

## Thriving Personally in Challenging Times

By: Pat Lynch, Ph.D., President

Especially during times of adversity it is critical that we pay close attention to our personal well-being. The analogy that comes to mind is the statement that air travelers hear every time we fly: “In the event a change in altitude causes the oxygen masks to drop, put your own mask on first before you assist others.” Similarly, we must be physically and mentally healthy in order for us to be most useful to ourselves and to others. Here are a few things we can do to ensure we take care of ourselves.

- Look realistically at what *is* instead of what *might be*. Separate fact from fiction or speculation by seeking objective evidence.
- Look realistically at your talents and strengths. While the environment may have changed, you – the person – have not. How can you leverage your talents and strengths?
- Create *realistic* expectations for yourself and others.
- Surround yourself with people who support you. Drop those who do not.
- Use “down” time to build on your strengths. Doing so will boost your confidence and you will emerge stronger than before.
- Look for life’s rainbows – literal and figurative. They are there when you least expect them, sometimes even when logic suggests they shouldn’t be there at all.
- Be open to whatever life brings your way. If you are not looking, you will never see the possibilities.
- Enjoy the simple pleasures of life. Take a walk on the beach or in nature. Watch how the colors in the sky change as the sun rises in the morning or sets in the evening. Go play in the rain and jump in the puddles it forms. Release your inner child!

- Focus on the abundance in your life. If you seek it, you will find it.
- Ask questions that lead you in positive directions for the answers. For example, instead of asking *whether* you can or should do something, ask *how* you can do it. You will find yourself a lot closer to where you want to go.
- Remain confident by focusing on those things you can control.
- Keep the big picture and the long-term in mind when making short-term decisions. You can avoid getting lost in the details and the feelings of being overwhelmed by keeping the big picture in front of you at all times.
- Make decisions that are consistent with your values.
- Look for reasons to *do* things rather than for reasons *not* to do them.

Remember: while we sometimes are unable to control our situation, we *always* get to choose how we experience it. By exercising that option, we choose to make healthy choices that will see us through even the most challenging of times.

What quality of life do *you* choose? ➔

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