

Life Notes

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Celebration—The Pilgrims Had It Right!

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November brings our thoughts to Thanksgiving and the story of the pilgrims celebrating their survival in the new land. That first Thanksgiving celebration was much like the celebration life coaches encourage of their clients to fully honor wherever they are in their lives. Celebration allows a person to appreciate his/her own successes and failures, wins and disappointments. That first Thanksgiving was likely filled with all of those. The pilgrims had suffered failures and disappointments. They had lost friends and family members. They had given up whatever comforts England had offered to eke out a meager existence in a rugged, unsettled, hostile place. They had put up with discomfort, loss, pain, agony, exhaustion, starvation, illness and more. They were on a life journey. They were in the process of making a better existence for themselves. Celebration for them brought attention and acknowledgement to their personal journeys. Life coaches encourage their clients to this same kind of celebration. It recognizes where one has been, how far he/she has come and also gives him/her opportunity to look ahead to new possibilities.

We often forget to celebrate failures, disappointments and losses and only plan feasts and parties around the successes in our lives like graduations, promotions, and retirements. What would happen if we took time to also celebrate challenges and disappointments? What would a celebration look like of the rejection letter... pink slip... failed exam... failure to make the team... or loss of the game? All of those losses have been part of my life's journey. I made it through all of them. As bad as I may have felt in the moment, there was a celebration in each event. I could celebrate the rejection letter because it really wasn't the right job for me and something better would come along. The pink slip: I was ready to move on when my organization had financial problems and had to cut the payroll. Hurray! It freed me to do something I was more excited about and relieved me from the stress of the old position! The exam: I studied harder. I practiced more. I learned more and passed on the second try. My daughter didn't make the team: she was a better singer and actor than an athlete so we celebrated as a family that she would have time to invest in music and theater. The lost game: we all learn from our losses and come back stronger to try again against a new opponent, on a different field.

All of these are reasons to celebrate! They acknowledge where we are in our life's journey. They catch us in the moment and make us think. Celebrating our disappointments nudges us to assess where we are and inspires us to look ahead. To celebrate challenges is as valuable to our life journey as a graduation party or a promotion dinner. Those make us feel good and give us opportunity to share our joy outwardly with

graduation party or a promotion dinner. Those make us feel good and give us opportunity to share our joy outwardly with special people in our lives. They are meaningful. The celebrations of our challenges and failures are also meaningful.

Celebration is a valuable tool. Each of us can define celebration so it is meaningful to us and appropriate to the situation we are celebrating. Celebration isn't always a party. It might be a nice meal or a night out in good company. It might be treating oneself to a small gift or quiet time alone. It could be indulging in good chocolate or time with a friend. Celebration is whatever you choose to bring your full attention to where you are in the flow of your life. Celebration gives you time to honor your success or failure, to acknowledge you and your journey. Be intentional about celebrating you. The pilgrims were and look what happened!

As always, it's nice chatting with you. If you'd like to learn more about life coaching or discovering a more compelling life, visit my website at www.lifesongcoaching.com. or give me a call at 218-327-2691. We'll make a plan!



Life Notes is a monthly submission to the Floodwood, MN, **Northern Independent**, and a newsletter to Life Song Coaching clients & potential clients. Contact Bonnie Henriksen, CPCC, at the above web address to request future copies of *Life Notes*.