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Editor's Letter: Mindfulness

Marianna Richardson
Brigham Young University, mariannari@hotmail.com

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Editor's Letter

MINDFULNESS

The year 2020 has been a memorable one. The pandemic has negatively impacted most people's lives. The election has filled the country with divisiveness and contention. Yet I have also had the positive experience of being home and enjoying more reflective time. Previously, I often said, "I wish I didn't have to go into work," and now I don't need to! I have also spent more time alone in my office, which gave me additional time to think and reflect.

The theme for this issue is mindfulness, which James Baraz describes as:

Simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it won't)."¹

Yes, our current situation may not be quite what we were hoping, but we can focus on the pleasant things that we can enjoy right now.

As business students and tomorrow's industry leaders, it is important to focus on having a positive mood rather than a negative one (especially with finals coming up). Martin Seligman, the founder of the positive psychology movement, pointed out the following through a variety of studies:

Positive mood produces broader attention, more creative thinking, and more holistic thinking. This is in contrast to negative mood, which produces narrowed attention, more critical thinking, and more analytic thinking. When you're in a bad mood, you're better at "what's wrong here?" When you're in a good mood, you're better at "what's right here?"²

There are a lot of things that are right! This issue focuses on things we can look forward to, such as the rise of a new generation, the presence of more women in the workplace, and corporate mindfulness.

THE RISE OF A NEW GENERATION

Gen Z is comprised of individuals ages 13 to 24, which now classifies 90 million people in the United States alone and has a growing impact on the American consumer economy. As companies market to Gen Z, they should be aware: Gen Z has very specific values, including brand loyalty, individuality and ethical production. They are also attuned to social media influencers. Applying this knowledge to focus on Gen Z will be increasingly important in the coming years for any consumer-focused business.

Your graduation day is here. As you walk across the stage to receive your diploma, you begin to reflect on this chapter of your life. You sigh in relief as you realize that every quiz, mid-term, and final exam is officially behind you. You should be stress free, right? Wrong. You look down and see your diploma in your right hand, but six figures of debt in your left. You ask yourself, "How did this happen?" and "What should I do from here?"

The thought of becoming financially stable can be overwhelming for some young adults. But the battle can be won with steady, consistent habits. In this issue, Jared David offers four ways you can learn to say "no" to yourself, so the world doesn't say "no" to you later.

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

There is a huge gender gap in STEM fields. Research has shown that companies work better and innovation thrives when the workforce is more diverse. However, many women battle cultural pressures and untrue stereotypes that discourage their pursuit of STEM careers. As a society, we need to change this negative perception and support and uplift women by encouraging them to enter STEM fields.

Businesses need women. Companies with women in leadership are more productive and profitable. Experts have found ways to attract women to their companies: create a culture of diversity; then, maintain this culture by increasing the number of women in leadership roles. Then, a company can better maintain this culture by increasing the number of women in leadership roles. These steps will change the culture of the company in practice and in image, thus encouraging more women to join the company's workforce.

CORPORATE MINDFULNESS

The business community has ignored mental health challenges for too long. Problems such as absenteeism and presenteeism cause massive losses for businesses. Both businesses and employees benefit when the proper action is taken to make the office (or the home) a more suitable work environment. Mind the gap between a positive and depressive work environment.

The mantra for most companies is "serve the customer." But should companies change their focus from "serving the customer" to "serving the world"? In an age of competition, companies must differentiate or become obsolete. Through corporate social impact, companies not only differentiate from competitors, but also increase customer loyalty, employee satisfaction, and global well-being.

ENJOY LIFE NOW!

With all the negative feelings swirling around us right now, it makes sense to be mindful of the positive things happening in our lives. "Mindfulness is a way of befriending ourselves and our experience"³ (Jon Kabat Zinn). We don't need to look to the future for happiness. As Buddha suggested: "Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment."⁴ We can develop a positive culture now at the Marriott School of Business as we support and help each other in our current circumstances.

Please share your thoughts about the articles within by commenting on them on our Facebook or LinkedIn pages. You can also find us on Instagram. For more information on finding success, listen to the MSR podcast, *Measuring Success Right* on iTunes or Spotify, and visit our business-based blog, *Marriott Saturday Reads*.

For those who speak Spanish, we now present the Marriott Student Review in Spanish. Enjoy listening to our Spanish podcast, *Las Caras del Éxito*. 🎧

Enjoy,

Marianna Richardson

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Editor-in-Chief

Marriott Student Review

Marriott Saturday Reads

Measuring Success Right

Las Caras del Éxito

Notes

1 James Baraz, "James Baraz Quotable Quote," Quotes, Goodreads, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/232890>.

2 Martin P. Seligman, *Flourish*, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2011, p. 80.

3 Katie Miles, "Mindfulness Is a Way of Befriending Ourselves and Our Experiences," Self Love, Metiza, <https://metiza.com/self-love/mindfulness>.

4 Steve Agyei, "Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment," Medium, July 24, 2016, <https://medium.com/@steveagyeibeyondlifestyle/do-not-dwell-in-the-past-do-not-dream-of-the-future-concentrate-the-mind-on-the-present-moment-6489c951bd48>.