

By Lori Pankonin

Co-Publisher

I recently read about a disabled man who always had a positive attitude despite all his pain and health issues. He said when he wakes up in the morning, he reminds himself that he has two choices, to make the best of a situation or to dwell on the negative.

He found that drowning in sadness or anger certainly isn't going to make it better. But searching for anything positive just might provide a shining spark in the day. How inspiring.

I was at a graduation reception when I talked to a gal whose sister, like me, had three grandchildren. Her grandson was a year younger than mine but the other two were very similar in age. Tragically, the three children were in a car accident with their mother. The oldest and youngest were killed.

Oh my gosh! I couldn't begin to imagine the devastation! The Easter picture of the boy holding his infant sister just a month earlier hit too close to home. Suddenly what I thought were problems in life really were extremely insignificant.

The pain was so widespread for those who knew them, and even for those like me who didn't. My heart ached for all the relatives and friends but my mind kept shifting to the young father whose life turned upside down so quickly.

His precious five-year-old son and five-month-old daughter were gone. He sat by his

unconscious wife's side in the hospital waiting for any sign of hope while family helped care for his three-year-old who lived.

I can't think of much worse blows to a person's life. Yet I read an article that expressed how appreciative he was of all the help and concern. He focused on the miracle that they could save six other children by donating the organs of his precious children.

Bless his heart!! He shifted his extreme pain to others who could benefit. There's no way that could remove the pain but finding anything positive was certainly a better direction for a moment of comfort.

Stories are endless of people who face sudden trauma in life. It happens every day.

But stories are also endless of how attitude can make the difference.

My father was a prime example of focusing on the positive throughout his lifetime. He didn't always see eye to eye with people and faced confrontation, but he attempted to see the other side and never held grudges.

When we got in trouble, punishment was handled but then he moved on. Praise and positive support were more constant and the direction he preferred.

He faced melanoma skin cancers for 20 years, which left him with some visible scars that he never let phase him. Cancer eventually moved to his kidney and eventually to his spine but he'd come out of surgeries raring and ready to run. Even when a spinal tumor robbed him of the use of his legs, he never complained and he praised my mother for helping him maneuver and continue to go.

Perseverance found him walking again although at a much slower pace and for limited distance. Commitment to therapy and medical attempts found him always hopeful for progress and

regained strength.

Even when death approached, he was content and positive, confident that heaven awaited him because of his belief in Jesus Christ.

I tend to be a worrier and am often times reminded that it doesn't pay to focus on the negative of what could happen. You waste the moment, and more often than not, the topic of worry never happens.

My daughter once sent me a list of 16 positive characteristics that she sees in me when she knew that I was down. Along with it was a significant message, "Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up." Proverbs 12:25.

Remember, every cloud has a silver lining. Look for it!