

# The need for hope in our lives

I don't want anyone to assume the choice of this topic has anything to do with the political circus currently performing here in the United States – it doesn't. While I'm amused by politics, I'm currently not paying much attention to it. I'll wake up again sometime in October, when all of the pushing and shoving is done.

As I write this, news reports are speaking of the decline in public confidence in the U.S. I've felt it – sometimes, it seems like people are going through some gigantic malaise – struggling to find their way out of the depths. Certainly, the economic news has a lot to do with it – it's difficult to stay hopeful when everyone in the media is crying doom and gloom.

But with all this stuff playing out, hope should be our primary goal – developing hope within ourselves, and helping others to feel hope within their lives.

How do we develop hope? It's a simple thing to do:

1. Have faith in your own abilities. If you don't have that faith at present, then earn it – choose something difficult, and do it well.
2. Decide that no matter how bad things might get, you can deal with it – and excel doing it. This may require a mental shift – but committing yourself to dealing with the future, no matter what it might be, gives you a strange sense of mastery. Troubles may still come, but when they do, you'll be ready for them.
3. Have a basic belief in the worth of those around you. If you don't have such a belief, then take time to speak to the people around you. Learn about their highs, their lows, their challenges. Let their lives help you to see your own life more clearly.
4. Build up a “critical storage” of items you would need in times of emergency – food and money come to mind initially, but also store up attitudes, hope and memories – by writing about your goals, your desires, and your dreams. Writing about your hope – whether it's in a notebook, a diary, or on a blog – helps you remember the good times. It's just as beneficial to you as if you were to stockpile food for a rainy day.
5. Learn to enjoy the sunny days – and the stormy days as well. In other words, realize that you're going to have a lot of both sun and storms – but both carry a remarkable sort of beauty that will help you along life's pathways. If we spend all

our time waiting for a sunny day, we miss the beauty that is inherent in the storms that come our way.

Hope is a habit that can be learned and developed. You can do it.

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