



October 27, 2022

## How Does Being Grateful For Today Rekindle Optimism For Healing Tomorrow?

Greetings \*|FNAME|\*,

Although the Thanksgiving holiday is still a good month away, I can't help feeling profound gratitude for today. This second round of chemotherapy seems to have much less caustic side effects than the last, so I can actually drink and swallow liquids, chew and taste food again, and even talk. While I still have heavy fatigue, the absence of the crippling pain I was suffering from over the past three months has brought me renewed vigor... enough to even go out and spend time with other people.



I'm so grateful I could attend the Chamber's recent Professional Women's Forum to learn about commercial real estate, as well as a Vistage mastermind meeting with a great speaker. It's terrific to be out with people again! Plus having relief from the pain I've experienced during the past several months has provided a welcomed reprieve where I can more deeply appreciate the many everyday blessings in our life. Not only do Paul and I have a nice home, vehicles that work and get us where we need to go, and children who support us in many ways, but we also have a devoted community literally all over the United States that has poured out its collective heart for us through the cards, gift cards, prayers, good thoughts and vibes, flowers, meals, visitors and guardians, household repairs, and the list goes on.

According to management tool [Harrison Assessments](#), I'm officially a 100% optimist! So it's no surprise that [folks like me](#) are expansive and open to new ideas or experiences, see failure as a new start, have a healthier heart, spread good vibes, and learn from different or difficult situations. Being an optimist is not only great for my current health situation, it's an asset as an entrepreneur and business owner. You MUST to be an optimist in either situation, as a positive mental state can absolutely improve outcomes. I've faced many challenges as a business owner for the past 15 years, and optimism was the only way I kept coming back. But of course, there are still periods when it can be very difficult to see past the challenges to a better future. Things can feel quite dark.

Fortunately, there is a way through. Although it doesn't and can't fix everything, I think of gratitude as one powerfully potent pathway back to optimism. Because gratitude for what IS GOOD TODAY helps embolden your confidence that tomorrow will be better in whatever way it shows up, even while helping you embrace healthy pragmatism. After the worst year of his life in terms of broken bones, other serious medical issues, and the passing away of his 92-year-old mother, Michael J. Fox talked about how championing optimism meant thinking that things are more likely to get better than they are to get worse. During [this interview for The Guardian](#), Fox described a gradual shift of his focus to realizing that "optimism is about the promises of the future, gratitude looks at the present. He also shared insight gained through a conversation about Muhammed Ali with his wife Lonnie. She said that "any feelings of loss or wistfulness were overtaken by the celebration that the present existed: it's a fact, it's evidence and it's preserved."



After living 30 years with Parkinson's Disease and maintaining everlasting optimism, wisdom has brought Michael J. Fox to a place where he embraces gratitude above all. Now I've only been dealing with cancer for 7 months now, which is far less time than Mr. Fox has battled his illness. I see the opportunity to learn lots about gratitude AND optimism from someone like him who has been in the trenches for so long. While my optimism is still off the charts when it comes to Change by Design, this cancer experience has opened my eyes and my heart to focus on the many gifts of today. I'm very grateful for what I have now and wanted to share four principles that help me in business, life, and especially with my cancer journey to reinforce optimism:

- **Exercise gratitude, especially for little things, even when you are hurting.** For many years as an entrepreneur, life felt so difficult and I could not muster gratitude. That is no longer the case. Even in difficult times, I can see and deeply appreciate so many things. My loyal and hard-working central team. The talented, hardworking and amazing group of subcontractors who contribute to Change by Design client success. The repeat clients we have who appreciate the quality we deliver. And of course, the opportunity to live my life another day. No matter what happens, I am grateful for what I have now.
- **Live in the moment, instead of dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.** The key balm for the brutality of the chemo regimen I've gone through is living in the moment and accepting that moment without fighting it. Living one moment at a time, one day at a time. The few times I've gotten anxious enough to project forward, it both exhausted and discouraged me. And this perspective keeps me from wasting time trying to fix what isn't "fixable" during another moment in time.
- **Embrace failure and its lessons to foster greater confidence in yourself while easing navigation around life's obstacles.** Confidence fuels optimism, but how do you grow it? By surviving failure. Again, and again. Failing and getting up to try again is now an automatic skill for me, but it's come through a lot of practice over the years, precisely as [this wonderful short video](#) portrays. In addition to confidence, persevering past failure is a chance to start again and get better at whatever you are practicing by reflecting on what you did, what you should have done, and planning forward to what you'll do next time.
- **Accept the support of others.** People know if you are open to receiving help from them or not. When someone trustworthy offers to help you, why do you hesitate? Is it because of fear or pride? Shame or ego? Or to not bother someone else with your needs? Some of that felt true in my past, but I can plainly see the need for openness to the community in which we belong. It is amazing to feel the embrace of so many people who have a genuine desire to support you and help you navigate major challenges like cancer. It propels you past survival to thriving in life.

I feel good that Change by Design continues to grow. I'm thankful to be participating in daily operations because I'm not in constant pain. I'm grateful for today's success and optimistic about tomorrow's healing. Will I beat stage 3 triple negative breast cancer? The doctors say yes, and I believe I will, but who knows? And how long do I have? This an aggressive cancer that prefers to resurface 1,2,3 or even more years later. But there's no point in worrying about that. I might live to be 100!

The focus must be on TODAY and what blessings we have. That's all we've got, and it is enough. I encourage you to live this adventure called life with gratitude and optimism. And never ever give up.

Gratefully,



*Sue*

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## Workforce Alignment: How Do I Align My Employees To Organizational Results?

By: Sue Ebbers, Ph.D.



Successful businesses and organizations develop and maintain a quality workforce that is aligned with organizational requirements. A systematic approach begins by determining KPIs, then measuring current training adherence, and finally designing a curriculum architecture which will effectively drive learning for employees. This article is part 1 of a 3-part blog series to help you better understand how to achieve this workforce alignment to results by following a very deliberate process.

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