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Coach's Corner; You can do this!

By: Sharon Pahlka

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I am amazed that each and every day we have a choice regarding what attitude we will embrace. With all the things, people and circumstances happening in life that I cannot change, having this powerful choice gives me comfort. This came home to me several years ago.

I was practicing for my first speech contest, feeling out of my league and afraid. A dear friend listened carefully to my speech and then said in her positive way, "Sharon, you can do this!" If you have ever had anyone say the right words at the right time, you know how I felt. It changed my attitude. "You can do this" became my mantra. And it worked! I placed second in the contest and felt great about it. It gave me the confidence to do more exciting and meaningful things in my life.

What had I been telling myself before her comment? I had let myself get overwhelmed by the situation and underestimated how well I could respond to it. I forgot I had a choice and unconsciously chose to listen to the negative inner voice that is driven by fear, hurt, anger, humiliation, etc. I like that I can choose a better way. It is like jumping out of bed in the morning saying, "Good Morning, God!" or rolling out and saying "Good God, morning!" What we say to ourselves has the greatest impact on our behavior. When facing difficulty, I now often tell myself: "You can do this," and love seeing my attitude change. I remind myself of a story that was circulating on the Internet:

There once was a woman who woke up one morning, looked in the mirror, and noticed she had only three hairs on her head. "Well," she said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So she did and she had a wonderful day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that she had only two hairs on her head. "Hmm," she said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today." So she did and she had a grand day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that she had only one hair on her head. "Well," she said, "today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So she did and she had a fun, fun day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on her head. "Yea!" she exclaimed, "I don't have to fix my hair today!"

Attitude is everything.

Coaching Question: How is your attitude?

Coaching Tip: Choose to guide your thoughts. Deliberately replace negative words and thoughts with positive ones.

Homework: Do an attitude check throughout the day. If you find yourself saying negative things about yourself or others, change it.

Quotes: "I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it." - Chuck Swindoll

"Whether you think you can or can't, you're right." - Henry Ford.

Sharon Pahlka is a life coach and speaker. In her coaching, she helps her clients live well and meaningfully, especially those with chronic health challenges. Sharon's column, Coach's Corner, offers helpful tips from her work. Contact Sharon Pahlka via her Web site, www.lifeisagift.com.

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