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Editor's Letter



Battles & Victories

I RECENTLY RECEIVED AN email with a quote by Plato, saying "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." I thought of that quote this week on my way to work.

As I waited at the stoplight, I was becoming increasingly impatient waiting for the red light to give way to green, thinking of all I had to do that day. The light changed, but the truck in front of me wasn't moving. The driver was distracted by his large dog, who was pacing in the back seat. Letting out an exaggerated sigh, I started drumming my fingers on the steering wheel. While this guy was talking to his dog, I was watching the minutes of a packed day slip away from me. Suddenly I thought of that quote, and felt a wave of shame roll over me. Maybe he was taking his dog to the vet because he was sick, or maybe he had a packed day ahead of him, too, and was struggling with all he had to do.

Even for those with the kindest and purest of hearts, it is too easy to forget about others, and to have our entire focus on ourselves. I was more concerned about getting to work, not about what kind of battles the man in the truck in front of me was facing.

Just think of the perspective we could gain and the difference we could make looking at things through someone else's point of view and taking into account the battles they are facing.

There are some people who have already figured out the benefit of thinking of others first, and they have taken it to an incredible level. One such group is made up of the medical professionals

from Spokane and Coeur d'Alene who traveled to Rwanda with Heart Healing Northwest. They all have busy lives back here, but, using their own vacation time and personal funds, they traveled to the other side of the world to provide specialized care for those who are fighting bigger battles that we can imagine: a battle for their life. On page 58 you can read about the life saving work they performed, and the lessons they learned along the way. Their example should inspire us all to be kinder to those around us, knowing they have their own battles.

John Latta has been filling the pages of this magazine with great outdoor stories and incredible photographs for well over five years. In each issue he does the hard work, hiking and climbing his way to beautiful peaks and mountaintop vistas, in order to create a visual that transports us to these locations. I have always been impressed with his work, but it wasn't until I read the touching story he wrote for this issue, about his dear friend, that I stopped to think about the lessons and memories he has made along the way, and how they shape his work for our publication. On page 38 you can learn more about what he has gone through to get those pictures and create those memories.

Sometimes the battles we are fighting are not life and death or ones with such strong holds on our heart, but they are simply frustrating! For anyone who has started a home improvement project, you know how that feels. This issue includes our annual home improvement article, and we wanted to offer up a beacon of hope for anyone who is battling a home improvement project that seems never-ending. Starting on page 90 is the tale of a massive and successful home remodel done on a historic home here in town. The homeowners had to battle frustration, impatience and many obstacles to complete the project, but the end result was definitely a victory!

Whatever battles you are fighting today, my hope is that reading through the pages of this magazine will inspire you and lift you up, providing stories of incredible people in our community who are doing great things. May today be a day filled with more victories than battles!

Blythe