

## **Life Is About Getting Up!**

**Dawn Brown**

What seems like a fall may be life's way of preparing us for a leap in growth. Stumbling and falling remind us to take care of ourselves. Often we fail to recognize that we are change agents. We have the ability to create an environment that makes growth possible in *our families* and *our workplace*. However, if we want to be effective in helping others, we can only give what we've first given to ourselves. It is not easy to "practice what we preach," but the shift in perception starts within us.

### **Why Shift Our Perception?**

Shifting our perceptions allows us to:

- increase our ability to handle uncertainty;
- strengthen our recovery from life's spills and falls;
- enhance morale in the workplace;
- expand our ability to recognize and manage stress;
- learn from our relationships with ourselves and others;
- move through change productively.

### **What Can We Do?**

You have *many* tools in your perception shift "starter kit". Consider the following five:

1. **Take care of yourself.** By taking care of ourselves emotionally and physically, we build up our emotional immune system; that, in turn, strengthens our physical immune system.
2. **Get help.** Help can take many forms, for example, talking to friends and colleagues, taking a course, attending a lecture or workshop, seeing a therapist, or reading a book.
3. **Monitor your thoughts.** We think approximately 50,000 thoughts per day. More than 80 percent of our self-talk about ourselves is negative. And we're not even aware of it! Therefore monitor your thoughts. It is hard to change them if we're not aware of them.
4. **Laugh.** No one escapes the ups and downs in life. We just take them so seriously! How can you make laughter part of your daily life? Many of the happenings that drive us crazy at work or home can also cause us to laugh—or at least smile—if we're able to shift how we look at them.
5. **Forgive.** This is the choice to release grievances and to not tie up our energies in making anyone, including us, wrong. Shifting our perception is about letting go of the feelings of guilt, judgement and resentment that pile up over time and drain us.

The Holiday Season is an excellent opportunity for our personal growth. It is easy to neglect ourselves as we get into the seasonal rush and it is easy to slip into sad thoughts as we notice what is not present in our lives. Many feelings can surface that seem to drain us of our sense of well-being. Now is the time to dip into our starter kit for tools to help us appreciate and celebrate our progress.

Remember, our only point of power is with us. *While we can't change the people and events in our lives, we can choose to change our perceptions of them.*

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