

ABOUT GENERATION Y

(this interview was conducted in the fall of 2009 at L.A. Lakers Club)

Journo: *Dr. Love, you've been around the club scene for a while, what do you think of the youth of today?*

D.L.: by large they are doing well.

Journo: *what advice would you give to young people?*

D.L.: I am not sure if I am the right person to give advice. I didn't have much of a youth at all. My youth was split between two cultures and my time was spent almost entirely under a lamp light as a bookworm.

Journo: *that's hard to believe judging from all the carry on you do these days.*

D.L.: I think it's a case of delayed puberty I'm going through at the moment.

Journo: *delayed? Unbelievably delayed it seems.*

D.L.: better live it late than never.

Journo: *is there life after pub life for you?*

D.L.: I don't frankly know how long I'm going to carry on. One thing I know is all that larrikinism is natural.

Journo: *do you think you would ever accept old age when it hits you one day?*

D.L.: hopefully not too soon. Quite frankly I was one of the first to understand the fragility of life from cradle to the grave. Not many youths would experience what I experienced on my first day at work. I was in my early 20's when I stepped into the ward of a Veteran's Hospital. The only people I served for that whole year as an apprentice were graceful and honorable people in their 60's and over.

Journo: *should the youth of today look beyond the horizon?*

D.L.: well, when one steps into a pub or a night club, all you see is young people and all young people see are other young people. When you are young and beautiful, you think life will be forever like that and they should feel that way. They are having the time of their life and their dreams and hopes for bigger and better things are almost surreal. Mind you, life should be that way too.

It wasn't that long ago, I was a youth. Back then I had the same dream as them and today I still have the same dream as them. I wish for all young people that their dreams come true.

Journo: *would that happen?*

D.L.: for some, it will.

Journo: *what about the rest?*

D.L.: if they work hard.

Journo: *don't dreams come naturally?*

D.L.: well, dreams of brick and mortar type, of big mansions, marble spas and granite floors come with hard work and planning.

Journo: *working hard to make a living or working hard to get rich?*

D.L.: working hard to get rich.

Journo: *isn't greed a bad word?*

D.L.: that depends how you look at it.

Journo: *whichever way you look at it.*

D.L.: not if you have worked for it.

Journo: *Aren't money just pieces of expensive papers printed by the Federal Reserve?*

D.L.: they are at first sight. But when you sit and think about it, it's a measure of an individual's and a nation's assets and wealth created which can be used to exchange for other individual's or other nation's assets and wealth.

Journo: *you are getting technical. What's the definition of asset?*

D.L.: asset is a bundle of goods and services that are of benefit to an individual or a nation.

You know, not long ago, back by the turn of the last century, bartering was still common place. Farmers would bring in bags of potatoes in exchange for a tooth extraction. The dentist would in turn to consume some of the hard earned potatoes. Left over potatoes can be used to exchange for peanuts at the local market or for a hair cut at the barber. That's assuming the barber is short on potatoes. He may insist on exchanging his service for a bottle of rum for which the dentist doesn't brew.

To cut the story short, that's how gold and silver coins came about. Coins were easier to fit into a pocket than potatoes when going shopping.

Journo: *where are you trying to lead us?*

D.L.: well, assets don't last for ever, unless you create more. The bags of potatoes would eventually be consumed, exchanged or perished, rotten away. The bottle of rum would dry up sooner or later. The barber would not give you a hair cut for nothing, so one has to keep on working to make more assets.

Journo: *we all know that, but you still haven't told us why getting rich is important?*

D.L.: the reality is there is a scarcity of economic resources. Every person and every nation is competing and literally fighting for resources. Why do you think there are wars being waged around the globe? Are they fought on pure moral or political ground?

At an individual level, wealth creation is important. Not only does it lead us to a better life style, it will save us during rainy days. Rainy days may be a drought gripping a nation, a global oil crisis, capital market collapse or a pandemic. Rainy days may also come at a personal level when one is struck down by serious illness or injury. The rainy days may never come, but trust me I've seen it all before.

Journo: *seen it all before?*

D.L.: well, we'd better leave some story for the book. The only thing I want to say is that it's better to hoard truck loads of potatoes while you can and when you can.

