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I was on my way to the Annual Session last Wednesday, and I was asked by a delegate on my flight, if I was heading to Orlando. I said "Actually, I am on my way to Chattanooga, and will be parachuting out in a few minutes." I will admit to you, this past 16 months has been extremely challenging, and the flight or fight biologic response has appeared now and then. I promise not to run off the stage.

How did this past year really "feel"? To be honest, it's been an EKG of emotional peaks and valleys not just for me, but for your 429 employees. Sunday night at Universal Studios, it was nice to see some of the ADA professional staff enjoy a real roller coaster, rather than the virtual one they have been on for the last two or three years.

A year ago, I spoke to you about my core values -- Integrity, Accountability, Respect, Acceptance and Optimism -- the urgent need to heal this organization, to restore trust through demonstrating ability, integrity and especially, benevolence.

One of my favorite philosophers Albert Camus wrote, "In the depths of winter, I finally learned that within me, there lay an invincible summer." I believe the ADA has discovered its Invincible Summer.

For better or worse, the 429 ADA professional employees have traversed these peaks and valleys at my side. And the story that I want to tell you today is their story and how they found their invincible summer.

Early in the morning and late into the evening,-- I see their exhaustion, but also their determination to keep going often through 60 hour plus workweeks, because the important job of supporting you and implementing your directives, has to be done and done superbly. Today,(SLIDE ONE) we have the same human resources 429 ADA staff actually working for the ADA, against 444 budgeted position and have been, pushing out 20 percent more work in response to your Board, Council and Committee resolutions,

directing us to provide more value for our members and the public. (SLIDE 2)The professional staff has been doing more work with fewer resources. What sustains us are our values and our passion for serving you this organization and this profession.

Change is best managed when predictability exists among business fundamentals. The ADA employees have been through a lot of uncertainty including not knowing who would be leading them. Many of them described to me what they lived through over the last two to three years as a toxic work environment . They felt anxiety every day. Fear was pervasive, fear of expressing the truth, fear of losing their jobs, fear of retribution if they challenged the status quo. . And yet, they emerged from this uncertainty and this anxiety with enthusiasm, dedication and energy. So what happened? What motivated this turn around?

As the Executive Director, it is my responsibility to manage the staff and keep them motivated to perform at an extraordinary level. A recent book by Mr. Daniel Pink, entitled Drive, talks about what motivates us as human beings. Based on 30 years of research, he concluded that three simple things motivate us -- autonomy, mastery and purpose. Based on my years of executive experience, I agree.

What moves us to perform consistently beyond our expectations? What makes us want to hang in there when the reward seems so hidden and the punishment so painfully obvious? What drives us to excel even when forces are brought to bear to cause us to fail?

First, it's autonomy –the capacity for self determination- This is a highly educated, mature and skilled workforce, many of whom, are national experts in their fields. The ADA professional staff consists of knowledge workers. They love to pursue problems and find solutions. Carrots and sticks don't work when dealing with knowledge workers. The ADA professional staff does not need to be coerced or threatened into performing at a superb level-they do this because it's their nature. For knowledge workers like these, the use of rewards and punishments to motivate performance actually makes performance

worse. .. The most effective way you can confirm this sense of autonomy is to respect them –Respect their knowledge skills and values.

ADA professional staff is your single greatest asset- Why wouldn't you want to protect this asset? It is in our member's best interest.

Then there's mastery – which is demonstrated with incremental achievements toward our goals,, building day by day to create significant organizational movement toward member driven goals and objectives. Look at what we have accomplished this year. As Malcolm Gladwell would say, the ADA is chock full of 10,000 hour professionals. It is remarkable. (SLIDES 9-13) Frankly, it would take too much of your valuable time to go through our accomplishments in more depth.....But consider this.....from developing and implementing a corrective action plan for ADAidm, ADA and ADAF, to instituting best accounting and budget practices, to creating the division of communications, and aligning our financial resources with a new strategic and operating plan, We are righting the ship financially and ensuring that our singular focus is on member value....Your professional staff thrives on results for our members and the public, not on politics. Your professional staff is asking, no begging, you to end the distraction of divisive politics. Our best work happens when your leadership is clear and compelling.

The third and final driver of our staff's success is purpose. Our staff is driven by a set of core beliefs – (SLIDES 3 – 8) that members are the purpose of our work ... and membership is everybody's work. We take personal responsibility for – and pride in -- our work. We understand that attitudes are contagious.

Purpose means passion for the mission, passion for the profession and passion for the public's health. The ADA employees work by these values. This organization has a noble purpose that matters to each and every ADA employee.

