'm only saying that I see that as a road to salvation because at one point in your life you're going to be facing the end of your life, and you're going to have to accept that whether you like it or not. It is magic that we even exist, that we live 50 or 60 or 100 years, it has been a gift no matter when you die. And when you realize that the biggest gift is your self-consciousness, your understanding of your limitations and your gifts, that that is the road that you want to choose. And journaling will help you define that road and you will develop your ability to travel on that road a little today, a little more tomorrow, then maybe after some setbacks, but ... anyway I wish you luck again.

Thank you. Bye.