



## THE CONSERVATION OF WRETCHEDNESS

Our phone rings when something catastrophic occurs. Someone, in their organization or community, experiences a failure that stops them from continuing in the normal routine of life. They need an independent investigator to lead the effort to learn what happened and understand it to an extent that we can move forward with a high level of confidence that it won't be repeated. Before I get off the phone, I already know what we're going to find, small unresolved problems.

Small unresolved problems are what cause big problems, **EVERY TIME**. It's frustrating. A plant blows up and I know I'm going to find small problems people there knew about but didn't think they'd cause a catastrophe. We collect evidence and prove those small problems that were ignored are exactly what caused the big problem. Moreover, we always find people do what they know they ought naught do. For instance, those small problems that caused the explosion at the plant, well people knew about them but decided not to fix them. They either thought they could get away with it or thought it wouldn't cause a bigger problem.

These experiences over four decades have convinced us of the truth in the **Conservation of Wretchedness; to put it simply, anytime someone does what they know they ought not do they set a failure in motion**. Just as in science there are conservation laws, we believe there is also a conservation law for failure. We have not found one instance that this is not true. If people understood this, it would improve their lives and businesses almost overnight. I believe most are too busy to see the conservation of wretchedness in operation. Others just refuse to believe it. In essence, choosing to run into the same brick wall over and over.

One of the most valuable outcomes of performing Latent Cause Analysis™ is the way it helps change the way people think. We call it a Latent Cause Mentality. I have a Latent Cause Mentality. I see life around me through a lens of evidence. I see the Conservation of Wretchedness at work in every failure I investigate. I don't say that like I'm biased, when I say I see it, I mean it's based on evidence. I don't just see it, I know it. I can prove it. Don't fall victim to the Conservation of Wretchedness. Use it to learn, grow, and improve your life and organization.