Dilemma for Houdini

Famed escape artist Harry Houdini issued a challenge wherever he went. He asserted that he could be locked in any jail cell in the country, and then free himself within minutes. He made good on his claim in city after city.

One time, however, something seemed to go wrong. Houdini entered a cell and heard the heavy metal door clang shut behind him. He took from his belt a concealed piece of strong but flexible metal and began to work on the lock to his cell. After a few minutes, he realized that something was not right with the lock.

He worked for half an hour with no success. An hour passed. Houdini began to sweat and pant in exasperation. He manipulated his tool every way he could think of, but the lock wouldn't budge. After two hours, the frustrated magician leaned against the door in exhaustion. To his amazement, it swung open. His "captors" had forgotten to lock it in the first place.

How many times do we make things harder than they have to be because we forget to stop, take stock of a situation, and try the simple, most obvious solution? How many times are challenges impossible only because we think them to be so?

Thinking is hard work, which is a probable reason so few engage in it.

--Beecher Hunter