

CATALYST



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Taking Pause to Reflect...

By Tom Marx

This month, I'd like to take a brief pause from the world of marketing to tell you a short story. As many of you know, I had a skiing accident March 5, which resulted in major back surgery March 8, twelve days in the hospital, followed by two months of recovery at home, much of it spent in a hospital bed in my living room.

I recall the pain and fear when I started to get out of that bed. First I used a walker and could perhaps move 15-20' or so, often getting tangled in the oxygen tubes that were connected to the oxygen machine. Then I lost the O2 machine and graduated to a cane. Finally I was able to SLOWLY climb the stairs to the 2nd level of our home, so I could sleep in our bed. When the hospital bed was returned to the rental company in June, I was still walking one careful step at a time.

Miraculously, I was then relieved of my upper torso body brace and was able to start doing my rehab work on a daily basis.

Now, nine months after the accident, to people who first meet me, I look normal. Sure I have a slight limp, I cannot get up from the floor very quickly, and I am not about to run the 100-meter dash in the next few months.

So why the story? About a week ago, someone asked me how the year has been for me. I replied "it's been an amazing year," and then proceeded to tell them of the joy of business, my partners here at The Marx Group, Karen (my wife) and family, and other relationships and communities in which I participate. At the end of my little summary of 2006, this person looked at me, slightly aghast, and asked "have you forgotten about your accident and the three months when your life stopped?"

I paused and realized that although the accident had completely changed my life in physical and spiritual ways that my perpetual "looking at the glass as half full" way of seeing things had provided me with the opportunity to work through those very difficult days and get on with my life.

This story was the perfect prelude to what I wanted to say at this time of the year: I AM SO THANKFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY I HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO CONTINUE TO BE A PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AND VITAL MAN. It could have been much worse. I could easily have been paralyzed. I could easily have had permanent nerve and muscle damage. I could have died.

So I end this year with a grateful heart. Grateful to Karen for nursing me back to health and in essence stopping her life for a couple of months as well; grateful for all the friends and business associates that spent time visiting while I was bed-bound; grateful to our clients that patiently awaited my return; grateful to the Mammoth Mountain Ski Patrol that safely got me off the mountain and to the hospital; grateful to the surgeon and the modern miracle of medicine that was able to repair the damage I caused; grateful to The Marx Group team who very capably took care of business while I was laid up; grateful to my positive attitude, which has helped me get to where I am today.

I ask you all to pause for a moment and say out loud what you are grateful for.

In the spirit of the holidays, I wish you all the best – and for a healthy, safe, peaceful and prosperous 2007.

Tom Marx
President