



Eyes that see the good in things

ALLISON LINDGREN

"The power of one man or one woman doing the right thing for the right reason, and at the right time, is the greatest influence in our society." – Jack Kemp

It was a beautiful weekend and an opportunity to see family that I hadn't seen for a while. I woke up early to the sound of the neighbor's rooster crowing. Not wanting to wake the others, I gathered my reading material and journal, then tiptoed to my sister's family room. Sitting in the recliner with my feet up, I contemplated the plan that had been percolating through this month-long writing challenge I'd accepted. I finished writing my three pages, read a reflective reading and spent the rest of the time, deep in thought.

Staring out the window, I was struck by the beauty surrounding my sister and brother-in-law's home. The natural beauty was calm and serene, with its many majestic oak trees lining the gentle, rolling hill leading to the quiet river below. My sister's love of gardening is evident everywhere you look; she says digging in the dirt is therapy for her. The gardens and living spaces she creates are therapeutic for me. I think I could live in their gazebo. A curving walkway, bordered by rosebushes and flowers of all kinds, leads to the door of their screened gazebo.

In Minnesota, believe me when I say that screen offers a serenity all its own! In any case, between my meditations and her peaceful retreat, my direction was clear. But it seems like a mountain right now. What am I saying? It seems like an entire mountain range! And the task looks so big that I don't even know where to start.

Once again, the power of three stepped in, as I worked through the problem in writing. Then it was reiterated in my reading, and again when I remembered this story. I've told stories from this safety training before. This one is really motivating to me and I hope it is to you, too.

This was the video that concluded the training and it opened with a picture of a stark, barren mountain. Then an older woman, started telling a story about a remote, unfriendly village on the side of a mountain. The mountain winters were harsh and kept people inside. As a result, they didn't spend time together or develop friendships or relationships, outside their immediate families. The mountainside was bleak and barren even in the best seasons of the year. Children were warned to not go to the mountain, but inevitably they did.

While they were there, they met up with an old woman who lived on the mountain; she would often be bent over, digging a little hole and then dropping a little something in it. The braver children spoke with the old woman and asked her what she was doing. She always told them the same thing, "I'm changing the face of the mountain."

The children grew and most of them moved to the city. After several years one of those children, now grown, returned to the mountain to show her family the harsh mountain where she'd grown up. But she didn't recognize her mountain.

"The mountainside was ablaze with all colors of beautiful flowers, swaying in the breeze. Bushes and young trees provided shade to the many children and adults gathered along the base of the mountain.

She saw a completely different sight from the one she remembered from her childhood. People were talking with each other and laughing and playing games. Families and neighbors picnicked together. The woman who had returned, stopped one of the villagers to ask, 'How did all of this come about? What happened to the bleak and barren mountainside of my childhood?'

The villager replied, 'What you see now is because of the old woman who lived on

this mountain a long time ago. She went out every day, planting seeds, believing all the while the results would bear fruit."

The woman recalled the image of the old and bent woman from her childhood. At last she understood the meaning of those words the old woman spoke. 'I am changing the face of the mountain.'"

Do you see a mountain whose face needs changing? I do. A wise friend gave me some advice, which I have paraphrased and adapted a bit to fit my circumstances.

You are here and alive in this very moment. So, what are those dreams you're busy dreaming, while the clock keeps ticking? What are those goals you're afraid to go after? What are the seeds that you need to plant and nourish?

Now is not the time to be on the fence, now is the time to leap. Today is the day for big beginnings and change. We can't wait for the perfect anything, perfect doesn't exist but progress does. Starting. Doing just one thing. Just one thing. Plant the seeds and expect that they will grow.

If I've learned anything in this journey, it's this: someday starts now, progress trumps perfection, and done is better than perfect. Life isn't promised to any one, our days are a gift. Plant those seeds and through the power of one, you might just change the face of that mountain.

Wise words. I don't know about you, but I'm off to change the face of my mountain.

So, what is your story? Please let us know about the stories that help us see the good in the people, places and things around us.

Stop in to share your stories with us, give us a call at 947-2417 or e-mail us at eyesthatseethegoodinthings@gmail.com. Or send a letter to Eyes That See the Good in Things, c/o Allison Lindgren, The Transcript, 6 8th St N., New Rockford, ND 58356.