Journo: *surely you couldn't eat all the potatoes yourself?*

D.L.: well, you could always leave some for the next generation.

Journo: *the next generation? Couldn't they grow their own potatoes?*

D.L.: yes they can, but what would the potatoes be worth at that time and how much do they have to grow to maintain the standard of living we have today? Life is getting harder for the next generation. I know that's hard to believe when there are plenty of consumer goods in the stores, plenty of food in the supermarkets and big mansions going up along the riverside.

Journo: *it is bloody hard to believe. I think you've been pessimistic.*

D.L.: Dr. Love is simply telling the truth. Go and ask your average mum and dad and they'll tell you the harsh reality of life and how much they have to work, doing one and a half job each just to pay the mortgages and make ends meet.

Those big mansions going up along the riverside aren't for them. They are reserved for the few chosen ones who control finance and exert powerful influence in the business and political world.

Journo: *who are they?*

D.L.: the grey haired men by and large. They are the corporate executives, real estate construction guru's, those who have inherited a silver spoon and a few professionals getting there the long and hard way.

Journo: *what about the rest of us?*

D.L.: just slaving away.

Journo: *you shouldn't tell generation Y that.*

D.L.: about not owning big mansions?

Journo: *yes.*

D.L.: forget the big mansions, even owning a cul de sac could be a thing of the past. The harsh reality for generation Y is that the banks would not lend home loans to a significant number of them at their income levels. For others it would become a life-time mortgage, paying it off well into their retirement if they could still afford to. For the rest they would have to pass it onto their off springs. It won't be long before "mortgage inheritance" becomes a catch phrase in America.

Journo: *what about the great American dream?*

D.L.: quite frankly the big American dream is a happy reality for those who own them and are increasingly becoming nightmares for those who want to own them.

Journo: *what does all this have to do with hoarding potatoes?*

D.L.: well, one of the reasons I want to work hard and get there is to look after my next generation, make sure they have an easier life than the one I've had. We had only \$500 when we (my parents and my brother) arrived on this shore years ago. One thing for sure, I want to pass on more than \$500 worth of sweet potatoes to my off-spring.

Journo: *a few big mansions?*

D.L.: something more than a "mortgage inheritance" I hope.

Journo: *should the youths of today start hoarding potatoes for rainy days?*

D.L.: not at all. Youth is a time to be carefree and to enjoy life. There is no mortgage, no attachment, no appendices and no commitments. But that doesn't mean they should waste their hard earned potatoes. Perhaps hoard and then trade them for an overseas holiday or pay for a course to advance their careers.

Journo: *a course to advance their careers?*

D.L.: well, 'cause nothing lasts forever. From the time you can walk into a pub to the age of thirty or something lasts for only a dozen years or so. Youth is only part of one's life.

Journo: *what happens after youth?*

D.L.: a lot of things. For a start your body and youthful looks will change. I think the harsh American sun has a lot to do with skin damage. Invariably young ladies would settled down and have a child or two. Having a child or two would also invariably transform their body.

Journo: *what are you getting at?*

D.L.: well, our society frowns on youthfulness and beauty. For the young and beautiful ladies of today, finding the better man for tomorrow and for a lifetime of challenges couldn't be more important.

Journo: *you mean not having a Tiffany twisted mind, the Benz and lot of pretty boys?*

D.L.: no, pretty boys can be better men too and dance in the courtyard.

Journo: *what about the beast in the Chamber?*

D.L.: you mean the beast with a heart of gold.

Journo: *yes that one. The one you've being singing about, the beast in Hotel California.*

D.L.: what about him?

Journo: *should he be one of the few chosen ones?*

D.L.: better man?

Journo: *for better or worse.*

D.L.: which version?

Journo: *the Pearl Jam version.*

D.L.: I've only sung the Robbie Williams version.

Journo: *why is finding a better man important?*

D.L.: life after youth is full of challenges. The first challenge is getting institutionalised for the majority of young men and women. The institution will soon be joined by an average of 1.6 members per institution. The pretty girl and pretty boy syndrome will quickly evaporate when pub rock at 2am is replaced by crying rhymes. They'll be singing: "the cot made me jumpy, I never stopped the dreams or the growing need for Valium and nappy change."

