

September 29, 2022

Sameness Survival - Seeing The Human Condition Through An Ever-Changing Prism Of Life

Greetings *|FNAME|*,

Although it stares us in the face every year, how we each think about change is maddeningly different based on our place in life. We see the seasonal cycles every year, passing now from Summer to Fall. Yet most of us don't think of Fall 2022 the same way we experienced:

- Fall 2020 - in the midst of the Covid pandemic
- Fall 2001 - after the terrorist attacks on 9/11
- Fall 1993 - when we watched Schindler's List in the theater
- Fall 1976 - when the Camp David peace accords were signed
- Fall 1963 - while grieving JFK's assassination in Dallas
- Fall 1945 - on V-J Day and all that came along with it
- Fall 1931 - singing The Star Spangled Banner



We humans live a strange duality of perception, where we feel so strongly that this time is fundamentally different than the past. And at the same time, we rightly recognize that these daily, weekly, monthly and yearly cycles are at their core, fundamentally the same as they were 100 years ago, 1000 years ago, and even longer. After all, it's still just families being formed, the loss of loved ones, political cycles and iterative rhetoric. It's technologies supplanting and replacing one another, and the sun rising over one horizon, then falling under the opposite. Tides continue moving the ocean to and fro. Everything alive working to survive each moment in time.

But no matter how optimistic or pessimistic we each may be about all this, there is a common thread we share. That thread is our rather strong and heavy bias toward surviving. It can be all consuming, influencing everything from how our society functions down to the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves.

During this past 6 months, my perspective on breast cancer has changed dramatically. It's now an alarmingly immediate part of my life, despite being exactly the same thing that it was 30 years ago, and likely even [422 years ago when it was first described in Egypt](#). Yet for me and my family, this is a whole new reality that drives us to form assumptions and perspectives that feel very new and very different from before. For the vast majority of people out there in the world, the reality of cancer is not as critically important as their other immediate survival concerns. Some people are facing how to stay alive in the midst of war. Others are figuring out how to survive an oppressive society while asserting their God-given freedoms as women, men and LGBTQIA+. Still others are hanging on through starvation, dehydration and insidious diseases that we in the United States can't even fathom. Surviving is a uniquely, intimately personal situation... and at the same time it is a universally human condition.



For me, business survival is inextricably linked the leadership team maintaining our day-to-day operations. They keep everything in my company humming, which keeps me freed up to bring in new client projects, or rest when needed. For my existential survival, chemotherapy infusions are now a temporary part of my life. My extended family has been collectively facing this cancer diagnosis along with me, rooting for my health progress and supporting me during this difficult time in ways akin to my work family. Whether you face a struggle in family or in business, remember that flexibility, agility, determination and open-mindedness will help you survive and thrive.

In the August issue of **OOMPH!** I wrote at length about the empathy and compassion you can gain by finding ways to take a walk in someone else's shoes. I also wrote about the many benefits that flow from that meaningful connection. This month I encourage you to look inward at how your own pursuit of survival has impacted your work, life, and family. By putting all of the facets of our lives in perspective, we can each appreciate the limited time we have. That focus helps us prioritize our efforts to survive and move beyond an immediate crisis.



When compared to the totality of time, our lives might appear to pass by like the blink of an eye. But through the lens of survival, today means everything. Today is the chance to change something that has held you fast for too long. Today is the day when you can forgive someone, or do your very best to mend a distant relationship. Today is about acceptance, but not resignation. Today is about hope, and about what comes next. I hope that today is remarkable for you. And I appreciate our opportunity to share this time together in our common human condition.

Faithfully,



Sue

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3 Ways To Avoid Damaging Assumptions That Undermine Business Results

By: Sue Ebberts, Ph.D.



The process of creating training solutions for businesses usually unearths some seemingly straightforward assumptions. For example, if you are addressing a quality issue in the manufacturing process, your assumption might be to just narrow it down to a materials issue or a labor issue. Unfortunately, this streamlined path to a common-sense answer is deceptive, and possibly even disillusion. Before taking action could deliver a crippling loss to your organization, read on to learn how models and simulation are used to test assumptions, plus what you can to further avoid the dangers of an echo chamber.

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