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Princess Bride, Dread Pirate & positive motivation

When people find out that I am a writer they ask several questions in quick succession: Dread Pirate? Like the Dread Pirate in the movie, Princess Bride? What kind of motivation? Then they look at me funny for a few seconds and ask, "Why the Dread Pirate?" I have to smile and then laugh. People know the Ron Reiner film, but they really don't see beyond the fairy tale.

William Goldman wrote a very special story for his two daughters. One wanted a story about a princess, the other, brides. A fairy tale of epic proportions was born. The fairy tale is about a young lady, Buttercup (Robin Wright), who casts aside a farm boy, Westley (Cary Elwes). The tale is spun around the concept of true love and how nothing, not even the genius Vizzini (Wallace Shawn), the Spaniard Inigo Montoya (Mandy Patinkin), the giant Fezzik (Andre Rousimoff), or the evil Prince Humperdinck (Chris Sarandon) can keep true love from blooming. The story has a secondary plot of a young boy (Fred Savage) who is reluctant to see his grandfather (Peter Falk), and by the end of the "kissing story" has been brought closer to him after the elderly gentleman reads him the fairy tale. The book, which was later turned into a full length feature film, is a fairy tale within a story. Both of the adventures within the work can teach us a lot about love, life, and relationships.

Many years ago, when I first saw the film, I walked away from something far different than most people. That "something" has stayed with me to this day. What I did walk away with that most others did not was a sense of just how powerful positive motivation can be. On the non-fairy tale side of the story, positive motivation plays a critical role in the grandfather's relationship with his grandson. The old man stays motivated no matter what the negative response or actions of his grandson. Positive motivation wins the day, and a better relationship is forged.

The fairy tale side of the story has its basis in positive motivation. Two characters exemplify the words positive motivation. The characters Buttercup and Westley (or later, the Dread Pirate) both show astounding motivation throughout the story. Buttercup never once loses her motivation. She continues forth no matter the odds. She keeps her belief in Westley firmly motivated no matter what the Prince tells her. Westley takes positive motivation to a whole new level, however. After being told to "leave" by his beloved Buttercup he takes passage on a ship to gain his fortunes and to win her admiration. The ship, its crew, and Westley are captured by the Dread Pirate. Westley maintains his positive motivation.

Even though the evil pirate states, "I may kill him tomorrow" every night before he went to sleep, he never does. The Dread Pirate would then pass a secret to Westley and hand over his title to the lad when he wanted to retire. Positive motivation gained a young farm boy the most feared, coveted, and respected title he could have ever wanted.

The Dread Pirate begins an adventure to save Buttercup from the not-so-nice Prince Humperdinck. He finds his love in the hands of three unscrupulous men. First he must defeat a vengeful Spaniard. The Dread Pirate maintains his composure and positive motivation while scaling the Cliffs of Insanity and engaging the Spaniard in a duel that is second to none. He defeats Inigo and leaves him unconscious but unharmed. He apologizes for having to knock him out and moves quickly toward his goal. Westley then comes face to face with the giant and bests him in a hand-to-hand combat. The Dread Pirate again leaves his opponent unconscious but unharmed on the field of battle. His quest leads him to meet the seriously humorous Vizzini, who tries to outsmart him using a quick wit and high IQ. The Dread Pirate defeats him with positive motivation, quicker wit and a higher IQ.

This wins him the prize he has come for, his Buttercup. But then things go slightly askew and he ends up on the doorstep of Miracle Max's hut being carried by none other than Inigo and the Giant! Only after Max (Billy Crystal) and Valerie (Carol Kane) see the man's undying positive motivation do they help him move forward on his journey! Soon Dread is face to face with Buttercup and Humperdinck. He wins the day and gets to ride off into the sunset with the Princess Bride.

I can think of no better pen name to write under in the motivational essay genre than the Dread Pirate! While my life has not been quite as adventurous as that of Westley, I can say that I have been cast aside, sailed all over this world, and continue to journey toward my goal no matter the odds. [Read more about Dread...](#) I have yet to see a better example of positive motivation than the Dread Pirate in the film, Princess Bride. Until I do, I will pen under the name, Dread Pirate.

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