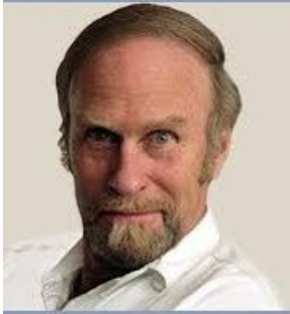


Silence and Action Are True Wisdom's Best Reply

By Frosty Wooldridge



As this world turns, each of us faces extraordinary challenges, ordeals, emotional pain, trauma, loss of loved ones and disappointments during our lives. It goes with the territory of living. Even at this point with a virus raging around the planet, we need to hold on to “hope.”

I remember vividly when Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) the lead character in the “Shawshank Redemption” sat in the corner of the prison yard with his friend (Red) Morgan Freeman discussing how Andy got swindled into prison by another man’s deeds. As they sat there, Andy gave instructions to Morgan Freeman to look him up at his hotel on a beach in Mexico as he worked on an old boat getting it ready for charter fishing for his guests. The only problem: Andy faced life in prison for ‘killing’ his wife, which, of course, he didn’t do the deed. And the prison warden held Andy into a stranglehold of his life. There was no chance for escape to a free life. But for Andy, “hope” made anything possible. Andy uttered uttered these iconic words, “It’s time to get busy livin’ or get busy dyin’.” With that statement, he decided to get busy living.

Later, Andy dug his way out of prison, and with brilliance, walked into the banks in Portland, Maine to claim his accrued money that he surreptitiously purloined off the warden as the warden was scamming his slave prison labor. He outsmarted the warden via the U.S. mail, crawled to freedom and skipped into

Mexico. He left evidence of the warden's evil deeds with the newspaper. The warden committed suicide as the cops came to lock him up. Morgan Freeman reunited with his friend Andy in Mexico to show that Karma works. Stephen King's iconic book and movie will be seen 100 years from now by adoring audiences. It epitomizes our struggles out of the darkness into the light.

At the same time, each of us enjoys the choices of creative thought, actions and deeds. Since I have stood astride my bicycle for over 65 years, there's a deep-seated joy in my soul. From my Schwinn Wasp and my paper route in my teen years to my fancy road bikes, to my sturdy touring bikes, I've enjoyed great energy, tremendous joy and soulful fulfillment via touring around the world on my bicycle.

The one thing about riding a bicycle, especially a touring bicycle, it calls for your best integrity, your true grit that comes from your sterling character. As you watch this movie of a man on a bicycle, you know how he feels. You know every movement, jump, 360-degree turn, balancing act, and total flow, even under water took his fortitude, many failures and countless mistakes to gain his expertise. From that, he gained his joy!

He will look back on his life and that video of him riding his bicycle through all the trials and tribulations as a metaphor for choices, and in fact, each of us makes those choices.

I am reminded of the great Roman philosopher Epictetus who said, "Tentative efforts lead to tentative outcomes. Therefore, give yourself fully to your endeavors. Decide to construct your character through excellent actions and determine to pay the price of a worthy goal. The trials you encounter will introduce you to your strengths. Remain steadfast...and one day, you will build something that endures; something worthy of your potential."

During this tenuous period in the United States, Canada, Europe and the world, let's all pull together, do our part, build our bodies, strengthen our minds and practice compassion. Let's let our actions, our minds and spirits triumph individually and collectively. May the God bless each and every one of us.

As it's been said, "May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back. May the sunshine warm upon your face and the rain fall softly on your fields. And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of his hand."

Be well for yourself and your family.

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