

# GOOD NEWS

## BY DENNIS MINTUM

It seems our society has become more and more “immune” to bad news in recent years. A prime example is, when it comes to mass shootings. There was a time, not long ago, when every major TV network would immediately pre-empt whatever was on, and spend hours... or even days, covering the tragedy. Now, most networks just issue a brief bulletin, then tell viewers to tune into their regularly scheduled news for more details.

But, maybe it isn't really the case that we are “immune” to the bad news. Maybe it's just that there is so much of it that we become overloaded with a feeling of helplessness. After all, what can WE do about it?

Our culture has also become one where the bad news has more impact than the good news. One very good and worthwhile charity has a television advertisement that this author absolutely hates. In the commercial, they say, “one in every five children diagnosed with cancer will not survive.” The reason it infuriates me so is that I am old enough to remember a time when a diagnosis of cancer was almost always a death sentence. What about saying, “four out of five children diagnosed with cancer will live... and we need your help to make that five out of five?”

What's needed is a major societal shift - from negative to positive. The first way to do that is to look for the good in even the worst disaster. When my son died of a heart defect at two years old, I was obviously devastated. But, what kept me going was the memories of the two years of love and joy I had with him. And, other good things came out of that tragedy: doctors were able to improve on infant heart surgery and my son's donated organs allowed two other children to live - and gave sight to a little girl who had been born blind.

Yes, there are a lot of things we could do to limit disasters such as mass shootings. All it takes is a little common sense, and people banding together to get

our politicians to do what is needed. New Zealand had ONE mass shooting... and immediately moved to ban assault weapons.

There are many other examples: For instance, instead of spending millions of dollars to “warehouse” people in prisons, what about spending some of that money to find ways to help those people become productive members of society?

We can use our experiences... even disasters and tragedies... to make things better. Why is it that, out of millions of airline flights, there are very few plane crashes? It's because, whenever there is a crash, thousands of hours are spent going over every detail, with the idea to prevent the same thing from happening again. Why don't we (and our government) do that with other things? Many “criminals” could be helped through counseling, therapy, etc. to prevent the “disaster” that landed them in prison from happening again, for example.

The other thing that we need for a societal shift is to bring our focus around to good news. One of my favorite authors and motivational speakers is a man by the name of Zig Ziglar. He often asked, “why does the weatherman say there's a 30% chance of rain? Why can't he say there's a 70% chance of sunshine?” That may be an over simplification, but the point stands. We should look for the good. As one song says, “we sure could use a little good news today!”