



By Mort Laitner

I sat on my couch contemplating Rodin's *The Thinker*. A human figure permanently frozen in bronze: the iconic image of a person deep in thought. A fist held up a handsome head in heavy meditation. A body crouched with tensed back muscles.

Into the living room sauntered Uncle Monroe, a worldly man who holds a University of Virginia degree in philosophy and acute memory to dish out knowledge to those with inquiring minds and a robust sense of humor.

"Young man, a penny for your thoughts?" Monroe bellowed.

"I'm trying to remember the last time I witnessed anybody in the 'Thinker' position," I replied. "I realize that when I'm at the computer, the palm of my left hand sometimes cradles my chin. My middle finger rests on my nose while the rest of my fingers surround my mouth. However my right arm rests on my mouse and not my knee."

Monroe managed to ignore my comment and asked, "What is thinking?"

“To reason, to remember experiences and then to make rational decisions.” I knowingly replied.

Without comment as if he was a Talmudic scholar, Monroe continued, “Are there different types of thinking?”

“Sure, there’s creative and wishful.” I quipped.

Being the Southern gentleman, Monroe asked, “May I be given permission to expound upon the subject?”

I nodded my head.

“Most people spend most of their non sleeping hours doing their best to avoid thinking!”

“Most people live their lives on auto pilot----- without using the four pillars.”

“What are the four pillars?”

“Goals, Visions, Plans and Actions.” Monroe continued, “I have often been told that it is unquestionable that the brain is our greatest asset, and yet it is also the world’s most famous and most common white elephant. How else can one describe the most magnificent asset that is operated at less than 3% capacity?”

“Monroe, that stuff sounds familiar. At work we say, Plan, Do, Check, and Act.” I replied.

Monroe paused as if he was in deep thought. He crouched down; put his thumb under his chin and a knuckle on it. He looked me square in the eyes “Excellent young man, you’ve moved to a higher plane. You’re now a four per center.”