



Canadian Holistic Management News & Views

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: to provide knowledge, motivation & networking opportunities for Holistic Managers

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Healthy People, Healthy Land, Healthy Profits

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Convention Update

The final results are in for our Lloyd convention. The good news is that we ended up with an \$11,000 reserve. This money will go towards next year's convention.

The auction raised about \$5,500 plus we had cash donations of about \$1,250. The balance of the \$11,000 was from income minus expenses.

Sincere heartfelt thanks to everyone.

Your support makes it happen.

The 2012 convention is set for Yorkton, Sask.

The dates are Tues & Wed. February 21st & 22nd.

Mark your calendars!!!!

Making Decisions in Difficult Circumstances

From time to time we are all faced with making decisions in difficult circumstances. The more important the decision & the more difficult the circumstance the more vital it is that we make a wise decision. The best way to make a wise decision is to have some process to follow. The best time to develop a process is when things are going well. When we have thought things thru before hand we are more likely to follow our process & to make a wise decision instead of a rash decision in the heat of the moment.

I have followed the flooding & excess rain situation in Manitoba & eastern Sask. quite closely. I have concern & empathy for all of you involved. If you live in this area you may well be saying "who does he think he is; he can't understand how difficult it is." If this is your reaction I agree with you completely. Please continue to read. It may be that since I am not personally involved I may be able to offer some helpful ideas.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Revisit your goal. Look closely at your values & the things that really matter to you. Usually you will find that they don't cost money & can be preserved no matter what circumstances you face.
2. Preserve your mental & physical health.
3. Preserve your marriage & family.

4. Don't ask why? There is no answer to that question. Instead ask yourself what am I going to do? How can I make the best of this situation? What positive action can I take? Make a decision on how best to proceed. Don't be paralyzed. Remember that no decision is also a decision & likely not the best one. In life it isn't what happens to us but how we choose to respond that determines our success & happiness.
5. Develop a support group. Find people facing a similar situation. Band together, not to complain but to find positive solutions.
6. Use the 7 testing questions to help you make wise decisions.
7. Remember that this too will pass away. "It is always darkest before the dawn."
8. Look at all the options.

Remember that life's trials are not meant to break us but to make us.

I want to share a couple of personal experiences dealing with flooding. The first involves my Dad. Our ranch is on the flood plain of the Beaver River, in the 1950's flooding was a major concern. In 1956 we experienced a spring, a summer & a fall flood. Times were difficult. I clearly remember my Dad thinking about relocating. In the end he didn't but it was a possibility. Instead of relocating Dad bought some land that didn't flood. He also was instrumental in forming the Beaver River Ranchers Association. This gave our local producers more power to lobby & was a useful tool. Dad was also able to make a deal with Ducks Unlimited. This resulted in extensive diking on our land & flood control gates to help us benefit from water in the spring & not be flooded at other times. The DU deal has benefited our ranch for over 45 years now. The benefits will continue into the future.

The second incident occurred in July 1997. We were being flooded & decided to move some of our cattle through the flood plain to higher ground & grass. The move was a mini disaster. When darkness fell we had cow calf pairs spread over 2 miles of land. They were all in the flood plain. In the flood of 1974 the water had risen 5 feet in one night. I knew this was a remote possibility in 1997. I clearly remember lying in bed & thinking. What would happen if the dike broke before we could finish moving the cattle? The answer was clear. They would all drown. I needed to sleep but couldn't until I reached some degree of peace. I thought about it & decided that if all the cattle drown we would be OK. We would have a much lower net worth but we could continue to ranch & have a great life. This allowed me to get some much needed rest. Of course the dike didn't break & the cattle didn't drown but that experience has stayed with me ever since that day. It has helped me have a good perspective about life & what really matters.

We know that even with our dike system we will be flooded from time to time. We have about 1000 acres of land that doesn't flood. Most of this land is very sandy & light. The traditional production has been very poor. Part of our flood strategy has been to improve that land. We are doing this my planned grazing & bale grazing. The next time it floods we will have 1000 acres that isn't flooded just like we have always had but we will have production from that land that will look like 5000 acres. This is an on going project. We plan to build a road this year that will allow us to access more of this land & continue on our flood insurance plan.

