



Improvements Require Change

By Connie Burtcheard

I have never been good at puzzles. I could never solve the Rubik's Cube. I have never been able to even fill in more than five answers of a Crossword Puzzle. I seem to think too literally for puzzles.

So, I've taken on a new "down time activity." I now relax doing Crossword Puzzles and Sudoku. These activities in the past would put me into either a coma or a determination that I was intellectually inept.

There is a reason for choosing something that I am not and never have been good with. Let me explain with one sentence.

The more we change the way we think about things, the more the things we think about change.

This statement applies to everyone. Regardless of your position in the organization, regardless of what your role is. For that matter regardless of whether it is business or personal things and thinking.

To be the most productive, think about this sentence regarding the things that "bother" you or cause stress - again, regardless of your position. Maybe it is the girl in the next cube that always has a bad attitude. Or maybe it is the office manager that is always too happy. Or, maybe it is the guy in the apartment above you that likes to start Saturday mornings with Whitney Houston's theme from the body guard. Regardless, if something is getting to you it is preventing you from being the best you.

If you treat this like a fitness program, then think about the area that you want to build. So, take one of these things/situations that bothers you. This is the muscle that you want to focus on. See this "thing" as the muscle that needs toning. How can you best and quickly tone the muscle?

Just like with workouts, there is a balance of weight and cardio. You should also balance the things that you think about.

For example, what do you have the ability to change?

Recently on "Desperate Housewives" the use of the serenity prayer was quoted. That is "Give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I cannot change, and the wisdom to know the difference."

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How are the two statements related? Well, first, from the serenity prayer, think about what you have the abilities to change. Then, what are your ways to create the change? Is it by bringing the issue to others (managers/supervisors)? Maybe you are able to change the way you think about these things. But, most importantly, you need to be able to determine the difference.

If there is something that you are able to change, start thinking differently about it. If it is having negative impact on you, start looking at the positive side. As you do this, you will find more positive things in your life.

I'm still struggling at solving crossword puzzles in less than 1 hour, but I do have Sudoku down to less than 2 ½ minutes. So, you really can change the way you think about and analyze the world around you.

Remember - The more you change the way you think about things, the more those things change.