

IS THE SKY REALLY FALLING?

By: Robert S. Sher

“The sky is falling. The sky is falling.” Do you remember this quote from the old fable Chicken Little? The chicken frantically shouted these very words after an acorn hit her in the head. Scared of the approaching disaster, she convinced her animal friends to escape to safety. The animals bought into the frenzy and were so frightened they joined Chicken Little in following Foxy Loxy who promised to lead them to help. Instead, Foxy Loxy ate them.

The sky did not fall; however, the animals, while accepting the mass hysteria as fact and listening to what they were told, did plan their own demise.

While the story is just a fable, it is a timely illustration of the dangers that come with predicting and promoting gloom and doom – something so many have done during these bad economic times. Keep it up and doom can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

With all of the bad threatening your livelihood, your business, your friends and your relatives, there is still plenty of good. You just have to find it. Be positive. In my coaching practice, I stress time and again the importance of exuding positive energy in everything you do. Don't fool yourself. Negative energy is draining and no one wants to be around a naysayer.

Take the positive challenge. To begin, make a concerted effort to focus on being upbeat and optimistic. Say one nice thing about life every day and say it to someone else. In doing so, you will eventually kiss goodbye all things resembling gloom and doom. A group of us took the challenge the other day while sitting in a dinner meeting. One gentleman suggested we go around the table and give everyone a chance to say something good about Detroit and about our lives. It sounded pretty good to me since I am a positive guy by nature.

When my turn came up, I told the group I was happy to have three sons and six grandchildren living right here just minutes from my house. My sons are each employed. No major revelations were revealed and talk focused mostly on family. One person had just secured a new contract.

I cannot emphasize enough how refreshing it was to spend a few hours over dinner in Detroit, a city hit extra hard by the recession, talking about our families, ideas and what's good about our city. I didn't hear any disparaging comments about Detroit or any complaints about business or the economy. It was both encouraging and constructive. Clearly, there was no sky falling that night.

While I do not see the world through rose-colored glasses, I firmly believe focusing on the good is always a better choice than obsessing about the bad. If you get knocked in

the head with an acorn, put some ice on your head. Save the acorn and consider planting it and launching an oak tree nursery. You can spend your time agonizing over what's not there anymore – or you can push ahead, doing what it takes to get a piece of what is there.

Go out and seek new opportunities. What's the risk? Failure? You only lose if you don't try something. If you try and fail, you win because you are in a better position to pick yourself up, start again and learn from the previous experience.

Even if the sky were falling, it would be out of your control. So you might as well stop worrying about it. Every roadblock, every problem and every challenge is a potential opportunity.

Do not be like the chicken or you might get eaten by a fox.

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