

Coach's Corner

by Sharon Pahlka, kidney patient and life coach



Keep engaged in life

From the Northwest Kidney Center *Output Newsletter*,
Dec 2005/Jan 2006

"My life isn't over yet!" was my thought as I walked my dog around Green Lake this fresh and sparkly morning.

What had kept me away?

I realized it had something to do with all that bellyaching I've been doing. I have a few "situations" that cause me problems and pain—neck, knee, back, and the latest, hmmm, hip. I like things to be "fixable," so I can go on living just the way I like to live—no limitations, please. But, some things can't really be fixed.

Sometimes, I find myself pulling back and avoiding engaging in life—exercise, going to dinner with friends, visiting someone, etc. This morning's walk showed me something. For a couple of weeks, I had kept myself from walking around Green Lake because I knew I'd experience pain and frustration. By going ahead anyway, I thoroughly enjoyed a beautiful morning. I did have to stop and stretch my hip out every now and then, but it was quite doable.

My "situations" will probably continue, so it seems better not to back away from engaging in life even when there are more challenges. I would just miss out. It takes more effort, courage, and perseverance, but an engaged life is worth it.

Coaching Question: What is keeping you from being engaged in life?

Coaching Tip: Live your life as if your life depended on it. Use words to re-write your thoughts, such as "I feel a little fearful about _____, but I am going to do it anyway." Or, "I am not going to let my circumstances keep me from enjoying life."

Homework: Make a list of five things where you take the easy way instead of the "engaging" way. Pick one a week, do it differently and note how you feel. Sometimes we win, sometimes we lose...was the cost worth it? Or, think of something you have been tempted to do but chose not to because of fears of some sort. List the benefits and costs of choosing not to take this action.

Quote: "Life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing."

Hellen Keller

"How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives."

Henry Ford

In addition to writing her column for the Northwest Kidney Center (NKC) newsletter, *Output*, kidney patient, Sharon Pahlka (on the right in the picture above) is involved in many other ways with the NKC as a volunteer and regional council member. In the picture above, she is joined at her NKC Expo booth with NKC volunteer Lauri Leonetti (middle) and a friend. Sharon is a life coach specializing in helping those with chronic health challenges live well and meaningfully. To learn more and read other Coach's Corner articles, visit her Web site: <http://www.lifeisagift.com>.