



Hope for 2015

Let's all do a collective exhale. The holidays are almost over and if you're like me, you're thankful for them but also glad that all the "extras" that come with them are winding to an end. I have a friend who says her favorite day of the year is December 26th because that's when she finally can sit down and relax. Alleluia to that! Not only because it's good to balance busyness with rest, but also because it's a good time to reflect about what we really want to create in the year ahead. You don't have to wait to do that until New Year's approaches, but for many of us, it's the perfect time to set some intentions. **The prospect of a whole new year brings with it a sense of anticipation, possibility, and hope.** What do you hope for in 2015?

Before you answer that question, **let's first distinguish what hope is and what it isn't.** Hope is not wishful thinking. I was recently reading a book by Dr. Lise Alschuler and Karolyn Gazella about thriving after cancer, and they did an excellent job of differentiating the two. Wishful thinking does not take into account your current reality; while hope on the other hand, does. Wishful thinking is absent of action, while hope requires it. According to Dr. Alschuler and Ms. Gazella, hope is derived from identifying those parts of your current situation that are unwanted AND an idea that something needs to change. They go on to say that hope isn't merely a thought, but requires a second component of actually engaging in actions to bring about the desired change. **Think of hope as a verb!**

So, what am I hoping for this New Year and ready to commit to action? 2015 is going to be one of great transition for me personally and professionally. Here's a brief, but in no way comprehensive list of what I'm hoping for in 2015:

- Quality time with my children
- Continued cancer-free health status
- Helping people, especially those with cancer, to empower themselves to create wellness in body, mind, and spirit
- Growing Wellfinity to provide an income
- Many hours of practicing and sharing yoga
- More fun and play in my life

- Love
- Giving and receiving grace
- Participating in a service project with my family
- Traveling out West to mountains and/or the ocean

Action Challenge: Go ahead and create your own list. Be honest and make sure that your list isn't a wish list, but a hope list. In other words, think about whether you're ready to take action.

Need some inspiration?

As I mentioned in my last newsletter, it's not always easy to have hope. Your current situation may be very dire and appear hopeless. You may feel depressed, scared, uncertain, or angry. So let me help you create hope. In addition to some inspirational quotes I've also included another survivor story to show that even when the situation seems very bleak, there are things you can do to shift your circumstance, or at the very least your experience, and restore wellness.

"You're only one thought away from changing your life." – Wayne Dyer

What you have to do is find that thought. What if you thought, "What I do can make a difference"? How would that change your outlook and willingness to take action?

"Let your hopes, not your hurts, shape your future." – Robert H. Schuller

Which will you let control your life?

"Only in the darkness can you see the stars." – Martin Luther King Jr.

Sometimes all we need to do to cultivate hope is shift our perspective. Is there any silver lining in your situation? Can any good come out of it –even if it's just a speck in the distance right now?

I have come to accept the feeling of not knowing where I am going. And I have trained myself to love it. Because it is only when we are suspended in mid-air with no landing in sight, that we force our wings to unravel and alas, begin our flight. And as we fly, we still may not know where we are going to, but the miracle is in the unfolding of the wings. You may not know where you are going, but you know that so long as you can spread your wings, the winds will carry you." – C. JoyBell C.

I love this quote because it implies you don't even have to know exactly what you hope for, or how you are going to get there, you just have to be open to possibility. This quote implies that we have resources within us that perhaps we didn't even know existed, but are there if we just take a step forward.

Finally, I present to you the story of Sue. Sue didn't have cancer just once, but three times! Her story is certain to inspire many to stay hopeful. Here it is in Sue's own words...

“When I had my third occurrence of breast cancer in 2007 I was terrified. I was worried the first and second time, but the third time the doctors indicated that the cancer might have spread. This hit the core of my being and I started having panic attacks. I was determined to do whatever I could to stay healthy, especially so that I could be here for my pre-teen daughters. I read a lot about cancer survival. I desperately wanted to be one of those people at the long-lived end of the survival curve.

My hospital team was expert in chemo, radiation and surgery; but I felt that I need something more. I saw a psychiatrist, a massage therapist, an acupuncturist, and an integrative nutritionist. I learned about mindfulness meditation, went dancing more, juiced vegetables daily, and ate healthy fats and proteins. I threw everything at this. I asked my oncologist who I could see about nutrition and wellness, and he recommended integrative medicine doctor, Dr. Nicole Nisly. She gave me some very valuable advice about food, supplements, and stress relief.

Dr. Nisly said it was essential for me to do at least 20minutes of mind-body work daily, and she gave me a CD my Bellaruth Naperstek. At the time, I didn't know what mind-body work was exactly, but I started listening to the recordings. After a period of determined mental adjustment, I started to get it. The CD she gave me was about fighting cancer, but I renamed it Healing on my computer because I wanted to focus on healing, not cancer. I understood the affirmations right away, and soon, I was listening to the guided imagery. I listened to the guided imagery every morning and night. It gave me so much comfort and even some feeling of control over my well-being. I listened especially during times of stress and I was comforted. I listened during my treatments, and after my chemo failed, I listened some more. Many times, I played the recordings on a loop all night long on my iPod and that felt even more healing. The words even made it into my dreams.

I am 7 years out from this harrowing recurrence, and as far as I know, I am well. I still listen to the recordings, although less often. I still eat very well and manage stress using mindfulness, meditation, and yoga. I feel that these are essential parts of my healing. We can never know why I survived. I believe that my wellness work has been very powerful.” - Sue

Sue is a prime example of how having hope and taking action work together powerfully. Notice that she didn't know at the time if what she was doing was going to work, but it gave her a sense of control and facilitated healing. You can do the same!

I would love to help you step into 2015 powerfully and with hope so this is your best year yet! Contact me at shelly@wellfinit.com or 319-330-8382 to schedule your free strategy session.

Have a wonderful start to the New Year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelly". The signature is written in a dark grey or black ink on a light, textured background.

Live with Intention, Love Yourself, Create Balance, Fulfill Your Purpose & Thrive!

P.S. As you read in Sue's testimonial, meditation can be a powerful tool for hope and healing. Be sure to take advantage of my FREE healing meditation when you sign up for my newsletter at www.wellfinity.com. Already receiving my newsletter and want the new meditation? Then send me an email and I'll be sure to get it to you.