

Please Pass The Perspective

By Kim Dannies

It is said that 'happiness is being attuned with what is so', but Americans tend to be more about the 'Go-Go-Go'. In a business culture whose mantra is bigger-better-more it is easy to lose a healthy perspective about what real satisfaction feels like. What did you accomplish this year? What worked? What did you learn? In what ways did you personally grow? What was painful for you? Did it create new opportunity or diminish your spirit? How did you cope with challenges? Did your physical and mental health sustain you? What are you most proud of? What made you feel satisfied? Did you mend a relationship or dispose of a toxic one? What would a new challenge look like? How do you measure it all? What values influence your evaluation? These are thinking questions: they put the focus on taking a moment to reflect upon and celebrate our accomplishments at every level. Sure, we all have lots of goals yet to be met, but why not savor a little perspective for the moment as we wind down 2006?

If the world's population were compressed into a village of 100 people, 1 out 100 would have a college education. 5 would be from North America and 18 would be white. 5 would control 32% of the world's wealth and they would all be Americans. 80 would live in substandard housing, 67 would not be able to read and 75 would not have electricity (or use it sparingly at night.) 50 would be malnourished and one dying of starvation; 33 would not have access to a water supply, 1 would have HIV. 2 would be near birth and 7 would have Internet access.

In a nutshell, if you have food in the fridge, clothing on your back, and a roof over your head, then you are one of the lucky 25 people in the village. If you have a bank account and money in your pocket, then you are one of 8 people in the village. If you are free to attend church, mosque or synagogue without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, war or death, then you are happier than 3 billion people in the world.

So, as you reflect on 2006, please do me a favor: season it with some perspective. Focus on the positives and gain energy from what went right. Do not make a list of New Year's Resolutions. Rather, spend some time with these questions and you will be amazed at what a little perspective can do for you and your plans for 2007.

What did you accomplish this year?

What worked?

What did you learn?

Continued...

In what ways did you personally grow?

What was painful for you?

Did it create new opportunity or diminish your spirit?

How did you cope with challenges?

Did your physical and mental health sustain you?

What are you most proud of?

What made you feel satisfied?

Did you mend a relationship or dispose of a toxic one?

What would a new challenge look like?

How do you measure it all?

What values influence your evaluation?

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