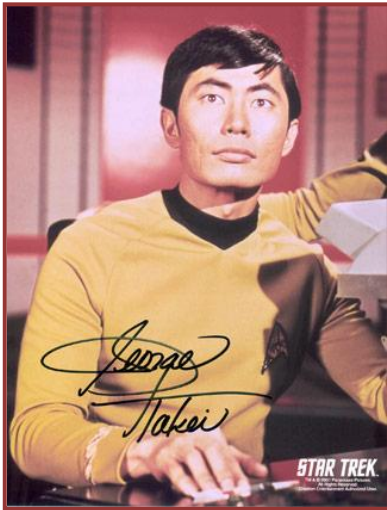


A Star Trek Encounter

You never know when a casual conversation with a stranger may have life-changing consequences.

While attending a Star Trek convention in 1978, Fred Beeman was among several fans who spotted series star George “Mr. Sulu” Takei heading for the hotel gym. They asked if they could sit through his workout. The actor graciously agreed.

“Do you mind if I smoke?” Beeman asked, pulling out a cigarette.



“Yes, as a matter of fact, I do,” Takei replied. As he went through his paces, Takei questioned Beeman about his habit.

“You never saw anyone on board the Enterprise smoking,” he noted, saying that by the 23rd century, humans had learned better.

The words hit home, and soon after, Beeman began a grueling effort to beat his addiction.

By 1981, when he met Takei at another convention, he could finally report he was smoke-free. “George Takei did what no one else could do. He got me to quit smoking,” Beeman says.

“I was just one of his millions of fans, but he cared enough about just one person to go out of his way to try to save a life – my life – and he did.”

You have influence over others, including strangers you may meet, as Takei did. Are you taking advantage of opportunities to improve their lives?

– Beecher Hunter