

Weekly Wisdom  
~Stephen Sarchet

"It's snowing still", said Eeyore gloomily.

"So it is."

"And freezing."

"Is it?"

"Yes", said Eeyore. "However", he said brightening up a little, "we haven't had an earthquake lately."

We've had a rough couple of weeks. Cold winter days with more snow than we've had in a while, a closure (which might have been good news for some!), and that swashbuckling sea captain from the East telling us we're in for more. And yet the days are getting just a little longer, the robins have returned to our trees, and the forecast is calling for sunnier days. Soon the snow will begin its stubborn retreat, the breezes will shift and begin to whisper of spring, and the earliest of flowers will defiantly bloom through the snow. Optimism is in the air.

I've always lived in places where time is marked by the changing seasons. I remember the smell of hay in the barn on the cold Ohio air. I've borne up to the sweltering heat and the weight of the humidity of August days in Missouri. Each had its time and each eventually gave way to spring or fall in accord with their appointed time. And in following their turn, each has given us not only a changing of seasons, but a sense of optimism and of future. A sense of reassurance that the patterns of life do change just as the tides rise and fall.

Just as our fathers and mothers before us, we look ahead. Even as the cold days of winter frost our windows and drive up our heating bills, we look forward. We know change isn't far away, and so we plan. We day dream. And we hope.

I remember the story of Viktor Frankl's time in concentration camps, of being separated from his family and his wife. Yet on a cold day he had a vision of his wife standing before him as if she were there with him, even though he had no way of knowing where she was or if she was even still alive. He discovered the power of love and a sense that he still had something he must do gave him the strength to survive. To look to the future. To find some small reason for optimism in one of the worst places in history.

I like to think people are generally optimistic. We all have reasons for looking ahead. Unfinished business, unfulfilled goals or unspoken words we hold on to till we see each other again. We find reasons with each other every day to be optimistic, to be hopeful, supportive, or to be strong for family we love, friends we spend time with, and maybe even for the people we work with. On the worst days of my life I've known two things; the sun will come up tomorrow (and no, that's not a reference to Annie!) and things to get better. And on my best days? Well, I try not to take them for granted like I did when I was younger. I hear the little voice in my mind reminding me that "right here, right now is the best place I can be."

*There is nothing in the world, I venture to say, that would so effectively help one to survive even the worst conditions as the knowledge that there is a meaning in one's life.*

~Viktor Frankl