I realize I haven't told you anything you don't already know. My hope is that this gentle reminder may help you refocus, use the knowledge you have & move ahead in a positive manner. If talking would help you please feel free to phone me.

I want to end with a chapter from the book UH- OH by Robert Fulghum. Robert is a young man & is working on a resort in California. Here is Robert's story.

"One week the employees had been served the same thing for lunch every single day: two wieners, a mound of sauerkraut & stale rolls. To compound insult with injury, the cost of the meals was deducted from our check. I was outraged.

On Friday night of that awful week, I was at my desk job around 11:00 pm, & the night auditor had just come on duty. I went into the kitchen to get a bite to eat & saw notes to the chef to the effect that wieners & sauerkraut are on the employee menu for two more days.

That tears it. I quit! For lack of any better audience I unload on the night auditor, Sigmund Wollman. I declared that I have had it up to here; that I am going to get a plate of wieners & sauerkraut & go & wake up the owner & throw it on him. I am sick & tired of this crap & insulted & nobody is going to make me eat wieners & sauerkraut for a whole week & make me pay for it & who does he think he is anyway & how can life be sustained on wieners & sauerkraut & this is un-American & I don't like wieners & sauerkraut enough to eat it one day for God's sake & the whole hotel stinks anyhow & the horses are all nags & the guests are all idiots & I'm packing my bags & heading for Montana where they never even heard of wieners & sauerkraut & wouldn't feed that stuff to pigs. Something like that. I'm still mad about it.

I raved on this way for 20 minutes & needn't repeat it all here. You get the drift. My monologue was delivered at the top of my lungs, punctuated by blows on the front desk with a fly swatter, the kicking of chairs & much profanity. A call to arms, freedom, unions, uprisings & the breaking of chains for the working masses.

As I pitched my fit, Sigmund Wollman, the night auditor sat quietly on his stool, smoking a cigarette, watching me with sorrowful eyes. Put a blood-hound in a suit & tie & you have Sigmund Wollman. He's got good reason to look sorrowful. Survivor of Auschwitz. Three years. German Jew. Thin coughed a lot. He liked being alone at the night job - gave him intellectual space, gave him peace & quiet & even more he could go into the kitchen & have a snack whenever he wanted to - all the wieners & sauerkraut he wanted. To him a feast. More than that, there's nobody around at night to tell him what to do. In Auschwitz he dreamed of such a time. The only person he sees at work is me, the nightly disturber of his dream. Our shifts overlap for an hour. And here I am again. A one-man war party at full cry.

"Fulchum, are you finished?" "No why?"

"Lissen, Fulchum, Lissen me, lissen me. You know what's wrong with you? It's not wieners & kraut, it's not the boss & it's not the chef & it's not this job."

"So what's wrong with me?"

"Fulchum, you think you know everything but you don't know the difference between an inconvenience & a problem.

"If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is on fire - then you got a problem. Everything else is inconvenience. Life is inconvenient. Life is lumpy.

"Learn to separate the inconveniences from the real problems. You will live longer. And will not annoy people like me so much, good night."

In a gesture combining dismissal & blessing he waved me off to bed.

Seldom in my life have I been hit between the eyes with truth so hard. Years later I heard a Japanese Zen Buddhist priest describe what the moment of enlightenment was like & I knew exactly what he meant. There in that late-night darkness of the Feather River Inn, Sigmund Wollman simultaneously kicked my butt & opened a window in my mind.

For 30 years now , in times of stress & strain when something has me backed up against the wall & I'm ready to do something really stupid with my anger, a sorrowful face appears in my mind & asks: "Fulchum. Problem or inconvenience?"

I think of this as the Wollman Test of Reality. Life is lumpy. And a lump in the oatmeal, a lump in the throat & a lump in the breast are not the same. One should learn the difference. Good night Sig."

PAY IT FORWARD CONSULTING

I am offering free consulting to individuals or management clubs.

There is no charge for this service.

Please contact me if you are interested. Don

CLASSIFIED ADS

We have decided to run classified ads as part of our newsletter. The cost is \$50 plus GST (\$52.50). The ads will run in 2 newsletters. Please send your ad to Don Campbell. Please make your cheque payable to B - C Ranch Inc. Box 817 Meadow Lake, Sask. S9X 1Y6. All the money from the ads will be donated to our annual convention.

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