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Dare to Create Opportunity

Stressed out about the economy right now? Politics? Housing? Business expenses? Taxes? Waiting, hoping, praying it will all just go away?

Colluding with friends, family and co-workers about how bad it is? Regurgitating stories? Gathering evidence? Again, waiting for someone else to do something about it?

Things are uncertain right now, no doubt. The economy is down. Things we care about are certainly taking a hit. It can be easy to get fixated on fear, frustration and hurt. It can be easy to find what's not working and speculate on how much worse it's going to get.

Despite a positive attitude, even the most optimistic can be challenged during times like this. But there is something you personally can do. As a human being, as a leader, as a parent, partner or spouse. You can get into action and dare to engage in the face of challenge and uncertainty.

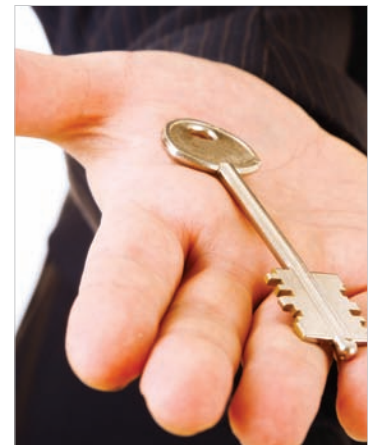
We're all being impacted by this in one way or another. We're all feeling it. Fortunately we can do some things to support ourselves and the people we care about right now.

No matter what's happening in our lives and in our world, we have the gift of free will and we do have control of certain things. Some people say we create our reality. I believe we co-create it. Life is in relationship, we're in relationship with the people and events around us. The question is, how do we want to be in that relationship? For example, we can control how we show up, what we choose to do with information, and how we take care of ourselves. We can control how we treat other people, what we say and what we do. We can control how much we contribute to helping things go better or worse. We can control whether we hang back or whether we lead. All of these things are gifts, they make a difference. Used well, they support powerful leadership.

Here are 5 quick tips to stay ahead of the game, keep your spirits up, stay in the most resourceful state possible, and make sure that you're a stronger leader for your team, family and organization.

1 Revisit your mission. I can not stress the importance of this. Why are you doing the work you do? What's important about it? What's the intended outcome? Who do you have to be to get there? What does your mindset need to be? Revisit the "why", imagine the success of achieving that mission (be it to complete a project or solve world hunger), and you'll reconnect with your highest power. (And be inspired to keep going, despite challenges.)

2 Engage your team. Now more than ever it is KEY to be fully engaging with your team. Visit your team mission together. Talk about what's going on that's causing distress, and then create a plan together to do something about it. How can you and your team create opportunity during this time? What do you have time to do now that you wouldn't otherwise have? Put new systems into place? Participate in team training? Go on a team retreat? What have you been wanting to do with your team, that now may be just the right time?





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3 **Take care of yourself.** You're the best "instrument of change" you have. Take care of it. Now is a great time to start that exercise program you've been contemplating but have been too busy to do. Now is the time to implement daily self-care structures into your life. Now is the time to create that extra personal edge. Whether it's eating more fruits and vegetables, drinking more water, taking a "white space" day to "be" and reflect, or starting yoga — do something extra for yourself. Set yourself up now so that you'll have the energy and stamina to do what you need to do.

4 **Nurture your relationships.** It's times like these that remind us of our priorities, isn't it? Spend extra time with loved ones; go to the park, have a picnic, hit an afternoon movie, pick up your kids early from school and hit the pumpkin farm. Do something out of the norm, and something that says "I love you" to the special people in your life. And it doesn't have to be expensive or complicated. Some of the fondest memories of my childhood come from hitting the local 29 cent burger stand with my dad on Tuesday nights! My husband and I love grabbing a cup of coffee and hitting the local book store for a night out. It's all about spending quality time together and appreciating the many gifts you have. Speaking of which —

5 **Be grateful.** I know this one can push buttons when things may be going differently than planned, AND think of all you have to be grateful for. Gratitude is an instant mood shifter. It can put you immediately into a more powerful resource state. Feeling uncertain, scared, stressed out, angry? Make a list of all the things you are grateful for and see what happens. The more you do, and the more you feel the emotion of gratitude, the more creative you'll become in finding new solutions and creating the results you want. Plus it just feels better. Life gives us many gifts, what are you grateful for today?

This issue's dare: Take one or all of these, reflect on what you'd like to do in each area, and then make a simple action plan that resonates for you. Pay attention to your thoughts and remember that you have an amazing ability to influence the attitudes of yourself and those around you. ▲

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Anese Cavanaugh, founder of Dare To Engage, Inc., is devoted to helping forward thinking individuals, business leaders and organizations marry mindset, mission and action to deliver bottom line leadership results, create successful teams and create environments where their customers and employees thrive. She is the creator of the Sustainable Leadership Program, Fully Body leadership, the Dare To Engage Mindset Programs, and "Bootism" a holistic approach to leadership, joy, and leading from the inside out. With degrees and credentials in the areas of professional coaching, health and productivity, and leadership development, Anese has coached hundreds of people to integrate the 3 for optimal results. She brings a fresh perspective to fully engaged living and leadership, celebrating and honoring the hero within each person. For more about Anese or the Dare To Engage Programs, or to receive a complimentary copy of her latest publication, go to DareToEngage.com or call 1.877.994.DARE (3273).