

## **The Art of Staying Positive**

**By: Robert S. Sher**

Someone once told me when things are bad, it never looks like they will be good and, when things are good, you never think it will be difficult.

These are tough times. With the looming threat of the recession, many of you might be finding it extremely difficult to be optimistic about your own futures.

Don't let the negative get you down. Don't whine. Don't complain. It won't result in anything good. The keys to being positive are survival, focus and persistence.

My son, Michael, who is in residential real estate, embodies a positive attitude. He used to say it was easy to sell a moderately-priced house. No one, not even Mike, would say that today but, somehow, Mike remains optimistic and he sold six houses in January. How does Mike stay upbeat in the face of adversity?

"I always believe the sun is going to rise the next day. Excuses are the barriers we create to accept our failures. It is harder today than it used to be to sell a house but still possible. People still have to buy and sell their homes and that is not changing."

Mike also networks a lot. Once a week he participates in a weekly business roundtable where he keeps up with business trends and gets acquainted with people in all types of businesses. You never know when one of them might need to sell a house.

Mike keeps up with trends and is always looking for news to stay ahead of the competition in the saturated market place. Now he is moving into a new area – short sales – in which he is helping sellers who are about to lose their homes negotiate with banks to avoid foreclosure.

Mike portrays confidence. When you are negative, you simply do not portray confidence to anyone. What message are you sending if you complain constantly to your spouse, friends or colleagues?

The old adage is true: Whether you think you can or can't, you are right, so you might as well take the high road and find a way to move forward. It is bad out there, and I know the economy has been slow to recover, but this is no time to feel sorry for yourself. Instead, recession-proof your finances and seek advice from a financial planner if you need help with it. Hate your job? Update your resume and send it out.

Feeling blue? Get counseling. Also, let's not underestimate the power of exercise. In addition to being good for you physically, it will make you feel better emotionally. Do what you can to think positive thoughts and keep those thoughts.

Some things, like corporate downsizing, restructuring, layoffs and buy outs, are out of your control but your attitude is yours to keep – and you should do what you can to keep it upbeat.

There used to be a very famous watering hole in downtown Detroit called The London Chop House. It had a sign behind the bar that said: "Nil Illegitimus Cardorundum".

Optimism is essential for survival and, ultimately, for success. What's more, optimism is achievable and is the perfect antidote to feelings of failure, insecurity, fear, defeatism and lethargy.

Now take some advice from author William Arthur Ward, who said, "The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change, the realist adjusts the sails."

*Robert Sher, CPA, is a Certified Executive Coach. Formerly CFO and partner for Schostak Brothers & Company, he now serves on the West Bloomfield Township Board of Trustees and is Treasurer of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Foundation. His Email address is: info@bobsher.com.*