The members of the institution also need roofing over their heads and food on the table. "Working hard to make a living, bringing shelter from the tempest, a father son left on carry on, mortgage inheritance in his veins" couldn't be further from the truth.

Journo: *working class man?*

D.L.: a working class man with a plan for the betterment of the institution's future.

Journo: *what about working class youth?*

D.L.: as long as they have a plan. Without a plan for the future and working towards that plan, one may find disappointment, lost dreams and opportunity somewhere down the road.

Journo: *so what plans should the youth of today have?*

D.L.: well, not everybody is going to be a professor, doctor or barrister nor do they necessarily want to be one. Any plan you make for the betterment of one's future is a good plan. That may be doing an apprenticeship to become a tradesperson, applying for a University degree or developing a plan to run a business.

There is simply no substitution for hard work. Sooner or later, the work has to be done, be it building assets or hoarding potatoes. You don't want to be in retirement and have nothing to show. Life couldn't be worse than to be old and penniless. I see it too often in my job. Many couldn't even afford their medicines.

Journo: *that's long away for today's youth to be worrying about?*

D.L.: true, but you've got to lay the foundation early.

Journo: just work and no fun?

D.L.: no, lots of fun as well. That's why I'm still at it.

Journo: *any trouble in paradise?*

D.L.: The one thing that disturbs me is that there is one fight too many in pubs of America. In my job I see enough suffering caused by nature, accidents and ravages of disease. There is no justification for two perfectly healthy young people punching each other out and end up doing jail house rock instead of having fun on the karaoke stage.

Journo: *what about grog and weed?*

D.L.: I frankly don't think there is an answer to some of these problems. I think it's a grass root problem, of broken families, broken dreams and hopes when they are growing up. I think bit more love, respect and guidance for young people may go a long way in getting them out of the blues.

Journo: *is that the message you're trying to preach?*

D.L.: if it helps. Right now though, I'm partying 24/7 trying to get out of my blues.

Journo: *24/7 forever?*

D.L.: till I find the chosen one.

Journo: *then disappear from the scene?*

D.L.: only when rest of the band members had enough of Rock N Roll.

Journo: *keep the faith?*

D.L.: keep the faith.

Journo: *time for a drink.*

D.L.: how is your liver?

Journo: *probably as good as yours.*

D.L.: mine is nearly up for a transplant. What would you like?

Journo: *Pink Lady.*

D.L.: Pink Lady? Not at the Lakers' Club. Real men don't drink that stuff.

Journo: *what do they serve?*

D.L.: looks like it's all Budweiser or Pure Blonde on taps.

Journo: *grab a couple of jugs of Pure Blonde.*

D.L.: you are supposed to be working.

Journno: *it's for Michael and Magic.*

D.L.: Michael and Magic?

Journno: *do you recognise those couple of bald guys sitting at the bar?*

D.L.: that's Jordan and Johnson, the Bulls' and Lakers' heroes.

Journno: *any memorable moments?*

D.L.: yep, back in March 21, 1989, a Bulls' vs Lakers' match when Michael and Magic were playing on the same court. Jordan scored a 3-pointer in the dying seconds to lead his team to a memorable 1-point win, 104-103.

Journno: *fair dinkum, you still remember that. It's good to know dementia hasn't set in.*

D.L.: I've told you, don't you give anybody any idea.

Journno: *I know you've gone through a lot of trouble looking for love, but can I give you some advice?*

D.L.: what may that be?

Journno: *I think you should come to the Lakers' Club every Friday night, have a few drinks and watch a game or two, instead of wasting your time on Sunset Boulevard. You see sheilas in Beverly Hills just want a good time. They want to be in arms of pretty boys and they don't look at life the way you do. It's time to quit.*

D.L.: I know, but this love thing, it's addictive. There is always the thought: one more night I could get lucky.

Speaker: attention ladies and gentleman, a taxi is looking for Dr. Love.

D.L.: got go. My fans are waiting at the Chamber.

Journno *(talking to himself): I don't know what it is, there is something wrong with this guy. He is going to lose everything one day.*

(End)