



## *Who gets top billing?*

What's the movie playing in your head? Right now? How did the "play button" get pushed?

What if you (I) pushed pause? Better still, what would happen if I pressed DELETE?

Is there a power that "my movie" has over me?

Speaking of movies, recently I ran across a term I hadn't heard before:

MCS: Main Character Syndrome.

MCS is when I put myself at the center of any movie currently "showing in theaters."

What happens when I play the role of the main character?

For me (maybe not for you...):

- I don't listen well.
- When things don't go my way (read, when others don't recognize that I am the main character in the current story) I get irritated, resentful, angry.
- Maybe I withdraw from others.
- Maybe I lash out at those closest to me.
- And then, if you're like me, when I become aware of what I'm doing, I beat myself up.

And, the beat goes on...

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Soviet dissident who spent 10 years in Russian Gulag and in exile, wrote many significant works. One of his most famous quotes is:

*The Universe has as many different centers as there are living beings in it.*

I call my version of MCS Mark's second law of thermodynamics.

Left to my own devices, the world (read my world) inevitably c0llapses.

The corollary: A Mark-centered world is too small a world to live in.

So, how do I do battle with MCS: Donald Miller, author of *Blue Like Jazz*, gives us one hint. We fight MCS by living in COMMUNITY. Miller writes, *Living in a community made me realize one of my faults: I was addicted to myself. All I thought about was myself. The only thing I really cared about was myself. I had very little concept of love, altruism, or sacrifice. I discovered that my mind is like a radio that picks up only one station, the one that plays me: K-DON, all Don, all the time...*

Only in community (think team...family...business...family business) do I stand a chance of having an “out-of-body experience” – a chance of getting out of myself, out of MCS, and along the way, I realize this world we live in is way bigger, way more beautiful, way more “Wow-ing” than my small self-centered world.

When I'm not hung up on my character in my movie, I can see a bit more clearly; become aware of the FACT that I am not the main character in “the movie”; grow less judgmental and more compassionate toward others...over time...AND, maybe I can do a small part to make THE world less divided...turn more “them's” into “us'es.”

If this were to happen, I might find myself stepping back and looking at the bigger picture, the bigger world that exists...and sing a different tune (other than **K-MARK, all Mark, all the time...**), like Louis Armstrong's, *What a Wonderful World*.