

## WORKPLACE WISDOM NEWSLETTER

### I CAN BEGIN AGAIN

Go with me to my 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classroom. Friday afternoon was the best day of the week. Mrs. Hunter would go into her storage room and bring out a 12" stack of gorgeous multi-color construction paper; plopping it on the front of her desk; order us to clear off our desks...it was drawing time! We could pick any "color" to begin our masterpieces. Sometimes a kid would mess up. Mrs. Hunter would invite my friend to her desk, give him a hug, and ask him two questions:

1. "Would you like to pick a new color?"
2. "Would you like to begin again?"

Many, many years later, I would have the privilege of "beginning again" as a result of two separate life incidents.

1. In the fall of the year, many years ago, I was stunned by the announcement, "I want a divorce." My internal response was screaming: "Me? Cinderella? Couldn't be!" Yes, it was – in fact – ME! I would soon **begin life again** with a new color of paper. I would be single after many years of having a marriage partner. Was it hard? Well, of course! Incredibly hard!

2. One night just past midnight, I awakened to find our house in flames. My two young daughters and I escaped to safety, but we lost our home and possessions. It took me over 4 months to rebuild that home, but I did it. Was it hard? Well, of course! I waded through filthy and charred belongings, smelled the stench of burned wood, and felt the sick depression of "loss". However, when we moved back into the house, it was absolutely beautiful! Not only was it beautiful, but our insurance had allowed us to replace everything the girls and I had lost. *That was when we three girls learned how to "shop-till-you-drop"!!!!* Today we have some truly fond memories of those dark days. We had the privilege of **beginning again**.

Well, we don't ever intend to get "messed up", like my little first grade friends. But, let's face it...sooner or later, life does get messed up or we find ourselves in messes.

After many years, and much reflection, this is the lesson that I can pass on: **beginning again is a privilege**. *Mrs. Hunter was fantastic to invite us to **begin again**.*

#### When are some times **YOU** may need to begin again?

- ?? When your work environment doesn't use your talents and experience
- ?? When your job begins to play out
- ?? When a long-standing relationship evaporates
- ?? When you must move to new surroundings
- ?? When health issues force adjustments

**How do you begin again?** How do you keep from getting depressed?  
Here's how...reframe your thinking to this: "It's a ***privilege to begin again!***"

1. Breathe deeply. Realize a fresh, new journey awaits you – be expectant.
2. Recap all that was good before *your picture* got messed up. Keep the good.
3. Recap all that was bad before *your picture* got messed up. Toss it out.
4. Work hard to do the things you MUST do. There's no time for laziness or self-pity in rebuilding a house.
5. Be patient! Life unfolds into another beautiful picture as we **begin again!** You can't rush a "masterpiece"!

**My Masterpiece today looks like this....**

Although I *remember* the devastating fire that awful windy winter night 20 years ago, I am very privileged to have had the opportunity to **begin again** with those two beautiful daughters of mine! Today, I have four fantastic little grandchildren because we were able to **begin again**.

And my marriage? Oh, that's a great story! I've been happily married to Ed Miller for over 10 years; he is the loving *support engine* for my energy – the true *wind beneath my wings*. I feel richly rewarded for being patient as I discovered what I needed in a mate to **begin again**.

**Thank you, Mrs. Hunter.  
What a wonderful lady you were!**

*(She would be approximately 110 years old, if she were alive today.)*