

## A4TD's Nugget of Knowledge

August 21, 2020

### **Greetings Everyone ~ A musing on mindsets**



My father was one of nine children, three of whom are still alive. My father passed away at age 95, and one of his elder sisters also died in her 90s – from an accident, not ill health.

This past weekend our family celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of his younger sister. 100!! The original plan was to hold a big family reunion in Easton, PA to celebrate. Due to COVID, it became a virtual party over the internet, with over 40 family members joining and participating from across the country, smiling broadly out from a sea of video windows. It was wonderful.

Let me tell you about my Aunt Mary. If you met her, you would think that maybe she was 75, or 80 at the most. Her mind is sharp as a tack. She walks over 2 miles every day and was a daily pool swimmer until COVID curtailed that. She is skilled on the computer. She still lives alone in her home, still drives, still hikes, still travels, still socializes with a large group of friends. She remains fiercely independent, and God help the poor naïve soul who dares to try to help her climb a steep incline or cross a street. She is an amazing role model for positive aging, and she inspires me with her “can do” mindset.

Clearly the genes on my Dad’s side are very good. My mother, however, passed away at age 78, as did her only sibling. In fact, Mom said that all the women in her family died at age 78.

I often wonder whose side of the family I take after. I have my father’s mind and sense of humor and the DeBellis eyes. My body type is more like my mother’s but my overall health is more like my Dad’s. A few months ago I turned 64, and I will admit that from time to time I ponder whether I only have 14 years left to live or a good 30. How much time might I have ahead of me to maximize? Sometimes I panic when I realize that 78

isn't really that far away. Other times I dread the idea of living into my 90s – I don't think I could handle 30 more years like 2020.

Of course, it's really an academic exercise since very few of us can predict when and how our lives on this plane will end. So why focus on it? If nothing else, COVID 19 is forcing us to live in the moment. My guess is that my Aunt hasn't spent her days focusing on the future at the expense of the present moment. She has been too busy living a very full life and enjoying a great deal of fun and loving connection with our family. She demonstrates a mindset of abundance and a zest for all life has to offer. Like all of us, she is frustrated by the impact of COVID on her life and her freedom, but she – actually all of us – are looking ahead to an in-person celebration next summer of her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday!

So how about you? What's your mindset? Are you able to embrace the moment with an eye on abundant possibilities for the future – including possibilities for your work life? Do you allow yourself to believe in yourself – that you “**can do**” it (whatever “it” is)? Or do you lose the present by focusing instead on a “**can't do**” mindset or on a ticking clock – perhaps living in fear of what may be and thereby darkening the present as well?

It comes down to choice – and practice too. I invite you to have a birthday cupcake while you think that over.

***Read on and enjoy.***

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## **Some Fabulous and Free “Boredom-busting” courses . . .**

FutureLearn.com is a fantastic site to access free courses intended to help you not only beat the boredom associated with the pandemic's lockdown but also expand your horizons.



Some of its titles include:

- How to Write your First Song
- Mindfulness for Wellbeing
- Rome: A Virtual Tour of the Ancient City
- Introduction to Norwegian

Check it out here: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/collections/boredom-busters>

## Helpful COVID-related information . . .



We certainly wish for your ongoing wellbeing and safety, and that your daily activities do not put you in contact with someone who has Covid 19. However, if you have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you may be contacted by a contact tracer or public health worker from your state or local health department.

Here's what to know if you get a call:

- A contact tracer may call to let you know you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. All information you share with a contact tracer, such as who you've been in contact with and your recent whereabouts, is confidential.
- You may be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. This means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining social distance from others at all times.
- You may be asked to monitor your health and watch for symptoms of COVID-19. Notify your doctor if you develop symptoms, and seek medical care if your symptoms worsen or become severe.

**Be aware of scammers** pretending to be COVID-19 contact tracers. Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Medicare Number or financial information. If someone

calls and asks for personal information, like your Medicare Number, hang up and report it to Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE.

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### **A Training Tidbit . . .**

When I was younger, in my 20s, I was insecure about communicating with others. For example, I once had to call Amtrak for train information, and I had to write everything down first. I was scared and nervous about making that call. Fast forward all these many years and you know what? I actually enjoy public speaking, which supposedly most people fear more than dying! I'm not sure why it is, except that when I am able to talk about things that matter to me in a way that utilizes my creative gifts, I feel confident and excited.

