

# Hard Times, New Times

How to Do Things the Smilin'Way

*Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "One's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."*

"Times are tough!"

Don't you ever get tired of hearing that line? I know I do. The truth is, Times have always been tough. Even in good times. And, the good times never seem to last as long as the hard times, so we tend to remember the good times less. This includes the exceptionally "good" times we had during the 1990's. Following the Civil War there was a 20 year Depression in the US economy. Banks, unsure the Republic would survive, were afraid to lend money even to well established firms. Unfortunately we've haven't come that far from those days. While our confidence, both public and private, may be at an all time low, it still remains a major indicator of we deal with Hard Times.

It would be naive of us to think that everyone made out well during the latest economic boom period. It would be equally naive of us, as well, to believe that everybody has taken a hit during this latest "economic downturn." Some people have – others have not. There will always be some people hurt by decaying markets, technology, contraction and globalization. People are people and they become affected positively and negatively during good times as well as bad. Whether you consider yourself in front of the 8 Ball or behind it depends on you.

You should always be keenly aware that, **problems equal opportunities**. The main distinction between a positive and negative view is how you shape your perspective on the events and how you allow those events to affect you.

I once took a coaching class from Judi Talesnick, a Master Certified Coach. Judi is a dynamic person who never exhibits any signs of anger or frustration towards the Universe and its bounty. Lord knows, by most people's definition, she has plenty of reason to "howl at the moon." But, Judi just doesn't choose to see it that way. Judi is living proof of the lyrics from Johnny Mercer's "AC-CENT-TCHU-ATE THE POSITIVE." She always "accentuates the positive and eliminates the negative." Judy does this by building within herself the most positive image of all that surrounds her, including the really hard stuff, the tough stuff, in good or bad times. She talks to herself, using plain language that clearly defines her choices and therefore reinforces both her tenacity and desire to succeed. And, most importantly, she listens.

Judy's trick is simply this. When she is about to tell herself that "doing this or doing that is **hard**" she substitutes the word "**New**" for the word "**Hard**." The effect is striking. With one short exchange she has prepared herself for the challenge and is ready to pursue success, not from the "Challenger's" seat, but from the **CHAMPION'S Throne**. Now, that is true empowerment. We can't always control or choose the circumstances affecting our daily life, but we **can** certainly determine the way we prepare ourselves to meet those challenges.

## **Hard Times - Hard + New = New Times**

In Johnny Mercer's opinion this is a 4 step process:

Step 1 - You've got to accentuate the positive

Step 2 - Eliminate the negative

Step 3 - Latch on to the affirmative and

Step 4 - Don't mess with Mister In-Between

Step 4 is really important. **Mister-in-Between** is a merchant of procrastination and doubt. If you allow him, he will sell you down the river in a heartbeat, along with your hopes, dreams and aspirations. **While Negative thoughts may undermine your chances to succeed, Procrastination will make sure that you never get the chance.** Regardless of how past, current or future events unfold; you always have the ultimate power to decide how you react to them.

When you begin to do this you will look at hard challenges in your life as New Challenges packed with the opportunity to stretch and grow. People who set sail on this course will **experience new dimensions - embrace new ideas - go new places - reach new heights - become new inspirations** and **latch on to the affirmative** so they can send the hard times packing. The Don E. Smith Experience is about meeting the challenges of transition and change by **inviting New Times into your life**. My clients do. I hope you will too.