

“Problems” are Often Just Points of View!

Among the sayings I often difficulties remembering is the one that tells me, “Problems are simply opportunities in disguise!”

Okay, I can live with that—sometimes—but when I leave the house in morning for an important appointment and my car greets me with a flat tire I have a tendency to wish I didn't have that opportunity to practice patience. I have gotten to the point that I prefer the statement, “There's a reason for everything!” Not much in the line of hope, but it makes it easier to handle reality. Perhaps the reason was that I had to miss the appointment so someone else could get the contract or else I would have suddenly have been thrust into a higher tax bracket. See how lucky I am?

And then there is the time when we (at the newspaper) are head-on into a deadline and there are five things that need to be done at the office by Noon, it is already 11:15, and every light between me and the office turns red. That quickly becomes a lesson in living safely in an agitated and intensely frustrated frame of mind (but I learned how to entertain my fellow motorists by banging my head against the steering wheel).

Why can't I ever find myself with the problem of having to spend a million dollars in less than a month, or having to take the whole family to Hawaii, all expenses paid, for six weeks?

There was the time I standing on a ladder and putting a roof on my patio and the ladder decided to sink, one-sidedly, leaving me with a choice of learning to fly or simply crash, screaming, at the edge of the patio slab. I decided it was a perfect time to demonstrate that man, beyond a doubt, could fly—couldn't land worth a darn but definitely could fly! The landing provided emphasis to the latter part of the lesson with fifteen cracks in seven of my ribs.

But I do remember there were times when problems led to innovative solutions. Using duct tape and electrician's tape to mend a radiator hose long enough to drive to a repair shop instead of calling a tow truck—that happened before I was a member of AAA. I remembered learning how to change the front brakes on my station wagon dressed completely in white and not getting a speck of dirt above my wrists. Back in 1965, we (me, my wife, two very young children, and our dog) drove to Wisconsin and back on a credit card (gas and oil only) and \$75.00.

We also found out how to get through six meals on cheese, crackers, and milk. Then, when we decided to spend our last night off the road and stopped by a motel in Heber City, Utah, we learned a little bit of money and a lot of honesty can really go a long way. The managers rented us a room for \$5.00 and then invited us to dinner and breakfast before we left. I learned, later, that they also gave each of the children \$2.50 so we could have lunch wherever we stopped. That was when I learned that there truly is such a thing a living with charitable love.

I have learned an important lesson, not necessarily because I wanted to learn it, that when you need a job, and can't find a job, the answer is to create a job. That also taught me that when you look for work, instead of pure charity, people can usually find something for you to do. It may not have been something I would want to do for a career, but minimum wage carries an hourly bonus of self respect.

Looking back over my life, I have come to realize that problems, indeed, can be opportunities and that everything does happen for a reason—which can often remain hidden for decades.

Someone Has To Be In Charge!

By Betty Muegge

The importance of an Advanced Health Care Directive (AHCD) cannot be understated. The AHCD is the document that appoints someone to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to make them yourself. It also enables you to make a choice as to whether or not you want to be sustained on life support if it appears that there is no real hope of recovery.

We all know the need for such a document but frequently resist getting it prepared. None of us wants to believe in the necessity for such a document.

The point is to bring the practical side of the AHCD to your attention. What if you get a call in the early evening telling you that a beloved relative has fallen, been taken to the emergency room and is not expected to live. First, you try to deal with the disbelief that the situation is as it is, and the

thoughts that there must be some mistake. You know that you must get to the emergency room to see for yourself. Then you realize that you are the one that is designated as the one to make life and death decisions.

The next step is to stop and locate the paperwork (the AHCD) before going to the hospital. The hospital personnel cannot give you much information if you are not authorized to receive it.

When you arrive at the emergency room, there are already relatives and friends present. You realize from the beginning that the initial prognosis is correct. The beloved relative is on a respirator and is being give medication to boost a falling blood pressure. Her heart had been stopped for at least 20 minutes before reaching the hospital. The outlook for survival is remote.

You become aware that the decision whether or not

to withdraw life-support will be in your hands alone. You are aware of the wishes of the relative, but you want to be as certain as you can that there is no hope for survival. It is a huge responsibility. Zillions of thoughts go through your head.

The medical staff is very informative and caring. Because the AHCD is at hand, the wishes of the beloved relative were fulfilled in a kind, painless and caring manner.

**Do you have your 3 most basic estate planning documents in place: Durable Power of Attorney for Management of Personal and Financial Affairs, Advance Health Care Directive and a Will?

Betty Muegge, Attorney at Law, is the author of Who Gets My Pets, The Handy Estate Planning Guide. For a free consultation and a free copy of her book, call her at 916-782-4048.

An Appeal for Community “Angels”

On a warm summer day, Kurtis Gunn, a warm hearted 16 year old at Bella Vista High School, attended his brother's baseball practice to assist the coach and the baseball team. He collapsed and had a seizure. After being rushed to the hospital, it was soon discovered that a large mass had formed in his brain. He was immediately hospitalized and after further tests, it was confirmed that it was indeed a brain tumor.

The surgery, lasting more than 8½ hours, took place at Kaiser Oakland Hospital. Afterwards, the doctor reported that the entire tumor was removed but the sample biopsy taken was inconclusive. Therefore, more samples are being tested and the family will wait to find out if chemo/radiation treatment may be required.

Meanwhile, the family had to make adjustments in their lives to care for their son which included his father closing his business. We are looking for angels in the community to come help this young man and his family during this trying time.

What can you do to help? We will be holding a car wash at two locations on Sunday, September 28th from 10-2. You can find us at Discovery Learning Center 4444 San Juan Ave (on San Juan, between Sunset and Fair Oaks Blvd Juan) or at the Round Table Pizza on the corner of Hazel and Madison Ave. If you would like to simply make a donation to the family we have set up an account through PayPal. Visit cause4Kurtis@sbcglobal.net. Where we will e-mail a link back to you.

Thank you for your generosity!



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