How about you? Are there things related to your training in SCSEP that scare you? Do you fear bringing all of yourself to your host agency, opening yourself up to learning and maximizing the opportunity? Fear is so common, but usually far too counterproductive.

One thing that may help you feel more confident is to get clear about your skills and talents – about your gifts that you love to use - and to find training and employment opportunities where you can use them.

### **Consider these questions:**

1. What do your friends or bosses count on you for?
2. If someone close to you were to brag about you or your skills, what would they



say?

3. What skills and talents have you happily used in your work or personal life that you wish to keep using?

**Now Take Action!!** Take some time to write down the answers to each of these questions. Then extract from these answers your skills, gifts and talents that you can confidently

*and happily bring both to your training and to future employment. These are the things you should then showcase in your resume.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Speaking of resumes, we want to be sure all SCSEP participants have a resume. Therefore, we're going to use this segment of the Nugget to help you get started. Even if you have to hand write your resume, that's okay –let's get going.

All resumes should begin with a summary of you and your skills. This section might be called a "Summary of Qualifications" or a "Professional Profile". Here's a good example of a summary of qualifications.

#### **Summary of Qualifications**

Reliable, organized, detail-oriented self-starter with strong administrative and customer service experience. Excellent oral and written communication skills. Strong team player with outstanding interpersonal skills and the ability to accept direction yet also work independently.

- 10+ years' experience in office administration
- Superior skills in organization, scheduling, reception and planning
- Proficiency with Microsoft Word and Excel

**Now Take Action!!** Notice that this Summary is full of words that describe skills and abilities. So now I want to encourage you take action. You've read the questions above and written down your answers. You've clarified your skills and talents. Now try combining them into your own Summary of Qualifications. It's okay if it is messy or

*rough. This is just to get you started. Then, proudly share this first draft with your A4TD professional staff contact!*

Woo Hoo! Great job!! Didn't it feel good to take that first step?

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**Work that Brain! . . .**

### ***Brain Teasers***

This issue's challenge:

- 1. The more of them you take, the more you leave behind. What are they?**
- 2. I begin with T, have T in the middle, and end in T. What am I?**

And here's an oldie but a goodie, submitted by an A4TD staffer. Have we evolved enough that we know the answer?

- 3. A father and son, traveling in a car, had a bad accident. The father was killed. The son was badly injured and was taken to the hospital. The doctor walked in, looked at the child and said, 'I cannot work on the child, he is my son'. Why?**

\* \* \* \* \*

Here are the answers to our previous challenge:



- 1. A red house is made from red bricks. A blue house is made from blue bricks. A yellow house is made from yellow bricks. What is a green house made from?*

***The answer is Glass.*** (Kudos to Steve T. and Lucille P. and Deb T. and Josette M.)

***Other submissions*** from the artists among us:

- Blue and yellow bricks (from David N.)
- Green bricks (from Kendra A.)

2. *I went into the woods and got it. I sat down to seek it. I brought it home with me because I couldn't find it.*

***The answer I was looking for is Splinter.*** (Kudos to Charles N-B, David N., Deb T.)

***Other valid submissions:***

- Peace of Mind (from Steve T.)
- A tick (from Kendra A.)

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### **Some reminders from A4TD . . .**

If you need help on any matter – including getting a wage verification letter – please first contact your local A4TD staff person for assistance. We ask that you don't call the home office.

Also, you are familiar with our routine of calling you every two weeks to connect for payroll purposes. We must talk with you in order to confirm your hours and ensure you get paid. Therefore, **please check your phone for messages and be sure to return our phone calls as soon as possible!!**

Finally, if you want to revisit some of our earlier Nuggets, you can now find them on A4TD's website Portal, in the Resources section. Remember, the password for accessing the Portal is "a4tdtraining".

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### **Fun facts . . .**



**Did you know that** Cleopatra had a special lipstick made for her, consisting of a crushed mixture of ants and deep red carmine beetles?

I guess beauty really is in the eye of the beholder.

Here is a little quiz for you:

*“Which of these toys came first?”*

- *G.I. Joe*
- *Barbie*
- *Slinky*
- *Silly Putty*”

Stay tuned for the answer next time. **Even better – feel free to submit your own fun fact or quiz for inclusion in the Nugget!**

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Last time I asked you **“What is the only letter that doesn’t appear in a US state name?”**

**The Answer?** Q (Kudos to Josette M., Ward G., Deb T. and Melodie L.)

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**In case you need a break . . .**



If you are feeling tired, anxious, overwhelmed or simply need a break, I invite you to watch this 7 minute video called “The World’s Most Relaxing Film”. It was filmed in Denmark. Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3fE6FQT82s>

Warning: Do not watch while driving or operating heavy equipment.

