

Reflections of L. Lane Grigsby

My early viewpoint of an engineering education was that the purpose of college was to teach students to think, a process not fully understood by other majors. My definition of thinking was to give a complete definition to a problem, develop at least one total solution, hopefully more than one, and select the best solution according to logically set parameters.

My guideline to a successful career was to diligently pursue opportunity, utilizing my ability to think as the separating factor from my competition. I was completely convinced that the disciplined use of logic and reasoning was the true course to sure success.

Thirty years after graduating with my engineering degree, I look back on the decisions I have made and am astounded by the fact that the most pivotal, life-changing, decisions were not carefully reasoned and logically approached, but rather were those which were guided by my heart. And, for the most part, each decision, although patently wrong in terms of logic at the time it was made, became an integral part of my "success."

At the most critical junctures of my life, I followed my heart in opposition to my brain, and I met with success. Part of

the reason why my heart made, what would later be positive decisions is because of what was in it, the values and morals and beliefs which were inculcated by my family.

I was raised in a family atmosphere where education, religion, and work effort were valued and demanded. We were expected to become good people, well educated, hard working, giving and loving, thoughtful and playful, religious, law abiding, contributing and sacrificing. These were not concepts which were occasionally mentioned, but were preached and practiced on a daily basis. In today's jargon, I was "raised right." This is not to say that I don't make my fair share of mistakes. But by most standards, I'm successful.

As a grandfather, I now embrace a more broadened base of decision making. I still appreciate the great value of good thinking, which is a product of good education, but I have come to believe that the truly difficult decisions require more than logic and reason and that I have a role in developing the hearts of my grandchildren which is at least equal to the role in developing the hearts of my grandchildren which is at least equal to the role of their future university.