

Coach's Corner

by Sharon Pahlka, kidney patient and life coach



Don't stay in a hole

From the Northwest Kidney Center *Output Newsletter*,
April/May 2006

Do you ever dig yourself a hole and wonder how you got there? I have, but it's more fun to talk about someone else so...

My friend Mary called me and told me she would be starting dialysis again after enjoying many years with her kidney transplant. Even though her kidney had been slowly failing for a year, the reality was finally hitting her. She unplugged her phone, locked her door, and crawled under the covers of her bed and cried. My sentiments exactly, I thought. As she continued to list her fears and the downsides of going on dialysis, the hole became deeper. But there was a bright side to the story that she wasn't choosing to focus on: her co-worker was donating her kidney in just one month.

This was amazing and exciting to me. How many of us can have our kidney fail and get a transplant a few weeks later? Honestly expressing our fears and disappointments can sometimes be helpful, but we should not stay there and make that hole bigger. Climbing out can be mighty tough. Keep that hole of negative thinking as small as possible and the visit short.

Coaching Question: Where in your life do you need to limit or STOP focusing on the negative?

Coaching Tip: Awareness brings choice. Choosing to say "NO" to the negative voices makes room for the positive. This can not only be more rewarding but can actually help us be more physically healthy.

Homework: Let this be "Awareness Week." Simply notice the negative voices that dig a hole for you. Just notice without doing anything about them. Once you are aware, you can make new choices and create different strategies to something more life-giving.

Quotes:

"A man's as miserable as he thinks he is."

—Marcus Annaeus Seneca

Sharon Pahlka is a life coach specializing in helping those with chronic health challenges live well and meaningfully. She spent 19 years on dialysis, and for the last 13 years has had a kidney transplant. To learn more and read other Coach's Corner articles, visit her Web site: <http://www.lifeisagift.com>.