

***“However vast the darkness, we must supply our own light.”***

- **Stanley Kubrick**

This quote is perfect. We are living in very dark times and as if on cue, we had a solar eclipse. The small town in Illinois where I grew up was one of the places in the path of totality. A good friend, who took a road trip to a place of totality, told me it was “absolutely amazing.” My home in Virginia didn’t get the full effect, but did experience a good-sized partial one. I didn’t have the glasses to see it for myself, but I did take a picture of the sun and was surprised to see a cross. It was as if God was sending a message to keep the faith and be hopeful. It got me thinking about where we are and how now more than ever, our choices are so important. I talk a lot about choosing happiness, courage and wellness. How we feel and what we do are truly up to us. That’s why I’m sure you’ll find it surprising that sometimes, even I need to be reminded that the choice is mine. It’s much too easy to get caught up in the negativity and darkness all around us, so it’s a good time to be reminded that we are in control of our own light. Unfortunately, with each passing day, I see a country headed in the wrong direction, constitutional rights being taken and a government forcing people to do things they don’t want to do. Darkness and evil are all around us and I’m completely convinced that we’re living through a battle between good and evil. To say it’s discouraging would be an understatement, but I came across some advice that will hopefully help lift the dark clouds trying to take away our light: *“Believe in the sun, even when it’s not shining. Believe in love, even when you’re alone. Believe in God, even when he’s silent.”* I’d call that faith, which is believing in something when common sense tells us otherwise. We can’t sit back and do nothing any more. We can’t let other people fight the battles raging all around us. Find the courage to stand up for those things in which you believe because if you don’t, the impending darkness could become permanent.

### **Thoughts for Spring**



Spring has finally sprung after what was a very long winter. Thirty-degree temperatures in April are just more proof that global warming, I mean climate change, is a hoax. This is definitely the time of year in which there are no good excuses for not getting outside and doing something, anything. Sunshine is good for the soul and the Vitamin D3 we get from the sun is great for the immune system. I decided to take a break from using food as medicine and to write about positive things we can do for ourselves with the change of seasons. Here are a few ideas to help you have a happier and healthier spring.

**Plant a Garden.** I think we all know our food supply is toxic. Between the pesticides sprayed on our fruits and vegetables to keep the insects away or the growth hormones and antibiotics injected into animals, it’s no wonder people are sick. Gardening can be overwhelming, so it’s ok to start small. I have a black thumb and kill practically everything I try to grow, but I’ve had some luck with basil. What a great herb with so many uses! I just put some into a large plantar and am anxiously awaiting signs of life. Growing your own food certainly seems to be a “must-do” during these turbulent times. Start small and increase from there.

**Go for a Walk.** For me, that advice will likely be a hike, though I do enjoy a walk around my neighborhood. You don’t have to be crazy like me and hike 12-15 miles to get the benefits of exercise, the fresh air and the sunshine. Get out and explore your own neighborhood. Take a drive to a town you’ve never been and get to know the shops and restaurants. They key is to get at least 30 minutes of exercise a day. It doesn’t even have to be all at once. Do three 10-minute sessions or two 15-minute ones. Not only will it clear your mind, but it will soothe your soul while helping your immune system get stronger.

**Look at the Stars.** I’m blessed to live in a place with zero light pollution, so I just go out on my deck to see them. It’s humbling to see their vastness and beauty and it’s a great reminder of how small we really are in the grand scheme of life. For some reason, looking at the stars fills me with a similar inner peace I get from listening to water and being in nature. Doing simple things like this can have a big impact on your mindset.

**Phone a Friend.** During the winter when it's cold and gloomy, it's easy to lose touch with good friends. It's so much simpler to just hibernate in your house and as I like to call it, "hermitize" yourself. Now that the weather is improving, pick up the phone, catch up with old friends and make a plan to connect. Grab a cup of coffee, a glass of wine or pick a fun place for lunch or dinner. You know someone is truly your friend when you make that call after time has passed and can pick up right where you left off, even if you haven't seen each other or spoken in a while. I'm blessed to have a handful of friends that fall into this category. I'm sure you have some too. Spring is a perfect time to break out of your solitude and reconnect with special people.

**Learn Something New.** It's easy to get in a rut and continue to do what you've always done. Spring is a good time to tackle a new challenge. Perhaps you've always wanted to learn how to play the piano, learn a new language or even how to crochet a blanket. The reality is, we're not as busy as we think we are, so take a few minutes out of every day and dedicate it to something other than scrolling through social media or watching TV. I bet you can find 30 minutes each day to dedicate to something you've always wanted to do. Right now would be the perfect moment to start.

**Take a Break from your Phone.** Most of us have unfortunately become a slave to our phone and probably don't realize how much time we spend on it. I'm sure you're aware you can check your daily average daily screen time, and the results probably aren't pretty and will likely be surprising. Go into "Settings" (on the iPhone) to find your screen time number. I've been working on reducing mine, which is down to an average of less than 3 hours. Honestly, I really don't know how the number is that high, but it's definitely better than it was. You'll find some days are better than others. Once we get away from our phones, it will give us much more time to do other things, like learning something new. We certainly won't have the time to try something new if our face is constantly in a phone. Did you know that you can actually schedule "Downtime" on your phone so that only the apps you choose to allow and phone calls will be available during that time? You can also set a time limit for specific apps. That might be a good way to start weaning yourself from your phone. I'm sure for many of you, it won't be easy.

The bottom line is this: little things can make a big difference. Sometimes, it's the simplest of things that can give you the most peace and the most pleasure. Make an effort to get out of your daily rut and do something new that challenges and refreshes you. Personally, I need nature. What do you need? This spring, figure out what will put you in your happy and peaceful place and then do it.

Before I close, I want to touch on fear for just a moment. As I've previously written, fear causes us to make poor and rash decisions that can have long-term ramifications. The latest fear porn being thrown at us is the bird flu and how deadly it is. Apparently, pushing Disease X didn't work out so well, so it's time for a new narrative and a different tactic. Please tune it out because it's all just noise to distract you. Continue to work on keeping your immune system strong and if you do get sick, make wise choices on how to get well. Please don't get caught up in this latest nonsense and if you need help navigating through it, please reach out to me.

Have an exceptional, peaceful and exciting month!