“We get more of what we focus on” says Dr. Bob Hoke before telling the story of his war-time experience as a younger man and the lesson he learned. Sue Clancy took notes (and drew pictures).
Once upon a time there was a certain Submarine Medical Officer who went on a 60 day underwater patrol on a large nuclear submarine with 152 other people on board the “boat”. As was traditional in the “silent service” he was not only expected to be the doctor but was cross-trained to “drive” the submarine.

That is, he became a Diving Officer of the Watch for four hours out of every twelve. He became very proficient at his job with much help from his crew mates. Then he was transferred to a different “boat”.
This was at a time, in the 1960’s, when there was some question, in some people’s minds, about the morality of war. Our young submarine doctor got caught up in this and began to think: “I’m a doctor, and I’ll be driving an engine of war. Isn’t that contrary to the Geneva conventions?” So, he wrote a letter to his Commanding Officer explaining his doubts and requesting not to be made a Diving Officer.
The Commanding Officer – the Captain – responded by calling the doctor to his state room where the Captain said: “Doctor, let me show you what I think of this letter” and he crumpled it up and threw it away. Then he poked his finger into the doctor’s chest and said “God damn you doctor, you will do what I tell you to do, or else!”

This made the doctor very angry but the captain was in command so he had no choice but to become a submarine “driver”. He was so mad he almost didn’t hear the Captain say “And besides you’re the most experienced Diving Officer I have” which was true.

On the patrol, the doctor was a very angry (mostly “suppressed”) Diving Officer. “The Captain is making me angry.” The Doctor said to himself “It’s all his fault!” Therefore, his anger grew because he was feeding it, every day.
He even once wrote a note that said “help! I’m being held prisoner on the diving stand!” He was in bad shape. Then one day, not “out of the clear blue” because they were underwater, he noticed something; he saw a big difference in what his anger was doing to him and its effect on the Captain. The Captain looked just
fine but he was tired, worn, haggard, and afraid he was going to get “the 7 year itch and the blind staggers” if he didn’t change.

So he made a decision: the Captain wasn’t making him angry – he was just making him do the job he was trained to do. The Captain wasn’t making him an “angry” Diving Officer, he was doing that to himself. “I am growing this anger myself, so since I am doing it I can and will change”.

And within several days he was happier at doing a job he was good at – even if he hadn’t wanted it. He had discovered a deep secret: There is a big difference between not getting what you want and being unhappy about not getting it. And he discovered an old truth: Resentment is when I take poison and wait for you to die.
About the author and artist:

Sue Clancy and Dr. Bob Hoke have a book available titled “Dr. Bob’s Emotional Repair Program – First Aid Kit” in both ebook and print versions. The ebook (ISBN: 9781624886140) is available via Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Copia, iBookstore, eSentral and many more places where ebooks are sold.

The print version of “Dr. Bob’s Emotional Repair Program – First Aid Kit” is available on demand at Espresso Book Machines (where you can watch your book copy pop out of the machine like a candy bar) which can be found by going to www.ondemandbooks.com

Sue Clancy’s writing, illustrations and fine art have appeared in many books and magazines. She is represented by 23 Sandy Gallery in Portland OR. www.23sandygallery.com, and the Joseph Gierek Fine Art gallery in Tulsa OK www.gierek.com

Dr. Bob Hoke is Board Certified in both Psychiatry and Occupational Medicine. He is currently in private practice in Norman, Oklahoma. Dr. Hoke acknowledges that the practice, alluded to in this story, now known as CBT (cognitive behavior therapy), have a long ancestry: Thanks to Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Albert Ellis, Aaron Beck and his own teachers Maxie Maultsby and Bill O’Hanlon.