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### **Silver Linings and other things shared by your colleagues. . .**

We welcome your contributions to the Nugget to use it as a place for you to find connection with other SCSEP participants as well as the professional staff in the A4TD community. If you want to say or share something, have a question or have a training-related topic you would like covered, please let me know. If you don’t want to use your name, that’s okay as well – just say so.

In the last Nugget I invited you to share your experience with silver linings – or anything else you found interesting. Here’s what I received:

**From Janice B.:** *“I would like to share my silver lining to the pandemic. My time at home has allowed me to spend time with my ailing sister, who has suffered two strokes during the pandemic. Being able to be there for her as her health is deteriorating has allowed us to create memories that I will cherish forever. Although she may not remember, I forever will. With all of life’s uncertainties, this time has taught me to cherish every moment, every memory and every person that has been in my life and to never take any of it for granted. I hope that everyone is able to embrace the little things that make us smile and to always remember, after every storm, the sun will eventually shine. Blessings to All.”*

**From Angie M.:** *“I am happy to hear you have been able to connect with your community. Something that is so important to me. I have been doing the same. I have been able to really spend time with my family in a way I never have as well. We have special times with play, bike riding, kayaking, swim and chit chats which I had so little time for before.”*

**From Crystal W.:** *“Here is my silver lining.... Before I came to A4TD I had learned that my job was closing. At the same time my mom was diagnosed with cancer. I thought to myself well this is really bad news. As I was talking to a coworker about all the bad news and feeling depressed about it all, she said to me ‘maybe the job closing is a good thing so you can spend more time with your mom’. Thinking this over I realized that there is the silver lining in everything bad.”*

**From Pam S.:** *“While I was recovering from ... surgery, I received my DNA results back from My Heritage. I was raised believing I was 1/2 Italian (dad) and 1/2 French Canadian (mom). My dad was 1st generation in the US...but my mom's ancestry (is) Maine/Canada for centuries. All the family names from both grandparents are French and they (and my mom) spoke the language.*

*When I was a teen, my dad told me of some Scottish ancestry...and indeed the DNA revealed that 6.9%. A paternal cousin told me our great grandmother was Albanian, and the DNA (confirmed that). I have a lot of Italian blood...27.4%, and 23.3% Greek and Southern Italian. The Greek was a surprise! . . . Next, I am 23.8% English!! That was another surprise. . . . (I am also) Iberian, 7.2% Scandinavian, and last and least, I am 1.1% W. Asian. So where's the French??? (My son's) DNA results from 23 and Me (show) he's 7% French and German. (This) . . . could be from his dad's side. Is it possible that my mother's side has no French ancestry at all?? That would be something! A My Heritage representative explained . . . their gene testing goes back 2,000 years and . . . can't discern between English and French. . . . (T)he representative informed me that it's just simply possible that there is French ancestry on my mother's side and that I simply didn't get those genes passed along to me! It's been fun and interesting to explore this.”*

**From Judy M.:** *“These days (I've been) going through everything and clearing out stuff. When I moved (here) a year ago, I only had 2 weeks off to pack and move. And*

*considering I move so much slower than I used to, I've been living in various stages of moving, BUT now I'm almost done getting ...stuff in order. The hard part is that I have so little storage in my apt. and ... several boxes are left to unpack and there is no room for any of it!! So I'm prioritizing what I want to keep. We are such packrats!!! At least when I go back to work I'll be in much better order and there won't be that much left to do. Oh, and ... I work in an old Junior High building AND I live in another old Junior High building. Each classroom is a one bedroom apt. and they left the halls looking like a school – lockers and all. I really like it, but I think those whose school was a bad experience wouldn't like it."*

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### **A Final Thought . . .**

***"Our biggest regrets are not for the things we have done but for the things we haven't done".***

~ Chad Michael Murray, American Actor

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### **Ask A4TD . . .**

Finally, remember that if you have a comment or a question for A4TD, "reply" to this message and share your thoughts or questions.

***Until next time, may you hold a "can do" mindset of abundance and possibility, recognizing all the wonderful talents you have to offer. Be safe, be well and remember that A4TD remains right here for you.***

***Sincerely,***

***All of us here at A4TD***

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