

3/1/2021

## Bring The Greatness

*Ellen C. Wells*



*Ellen C. Wells*

I write this as I recover from having two wisdom teeth removed just two hours ago. After a few weeks of looks and words of concern from friends and family over my upcoming surgery, the whole process wasn't as bad as I thought it would be, even though I opted out of the nitrous oxide. (I had a bit of a panic when they placed the mask over my nose—you'd think I'd be used to it by now.)

The four shots of Novocain were plenty to deaden all feeling on the left side, from chin to crown; enough so that all I really felt was a general cranking, similar to how you'd start those old Model Ts. The time between the last Novocain injection and the last tooth being removed was all of 7 minutes. I waited longer to pay my bill and call the elevator than I did for Dr. August to do her job. Gosh she was efficient, professional and just so pleasant about what could have been a horrible experience. I even laughed (and then teared

with sharp pain) when she sneakily placed an injection into my soft palette without warning. Well played, doctor, well played.

All this got me thinking about people who excel at what they do. Dr. August clearly is tops in tooth extraction. And it's not because she's efficient at it. A doctor could pull 100 teeth a day and still have a poor reputation. Indeed, you clearly get the sense that Dr. August genuinely cares about her patients and the process. You can't fake the smile of compassion and caring.

We often elevate athletes, actors and artists as examples of greatness in what they do and as examples of what is achievable. Tom Brady? Laser focus. Meryl Streep? Unsurpassed range. Amanda Gorman? Unstoppable confidence. They all love, love, love what they do. But we don't need to be internationally known and celebrated to be considered great at something. We can excel at anything—from tooth extraction to taffy pulling—not just the celebrated stuff—if it's something we truly love to do.

I'll use myself as an example. I'm pretty good at a few things, like writing and gardening, but what I love to do more than anything is to make pizza. I'm constantly perfecting dough, fine-tuning my senses to its readiness and testing flavor combinations. And when I'm not researching and practicing my pizza skills, I'm reveling in the splendor of sharing my creations with friends. I feel transformed as a person while I make it. I exude confidence, joy and authenticity when I'm shaping and sharing pie. I'm laser focused on producing the best pizza I can make. And people love eating my pizza, I think because they can taste the care I put into it. Pizza night at my house is a wonderful

thing.

You are truly great at something. You know you are. If it's something you do for a living, that's great! But it might not be even a small portion of your paycheck. That's fine. Not all of us can be Michael Phelps or Michelangelo. As we head into the spring season when it's all hands on deck at the garden center, it's important to realize not everything you're about to do is something you're going to love. In my mind, you have three options: 1) You can complain about it, 2) you can push both happiness and unhappiness aside and just get the job done, or 3) you can bring to the job the elements of what you love to do, what fills you and brings you joy.

It may be the research that nabs your interest. It could be the creative elements that sparks your joy. It could be the sense that you're making people happy. Find that element of authenticity that makes customers want to come back to you again and again, even if you aren't serving pizza. **GP**