

Semiannual Inspiration: 2012 Lessons – Start Small, Be Resilient, and Chase the Sun

Greetings family, friends, and colleagues,

Can you believe it's already time again for lessons of the year?! 2012 is almost behind us.

I started an annual tradition just last year – I wrote you about lessons I learned in 2011, and the response was overwhelming! Many of you commented that you loved the lessons, and others of you shared your own. So, now it's tradition. Below are my lessons of 2012, and after that, I make a call for yours. Read on!

MY LESSONS OF 2012

2012 was a very challenging year for me. Very challenging, but at the same time full of learning, growth, and peace. I have three lessons to share this year.

- **Start small to change big.** I am reading an outstanding book at work called The Power of Habit (*Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*) by Charles Duhigg. At the center of his book is the concept of the keystone habit. I'll summarize for you – by changing one small, yet central, habit, you can fuel other changes in your life. I have identified the one keystone habit that is central to my well-being – exercising at least 4 times per week (two runs and two workouts at the gym). I learned that exercise has a very powerful influence in helping me feel good about myself and reach my personal and professional goals. The endorphin release fuels my positivity; the endurance ensures my appetite remains strong, which is especially important when I am depressed or anxious; and I do some of my best personal and professional thinking while I am running. Long story short, pick one small but central habit you'd like to change; work on just that; and see what other changes follow!
- **Be resilient.** Oh boy, did I learn the importance of mental toughness in 2012. I really don't have much to say about this lesson, except that the only way I got through the challenges was to face them head on, and some days it took all of my strength. I think this lesson is best summed up by a Robert Frost quote my manager recently shared with me, "The only way around is through."
- **Chase the sun.** One of my favorite songs right now is *Chasing the Sun* by The Wanted. Sure, it's probably about dancing and staying up all night, but I take the lyrics more literally. Some of my best moments this year were in the sun - running along the river in Philadelphia on a sunny autumn day, feeling the warm summer sun on my back in Sausalito (near San Francisco), and meandering along the canals of Amsterdam in the bright spring sunshine. So, get out in the sun whenever you can (with protective lotion if that's important to you!) and soak in the Vitamin D!

YOUR LESSONS OF 2012

Now, it's your turn. Last year, nearly 30 of you shared lessons, and I'd love to see double that number or more this year! **Please send me one lesson you learned in 2012 by December 1, and please include your location.** I will compile them in December and send another semiannual inspiration message with the lessons by year end.

CONCLUSION

2012 was challenging for many of us, but remember that **just on the other side of challenge are always possibilities for learning, growth, and peace.** If you find yourself in a difficult place right now, you are in my thoughts, and I hope you get to the other side of it soon. I am rooting for you.

Fall is all about change. Start small, be resilient, and chase the sun! If you are in the northern hemisphere with Jon and me, I wish you peaceful change this fall, and if you're in the southern hemisphere, I wish you peaceful renewal this spring.

As always, you can reach me anytime via email, LinkedIn, or my blog. I look forward to learning from your lessons.

Cheers from Philadelphia,

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*Have you invested in your community today?
The world only spins forward - the great work begins!*

PS – You receive a semiannual inspiration message from me approximately 3-4 times per year. If you would like to forward my message to others, please feel free to do so. If they would like to be added to the distribution list, please have them email me at BFish@aol.com. And if you ever decide you'd like to be removed from the list, please email me at BFish@aol.com.

PPS – Previous semiannual inspirational messages dating back to June 2008 can be found at <http://brianfishbone.typepad.com/becoming-the-blog/semiannual-inspirational-messages.html>.