The staff understands that to thrive, we need a supportive unified organization- Trust and mutual respect must flow from the top and percolate to the bottom. As leaders of this profession, you set the tone. If we

are going to be an association based on trust and mutual respect....it must start here with the supreme governing authority and the managing body. If we are going to seek excellence and relevance, we need to provide opportunities to learn and develop...we need to provide the necessary tools for our professional staff to do our jobs....we need to treat people fairly...and if we are to have an organization where character assassination, purposeful humiliation and malicious rumors are never used as management techniques—it starts with the tone from the top.

(SLIDE 14)

Today, you have working for you, one of the finest most ethical and experienced senior management teams I have ever had the honor to work with. Together, they represent an average of 28 years each of expertise and leadership in their fields. We are an organization that possesses the experience, knowledge, skills and values as good as or better than any Fortune 500 company.

Uncertainty and fear could have immobilized this organization. Instead, like a wave at the beach, it washed over the employees and because we are motivated by autonomy, mastery and purpose, we didn't let it knock us down, we got on with the work at hand. The ADA professional staff found our "invincible summer".

(SLIDE 15)

We all agree there were serious governance and operational problems developed over a decade that needed corrective actions. And we also agree -- that we do not all agree – on how to fix those problems. One thing is certain. Change is inevitable. Change must happen. As Malcolm Gladwell might say, this organization is at a Tipping Point - little changes can make a huge difference. New ideas and behaviors can spread through an organization like a virus. The ADA professional staff is now infected with the optimism and success virus-and we are happy to share our virus with you. Let's start a "positive" epidemic of our own here and now.

A few vigorous and vocal -- yet in the minority -- opponents didn't want me or the professional staff to do this job. They resisted what is necessary to make the ADA a well run business, and fully accountable for performance. The distraction caused by these derisive efforts diverted precious resources, away from the members and our social obligation. Did the drama add one cent of value to this Association or our members? Nope. This drama came with a bill of over \$900,000. What a waste of money and what a waste of time.

Drama exacts one other hidden cost – it bruises our civility. . As we move beyond the problems of the past, we have an opportunity to restore civility to our culture. Our charge now is to be better than the world around us. To hold onto higher ethical standards ... to debate with greater understanding and respect to see compromise and agreement as signs of maturity, not weakness.

We come together in this House of Delegates, to debate, ready to disagree, ready to win or lose on the merit of our debate -- never losing respect for our profession and each other, despite our differences. It is a new day. We feel tremendous pride -- like we the staff do -- in our indomitable strength and the power of persistence. We believe in the clarity that comes with courage, and the optimism that enables us to carry on through the darkest of times. And when the majority rules, we rally around that decision. When the majority rules, we come together, leaving our personal agendas behind, and focus on what is best for this Association, not our own needs. We all share the duty of loyalty to the ADA. We all share the duty of care- We all share the duty of obedience to our purpose.

Picture in your mind, a 151 year old solid, hardwood, highly polished mahogany stool with three beautifully carved legs-each leg representing the House, the Board and the Professional Staff. Together, these three legs support our members.

(SLIDE 16)

Together, we can overcome any challenge, rise above dissention and discord and reach a new place -- a refreshed ADA culture: one of trust, of fairness, of integrity, mindful of our past, and dedicated to never repeat the errors of the past. Our total dedication and focus must be on member value, to enable our

members to be successful in their careers and to enable each member to fulfill their social contract with their communities in a meaningful way without sacrificing the integrity of this profession.

This house divided cannot stand. Today, we can begin to stand together, strong on our three legs and taller than at any other time in the last four years. We are all here for one purpose—to promote the art and science of dentistry and to improve the public's health.

Integrity, Accountability, Respect, Acceptance and Optimism—my parents raised me in a way in which these personal beliefs took shape and became a barometer for my actions. Last year, I told you a little about my dad, a proud dentist for 33 years, who died 30 years ago. As anyone who has lost a parent too early knows, it draws you even closer to the other parent. My mom — who died on August 30 of this year — was the smartest woman I have ever known, even though she never went beyond high school.

One of the books that intrigued her most was “The Will to Believe” by the great American psychologist and philosopher William James, written in 1897. My mother was an Irish Catholic woman of tremendous faith. My siblings and I chose a quote of William James for her funeral: “Be not afraid of life, Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact”

To you, the supreme legislative and governing body, to the Board, the managing body, and to my incredible professional staff, if my mom was here today, she would say, be not afraid of moving ahead, believe that this association is and will be, the most enduring most relevant association in the world, and your belief will help create the fact. Believe and it will be fact.