



Through darker days

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Isn't it strange how additional work and challenges arise during the few days that you are not at work? And when you return to the office or the dispensary, it seems impossible to ever catch up again!

Well, I kid myself not with the saying: "On particularly rough days, when I'm sure I can't possibly endure, I like to remind myself that my track record for getting through bad days so far is 100% and that is pretty good." (source unknown)

Most of us tend to focus so much on the difficulties we face that we forget exactly how resilient and resourceful we really are. We have to make a deliberate choice to focus on the brighter side and, even in dark times, to keep our eyes on the light.

This is true for our personal lives, but also for the profession, as often we get so bogged down with the challenges we face, that we forget all the good work and hard yards we invested in, that will in good time come to fruition. More often than not, we get a great outcome when we least expect it and what a relief and uplifting event it can be!

What I have learned about people who are referred to as "even keeled", is that they are able to concentrate on the positive and have a firm belief that good things will happen. We hardly ever refer to a person who is constantly negative as "even keeled", do we? We use far less complementary terms when referring to them.

When bad things happen to a positive person, they will always tell you "Yes, it is bad, but it could have been worse!" and "It will all pass". They do not get stuck in the "now" and in the "negative".

Does it have any bearing on the pharmacy profession? I certainly think so.

Over many years we have, as a collective, done wonderful work in each and every practice setting. We served our nation with empathy and great care. We invested in our young pharmacists, through student

training and internships. We invested our time in mentoring our young colleagues to enable them to take over where we left off. Then why do we doubt their ability to create a prosperous future for the profession?

Within the PSSA, an enormous amount of time and effort was invested into engagement with Government, Education, National Workforce and international organisations, such as WHO and FIP, and much of this investment is yet to come to fruition. It would be naïve to think that these kinds of interactions will show immediate results. Like a farmer planting fruit trees, who understands that in year one there will be no return on his investment, but that in the long term (if his orchard is maintained!) there may be rich rewards.

We have to keep our faith and like the farmer, we have to constantly irrigate, prune and weed our orchard in the knowledge that if we do whatever is in our power to do, the harvest will come in.

It would be unwise to sit back and hope that somebody else will do all the work on my behalf! Many of our colleagues believe that they have elected the PSSA NEC and now it is up to the NEC and the National Office to do the work. This is unfortunately not true in totality. Yes, the NEC and Office staff do a lot of work, but without the input and expertise of our members the NEC will not be able to fully represent the views and needs of our members.

There is a lot of work to be done and we will call on all our members to contribute. You have the opportunity and the power to help shape the future of our profession. Now is the time!

For those who have the privilege to take a break this festive season, take care when on the road! To all our members, I wish you a blessed festive season, with love and joy in abundance. Keep your faith and forget about work for a few days (should you be so lucky as not to work).

Let us then take on the new year with renewed resolve and energy.