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## REINVENTION

A unified theory for a personal and professional life well-lived.

**B**y now, you've probably grown accustomed to (and weary of) me spilling out the gory details of my personal life on this page.

Just to recap, in the past five years alone, faithful readers like you have been forced to endure my ramblings about my kids, my crappy golf game, tinnitus and hearing loss, divorce, being broke, overcoming alcoholism, quitting smoking, etc., etc., etc. For me it's sort of like an instant therapy session. I pound out 835 words about whatever weirdness is bouncing around in my head, hit send and instantly feel better.

I'm weird like that. But, to me, it's not weird to share my life with my friends. The late great Harvey Penick used to say, "If you play golf, you are my friend." My version is, "If you grow grass for a living, you're my friend."

Well, my friends, this month I have something really weird... something very, very strange... to reveal: I got married a few weeks ago.

Yup, I finally convinced the fabulous Kim to become Mrs. Jones. Astoundingly, this wonderful, beautiful, creative and compassionate woman agreed to marry an aging, half-deaf, recovering addict with no savings, a bad comb-over and a golf swing that has more flaws than a Shakespearean villain. She's a little nuts... and I am eternally grateful for it. I'm the luckiest man in the world.

This continues my ongoing reinvention. I'm incredibly blessed. Looking back five years, my prospects for anything beyond darkness, despair and delusion were dim. Yet now, I love madly, laugh loudly and live with a new sense of purpose.

Let's talk about that last thing for a bit. In my case, my sense of purpose is simple: I want to live the rest of my life honestly, help others and have fun.

I know that sounds goofy and idealistic. The real world still lurks menacingly around every corner. I still have to run Golf Course Industry and our sister publication *Lawn & Landscape*, make money for my boss and keep a bunch of awesome, passionate, talented people employed. I still have to get my kids through college and off to their own adventures. I still need to be a good husband to the amazing woman who agreed to put up with me. I still have to stay sober, tobacco-free and (hopefully) less crazy than before. In short, I still have bills to pay and promises to keep.

evance to this column, let's start with a renewed commitment to this wonderful community of turfheads.

This year, we're going to begin to tackle the real issues facing our industry head on. We've always been pretty candid about the business, but the most important thing we can do is help solve problems instead of just writing about them. So, look for GCI to start leading the charge on issues and partnering with some important and surprising organizations to make a difference. We'll be announcing those programs over the next few months but

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Yet, those things will all happen naturally if I simply continue to do the next right thing.

I learned that "next right thing" concept in AA, but it's a fundamental idea that turns up in nearly every religion and philosophy out there. I just didn't absorb it until it hit me square between the eyes that dishonesty, delusion and selfishness weren't right no matter how well I rationalized them. It turns out being a drunk, hitting bottom and starting over taught me the important stuff I should have learned had I been paying attention to all those goddamned books I read over the years. I recently was informed by my brilliant new stepdaughter that there's actually a word for it: *pathemata*. It means "learning through suffering." Wow.

I don't want to waste those tough lessons. I'm excited to put what I've learned to work in every aspect of my life. And, in the spirit of adding rel-

all of our new initiatives have this in common: We're committed to being an independent advocate for our industry, its people and its values. Stay tuned.

If you're coming to Orlando, let's talk. Find me, grab me and tell me what you think we should be doing to serve your needs – and the larger needs of the industry – more effectively. Let's talk about the challenges you face and your hopes and dreams for the future. Let's talk about how we can help you succeed and how you can have a voice in what we do. Mostly, let's talk because we're friends.

And, if you're very lucky, you might get to meet Mrs. Jones. She'll be there the last day or so of the big show. She'll be easy to find. She's the tall, gorgeous blonde following me around telling me to calm the hell down and reminding me to focus on what's important.

Did I mention I'm the luckiest man on the face of the earth? **GCI**