

Oxygen to the Soul

Do you fully understand how important encouragement is to anyone? We all need it, and that includes leaders. And if you are reading this now, that means you. The responsibilities assigned to you have been granted because of recognition of the leadership qualities that you possess.

Physician George Adams found encouragement to be so vital to a person's existence that he called it "oxygen to the soul."

John C. Maxwell, author, speaker and molder of leaders, says, "New leaders need to be encouraged. When they arrive in a new situation, they encounter many changes and undergo many changes themselves. Encouragement helps them reach their potential; it empowers them by giving them energy to continue when they make mistakes."

Writing in *The Maxwell Daily Reader*, published by Thomas Nelson, Maxwell advises: "Use lots of positive reinforcement with your people. Don't take acceptable work for granted; thank people for it. Praise a person every time you see improvement. And personalize your encouragement any time you can. Remember, what motivates one person may leave another cold or even irritated. Find out what works with each of your people and use it."

UCLA basketball coach John Wooden told players who scored to give a smile, wink or nod to the player who gave them a good pass.

"What if he's not looking?" asked a team member.

"I guarantee he'll look," Wooden replied.

As Maxwell observed: "Everyone values encouragement and looks for it – especially when his leader is a consistent encourager."

And that pays dividends for the entire team.

As you go about your duties in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home today, spread a little encouragement – and see how much better the day will go.



– Beecher Hunter