



Take the time to reflect and appreciate your abundance - by Mark Schnurman

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As life and work move at a rapid pace we don't always take the time to reflect and appreciate our abundance. But whether we like it or not, life will at some time offer a rough dose of perspective.

I recently lost a friend and neighbor, Hart, only 49 years old, my age. Simultaneously, my father has been in the hospital for over a week. Third, because things come in threes, I had surgery to eliminate pain in my foot and was largely immobilized for the last two weeks.

Yesterday, was Yom Kippur—the holiest day of the Jewish calendar and a fast day. Instead of the usual going to temple, yesterday was unique for me in two ways.

First, Hart's family held a celebration of life event in his honor that my family attended. There were some tears and a lot of laughs as we chose to honor his life and not mourn his death.

Next, instead of the usual breaking of the fast at my house, my family chose to break the fast at the hospital with my Dad and focus on being together with him and not the venue.

Finally, two days ago I was promoted to a walking boot. I am giddy to be in a walking boot and not focused on my limited mobility.

So with that as a backdrop I want to express my appreciation for the gifts I have in my life and how fortunate I am. I was lucky to know my friend Hart, even if for too short a time. I am lucky to have my father in my life. Even though Parkinson's has diminished him, I love being with him. Finally, I am lucky to have access to medical care.

So yeah, things are not always easy but that is okay. My cup is always going to be half-full. Work and life have cycles with natural ebbs and flows. I believe the key to success and happiness is simply about what you focus on. I choose to focus on the positive.

There is an old Mayan story about a grandfather speaking to his grandson about a continuous battle inside people. The grandfather said, 'My son, the battle is between two wolves. One wolf is evil and full of anger, jealousy, frustration, disappointment, regret, greed, arrogance and hubris. The other wolf is good. It is full of kindness, equanimity, perspective, hope, patience, empathy and generosity.

The grandson asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins the battle?"

The grandfather responded simply, "The one you feed."

And so it is with all of us. There are always things to be upset, disappointed and frustrated about. There always will be. But why let these sap your energy? Why have a pity party?

Instead focus on all the good in your lives. If you are reading this you are almost certainly employed in commercial real estate. Our industry has up and down cycles but few other careers provide the opportunities ours does.

One of the challenges brokers have is that ours is a "What have you done for me lately?" world. Even if you just closed a big deal you must ask yourself, "Where is my next deal coming from?" Don't fret it. Instead of focusing on fear, focus on actions.

Every day I focus on what I can control. I am confident that if I focus on my key activities, every day the results will come. They always have in the past and I know they will in the future.

The last month has been difficult for me personally but it also held a lot of positives so long as I looked for them.

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