Step by Step: Grabbing Opportunity

Special to ATW by Earlene Gleisner, RN

Physical health is one segment of wellness. Because the average person generates 25,000 to 50,000 thoughts per day, according to a report in ‘Psychology Today’, there is a profound relationship between our thoughts and our well-being. Beginning in 1952 with Norman Vincent Peale’s book “The Power of Positive Thinking”, a large

school of thought developed around the idea that happiness and unhappiness are largely byproducts of thoughts.

The answer to why optimists do better than pessimists in their life challenges is that optimists are more than Pollyanna’s. They are problem solvers who try to improve their situations.

In her ***Avenues to Wellness*** talk, “The Road to Success is Always Under Construction,” Margie Handley, President of the Frank R. Howard Foundation, gave many examples of how that optimistic attitude helped her accomplish her personal goals. This attitude also helped her overcome challenges that would have crushed her spirit. With no more formal education than a high school diploma, she claims her success came from the school of hard knocks. Her career began as a mom, moved through business ventures such as making wooden boxes for Howitzer Cannon Barrels and Nike Missiles, a retail Western Clothing Store, owning Hot Rocks, an asphalt, sand and gravel company, running for State Senate, then following her passion to spearhead a way to build a new hospital for Willits. We all know how that turned out.

Along the way, Margie used inspiring thoughts to bolster her resolve. She says, “Once you’ve established your passion, it’s time to make a commitment. Then tenacity is needed.” As Winston Churchill said, “Never give up, never give up. Never. Never. Never.”

“Don’t be afraid to take a risk” is her next piece of advice. The only thing that counts is what you finish. Procrastination is your enemy. You should trust your hopes, not your fears; no one can make you feel inferior unless you agree to it. It’s your attitude at the beginning of a difficult task which, more than anything else, will affect its successful outcome. If you believe it will work out, you’ll see opportunities; if you don’t, you’ll only see obstacles.

Failure has never been an option for Margie, “unless you just don’t try”, she said. And try has been her by-word. Margie never considered her loss of the State Senate election a failure; she learned so much during the campaign and made life-long friends during the experience.

Margie used many inspiring quotes as she told the story of her career and her hopes for future endeavors for the community. “Shoot for the moon,” she says, “even if you miss, you’ll land among the stars.”

Monthly Challenge: If we can remember to walk like a vibrant, healthy person, we can lift our own spirits. Come on. We can do it. Analyze your gait. Do you walk slowly because you have just become lazy or perhaps have a fear of falling? Tip: Make a conscious effort to take bigger strides, walk with your heel first, and wear comfortable shoes. Stand up straight. You will look and feel better.

***Avenues to Wellness*** was created especially for Inland Mendocino County by the Frank R. Howard Foundation. Visit www.avenuestowellness.org, or email [atwforhealth@gmail.com](https://webmail.mcn.org/squirrelmail/src/compose.php?send_to=atwforhealth%40gmail.com) for more information.