

“The Joy & Appreciation for Small Things”

By Mellve Shahid Sr., Founder/CEO, The Empowerment Network

As I celebrate another year on this earth and as time seems to be moving faster in this technology-driven, jet age we live in, a greater appreciation and understanding for small things seems to creep more into my life. The things that once brought me happiness seem so meaningless to me at this point in life. Yes, a greater love for the smaller things that this life has to offer is what I’m seeking and wanting. I’ve noticed that the small things have now become the big things in my life and that the simplicity of life is what brings me the most joy.



It amazes me how the spirit of joy for small things has come and erased the things that once brought me so-called pleasure in my earlier years of life. The desire for those things that I once valued, are all but gone.

I wonder as I celebrate another birthday, whether this is a new sense of maturity or the mind set of someone getting older. Could it be that as a cancer survivor, a sense of newness for this life has made me recognize and understand that tomorrow is not promised and that life is better served when it’s shared with my fellow man, embracing the smaller things of this life?

I noticed the sounds of the chirping of the birds in the early morning, and the humming of the bees that hover over my wife’s plants on the front porch. I noticed the worms on the sidewalk in the early morning, seeking food and water, before the heat of the sun bakes them. I sometimes stare at the beautiful blue skies in the late evening and notice the brightness of the moon at night.

My skin seems to bask in the warmth of the sunlight in the heat of the day. The voices of my grandchildren yelling, “Papa” always amazes me as they eagerly tell me what’s new in their lives. I thank God for waking me up in my right mind to see a day I’ve never seen before, and for the activity of my limbs, that sometimes become stiff.

I appreciate when the phone doesn’t ring, because it might be the voice of someone on the other end, announcing the passing of another classmate. I pay more attention to the words and the lyrics in inspirational songs. The words seem to play over and over in my head. This is my season for grace and mercy. Is this my season to reap what I have sowed?

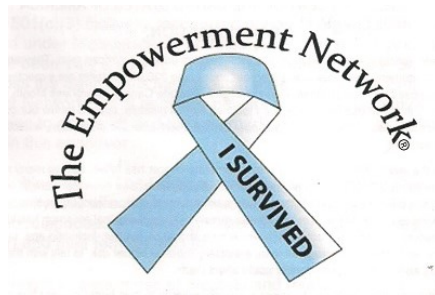
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This song by William Murphy, "It's Working", comes to mind as I reflect on the undeserved mercy that God offers us each day of our lives. It's reflected in the small things that this life has to offer, and I've failed in the past to notice them when they were all around me. I appreciate my wife's voice yelling, "Food is ready" and the smell as I approach the kitchen.

With the added year to my life and becoming the senior of the family, I thank God that the people of yesterday never gave up on me. They taught me the love of small things and to cherish the simple things in life. They shared great lessons, stories and instilled in me the values of a lifetime to pass on to future generations. Those conversations are indeed gone, but not forgotten.

I'm passing on and sharing this new sense of awareness for the small things in life to cancer survivors throughout the St. Louis community in my writings and in my lectures. Don't take for granted that the small things will always be there. Enjoy them, embrace them and make the most out of each day. Thank God for the new life that he has given each of us as cancer survivors. I'm excited about this new chapter in my life that "small things matter the most".

Happy Father's Day!



Who we are

The Empowerment Network (TEN) Inc. participates in more than 60 events annually to promote early detection of prostate cancer in vulnerable, high-risk metropolitan males, age 35+. As a result, hundreds of prostate cancer survivors have joined TEN, which is housed in its own Cancer Center.

The overall objectives of the TEN Cancer Education and Information Center are to efficiently and effectively reach populations of uninsured, underinsured, diagnosed and undiagnosed males and their families through:

- Heighten awareness in terms of prostate and related cancers
- Increase PSA testing/screening
- Provide treatment referrals, education, resources and support
- Increase volunteerism