

***"Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but only empties today of its strength."***  
- **Charles Spurgeon**

This is a wonderful quote because it reminds us of how when we're anxious about something, it doesn't help to make the situation better nor does it change anything. As my dad would say, "Anxiety is a negative emotion and we can't let it control us". In my opinion, the opposite of anxiety is hope, which is what I want to focus on this month. Many of us, when we're going through a difficult time, lose hope and give up. So this month, I wanted to remind you that sometimes, hope is the only thing we have and what ultimately gets us through whatever struggles we're facing. If you need some help to get on that path, be sure to contact me.

Yours in health,



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### **The Amazing Power of Hope**



My closest friends know I had a pretty rough year. To quote one of my closest, when describing how I was doing to someone really important to me, she told him, "She's been misplaced, but is finding her way." She was right. As I rode my emotional roller coaster and before I was finally able to exit, I can honestly say that I never gave up hope. It's what ultimately saved me and brought me to where I am today. Hopefully, it can save you too.

There's so much negativity in our country right now. We can't turn on the television or open the newspaper without reading about the latest tragedy. It can be completely overwhelming and cause us to lose hope. I remember years ago, there was a show called "Good News", which only focused on positive stories that happened during the week. Sadly, the show is no longer on the air. So the question becomes, how do we remain hopeful when we're constantly told that essentially, the sky is falling?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines hope as: "to cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen or be true". I'm not particularly religious, but I found the definition of hope in the Bible to be quite interesting. As described in Scripture hope means: "A strong and confident expectation". I like that. What's your personal definition of hope? That's what's really important.

I truly believe that there's always a reason to have hope. Even in our darkest hours, hope is dangling out there, no matter how distant it may feel. I've learned that hope can be a healer that enables us to survive something that seems completely unsurvivable. It reminds me of Pandora. Remember her and her box? When it was opened, all kinds of negative emotions flew out of it. But after all the negatively was freed, sitting at the bottom of the box, just waiting to restore us, was hope. Hope tends to be a reassuring internal voice that can soothe us when we most need it. I think Nelson Mandela is

a perfect example of someone who had this internal voice. People like Kurt Cobain and Robin Williams are examples of people who seemingly had it all, but had lost the internal voice that could've possibly saved them. They took their own lives because they had, for whatever reason, lost hope.

I also believe that the healing properties of hope can be tremendous. Just take a look at studies where people who are sick are given a placebo, told that it will heal them and it does. "Mind over matter" is what my dad would say. The mind is truly a powerful tool and the positive energy generated from hope can truly transform you.

There's definitely a connection between hope and healing, which includes a positive attitude. Many of you are old enough to remember Norman Cousins. He had a rare connective-tissue disease called Ankylosing Spondylitis and was given a few months to live back in 1964. He was told he had a 1 in 500 chance of survival and was told to "get his affairs in order". But Mr. Cousins didn't believe it. He maintained hope that he'd survive and researched his options. He ended up doing three things that would be unusual today, but absolutely unheard of back then:

1. He fired his doctor and left the hospital to check into a hotel. He realized the over-medication he was getting in the hospital wouldn't be good for his health. He then found a doctor willing to work WITH him as opposed to insisting on being in charge and telling him what to do.
2. He began injections of massive doses of vitamin C, which today, have been shown to cure many diseases, including cancer.
3. He got a movie projector and started watching funny movies. In spite of his pain, he laughed until his stomach hurt.

Did it work? Who knows? But he didn't die until November 30, 1990, 26 YEARS after he was first diagnosed. Through it all, he had hope he'd beat the terrible odds he'd been given and survive....and he did.

This tells me that hope is really about having a sense of meaning for your life. It's also about not only having choices to make, but making good ones. It's about looking thoughtfully at what you really want and going after it. Any relationship or goals we have are ultimately based on hope. It's no wonder they often become challenges. Therefore, we need to strike some type of balance between a hope that's a belief in ourselves and one that's a belief in someone else. We can only control ourselves, so we must determine if OUR hopes ultimately serve OUR best interests.

The best way to assess your hopes is to figure out whether they lead you away from or toward your ultimate goals. If they're leading you toward them, they're positive. If they're leading you away, they're negative. Listen to your gut. It often knows better than you. But at the end of the day, when you think all hope is lost, it's often all that remains.

We certainly can't live on just hope, but we can't live without it either. When we're feeling lost and alone, it's important to remember that there's always someone in a less desirable place than you. And maybe, just maybe, you're actually the bright light in someone else's darkness when they've given up on their own hopes and dreams. That's what I learned several months ago. I was actually someone's light and had no clue I was guiding him through his darkness. That could be you at this very moment and you don't even know it. When you've lost hope, you've lost just about everything. So let hope be your strength and your guiding light and you'll be amazed by what can happen.

Be hopeful and have a wonderful month.