

Our New Year's Message: 2022

Moving Toward the Light

Yogi Berra was quoted as saying, "It's déjà vu all over again." Related to Yogi's statement is the Yiddish expression, "Man plans, and God laughs."

Finishing our second year of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused many people to wring their hands and say how terrible things are. They bemoan the stress endured, lack of contact with others and upending of their daily lives.

Centuries ago, William Shakespeare was forced to leave London for seven years during an outbreak of the bubonic plague. When the theaters were shuttered, he was largely unable to practice his trade of putting on plays. One of the things he did during that time was to write some epic poetry. He was not known for his poetic talent. But to keep body and soul together, he employed his gift for writing in a different mode.

Returning to the Yiddish expression above, if a plan does not work, then a new plan is necessary. None of us can see around corners. But when we make a sincere effort at plotting our way forward, we can often be successful.

A significant differentiator between success, mediocrity and perhaps outright failure is not being captured by yesterday's solutions. That sounds simple, given our relative exhaustion with the COVID-19 era. Our responsibility is to move toward other actions, strategies, solutions and opportunities; to move toward the light.

You are only captured by yesterday to the extent that you accept it. It is less about confidence than it is about taking action, trying new things and being open to new possibilities. Of course, that is easier said than done. One of the definitions of stress is change, but per an old Chinese adage, it also translates into opportunity.

A person does not have to leave their present job to find new success. It is as much about looking around your current venue, experimenting with different ideas, trying out new ways of doing things and adjusting them as you go. It is about dealing with your anxieties and turning that emotional energy into fuel for action. Frankly, God should laugh if you think that only one plan works for an entire career or lifetime!

My wish for you is to use the emotions born of hard times as fuel for action, adjust your plans as you go and move toward the light of a successful new year.

George E. Gercken